

Afterlife

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See the last page for date of publication.

1) Brahmanic as Abrahamic illusions.

2) Egypt Gods as Hindu Gods illusions.

In philosophy, religion, mythology, and fiction, the **afterlife** (also referred to as **life after death** or the **Hereafter**) is the concept of a realm, or the realm itself (whether physical or transcendental), in which an essential part of an individual's identity or consciousness continues to exist after the death of the body in the individual's lifetime. According to various ideas about the afterlife, the essential aspect of the individual that lives on after death may be some partial element, or the entire soul or spirit, of an individual, which carries with it and confers personal identity. Belief in an afterlife, which may be naturalistic or supernatural, is in contrast to the belief in oblivion after death.

In some popular views, this continued existence often takes place in a spiritual realm, and in other popular views, the individual may be reborn into this world and begin the life cycle over again, likely with no memory of what they have done in the past. In this latter view, such rebirths and deaths may take place over and over again continuously until the individual gains entry to a spiritual realm or Otherworld. Major views on the afterlife derive from religion, esotericism and metaphysics.

Some belief systems, such as those in the **Abrahamic tradition**, hold that the dead go to a specific plane of existence after death, as determined by a god, gods, or other divine judgment, based on their actions or beliefs during life. In contrast, in systems of reincarnation, such as those in the Indian religions, the nature of the continued existence is determined directly by the actions of the individual in the ended life, rather than through the decision of another being.



Ancient Egyptian papyrus depicting the journey into the afterlife.



Paradise of Bhaishajyaguru discovered at the Mogao Caves.

Contents

- 1 The afterlife in different metaphysical models
 - 1.1 Reincarnation
 - 1.2 Heaven and hell
 - 1.3 Limbo
 - 1.4 Purgatory
- 2 Ancient religions
 - 2.1 Ancient Egyptian religion
 - 2.2 Ancient Greek and Roman religions

- 2.3 Norse religion
- 3 Abrahamic religions
 - 3.1 Judaism
 - 3.1.1 She'ol
 - 3.1.2 Olam Haba
 - 3.1.3 Reincarnation in Jewish tradition
 - 3.2 Christianity
 - 3.2.1 The Catholic Church
 - 3.2.2 Orthodox Christianity
 - 3.2.3 The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
 - 3.2.4 Jehovah's Witnesses
 - 3.2.5 Seventh-day Adventists
 - 3.3 Islam
 - 3.3.1 Ahmadiyya
 - 3.3.2 Sufi
 - 3.4 Bahá'í Faith
- 4 Indian religions
 - 4.1 Hinduism
 - 4.2 Buddhism
 - 4.3 Sikhism
- 5 Neopaganism
 - 5.1 Wicca
- 6 Others
 - 6.1 Shinto
 - 6.2 Unitarian Universalism
 - 6.3 Spiritualism
 - 6.4 Zoroastrianism
- 7 Parapsychology
- 8 Philosophy
 - 8.1 Modern philosophy
 - 8.2 Process philosophy
- 9 Science
- 10 Popular culture
 - 10.1 Movies
- 11 See also
- 12 References
 - 12.1 Notes
 - 12.2 Further reading
- 13 External links

The afterlife in different metaphysical models

In metaphysical models, theists generally believe some type of afterlife awaits people when they die. Members of some generally non-theistic religions such as Buddhism, tend to believe in an afterlife, but without reference to a deity. The Sadducees were an ancient Jewish sect that generally believed that there was a God but no afterlife.

Many religions, whether they believe in the soul's existence in another world like Christianity, Islam and many pagan belief systems, or in reincarnation like many forms of Hinduism and Buddhism, believe that one's status in the afterlife is a reward or punishment for their conduct during life.

Reincarnation

Reincarnation refers to an afterlife concept found among Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Rosicrucians, Theosophists, Spiritists, and Wiccans. Reincarnation is also a belief described in Kabbalistic Judaism as *gilgul neshamot* (Reincarnation of Souls).^[1] In reincarnation, spiritual development continues after death as the deceased begins another earthly life in the physical world, acquiring a superior grade of consciousness and altruism by means of successive reincarnations. This succession leads toward an eventual liberation.

One consequence of reincarnationist beliefs is that our current lives are both afterlife and a beforelife. According to those beliefs events in our current life are consequences of actions taken in previous lives, or Karma.

Rosicrucians,^[2] in the same way of those who have had near-death experiences, speak of a life review period occurring immediately after death and before entering the afterlife's planes of existence (before the silver cord is broken), followed by a judgment, more akin to a Final Review or End Report over one's life.^[3]

Heaven and hell

In Abrahamic religions, the view is generally held that one goes to hell or heaven depending on one's deeds or faith while on Earth,^[4] or predestination and Unconditional election, or to the intermediate state to await the Resurrection of the Dead. In most denominations, heaven is a condition of reward for the righteous to go after they die, traditionally defined as eternal union with God. Hell in comparison is a condition of punishment and torment for the wicked, traditionally defined as eternal separation from God and confinement with other sinful souls and fallen angels.

Limbo

Despite popular opinion, Limbo, which was elaborated upon by theologians beginning in the Middle Ages, never entered into the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, yet, at times, the Church incorporated the theory in its ordinary belief. Limbo is a theory that unbaptized but innocent souls, such as those of infants, virtuous individuals who lived before Jesus Christ was born on earth, or those that die before baptism must wait before going to heaven. Therefore, neither merit the beatific vision, nor yet are subjected to any punishment, because they are not guilty of any personal sin although they have not received baptism, so still bear original sin. In other Christian denominations it has been described as an intermediate place or state of confinement in oblivion and neglect.^[5]

Purgatory

The notion of purgatory is associated particularly with the Catholic Church. In the Catholic Church, all those who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven or the final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The tradition of the church, by reference to certain texts of scripture, speaks of a "cleansing fire" although it is not always called purgatory.

