



The Mountains of Tibet

Mordicai Gerstein

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In a tiny village, high in the mountains of Tibet, lives a woodcutter. All his life he has longed to travel to faraway places, to see the world. But he grows old without ever leaving the mountain. When he dies, he is suddenly offered the chance to live another life, in any form he wants, anywhere in the galaxies. Carefully he decides... and finds himself in a place he never thought he would choose.

The Mountains of Tibet Details

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From Reader Review The Mountains of Tibet for online ebook

Melia Hill says

While a quick read (it is a picture book after all), this one gave me a short bout of chills from the wonderful reincarnation story and I just love the illustrations!!

I can't believe this one fell under my radar for 3 years!

Kristen Lauderdale says

Moved me to tears. Amazing message

Dodie says

A good book to introduce kids to the idea of reincarnation.

Amy says

A woodcutter lives in the mountains of Tibet, wishing that he could travel and see the world. Instead, he marries, has children and dies an old man, satisfied with his life. But the book does not end there...we see him float in the cosmos and decide how he shall spend his next life. In another galaxy? On another planet? Or will a choose the familiarity of home?

Angelica says

This multicultural and inspiration book about life and death tells the story of a boy who was born high up in the mountains of Tibet and he loved to fly kites. The story continues to tell the story of his life up until his death. Kind of like what we see what happens when we die. But also this story is about reincarnation.

Great for kids who wonder what happens when we pass away.

Great for 1st-2nd graders

Mathew says

Written as an interpretation of sorts of The Tibetan Book of the Dead, Gerstein's picturebook in a warm, wonderful narrative about the cycle of life and death. It beautifully illustrates the idea of our consciousnesses journey through many lives from the perspective of a young boy who wishes to see the world. Although the

narrative is well written, for me, it is Gerstein's watercolors and gouache illustrations that strike home the welcome warmth that comes with the message that we are all part of the same thing and that we have nothing to fear as we leave one life for another.

Julie Suzanne says

About reincarnation; a good UU or Hindu (I think) read to cope with the death of a loved one (including animals). Much less childish than the other ones I read--definitely not just a children's book.

Nikita Shah says

This is a story about life after death, reincarnation. It goes through the life of a boy flying a kite, then grows up into an adult and grown old in his village where he then dies. The story continues by giving the man options of what he who/what he would like to be in his next life. Each page has beautiful pictures depicting the words to draw attention to the beauty in life.

I think this is a good book to use for children when in RE or PHSCE when discussing life after death or when dealing with sensitive topics such as death. The story told makes the reader see how the character lived a happy life and had choices for he wanted to come back as. This can be comforting to know as it allows children to understand that although death causes sadness, it's not all bad thereafter.

This book can also be used to discuss the stages of life and stages of growing up. Children can recall what they did when they were younger, or choose a defining moment of themselves now and then follow through by writing about what they would like to be when they are older. This allows children to have high aspirations and think about their future. They could create their own little books with their own illustrations (incorporating ICT or Art).

Joshua Buhs says

The art is wonderful, particularly in the later pages, when the focus is on the creatures and people inhabiting earth.

The story is a bit more difficult to wrap my head around. It ends as though it is trying--in the conventional style of American children's books--to make a moralistic point. I think the author and publisher believe there is a point: but the story doesn't really build to or justify the ending.

There seems to be a bit of a disconnect between the Tibetan tradition which inspired the story and the structure in which it is expressed here. The choices here are not really ones we get to make in our own life--they are on a vaster, more cosmic dimension--and the narrative never really deals with that.

Odd.

Cindy says

Sweet story about a boy who lives a long life in a mountain valley, longing to see the world. Then after he dies, he is offered the chance to be born again, anywhere, in any form. Some might be surprised at his choice.

Emma Roulette says

I have been trying to find the name of this book for a really long time. My mom gave this to me when I was little. I remember, for years after, believing in reincarnation, delighting in the possibilities of my future life. This book is beautifully illustrated with a gentle, touching message that guides you deep into your own imagination, long after finishing the book.

Arturo says

The Mountains of Tibet by Mordicai Gerstein is a great book for a reader, of ages 10 and up, who had their own interpretation of what happens in the after-life.

This small tale follows a boy in Tibet who grows up having fulfilling a fraction of his dreams before he...

Read the The Mountains of Tibet, and discover a new perspective on life full of fantasies.

Lara Messersmith-Glavin says

I'm obsessed with children's literature - I think I'm secretly convinced that all the wisdom a person acquires in one's life is absorbed by the age of 9, after which point it's all testing things out and getting hurt and excited and disappointed and reinspired...I'm not sure that I ever had such an uncluttered view of the universe and the infinite as I did when I was 6 or 7 years old.

