

# 2019 VCE Religion and Society written examination report

## General comments

Students generally showed a good understanding of the examination requirements and the need to approach them differently to school-based assessments. They clearly tried to focus on the questions and address the key terms in them, rather than resorting to rote answers. Most attempted all questions although a few attempted only some questions or none at all. Most students contained their responses within the provided answer space, showing they were able to select appropriate content for the question focus.

In Section A many students were able to address questions directly without repeating the question or including unnecessary preambles. In Section B, however, many students lost time, space and marks by filling much of the allocated space with unnecessary background information.

Many students demonstrated understanding of the broad nature of the relationship between religion and society. This showed that attention had been given to the general key knowledge points in the Areas of Study, which require study of religion generally before any study of a particular tradition or examples from that tradition, and to the introductions to Units 3 and 4 and each of the Areas of Study, which provide ideas and terms for study and discussion of the nature and interaction of religion and society.

Increasingly students are studying more than one religious tradition though not necessarily consistently for each Area of Study. Some appear to study one tradition across Areas of Study 3.1 and 3.2 and perhaps that same tradition or another for Unit 4, and a different tradition for Area of Study 3.3, possibly because some traditions offer more accessible information for individuals to study.

The ability to work with actual religious beliefs is an essential part of each Area of Study. Many students were not able to explain the theological connection between the nominated beliefs. There was also some misunderstanding of the term 'belief', with students repeatedly using it but without stating what that belief (idea) is, or confusing 'beliefs' – the theological ideas held by a religious tradition – with 'belief in', or faith in an idea.

Many students included historical context in their responses, though not always accurately.

Students selected a diverse range of individuals in Area of Study 3.3 and most were appropriate. The best responses showed that students had studied the writings of the selected person which reflected on their significant life experience. A few students had studied a person who converted to the religious tradition. This was incorrect, as the person had to be a member of the selected religious tradition when they had the significant life experience. Others selected an appropriate person but chose the wrong significant life experience, thus using a conversion experience, which is not part of the Study Design.

Some students included unnecessary biographical detail in their responses, and went on to tell a story about the person's life, rather than to analyse the person's significant life experience as required. This area requires improvement.

The third key knowledge point in Area of Study 3.3 required a number of different yet interrelated things to be analysed. It asks that students explain and compare the member's:

- level of adherence to relevant religious beliefs
- understanding of relevant religious beliefs
- faith in relevant religious beliefs
- engagement with the related expressions of those beliefs prior to, during and after the experience.

Students lacked a range of alternative words for the terms in this key knowledge point that would have helped them demonstrate their understanding of the question focus.

There was little evidence of analysis and synthesis in most student responses. Likewise, supportive evidence had to be more than a numbered reference in brackets, which were often incorrect. Students should be reminded that when using supportive text, whether quoted or paraphrased, they must note the source book or person.

Many students misread or misinterpreted questions.

It is recommended that students be encouraged to work on improving handwriting.

## Specific information

**Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in totals more or less than 100 per cent.

## Section A

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	2	16	32	35	15	2.5

Students had to show they understood that the search for meaning is a lifelong journey to find answers to existential questions (big questions of life). Just repeating the phrase 'search for meaning' did not show this. A definition of 'significant life experience' was unnecessary and did not receive a mark.

Some of the important things that significant life experiences bring to the search for meaning are:

- confirm/re-affirm/consolidate existing answers to existential questions
- enable less questioning or uncertainty about answers to existential questions
- stimulate further thinking about or research into existential questions
- disturb or undermine the previous understanding of the meaning of existence
- enhance understanding of the meaning of existence.

