

There's [more information](#) on the afterlife on p.6 for Christianity, p.20 for Islam and p.29 for Judaism.

Most Religions Teach that there is an Afterlife

- 1) Many people believe that, although your **body** may die and decay, your **soul** can live on — in other words, you move on to a different kind of **existence**. This is the basic idea of **life after death**.
- 2) Most religions teach that something happens to the soul **after death**. Some religions teach that the soul is **rewarded** or **punished** for the **actions** of the person on Earth. Others believe the soul is **reincarnated**. Christians, Muslims and Jews believe that life on Earth isn't **everything** — a **better life** awaits them. It's still **important** though, and is **preparation** for the afterlife.

CHRISTIANITY teaches that people go to **heaven** or **hell**, depending on how God **judges** their actions — trying to live life according to Christian **teachings** and believing in **Jesus** will allow them to receive **God's grace** and go to **heaven**. Catholics believe that some go to **Purgatory** — a place where **sins** are **paid for** before going to heaven (see p.6).

"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus... For it is by grace you have been saved..." **Ephesians 2:6-8 NIV**



"...one who had repented, believed, and done righteousness, it is promised by Allah that he will be among the successful." **Qur'an 28:67**

MUSLIMS believe the afterlife means going to **jannah** (paradise) or **jahannam** (hell). After a person dies, their soul goes to **barzakh** to **await judgement** (see p.20). On **Yawm ad-Din** (the Day of Judgement), everyone's actions will be judged. Muslims believe Allah "...will assemble you for the Day of Resurrection..." (**Qur'an 45:26**). Those who Allah deems **good** go to **jannah**, and the **bad** to **jahannam**.

Lots of **JEWS** believe in **Gan Eden** (paradise) and **Gehinnom**, a place where people are **punished** for bad things they've done (see p.29). Most people will **move** from Gehinnom to Gan Eden, but **evil** people will stay for **eternity**. Some believe they'll eventually be **resurrected**, when God "will swallow up death for ever" (**Isaiah 25:8 NIV**). This is part of **Maimonides** 13 principles of faith. However, Jews tend to **concentrate** on **this life**, rather than what might happen after death.

- 3) There are many **arguments** used by both **religious** and **non-religious** people to **support** life after death:

- The **paranormal** (things science can't explain, which are thought to have a spiritual cause, e.g. **ghosts**) is sometimes used as evidence. Some people (**mediums**) claim they can **talk to the dead**.
- Some people claim to have evidence of **reincarnation** (they lived a previous life, died, and were reborn in a new body). Lots of research has been carried out with young **children** who claim to remember **past lives**.
- People say they've had a **near-death** or **out-of-body experience** where they've spoken to long-dead **family members**.
- Some believe there must be **more** after **life on Earth**. They might see going to heaven or paradise as a **reward** for people who've been **good** all their lives — it must exist to **compensate** for the **unfairness** of life on Earth.

Some People Don't Believe in Life After Death

- 1) Many people believe that when you die, that's it — you **cease to exist**. They might argue that there isn't any **concrete evidence** that there is life after death, so the **logical** answer is that it **doesn't exist**. They think people's **memories** of previous lives **aren't real** — they could've been **suggested** to the person.
- 2) They might say that believing in an afterlife is just a way of **helping** people deal with **death** — the idea provides **comfort**.
- 3) They could also argue that the idea of an afterlife is used by religions to put **pressure** on people to **follow** their teachings and **live** their lives in a certain way.
- 4) Believers would **disagree** with these arguments, since their own beliefs come from **sacred texts**.
- 5) Christians might argue that Jesus's **resurrection** shows that there's life after death: "He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit" (**1 Peter 3:18 NIV**). However, **non-believers** may say that the stories of Jesus's resurrection are **made up**.

It might not seem like it now, but there is life after exams...

Be sure to finish essay questions with a conclusion, based on the arguments you've considered.

EXAM TIP