This book, along with many others, appeals to that capacity that children have for gentle wisdom and universals. Beautifully illustrated and with both cultural information and a general sort of appeal - it's a favorite, for sure.

Michele Karmartsang says

I've always loved this book. Raising Tibetan-American kids, it so simply explained the idea of reincarnation. It's been years since we talked about it, but I think I remember my husband (the Tibetan) feeling that the conscious choices the woodcutter made aren't quite right, but for a kid's book it did alright. I think for a fictionalization of what we cannot know, it does a great job of illustrating the attachment to our previous life

that Buddhists believe carry through to the next life, but are strongest the closer to leaving the last one.

The illustrations are fine, but clearly out of the author's imagination- the clothing is vaguely Chinese looking, except for one page showing all the mothers wearing the traditional apron of a married woman. Also, although there are wooded areas of Tibet, most of Tibet is high plateau and unforested. These little details are tiny because I feel the message is far more important.

Miriam says

I'm really not sure who this book is for or what I thought of it.

Probably it is not the best introduction for a child who has not already been introduced to the ideas of death and reincarnation. This is a very specific concept of reincarnation, too, which is not the same as many people's belief concerning how reincarnation works.

After living all his life in one spot, an old man dies (peacefully, I guess; it is glossed over) and finds himself floating in the cosmos where he must choose whether or not to be reincarnated and if so, where and how. He doesn't get specifics to choose from, though, just colors and lights to which he is drawn. I wasn't sure what the point was in making him decide to return to exactly where he was in his first life: we get what we ask for? (seems to kind of imply that if your life sucks it is your fault for choosing it.) We are stuck in patterns are repeat them? Things are fine the way they are?

The illustrations were pleasant, especially the ones of the kids flying kites. Cosmic whirligigs aren't really my thing.

Not really my thing, I guess, overall. ymmv.

J-Lynn says

An excellent introduction to the Buddhist concept of reincarnation. The author wrote the story based on his reading of the Tibetan Book of the Dead and designed the intricate water color pictures after traditional Tibetan artwork.

Antoinette Perez says

Sweet, short children's book that covers the concept of reincarnation.

Allison says

The Mountains of Tibet is a charming story of the life of a young boy in Tibet who grows to old age, dies and what his experience is after he dies. The story doesn't take the paths that I thought it would and I don't want to give it away. What I will say is that throughout his life, the man tells of the same goals he's had but doesn't

reach. When he is given the opportunity to pursue them in his next life, he makes a surprisingly different decision about not only where he will come back but also how.

There is a note at the end of the book that tells of the author and illustrator creating this book after he read the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*. *The Mountains of Tibet* is a great story in and of itself but furthermore, it is a nice introduction to the complexities of the teachings and understandings people have of reincarnation.

Earlier this year our family experienced the loss of our beloved Johnny Cat. He was eighteen years old and while his death was expected in the not too distant future, his illness and passing were very sudden - less than 24 hours from a dramatic turn for the worst until his passing. As a small family from a small family, Johnny Cat's death was only the third death of a close friend or family member my children had experienced. In the time since his passing, we've had a lot of discussions about death and what happens after death, including interesting long discussions about reincarnation and the afterlife.

My children, especially my youngest (who is now 18 years old and on the Autism Spectrum) has always had an intense curiosity about diverse topics. When the curiosity bug bites, the world must stop and as much information as possible must be pursued until its thirst is quenched. Sometimes, a little bit will do it, more often though, a full-blown nearly encyclopedic knowledge of a topic or item will need to be amassed before anything else new can be approached. This book satisfied what was needed at the time but also opened the door to further study because it was ankle deep wade into reincarnation beliefs instead of just a toe dipping experience.

I would recommend not waiting until questions come up about diverse cultures and beliefs before checking out books like *The Mountains of Tibet*. The sooner and more often that children learn about and are exposed to people, cultures and beliefs that are different from their own, the sooner they can realize that we are all part of one human race, one family on this amazing planet and that we are all interesting, valuable and have interesting contributions to make life better for everyone.

Kara says

This deceptively simple book explores questions about choices, life, death, and how we are all people.

T. says

This is a beautiful little book that brings tears to my eyes every time I read it. Its premise is very simple: it's the story of a man who dies and is reincarnated. Not many children's books deal with the subject of death or the metaphysical, and even though this book only very superficially speaks to these things, it does so with grace.