Anglicans of the Anglo-Catholic tradition generally also hold to the belief. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed in an intermediate state between death and the resurrection of the dead and in the possibility of "continuing to grow in holiness there", but Methodism does not officially affirm this belief and denies the possibility of helping by prayer any who may be in that state.^[6]

Ancient religions

Ancient Egyptian religion

The afterlife played an important role in Ancient Egyptian religion, and its belief system is one of the earliest known in recorded history. When the body died, parts of its soul known as *ka* (body double) and the *ba* (personality) would go to the Kingdom of the Dead. While the soul dwelt in the Fields of Aaru, Osiris demanded work as restitution for the protection he provided. Statues were placed in the tombs to serve as substitutes for the deceased.^[7]

Arriving at one's reward in afterlife was a demanding ordeal, requiring a sin-free heart and the ability to recite the spells, passwords and formulae of the Book of the Dead. In the Hall of Two Truths, the deceased's heart was weighed against the *Shu* feather of truth and justice taken from the headdress of the goddess Ma'at.^[8] If the heart was lighter than the feather, they could pass on, but if it were heavier they would be devoured by the demon Ammit.^[9]

Egyptians also believed that being mummified and put in a sarcophagus (an ancient Egyptian "coffin" carved with complex symbols and designs, as well as pictures and hieroglyphs) was the only way to have an afterlife. Only if the corpse had been properly embalmed and entombed in a mastaba, could the dead live again in the Fields of Yalu and accompany the Sun on its daily ride. Due to the dangers the afterlife posed, the Book of the Dead was placed in the tomb with the body as well as food, jewellery, and 'curses'. They also used the "opening of the mouth".^{[10][11]}

Ancient Egyptian civilization was based on religion; their belief in the rebirth after death became their driving force behind their funeral practices. Death was simply a temporary interruption, rather than complete cessation, of life, and that eternal life could be ensured by means like piety to the gods, preservation of the physical form through mummification, and the provision of statuary and other funerary equipment. Each human consisted of the physical body, the 'ka', the 'ba', and the 'akh'. The Name and Shadow were also living entities. To enjoy the afterlife, all these elements had to be sustained and protected from harm.^[12]

On March 30, 2010, a spokesman for the Egyptian Culture Ministry claimed it had unearthed a large red granite door in Luxor with inscriptions by User,^[13] a powerful adviser to the 18th dynasty Queen Hatshepsut who ruled between 1479 BC and 1458 BC, the longest of any woman. It believes the false door is a 'door to the Afterlife'. According to the archaeologists, the door was reused in a structure in Roman Egypt.

Ancient Greek and Roman religions

The Greek god Hades is known in Greek mythology as the king of the underworld, a place where souls live after death.^[14] The Greek god Hermes, the messenger of the gods, would take the dead soul of a person to the underworld (sometimes called Hades or the House of Hades). Hermes would leave the soul on the banks of the River Styx, the river between life and death.^[15]

Charon, also known as the ferry-man, would take the soul across the river to Hades, if the soul had gold: Upon burial, the family of the dead soul would put coins under the deceased's tongue. Once crossed, the soul would be judged by Aeacus, Rhadamanthus and King Minos. The soul would be sent to Elysium, Tartarus, Asphodel Fields, or the Fields of Punishment. The Elysian Fields were for the ones that lived pure lives. It consisted of green fields, valleys and mountains, everyone there was peaceful and contented, and the Sun always shone there. Tartarus was for the people that blasphemed against the gods, or were simply rebellious and consciously evil.^[16]

The Asphodel Fields were for a varied selection of human souls: Those whose sins equalled their goodness, were indecisive in their lives, or were not judged. The Fields of Punishment were for people that had sinned often, but not so much as to be deserving of Tartarus. In Tartarus, the soul would be punished by being burned in lava, or stretched on racks. Some heroes of Greek legend are allowed to visit the underworld. The Romans had a similar belief system about the afterlife, with Hades becoming known as Pluto. In the ancient Greek myth about the Labours of Heracles, the hero Heracles had to travel to the underworld to capture Cerberus, the three-headed guard dog, as one of his tasks.

In *Dream of Scipio*, Cicero describes what seems to be an out of body experience, of the soul traveling high above the Earth, looking down at the small planet, from far away.^[17]

In Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the hero, Aeneas, travels to the underworld to see his father. By the River Styx, he sees the souls of those not given a proper burial, forced to wait by the river until someone buries them. While down there, along with the dead, he is shown the place where the wrongly convicted reside, the fields of sorrow where those who committed suicide and now regret it reside, including Aeneas' former lover, the warriors and shades, Tartarus (where the titans and powerful non-mortal enemies of the Olympians reside) where he can hear the groans of the imprisoned, the palace of Pluto, and the fields of Elysium where the descendants of the divine and bravest heroes reside. He sees the river of forgetfulness, Lethe, which the dead must drink to forget their life and begin anew. Lastly, his father shows him all of the future heroes of Rome who will live if Aeneas fulfills his destiny in founding the city.

Norse religion

The Poetic and Prose Eddas, the oldest sources for information on the Norse concept of the afterlife, vary in their description of the several realms that are described as falling under this topic. The most well-known are:

- Valhalla: (lit. "Hall of the Slain" i.e. "the Chosen Ones") Half the warriors who die in battle join the god Odin who rules over a majestic hall called Valhalla in Asgard.
- Fólkvangr: (lit. "Field of the Host") The other half join the goddess Freyja in a great meadow known as Fólkvangr.
- Hel: (lit. "The Covered Hall") This abode is somewhat like Hades from Ancient Greek religion: there, something not unlike the Asphodel Meadows can be found, and people who have neither excelled in that which is good nor excelled in that which is bad can expect to go there after they die and be reunited with their loved ones.
- Niflhel: (lit. "The Dark" or "Misty Hel") This realm is roughly analogous to Greek Tartarus. It is the deeper level beneath Hel, and those who break oaths, abduct and rape women, and commit other vile things will be sent there to be among their kind to suffer harsh punishments.

Abrahamic religions

Judaism

She'ol

Writing that would later be incorporated into the Hebrew Bible names Sheol as the place of the dead.^[18] The Christian writer's traditional re-interpretation is that the Hebrew word Sheol can mean many things, including "grave", "resort", "place of waiting" and "place of healing". It can also mean "deep", as it is used when the earth opens up and destroys the rebellious Korah, Dathan and Abiram and their 250 followers (Numbers 16:31-33 (<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Numbers%2016:31-33;&version=31;>)). One might take this as implying that Sheol is literally underground, although it is as easily read literally, as signifying an earthquake or split in the earth.

Ecclesiastes: "For what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other. Surely, they all have one breath; man has no advantage over animals, for all is vanity. All go to one place: all are from the dust, and all return to dust. Who knows the spirit of the sons of men, which goes upward, and the spirit of the animal, which goes down to the earth?" (Ecc. 3:19-21 NKJV)

"But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion. For the living know that they will die; But the dead know nothing, And they have no more reward, For the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, their hatred, and their envy have now perished; Nevermore will they have a share in anything done under the sun." (Ecc. 9:4-6 NKJV)

Similarly Psalms 146:2-4 (NKJV) states: "Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help. His spirit departs, he returns to his earth; In that very day his plans perish."