It was not necessary to refer to religion or religious beliefs in order to answer this question. Students could earn full marks for giving three different reasons why significant life experiences are important in the search for meaning, or two well-explained reasons.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Significant life experiences are important in the search for meaning as they may fundamentally shape the way individuals relate to their world, others and especially impact in their religious beliefs. They can begin a process of questioning one's existing understanding of existence leading to a reaffirmation of that or a reinterpreting to establish a new perception of life and its meaning. They may cause one to embark on a spiritual odyssey, establishing a different relationship with ultimate reality, perhaps encouraging increased commitment to religious beliefs and practices. This would contribute to the search for meaning as such involvement with religion is a way of providing a framework for living a life of meaning and purpose.*

### Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	9	17	25	28	17	4	2.4

High-scoring responses showed clear understanding of the difference or connection between stances and supporting responses and at least three ways in which they are linked. Repeating the phrase 'stances and supporting responses' did not show the required understanding of them and did not score well.

Students were required to show an understanding of some of the following points and give general examples of a stance and related supporting responses to demonstrate their connection:

- a stance is a defended position of principle, regardless of whether the attitude behind the stance is support, resistance or indifference to a challenge
- supporting responses are deliberate actions and policies
- supporting responses involve different aspects of religion to achieve a particular stance
- supporting responses are intended to achieve the aim of the stance
- supporting responses are actions in defence of the principle position.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response:

*While stances are the principled perspectives or positions towards a particular challenge, (and are the initial response) supporting responses are actions intended to achieve or implement the stance. Sometimes the stance may be sufficient in addressing the challenge and maintaining the integrity of the religious tradition, but usually there are some follow up actions taken to make the stance is clear to adherents and provide guidance for thinking and behaviour related to the ideas in the challenge. The intention behind supporting responses is to ensure the stance is achieved but this may not always happen as some supporting responses may be too weak or aggressive and work against the stance. Fundamentally both stances and their supporting responses are intended to work in cooperation to retain the integrity, authenticity and identity of the religious tradition.*

### Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	11	18	25	25	16	5	2.3

This question required students to show their ability to synthesise the material they had studied. The response should have been about the interaction, over time, of religious traditions with the societies of which they are a part.

Responses could have included observations such as:

- When religious traditions are in harmony with their society they can be mutually supportive or at least tolerant of each other.
- Religious traditions can inform and lead the policies and practice of their wider society.
- When religious traditions are in conflict with their societies over particular issues, they can refuse to participate in their society, setting themselves intentionally apart from the wider society or perhaps unsettling the wider society.
- Religious traditions can also challenge particular elements of their society and propose radical change.
- A religious tradition can dominate and dictate policies and practices to their society.
- The impact of the wider society can be sufficiently strong to bring about a change in the attitude, principles, values and perhaps practice of the religious tradition.

High-scoring responses included four to five points about the interaction between religion and the societies they are part of. Students could support their general observations by noting that these points have been the experience of one or more religious tradition. They could name such traditions although the question did not require examples of actual challenges.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response:

*The ways that religions and their wider society perceive and behave towards each other can vary greatly over time. Their relationship may be mutually beneficial, especially when there is respectful accommodation of differences and even agreement between religions and their wider society, leading to a harmonious cooperation that advantages all. But the relationship can also be harmful to one or both, especially when the values and beliefs of one clashes with those of the other. The government and legal system of a country may impose restrictions on the practices of a religion seen to be disruptive of the society. A religion may find itself at odds with the values and innovations of the wider society and decide to withdraw from engagement with that society.*

#### Question 4a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	25	44	27	2

Although students could include a brief definition of rituals within their answer and build on that, the definition was not necessary and did not gain marks. High-scoring responses usually included three different points indicating how rituals contribute to the search for meaning, such as providing:

- ways of affirming the answers that religious beliefs offer about the meaning of existence
- opportunities for gaining/developing/nurturing insight (possibly through spiritual experience) into the beliefs of the tradition about the meaning of existence
- ways to act out/enact a belief, making it more real in people's lives and reinforcing their belief, assuring them they are on the right path in the search for meaning
- a sense of shared purpose in the search for meaning with other adherents of the tradition
- an identity within a like-minded community
- a sense of belonging
- a way of communing with ultimate reality
- a spiritual experience.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Rituals contribute to the quest to find meaning and purpose in existence by enhancing spiritual experience and understanding, connecting the earthly with the divine, providing adherents of religions with opportunities to connect with their ultimate reality and find or reaffirm the meaning*

