

Bumps in the Night!!!!

June 2014 Issue

Paranormal "U"

Tibetan Book of the Dead

By Carl Crooks, TnT Paranormal Investigators LLC

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is a guide through the afterlife and also a guide for the living. It is the key to life after death and the answer to humanity's oldest question; what happens to us after we die.

To better understand the purpose of this book one should understand the basic beliefs of Buddhism. The One belief is that life is full of suffering and that suffering comes from desire and ignorance. Another, suffering can be eliminated through meditation, studying, and the possession of compassion and wisdom. And still another, those who have compassion and wisdom can become enlightened and on the pathway to reincarnation.

Karma is another part of Buddhism that is important to understand. The concept of karma is that through your mortal life, one will experience good and evil deeds which will be reconciled in the next life. If your karma is bad, you may be placed in hell or be reborn as an animal. If your karma is good, you may have the chance to become a god or to be reborn as a human.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead was originally known as *The Book of Liberation Upon Hearing in the After-Life*, and was given its western name, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, by Walter Evans-Wentz in the early 1900's. It is believed to have been written in the 8th century AD but not brought to the light of day until the 14th century. It is considered to be one of the holiest books in the world.

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* was discovered by a lone American, Walter Evans-Wentz, an Oxford educated anthropologist who was on a spiritual quest, in Tibet, in 1919. He spent three years translating it into English and first published it in 1927. Since its original publishing, it has been translated into several different languages and is still available in bookstores.

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is believed to have been written by Padmasambhava, also known as The Lotus Born. The Lotus Born, was a human being, mystical in nature, and came to Tibet having traveled from Afghanistan through India during a time that the Buddhist religion was becoming dominant in Asia, China, and Indonesia. Upon finishing the book, The Lotus Born thought that what he had written was too powerful and dangerous to be given to the Buddhist people and he hid it in the hills surrounding Tibet, with the prophecy that it would be found at the end of 600 years.

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* was discovered in the Gampo Hills in Central Tibet, by a Tibetan *terton*, Karma Lingpa, a discoverer of ancient texts. The rituals from this text have been used in the same way by Tibetan Lamas for the past 600 years.

Upon the death of a person in Tibet, Tibetan monks are called to the side of the deceased. The soul of the person will wander up to 49 days as the monks chant and read the text to reassure the soul how they are to find their way to the next life.

When a person dies, the monks force the body into a fetal position, the spine is broken, and the legs and arms are tied tightly together. The corpse is then allowed to stiffen in a small bundle nearly half the size the person was in life. The monks make a sky burial, placing the body outdoors, in a remote location. It is believed that the body no longer has a purpose and the last gift of the body is made as an offering to the vultures.

Bumps in the Night!!!!

June 2014 Issue

Paranormal "U"

Tibetan Book of the Dead

The message given to the deceased, through the chanting monks is: Do not be attached to this world, do not be distracted or afraid by what you see, but to face the challenges in an attempt to secure your next life.

The deceased person is usually confused by being dead and the soul may choose to stay around the living in an attempt to obtain comfort from those left behind. The monks' chanting is put in place to reassure the soul that all will be okay and to follow their directions.

The soul will go through three Bardos, the environment between the death and the next life. During this time the soul will experience things which are quite similar to those who have described near death experiences.

The Chikhai Bardo, or the Moment of Death, has the presence of a white light or a blinding light and the soul may feel compelled to go to it. The monks relay the information to not go there but to move on past it.

The Chonyid Bardo, The Peaceful Deities, is the second part of this journey. Here the soul will experience different lights, colors, and beautiful things. These beautiful things are a trap, the soul is being seduced by the beauty being presented, and it is an obstacle of the liberation that the soul is seeking. The goal of Bardo is to achieve enlightenment. Here the soul will experience the yin-yang, the duality found in life. And with this duality is the flip side of the Peaceful Deities, Chonyid Bardo: The Wrathful Deities. If you are taken in by the beauty, here there are wrathful blood drinking deities. Seeing these demons is a truly frightening thing and the monks will chant for the soul to ignore them, that they are not real, and that the soul must move on past them.

The end finds you face to face with the most terrifying deity of all, Yama, who is death himself. A wrathful deity waiting for you. Here, Yama examines the deeds of the person, their karma, and represents their deeds by using white pebbles, good Karma, and black pebbles, bad karma. If the black pebbles are more, this may mean the soul is reborn as an animal or experience a life time of torture in hell. More white pebbles will offer the soul a positive rebirth or even entrance into the world of the gods. It is believed that being reborn as a more enlightened human, understanding the nature of suffering, one may help others to overcome their suffering and become more enlightened.

An evil person can be reborn as an animal or a demon or even worse, a wrathful spirit called the Hungry Ghost, with an appetite that cannot be satisfied; a realm of great suffering.

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* offers the soul an escape from a lifetime of torture or being reborn as an animal. If the soul can focus on the constant chanting of the monks, the soul can leave the Lord of Death behind and move forward into the third Bardo, the Sidpa Bardo or, The Moment of Rebirth.

During this time, the soul will view couples having sexual intercourse and the opportunity to choose their future parents. At the moment of conception, the soul is placed in the womb of the woman, which at birth is experienced as the tunnel, and the white light is experienced as the light of the world the soul is being reborn into.

The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* can help guide a person to a better life. It helps people to learn that it is best to be a kind and loving person. To limit your suffering, meditate, and increase your wisdom and compassion for others. In this way, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* is just as important to the living as it is to those who have died.