In the book of Job it is stated: "But man dies and is laid away; indeed he breathes his last and where is he? ... So man lies down and does not rise. Till the heavens are no more, they will not awake nor be roused from their sleep ... If a man dies, shall he live again?" (Job 14:10,12,14a NKJV)

Olam Haba

The Talmud offers a number of thoughts relating to the afterlife. Talmudic authorities agree that any virtuous gentile will be given a share in the world-to-come. After death, the soul is brought for judgment. Those who have led pristine lives enter immediately into the "Olam Haba" or World to Come. Most do not enter the World to Come immediately, but now experience a period of review of their earthly actions and they are made aware of what they have done wrong. Some view this period as being a "re-schooling", with the soul gaining wisdom as one's errors are reviewed. Others view this period to include spiritual discomfort for past wrongs. At the end of this period, not longer than one year, the soul then takes its place in the World to Come. Although discomforts are made part of certain Jewish conceptions of the afterlife, the concept of "eternal damnation", so prevalent in other religions, is no tenet of the Jewish afterlife. According to the Talmud, extinction of the soul is reserved for a far much smaller group of malicious and evil leaders, either whose very evil deeds go way beyond norms, or who lead large groups of people to utmost evil.^{[19][20]}

Maimonides describes the Olam Haba ("World to Come") in spiritual terms, relegating the prophesied physical resurrection to the status of a future miracle, unrelated to the afterlife or the Messianic era. According to Maimonides, an afterlife continues for the soul of every human being, a soul now separated from the body in which it was "housed" during its earthly existence.

The Zohar describes Gehenna not as a place of punishment for the wicked but as a place of spiritual purification for souls.^[21]

Reincarnation in Jewish tradition

Although there is no reference to reincarnation in the Talmud or any prior writings,^[22] according to rabbis such as Rabbi Avraham Arie H Trugman, reincarnation is recognized as being part and parcel of Jewish tradition. Trugman explains that it is through oral tradition that the meanings of the Torah, its commandments and stories, are known and understood. The classic work of Jewish mysticism,^[23] the Zohar, is quoted liberally in all Jewish learning; in the Zohar the idea of reincarnation is mentioned repeatedly. Trugman states that in the last five centuries the concept of reincarnation, which until then had been a much hidden tradition within Judaism, was given open exposure.^[23]

Rabbi Shraga Simmons commented that within the Bible itself, the idea [of reincarnation] is intimated in Deut. 25:5-10, Deut. 33:6 and Isaiah 22:14, 65:6.^[24]

Rabbi Yirmiyahu Ullman wrote that reincarnation is an "ancient, mainstream belief in Judaism". The Zohar makes frequent and lengthy references to reincarnation. Onkelos, a righteous convert and authoritative commentator of the same period, explained the verse, "Let Reuben live and not die ..." (Deuteronomy 33:6) to mean that Reuben should merit the World to Come directly, and not have to die again as a result of being reincarnated. Torah scholar, commentator and kabbalist, Nachmanides (Ramban 1195–1270), attributed Job's suffering to reincarnation, as hinted in Job's saying "God does all these things twice or three times with a man, to bring back his soul from the pit to ... the light of the living" (Job 33:29,30)."^[25]

Reincarnation, called *gilgul*, became popular in folk belief, and is found in much Yiddish literature among Ashkenazi Jews. Among a few kabbalists, it was posited that some human souls could end up being reincarnated into non-human bodies. These ideas were found in a number of Kabbalistic works from the 13th century, and also among many mystics in the late 16th century. Martin Buber's early collection of stories of the Baal Shem Tov's life includes several that refer to people reincarnating in successive lives.^[26]

Among well known (generally non-kabbalist or anti-kabbalist) rabbis who rejected the idea of reincarnation are Saadia Gaon, David Kimhi, Hasdai Crescas, Yedayah Bedershi (early 14th century), Joseph Albo, Abraham ibn Daud, the Rosh and Leon de Modena. Saadia Gaon, in *Emunoth ve-Deoth* (Hebrew: "beliefs and opinions") concludes Section VI with a refutation of the doctrine of metempsychosis (reincarnation). While refuting reincarnation, the Saadia Gaon further states that Jews who hold to reincarnation have adopted non-Jewish beliefs. By no means do all Jews today believe in reincarnation, but belief in reincarnation is not uncommon among many Jews, including Orthodox.

Other well-known rabbis who are reincarnationists include Rabbi Yonassan Gershom, Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, Talmud scholar Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, Rabbi DovBer Pinson, Rabbi David M. Wexelman, Rabbi Zalman Schachter,^[27] and many others. Reincarnation is cited by authoritative biblical commentators, including Ramban (Nachmanides), Menachem Recanti and Rabbenu Bachya.

Among the many volumes of Rabbi Yitzchak Luria, most of which come down from the pen of his primary disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital, are insights explaining issues related to reincarnation. His *Shaar HaGilgulim*, "The Gates of Reincarnation", is a book devoted exclusively to the subject of reincarnation in Judaism.

Christianity

Mainstream Christianity professes belief in the Nicene Creed, and English versions of the Nicene Creed in current use include the phrase: "We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." *Christian eschatology* is concerned with death, an intermediate state, Heaven, Hell, the Second Coming of Christ, the *resurrection of the dead*, a rapture, a tribulation, the Millennium, end of the world, the last judgment, a new heaven and a new earth, and the ultimate consummation of all of God's purposes. Eschatological passages are found in many places, especially Isaiah, Daniel, Matthew 24, Matthew 25, and the Book of Revelation. Although punishments are made part of certain Christian conceptions of the afterlife, the prevalent concept of "eternal damnation" is a tenet of the Christian afterlife.

When questioned by the Sadducees about the resurrection of the dead (in a context relating to who one's spouse would be if one had been married several times in life), Jesus said that marriage will be irrelevant after the resurrection as the resurrected will be (at least in this respect) like the angels in heaven.^[28]

Jesus also maintained that the time would come when the dead would hear the voice of the Son of God, and all who were in the tombs would come out, who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation.^[29] According to the Gospel of Matthew, at the death of Jesus tombs were opened, and at his resurrection many saints who had died emerged from their tombs and went into "the holy city", presumably New Jerusalem.^[30] No other New Testament account includes this event.

The Last Day: Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven, over which He rules, to a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. So it will be at the close of the age also known as the Last Day. The angels will separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of unquenchable fire. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

The Book of Enoch describes Sheol as divided into four compartments for four types of the dead: the faithful saints who await resurrection in Paradise, the merely virtuous who await their reward, the wicked who await punishment, and the wicked who have already been punished and will not be resurrected on Judgment Day.^[31] It should be noted that the Book of Enoch is considered apocryphal by most denominations of Christianity and all denominations of Judaism.