*of their life. They also offer adherents a tangible, meaningful way to express religious beliefs allowing for personal communion with ultimate reality. Moreover, when performed in community rituals give members a chance to be part of something greater than themselves, nurturing the inherent psychological need of humans to belong to a group, providing another level of purpose in life.*

#### Question 4b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	18	37	29	11	<b>2.3</b>

Students had to describe how one ritual from a religious tradition or denomination they'd studied contributed as a whole or in part to a person's search for meaning. The example chosen had to be linked directly to the points made in the answer to Question 4a. It was not enough to say that 'it contributes' or 'it adds to the search for meaning'.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*In the Catholic Christian tradition within the overall ritual of the Mass is one of the main rituals or the Eucharistic rite. This is when the celebrant (priest) speaks and acts as Jesus instructed his followers at the Last Supper. 'This is my body; this is my blood. Do this in remembrance of me.' The bread and wine which represent some of the meal from Jesus' last supper are lifted up for the congregation to see and words of consecration are said over the bread and wine which is then received by the adherents present. This transubstantiation of the bread and wine into Jesus' body and blood is believed to be the real presence of Jesus in the ritual and is a personal encounter of Jesus for those in the ritual. The prayers and readings of the Mass leading up to and following the Eucharistic rite remind adherents of many beliefs about God and of how they have a responsibility to live as Jesus did.*

#### Question 5a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	18	42	38	<b>2.2</b>

Students had to link any statements they made about ultimate reality directly to some part of the image that suggested the point they wanted to make, such as:

- the text implies monotheism as the placement of the apostrophe in 'God's' refers to one God
- God is omnipotent and omniscient (all powerful and all knowing) as suggested in the text 'Fix anything'
- God is omnificient (unlimited in creative power) as suggested in the text 'Fix anything'
- God is omnipresent (present in all places at all times) as suggested in the text 'Always open'
- the text makes the point that God is there to serve us.
- Humans' relationship to God is one of dependency; humans turn to God in times of crisis as the image text suggests humans can go to God to have things fixed
- the relationship of God to humans is one of benevolence and personal involvement. God guides, heals, makes things right, makes things whole, as suggested in the text 'Fix anything'.

High-scoring responses usually included three different points.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*The text in the image suggests that there is one ultimate reality (indicated by the apostrophe in God's) and is capable of tending to the needs of all humans, and is infinitely involved in the physical world. There does not seem to be any requirement for God's help apart from going to the service centre in some way. Further the image text suggests that God is available at all*

*times and exists to fulfil the needs of humans. The concept of a 'service centre' suggests that God is somewhat physical as there is one physical location to find God's help.*

### Question 5b.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	11	18	23	23	13	6	3.1

The question required students to explain the extent to which the understanding of ultimate reality identified on page 6, in Question 5a., reflected the beliefs of one religious tradition. Students had to link each belief to one of the points they made in Question 5a., and explain whether they applied to those beliefs by clearly indicating the extent of similarity or difference between them.

High-scoring students usually gave good explanations for three of the points they mentioned in Question 5a., either by listing each point separately or combining related points. Reference to sources was not necessary for full marks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*To some extent the image reflects Judaism's beliefs about ultimate reality. In Judaism there is only one God and one of God's traits is his omnipotence, as reflected in the image suggesting God is infinitely capable of divine intervention. Similar to the image, Judaism holds God to be immanent, that is intimately involved with what God has created. However, Judaism also holds that God is transcendent, above and other from which God creates, a notion not evident in the image text. Also unlike the image, Judaism holds that God is incorporeal. Further, whilst Judaism believes God always listens to prayers, God is not 'a service centre' and will not always answer prayers in the desired way, as humans were created with free will and in the image of God and therefore have the ability and responsibility to try to fix their own problems.*

## Section B

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	7	6	10	18	26	11	10	7	5	2	1	4.1

The question required detailed discussion about the extent of variation in both stances and supporting responses of the selected tradition during the various challenges studied. Detailed description of these was not the focus of the question, and merely listing various stances and their supporting responses was not an adequate response. Students who misread the question and wrote about only one challenge were awarded no more than four marks, depending on the quality of the answer.

