

Life after death

Christian Belief

Christians believe that death is not the end, but that after the human body dies and is buried or cremated, the unique soul in every human lives on. They believe that after we die, we will be judged by God and treated according to how we lived. Most Christians believe that this means good souls will go to Heaven and bad souls will go to Hell.

Jewish Belief

Judaism teaches that at the end of the world, the Messiah (Son of God) will come and judge everyone's souls. They believe that their souls will be either punished or rewarded depending on how they lived their lives. Some believe that all good souls will be brought back to life to enjoy a new good world on Earth where everyone will obey the God's rules and therefore be peaceful.

Muslim Belief

Muslims believe that there will be a Day of Judgement at the end of the world. At this time, all bodies will be resurrected from the dead. Muslims believe that everyone will be judged according to the life they have led. Those who have lived good lives and followed the teachings of Islam will go to Paradise; those who have not will be punished in Hell.

Humanists

Humanists reject the idea or belief in a supernatural being such as God. This means that humanists class themselves as agnostic or atheist.

Humanists have no belief in an afterlife, and so they focus on seeking happiness in this life. They rely on science for the answers to questions such as creation, and base their moral and ethical decision-making on reason, empathy and compassion for others.



Key terms

Afterlife - Life after death.

Benevolent – kind.

Atman - The essence of a being. Can refer to body, mind or soul, depending on context, but usually indicates the soul that is reborn in Hinduism.

Conscience - An inner sense (or 'voice') which communicates what is right or wrong in one's behaviour.

Genesis - The first book of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) describing the origins of humanity and humans' relationship with God.

Haram – Forbidden by Muslim rules.

Literalist - Christians that take the Bible literally.

Mediums - claim evidence for life after death by contacting people's dead relatives and telling them things only their relatives could know

Moksha - Ultimate liberation from the continuous cycle of birth and death in Hinduism.

Monotheist – Belief that there is only one God.

Mortal -Being subject to death.

Non-literalists - don't believe everything in the Bible is supposed to be read literally.

Nicene Creed – A set of beliefs that ALL Christians have.

Omnipotent – All powerful.

Original sin - The transference of Adam and Eve's breach of God's trust to all of humanity.

Purgatory - Purely Catholic belief. Where the soul goes to be cleansed of sin before going to Heaven.

Rakat - set sequence of actions and prayers (standing, bowing, prostrating, and kneeling). They turn to the left and right to show respect to the angels.

Salat – the 5 daily prayers performed by Muslims.

Genesis is the first book of the Bible. Genesis 1 describes the creation of the heavens and the earth, while Genesis 2 focuses on the creation of the first humans, Adam and Eve: Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

Genesis 1 explains how: God is the only creator, God existed before he created the world, the world was well planned and is sustained by God, God blessed creation; all creation is holy, God created everything in Heaven and on Earth in six days and on the seventh day, God rested.

Hindus believe in reincarnation, and they call this process samsara. This is the belief that there is a cycle of rebirth of the soul. This occurs repeatedly. However, the actions of a person in their mortal life determine their incarnation (i.e. how they will be reborn) in the next. Karma is the belief that all actions have a reaction. This is directly linked to the belief in samsara. Good actions, such as not harming other living creatures (ahimsa), have positive karma and negative actions have negative karma. Hindus' belief in karma means they believe that their good actions will allow them to have a good mortal life. Leading a good mortal life is another way Hindus can increase their chance of achieving moksha.

Charles Darwin was an English naturalist who studied variation in plants, animals and fossils during a five-year voyage around the world in the 19th century. Darwin visited four continents on the ship HMS Beagle.

Darwin observed many organisms including finches, tortoises and mocking birds, during his five week visit to the Galapagos Islands, near Ecuador in the Pacific Ocean. He continued to work and develop his ideas once he returned from his voyages.

Darwin's theory of evolution challenged the idea that God made all the animals and plants that live on Earth, which contradicted the commonly held Christian views of his era. He did not publish his scientific work and ideas until 28 years after his voyage.

Finally, as a result of Darwin's world expedition and observations, which were backed by many years of experimentation; his discussions with like-minded scientists and his developing knowledge of geology and fossils; he proposed the theory of evolution by natural selection.

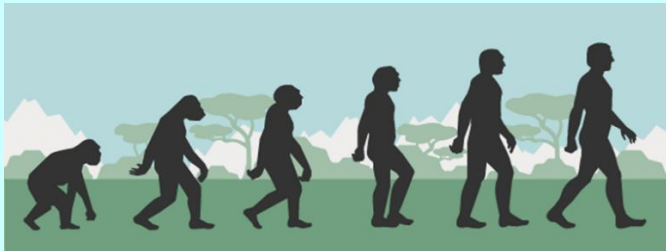
Darwin proposed that:

individual organisms within a particular species show a wide range of variation for a characteristic

individuals with characteristics most suited to the environment are more likely to survive to breed successfully

the characteristics that have enabled these individuals to survive are then passed on to the next generation

This theory is called natural selection.



### Paley's Watch Theory

**William Paley (1743 – 1805)** argued that the complexity of the world suggests there is a **purpose** to it. This suggests there must be a designer, which he said is God.

Paley used a watch to illustrate his point. If he came across a mechanical watch on the ground, he would assume that its many complex parts fitted together for a **purpose** and that it had not come into existence by chance. There must be a watchmaker.

"In the absence of any other proof, the thumb alone would convince me of God's existence." **Isaac Newton (1642-1727)**



**St Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) - Catholic Monk**

St Thomas Aquinas also came up with the cosmological argument (argument from causation)

Aquinas suggested there needed to be a first cause (a prime mover). He also suggested that this prime mover needed to be an unmoved mover. "Therefore it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God."