The book of 2 Maccabees gives a clear account of the dead awaiting a future resurrection and judgment, plus prayers and offerings for the dead to remove the burden of sin.

The author of Luke recounts the story of Lazarus and the rich man, which shows people in Hades awaiting the resurrection either in comfort or torment. The author of the Book of Revelation writes about God and the angels versus Satan and demons in an epic battle at the end of times when all souls are judged. There is mention of ghostly bodies of past prophets, and the transfiguration.

The non-canonical Acts of Paul and Thecla speak of the efficacy of prayer for the dead, so that they might be "translated to a state of happiness".^[32]

Hippolytus of Rome pictures the underworld (Hades) as a place where the righteous dead, awaiting in the bosom of Abraham their resurrection, rejoice at their future prospect, while the unrighteous are tormented at the sight of the "lake of unquenchable fire" into which they are destined to be cast.

Gregory of Nyssa discusses the long-before believed possibility of purification of souls after death.^[33]

Saint Augustine counters Pelagius, arguing that original sin means that the unbaptised go to hell, including infants, albeit with less suffering than is experienced by those guilty of actual sins.

Pope Gregory I repeats the concept, articulated over a century earlier by Gregory of Nyssa that the saved suffer purification after death, in connection with which he wrote of "purgatorial flames".

The noun "purgatorium" (Latin: place of cleansing^[34]) is used for the first time to describe a state of painful purification of the saved after life. The same word in adjectival form (*purgatorius -a -um*, cleansing), which appears also in non-religious writing,^[35] was already used by Christians such as Augustine of Hippo and Pope Gregory I to refer to an after-death cleansing.

During the Age of Enlightenment, theologians and philosophers presented various philosophies and beliefs. A notable example is Emanuel Swedenborg who wrote some 18 theological works which describe in detail the nature of the afterlife according to his claimed spiritual experiences, the most famous of which is *Heaven and Hell*.^[36] His report of life there covers a wide range of topics, such as marriage in heaven (where all angels are married), children in heaven (where they are raised by angel parents), time and space in heaven (there are none), the after-death awakening process in the World of Spirits (a place halfway between Heaven and Hell and where people first wake up after death), the allowance of a free will choice between Heaven or Hell (as opposed to being sent to either one by God), the eternity of Hell (one could leave but would never want to), and that all angels or devils were once people on earth.^[36]



Domenico Beccafumi's *Inferno*: a Christian vision of hell

On the other hand, the enlightenment produced more rationalist philosophies such as deism. Many deist freethinkers held that belief in an afterlife with reward and punishment was a necessity of reason and good morals.

Most Christians deny that entry into Heaven can be properly earned, rather it is a gift that is solely God's to give through his unmerited grace. This belief follows the theology of St. Paul: *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast.* The Augustinian, Thomist, Lutheran, and Calvinist theological traditions all emphasize the necessity of God's undeserved grace for salvation, and reject so-called Pelagianism, which would make man earn salvation through good works. Not all Christian sects accept this doctrine, leading to many controversies on grace and free will, and the idea of predestination. In particular, the belief that heaven is a reward for good behavior is a common folk belief in Christian societies, even among members of churches which reject that belief.

Christian theologians Thomas Aquinas and Jonathan Edwards wrote that the saved in heaven will delight in the suffering of the damned. Hell, however, does not fit modern, humanitarian concepts of punishment because it cannot deter the unbeliever nor rehabilitate the damned, this however, does not affect the Christian belief which places Biblical teaching above the ideas of society. Some Christian believers have come to downplay the punishment of hell. Universalists teach that salvation is for all. Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists, though they have among the strictest rules on how to conduct their lives, teach that sinners are destroyed rather than tortured forever. John 3:16 says that only those that accept Jesus will be given eternal life, so the people that do not accept him cannot burn in hell for eternity because Jesus has not given them eternal life, instead it says they will perish.

In American pop culture depictions of Heaven, particularly in vintage cartoons such as those by Looney Tunes in the mid-20th century, the souls of virtuous people ascend to Heaven and are converted into angels. However, this is not in accordance with the orthodox Christian theology. Christianity depicts a sharp distinction between *angels*, divine beings created by God before the creation of humanity and are used as messengers, and *saints*, the souls of humans who have received immortality from the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, who dwell in Heaven with God.

Latter Day Saints believe that the soul existed before earth life and will exist in the hereafter. Angels are either spirits that have not yet come to earth to experience their mortality, or spirits or resurrected beings that have already passed through mortality and do the will of God. See Job 38:4-7, D&C 93:29. According to LDS Doctrine, Michael the Archangel became the first man on earth, Adam, to experience his mortality. The Angel of Moroni visited the boy, Joseph Smith, after living out his mortal life in ancient America. Later, he received Angelic administrations from the Apostles Peter, James, and John, John the Baptist, and others.

The Catholic Church

The Catholic conception of the afterlife teaches that after the body dies, the soul is judged, the righteous and free of sin enter Heaven. However, those who die in unrepented mortal sin go to hell. In the 1990s, the Catechism of the Catholic Church defined hell not as punishment imposed on the sinner but rather as the sinner's self-exclusion from God. Unlike other Christian groups, the Catholic Church teaches that those who die in a state of grace, but still carry venial sin go to a place called Purgatory where they undergo purification to enter Heaven.

Orthodox Christianity

The Orthodox Church is intentionally reticent on the afterlife, as it acknowledges the mystery especially of things that have not yet occurred. Beyond the second coming of Jesus, bodily resurrection, and final judgment, all of which is affirmed in the Nicene Creed (325 CE), Orthodoxy does not teach much else in any definitive manner. Unlike Western forms of Christianity, however, Orthodoxy is traditionally non-dualist and does not teach that there are two separate literal locations of heaven and hell, but instead acknowledges that "the 'location' of one's final destiny—heaven or hell—as being figurative."^[37] Instead, Orthodoxy teaches that the final judgment is simply one's uniform encounter with divine love and mercy, but this encounter is experienced multifariously depending on the extent to which one has been transformed, partaken of divinity, and is therefore

compatible or incompatible with God. "The monadic, immutable, and ceaseless object of eschatological encounter is therefore the love and mercy of God, his glory which infuses the heavenly temple, and it is the subjective human reaction which engenders multiplicity or any division of experience."^[37] For instance, St. Isaac the Syrian observes that "those who are punished in Gehenna, are scourged by the scourge of love. ... The power of love works in two ways: it torments sinners . . . [as] bitter regret. But love inebriates the souls of the sons of Heaven by its delectability."^[38] In this sense, the divine action is always, immutably, and uniformly love and if one experiences this love negatively, the experience is then one of self-condemnation because of free will rather than condemnation by God. Orthodoxy therefore uses the description of Jesus' judgment in John 3:19-21 as their model: "19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. 21 But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God." As a characteristically Orthodox understanding, then, Fr. Thomas Hopko writes, "[I]t is precisely the presence of God's mercy and love which cause the torment of the wicked. God does not punish; he forgives. . . . In a word, God has mercy on all, whether all like it or not. If we like it, it is paradise; if we do not, it is hell. Every knee will bend before the Lord. Everything will be subject to Him. God in Christ will indeed be "all and in all," with boundless mercy and unconditional pardon. But not all will rejoice in God's gift of forgiveness, and that choice will be judgment, the self-inflicted source of their sorrow and pain."^[39]

Moreover, Orthodoxy includes a prevalent tradition of *apokatastasis*, or the restoration of all things in the end. This has been taught most notably by Origen, but also many other Church fathers and Saints, including Gregory of Nyssa, whom Maximos the Confessor called the "universal doctor" and the Second Council of Constantinople (553 C.E.) not only called him the "father of fathers" but also affirmed his orthodoxy while also simultaneously condemning Origen's brand of universalism because it taught the restoration back to our pre-existent state, which Orthodoxy doesn't teach. It is also a teaching of such eminent Orthodox theologians as Olivier Clément, Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, and Bishop Hilarion Alfeyev.^[40] Although *apokatastasis* is not a dogma of the church but instead a theologoumena (<http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/theologoumenon#English>), it is no less a teaching of the Orthodox Church than its rejection. As Met. Kallistos Ware explains, "It is heretical to say that all must be saved, for this is to deny free will; but, it is legitimate to hope that all may be saved,"^[41] as insisting on torment without end also denies free will.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints

Joseph F. Smith of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints presents an elaborate vision of the Afterlife. It is revealed as the scene of an extensive missionary effort by righteous spirits in paradise to redeem those still in darkness—a spirit prison or "hell" where the spirits of the dead remain until judgment. It is divided into two parts: Spirit Prison and Paradise. Together these are also known as the Spirit World (also Abraham's Bosom; see Luke 16:19-25). They believe that Christ visited spirit prison (1 Peter 3:18-20) and opened the gate for those who repent to cross over to Paradise. "*--- what Jesus' immortal spirit did after His death and before His Resurrection is a mystery to all but the Latter-day Saints ---*" (Elder Spencer J. Condie, *Liahona*, -*Church magazine* – July, 2003) "*- - - unto the wicked he did not go, and among the ungodly and the unrepentant - - his voice was not raised. - - But behold, from among the righteous, He organized His forces and appointed messengers ...*" (D&C 138:20, 30–32). "*Christ opened the doors of hell to missionary work among the dead ...*" (H. Donl Peterson, "*I Have a Question*", *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 36–38). This is similar to the Harrowing of Hell doctrine of some mainstream Christian faiths. Both Spirit Prison and Paradise are temporary according to Latter-day Saint beliefs. After the resurrection, spirits are assigned "permanently" to three degrees of heavenly glory, determined by how they lived— Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telestial.(1 Cor 15:44-42; Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76) Sons of Perdition, or those who have know and seen God and deny it, will be sent to the realm of Satan, which is called Outer Darkness, where they shall live in misery and agony forever. (See Doctrine and Covenants, Section 76.)

Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses occasionally use the terms "afterlife" and "hereafter"^[42] to refer to any hope for the dead, but they understand Ecclesiastes 9:5 (http://watchtower.org/e/bible/ec/chapter_009.htm#bk5) to preclude common views of afterlife:

For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they any more have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that death is the price for sinning.^{[43][44]} Individuals judged by God to be wicked, such as in the Great Flood or at Armageddon, are given no hope of an afterlife. After Armageddon there will be a resurrection in the flesh^[45] of "both righteous and unrighteous" dead (but not the "wicked"), based on Acts 24:15. Survivors of Armageddon and those who are resurrected are then to gradually restore earth to a paradise.^[46] After Armageddon, unrepentant sinners are punished with eternal death (non-existence).

Seventh-day Adventists

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, teaches that the first death, or death brought about by living on a planet with sinful conditions (sickness, old age, accident, etc.) is a sleep of the soul. Adventists believe that the body + the breath of God = a living soul. Like Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventists use key phrases from the Bible, such as "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten" (Eccl. 9:5 KJV). Adventists also point to the fact that the wage of sin is death and God alone is immortal. Adventists believe God will grant eternal life to the redeemed who are resurrected at Jesus' second coming. Until then, all those who have died are "asleep". When Jesus the Christ, who is the Word and the Bread of Life, comes a second time, the righteous will be raised incorruptible and will be taken in the clouds to meet their Lord. The righteous will live in heaven for a thousand years (the millennium) where they will sit with God in judgment over the unredeemed and the fallen angels. During the time the redeemed are in heaven, the Earth will be devoid of human and animal inhabitation. Only the fallen angels will be left alive. The second resurrection is of the unrighteous, when Jesus brings the New Jerusalem down from heaven to relocate to Earth. Jesus will call to life all those who are unrighteous. Satan and his angels will convince the unrighteous to surround the city, but hell fire and brimstone will fall from heaven and consume them, thus cleansing Earth of all sin. The universe will be then free from sin forever. This is called the second death. On the new earth God will provide an eternal home for all the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, where Eden will be restored. The great controversy will be ended and sin will be no more. God will reign in perfect harmony forever.(Rom. 6:23; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 11:11-14; Col. 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; John 5:28, 29; Rev. 20:1-10; Rev. 20; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Jer. 4:23-26; Rev. 21:1-5; Mal. 4:1; Eze. 28:18, 19; 2 Peter 3:13; Isa. 35; 65:17-25; Matt. 5:5; Rev. 21:1-7; 22:1-5; 11:15.)^{[47][48]}

Islam

The Islamic belief in the afterlife as stated in the Qur'an is descriptive. The Islamic word for Paradise is Jannah and Hell is Jahannam. Their level of comfort while in the grave depends wholly on their level of Iman or faith in the one almighty creator or supreme being God or Allah. In order for one to achieve proper, firm and healthy Iman one must practice righteous deeds or else his level of Iman chokes and shrinks and eventually can wither away if one does not practice Islam long enough, hence the depth of practicing Islam is good deeds. One may also acquire Tasbih and recite the names of Allah in such manner as "SubhannAllah" or Glory be to Allah over and over again to acquire good deeds. The levels in Jannah are 7^[49] and 7 ((15) HĪCR Suresi. Âyet - 44) for Jahannam.

Islam teaches that the purpose of Man's entire creation is to worship the Creator of the Heavens and Earth —Allah alone that includes being kind to other human beings and life including bugs, and to trees, by not oppressing them. Islam teaches that the life we live on Earth is nothing but a test for us and to determine each individual's ultimate abode be it punishment or Jannat in the afterlife, which is eternal and everlasting.

In the 20th century, discussions about the afterlife address the interconnection between human action and divine judgment, the need for moral rectitude, and the eternal consequences of human action in this life and world.^[50]

Jannah and Jahannam both have different levels. Jannah has seven gates and seven levels. The higher the level the better it is and the happier you are. Jahannam possess 7 deep terrible layers. The lower the layer the worse it is. Individuals will arrive at both everlasting homes during Judgment Day, which commences after the Angel Israfil blows the trumpet the second time. Islam teaches the continued existence of the soul and a transformed physical existence after death. Muslims believe there will be a day of judgment when all humans will be divided between the eternal destinations of Paradise and Hell.

Resurrection and the Day of Judgment

A central doctrine of the Qur'an is the Last Day, on which the world will be destroyed and Allah will raise all people and jinn from the dead to be judged.

The Last Day is also called the Day of Standing Up, Day of Separation, Day of Reckoning, Day of Awakening, Day of Judgment, The Encompassing Day or The Hour.

Until the Day of Judgment, deceased souls remain in their graves awaiting the resurrection. However, they begin to feel immediately a taste of their destiny to come. Those bound for hell will suffer in their graves, while those bound for heaven will be in peace until that time.

The resurrection that will take place on the Last Day is physical, and is explained by suggesting that God will re-create the decayed body (17:100: "Could they not see that God who created the heavens and the earth is able to create the like of them"?).

On the Last Day, resurrected humans and jinn will be judged by Allah according to their deeds. One's eternal destination depends on balance of good to bad deeds in life. They are either granted admission to Paradise, where they will enjoy spiritual and physical pleasures forever, or condemned to Hell to suffer spiritual and physical torment for eternity. The day of judgment is described as passing over Hell on a narrow bridge in order to enter Paradise. Those who fall, weighted by their bad deeds, will remain in Hell forever.

Ahmadiyya

Ahmadi Muslims believe that the afterlife is not material but of a spiritual nature. According to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Ahmadiyya sect in Islam, the soul will give birth to another rarer entity and will resemble the life on this earth in the sense that this entity will bear a similar relationship to the soul as the soul bears relationship with the human existence on earth. On earth, if a person leads a righteous life and submits to the will of God, his or her tastes become attuned to enjoying spiritual pleasures as opposed to carnal desires. With this, an "embryonic soul" begins to take shape. Different tastes are said to be born which a person given to carnal passions finds no enjoyment. For example, sacrifice of one's own's rights over that of other's becomes enjoyable, or that forgiveness becomes second nature. In such a state a person finds contentment and Peace at heart and at this stage, according to Ahmadiyya beliefs, it can be said that a soul within the soul has begun to take shape.^[51]

Sufi

The Sufi scholar Ibn 'Arabi defined Barzakh as the intermediate realm or "isthmus". It is between the world of corporeal bodies and the world of spirits, and is a means of contact between the two worlds. Without it, there would be no contact between the two and both would cease to exist. He described it as simple and luminous, like the world of spirits, but also able to take on many different forms just like the world of corporeal bodies can. In broader terms Barzakh, "is anything that separates two things". It has been called the dream world in which the dreamer is in both life and death.^[52]

Bahá'í Faith

The teachings of the Bahá'í Faith state that the nature of the afterlife is beyond the nature of those living, just as an unborn fetus cannot understand the nature of the world outside of the womb. The Bahá'í writings state that the soul is immortal and after death it will continue to progress until it attains God's presence. In Bahá'í belief, souls in the afterlife will continue to retain their individuality and consciousness and will be able to recognize and communicate spiritually with other souls whom they have made deep profound friendships with, such as their spouses.^[53]

The Bahá'í scriptures also state there are distinctions between souls in the afterlife, and that souls will recognize the worth of their own deeds and understand the consequences of their actions. It is explained that those souls that have turned toward God will experience gladness, while those who have lived in error will become aware of the opportunities they have lost. Also, in the Baha'i view, souls will be able to recognize the accomplishments of the souls that have reached the same level as themselves, but not those that have achieved a rank higher than them.^[53]

Indian religions

Hinduism

The Upanishads describe reincarnation (*punarjanma*) (see also: samsara). The Bhagavad Gita, an important Hindu script, talks extensively about the afterlife. Here, the Lord Krishna says that just as a man discards his old clothes and wears new ones; similarly the soul discards the old body and takes on a new one. In Hinduism, the belief is that the body is but a shell, the soul inside is immutable and indestructible and takes on different lives in a cycle of birth and death. The end of this cycle is called "Mukti" (Sanskrit: मुक्ति) and staying finally with supreme God forever; is "Moksha" (Sanskrit: मोक्ष) or salvation.

The Garuda Purana deals solely with what happens to a person after death. The God of Death Yama sends his representatives to collect the soul from a person's body whenever he is due for death and they take the soul to Yama. A record of each person's timings & deeds performed by him is kept in a ledger by Yama's assistant, Chitragupta.

According to the Garuda Purana, a soul after leaving the body travels through a very long and dark tunnel towards the South. This is why an oil lamp is lit and kept beside the head of the corpse, to light the dark tunnel and allow the soul to travel comfortably.

The soul, called "Atman" leaves the body and reincarnates itself according to the deeds or Karma performed by one in last birth. Rebirth would be in form of animals or other lower creatures if one performed bad Karmas and in human form in a good family with joyous lifetime if the person was good in last birth. In between the two births a human is also required to either face punishments for bad Karmas in "naraka" or hell or enjoy for the good karmas in "svarga" or heaven for good deeds. Whenever his or her punishments or rewards are over he or she is sent back to earth, also known as "Mrutyulok" or human world. A person stays with the God or ultimate power when he discharges only & only yajna karma (means work done for satisfaction of supreme lord only) in last birth and the same is called as "Moksha" or "Nirvana", which is the ultimate goal of a self realised soul. Atma moves with "Parmatma" or the greatest soul. According to Bhagavad Gita an "Atma" or soul never dies, what dies is the body only made of five elements—Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Sky. Soul is believed to be indestructible. None of the five elements can harm or influence it. Hinduism through Garuda Purana also describes in detail various types of "Narkas" or Hells where a person after death is punished for his bad Karmas and dealt with accordingly.

Hindus also believe in 'Karma'. 'Karma' is the accumulated sums of one's good or bad deeds. Satkarma means good deeds, vikarma means bad deeds. According to Hinduism the basic concept of Karma is 'As you sow, you shall reap'. So, if a person has lived a good life, they will be rewarded in the afterlife. Similarly their sum of bad deeds will be mirrored in their next life. Good 'Karma' brings good rewards and bad 'karmas' lead to bad results. There is no judgment here. People accumulate karma through their actions and even thoughts. In Bhagavad Gita when Arjuna hesitates to kill his kith and kin the lord reprimands him saying thus "Do you believe that you are

the doer of the action. No. You are merely an instrument in MY hands. Do you believe that the people in front of you are living? Dear Arjuna, they are already dead. As a *kshatriya* (warrior) it is your duty to protect your people and land. If you fail to do your duty, then you are not adhering to dharmic principles."

Buddhism

Buddhists maintain that rebirth takes place without an unchanging self or soul passing from one form to another. The type of rebirth will be conditioned by the moral tone of the person's actions (kamma or karma). For example, if a person has committed harmful actions of body, speech and mind based on greed, hatred and delusion, rebirth in a lower realm, i.e. an animal, a ghost or a hell realm, is to be expected. On the other hand, where a person has performed skillful actions based on generosity, loving-kindness (metta), compassion and wisdom, rebirth in a happy realm, i.e. human or one of the many heavenly realms, can be expected.

In Tibetan Buddhism the Tibetan Book of the Dead explains the intermediate state of humans between death and reincarnation. The deceased will find the bright light of wisdom, which shows a straightforward path to move upward and leave the cycle of reincarnation. There are various reasons why the deceased do not follow that light. Some had no briefing about the intermediate state in the former life. Others only used to follow their basic instincts like animals. And some have fear, which results from foul deeds in the former life or from insistent haughtiness. In the intermediate state the awareness is very flexible, so it is important to be virtuous, adopt a positive attitude, and avoid negative ideas. Ideas which are rising from subconsciousness can cause extreme tempers and cowering visions. In this situation they have to understand, that these manifestations are just reflections of the inner thoughts. No one can really hurt them, because they have no more material body. The deceased get help from different Buddhas who show them the path to the bright light. The ones who do not follow the path after all will get hints for a better reincarnation. They have to release the things and beings on which or whom they still hang from the life before. It is recommended to choose a family where the parents trust in the Dharma and to reincarnate with the will to care for the welfare of all beings.

"Life is cosmic energy of the universe and after death it merges in universe again and as the time comes to find the suitable place for the entity died in the life condition it gets born. There are 10 life states of any life: Hell, hunger, anger, animality, rapture, humanity, learning, realization, bodhisatva and buddhahood. The life dies in which life condition it reborn in the same life condition."

Sikhism

Sikhs also believe in reincarnation. They believe that the soul belongs to the spiritual universe which has its origins in God. It is like a see-saw, the amount of good done in life will store up blessings, thus uniting with God. It needs to be clarified whether the ideal is union or link with 'Waheguru' (God) or merger in God (Hindu belief). Before the creation of the world, God was all by Himself, in a Self-absorbed state. In that state, God's Will, Naam or Attributes were not expressed, since they have relevance only in the created world. At next stage, universe was created. Since then God's Naam and Will have become expressed and creative functioning in the universe goes on. The suggested merger in God (Hindu belief) in this state involves virtually a reversion to the first state of God being Self-absorbed. This reversal would evidently be counter to the expressed Creative Will of God. So Sikhs believe in union as opposed to merger. A soul may need to live many lives before it is one with God. But there is more to it than this; there are four classes that are included in this belief. Above these four classes is God "*Waheguru*" and the soul can choose to stay with him it wishes, or take another step and go to its people and serve them. Below these four classes are non-humans such as plants and viruses. Souls move up and down according to their deeds, a good life and death moves them up to a higher class and a bad life and death results in going down a class.

Neopaganism

Wicca

The Wiccan afterlife is most commonly described as The Summerland. Here, souls rest, recuperate from life, and reflect on the experiences they had during their lives. After a period of rest, the souls are reincarnated, and the memory of their previous lives is erased. Many Wiccans see The Summerland as a place to reflect on their life actions. It is not a place of reward, but rather the end of a life journey at an end point of incarnations.^[54]

Others

Shinto

Unitarian Universalism

Some Unitarian Universalists believe in universalism: that all souls will ultimately be saved and that there are no torments of hell.^[55] Unitarian Universalists differ widely in their theology hence there is no exact same stance on the issue.^[56] Although Unitarians historically believed in a literal hell, and Universalists historically believed that everyone goes to heaven, modern Unitarian Universalists can be categorized into those believing in a heaven, reincarnation and oblivion. Most Unitarian Universalists believe that heaven and hell are symbolic places of consciousness and the faith is largely focused on the worldly life rather than any possible afterlife.^[57]

Spiritualism

In spiritualism, the afterlife realm, known as the "plane of Venus", was described by Edgar Cayce. Venus, as an afterlife realm, is not a reference to the planet. It is a reference to the afterlife realm for which the planet Venus physically represents. Venus is the afterlife realm where love is dominant. Cayce says of Venus,

In Venus we find the lovely becoming the expressions in activities in which there is the beauty seen in love, in companionship, in association, in music, in art, in all the things that bespeak of the loveliness even of nature and material things, rather than the expression of same in the earthly form or manner.

According to Cayce, this afterlife realm can be referred to as the realm of love. Sympathy, the alleviating of hardships, the seeking of love, beauty and song are some influences that people from that realm possess. Beauty, either natural or man-made, will move these individuals; furthermore, there is a desire to beautify the home. There is a strong attraction to the opposite sex. This dimension is an indescribably lovely existence. Here one must leave behind all rigid intellectual structures and dogmas, be they scientific, religious, or philosophical. An infinite variety of new sounds, colors and feelings are experienced here and souls find a much wider freedom to function with highly energized intellect and spirit. If, in this dimension, the soul becomes free from the Earth pull, it is qualified to experience cosmic ranges beyond Earth's confines.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism states that the *urvan*, the disembodied spirit, lingers on earth for three days before departing downward to the kingdom of the dead that is ruled by Yima. For the three days that it rests on Earth, righteous souls sit at the head of their body, chanting the Ustavaiti Gathas with joy, while a wicked person sits at the feet of the corpse, wails and recites the Yasna. Zoroastrianism states that for the righteous souls, a beautiful maiden, which is the personification of the soul's good thoughts, words and deeds, appears. For a wicked person, a very old, ugly, naked hag appears. After three nights, the soul of the wicked is taken by the demon Vizarəša (Vīzarəša), to Chinvat bridge, and is made to go to darkness (hell).

Yima is believed to have been the first king on earth to rule, as well as the first man to die. Inside of Yima's realm, the spirits live a shadowy existence, and are dependent on their own descendants which are still living on Earth. Their descendants are to satisfy their hunger and clothe them, through rituals done on earth.

Rituals which are done on the first three days are vital and important, as they protect the soul from evil powers and give it strength to reach the underworld. After three days, the soul crosses Chinvat bridge which is the Final Judgment of the soul. Rashnu and Sraosha are present at the final judgment. The list is expanded sometimes, and include Vahman and Ormazd. Rashnu is the yazata who holds the scales of justice. If the good deeds of the person outweigh the bad, the soul is worthy of paradise. If the bad deeds outweigh the good, the bridge narrows down to the width of a blade-edge, and a horrid hag pulls the soul in her arms, and takes it down to hell with her.

Misvan Gatu is the 'place of the mixed ones' where the souls lead a gray existence, lacking both joy and sorrow. A soul goes here if his/her good deeds and bad deeds are equal, and Rashnu's scale is equal.

Parapsychology

The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1882 with the express intention of investigating phenomena relating to Spiritualism and the afterlife. Its members continue to conduct scientific research on the paranormal to this day. Some of the earliest attempts to apply scientific methods to the study of phenomena relating to an afterlife were conducted by this organization. Its earliest members included noted scientists like William Crookes, and philosophers such as Henry Sidgwick and William James.

Parapsychological investigation of the afterlife includes the study of haunting, apparitions of the deceased, instrumental trans-communication, electronic voice phenomena, and mediumship.^[58] But also the study of the near death experience. Scientists who have worked in this area include Raymond Moody, Susan Blackmore, Charles Tart, William James, Ian Stevenson, Michael Persinger, Pim van Lommel and Penny Sartori among others.^{[59][60]}

A study conducted in 1901 by physician Duncan MacDougall sought to measure the weight lost by a human when the soul "departed the body" upon death.^[61] MacDougall weighed dying patients in an attempt to prove that the soul was material, tangible and thus measurable. Although MacDougall's results varied considerably from "21 grams", for some people this figure has become synonymous with the measure of a soul's mass.^[62] The title of the 2003 movie *21 Grams* is a reference to MacDougall's findings. His results have never been reproduced, and are generally regarded either as meaningless or considered to have had little if any scientific merit.^[63]

Frank Tipler has argued that physics can explain immortality, though such arguments are not falsifiable and thus do not qualify, in Karl Popper's views, as science.^[64]

After 25 years of parapsychological research, Susan Blackmore came to the conclusion that there is no empirical evidence for an afterlife.^{[65][66]}

Philosophy

Modern philosophy

There is still the position, based on the philosophical question of personal identity, termed open individualism, and in some ways similar to the old belief of monopsychism, that concludes that individual existence is illusory, and our consciousness continues existing after death in other conscious beings. Positions regarding existence after death were supported by some notable physicists such as Erwin Schrödinger and Freeman Dyson.^[67]

Certain problems arise with the idea of a particular person continuing after death. Peter van Inwagen, in his argument regarding resurrection, notes that the materialist must have some sort of physical continuity.^[68] John Hick also raises some questions regarding personal identity in his book, *Death and Eternal Life* using an example of a person ceasing to exist in one place while an exact replica appears in another. If the replica had all the same experiences, traits, and physical appearances of the first person, we would all attribute the same identity to the second, according to Hick.

Process philosophy

In the panentheistic model of process philosophy and theology the writers Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne rejected that the universe was made of substance, instead reality is composed of living experiences (occasions of experience). According to Hartshorne people do not experience subjective (or personal) immortality in the afterlife, but they do have objective immortality because their experiences live on forever in God, who contains all that was. However other process philosophers such as David Ray Griffin have written that people may have subjective experience after death.^{[69][70][71][72]}

Science

The scientific community demands much greater skepticism than is found among most religions regarding the belief in the continuity of consciousness after death. Regarding the mind–body problem, most neuroscientists take a physicalist position according to which consciousness derives from and/or is reducible to physical phenomena such as neuronal activity occurring in the brain.^{[73][74]} The implication of this premise is that once the brain stops functioning at brain death, consciousness fails to survive and ceases to exist.^{[75][76]}

Popular culture

Movies

- *Ghost* with Patrick Swayze, Demi Moore, and Whoopi Goldberg
- *Flatliners* with Julia Roberts, Kiefer Sutherland and Kevin Bacon
- *Ghost Whisperer*
- *Hereafter* by Clint Eastwood
- *What Dreams May Come* with Robin Williams, Cuba Gooding Jr., and Annabella Sciorra
- *The Sixth Sense* with Bruce Willis

See also

- Akhirah
- Allegory of the long spoons
- Bard
- Brig of Dread (Bridge of Dread)
- Cognitivism
- Cryonics
- Dimethyltryptamine
- Empiricism
- Epistemology
- Exaltation (Mormonism)
- Fate of the unlearned
- Logical positivism
- Mictlan
- Omega Point
- Parapsychology
- Invoked

- Pre-existence
- Soul retrieval
- Suspended animation
- Undead

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External links

- <http://www.lifeafterdeaths.org/> for the Islamic view on life after death



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- http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p123a12.htm for the Catholic view on life after death
- http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070419_unbaptised-infants_en.html an article explaining the Catholic opinion on the idea of limbo

- Stewart Salmond—The Christian Doctrine of Immortality (<https://archive.org/details/christiandoctri04salmgoog>)
- Dictionary of the History of Ideas: *Death and Immortality* (<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv1-76>)
- Afterlife (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/afterlife>) entry by William Hasker in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- *The Destiny of the Soul: A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life* at Project Gutenberg (Extensive 1878 text by William Rounseville Alger)
- Online version (<http://www.swedenborgdigitallibrary.org/contets/HH.html>) of Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* (Swedenborg Foundation 1949, new translation 2002)
- Online searchable copy (<http://smallcanonsearch.com/read.php?book=hh§ion=1>) of Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell* also known as the underworld in Ancient Greece

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