Successful responses stated clearly how much or how little variation had occurred in the stances and within the supporting responses of the selected tradition across the various challenges studied. Better responses noted that the variation in stances and/or the supporting responses was linked to the wider context of the challenges.

Students could elaborate on the following:

- stances may be very consistent but responses may vary greatly
- stances may have varied but supporting responses were similar, or consistently the same.

Some students treated each challenge separately then made a comparative statement about it in relation to the others. Such comparisons, however, had to be more detailed than a summative sentence at the end of the answer. Other responses synthesised their observations about

variations in stances and supporting responses among the challenges, and included examples that supported their statements. Responses with no supporting sources did not receive more than eight marks, depending on the quality of detail in the answer.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*One challenge faced by the Catholic Christian tradition was the Roman persecution (303-311 CE) under Emperor Diocletian which involved the violent oppression of the early Christians to which the Church took a passive resistance stance with similar supporting responses. The Church resisted the challenge to abandon their faith and responded to the subsequent persecution in a prayerful and steadfast manner as they were told by Jesus in the Gospels to 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'. They enacted their resistant stance by conducting their rituals secretly and hiding texts and relics in places such as the Catacombs of St Sebastian in Rome.*

*This stance and related responses varied significantly from the confrontational stance and supporting responses taken to the Christological crisis (313-381CE) to deal with the challenge of the theory of the priest Arius who taught that Jesus was not truly God. The Church took the stance of reaffirming the full divinity of Jesus and supporting this by condemning Arius as a heretic, appealing to the supportive evidence in the text of the Gospel of John 1:1, 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' The condemnation of Arius' theory was followed by his excommunication from the Church in hope that his heresy would stop.*

*But by the time of the challenges brought by the Black Plague (1347-1351CE), the Church was the dominate religion across Europe with many influential individuals and groups involved in leadership of the members and so there was a variety of stances and the responses supporting them. This internal variation was different to the more united ways in which the Church responded to the earlier challenges mentioned. Officially the Pope, Clement VI, saw the disastrous effects of the plague as the mysterious working of God's wrath and called on Christians to repent and come closer to God. But he condemned the response of the Flagellants who also saw the plague as a punishment from God, but took to self-mutilation and violence against the Jews who they saw as representing evil as they had rejected Jesus as the Messiah.*

#### Question 2a.

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	6	18	28	31	18	2.4

The question required students to state what is believed about how ultimate reality relates to (regards, thinks of, treats, interacts with) humanity and then say what is believed about how humanity relates to ultimate reality according to the tradition selected.

Successful responses showed understanding of the concept of relationship as a two-sided interaction. Some students emphasised features of the relationship that are mutual and also noted those features that are different. Responses with no supporting sources were given a maximum of three marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*The Catholic Christian tradition believes that a covenant relationship exists between the creator God and humanity, created in God's image, in which both have responsibilities towards each other based on mutual love. This ancient covenant was renewed with Jesus' life, death and resurrection involving God's promise of salvation and eternal life and the ethical call to humanity to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself'. (Luke 10:27)*

**Question 2b.**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	7	18	31	28	17	<b>2.3</b>

The question required students to refer to the beliefs of the selected tradition that show how humans should think, regard, value, act and behave towards the rest of the natural world. Then they had to show that the natural world supports and sustains humans.

High-scoring responses showed understanding of the concept of relationship as a two-sided interaction. Responses with no supporting sources received a maximum of three marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*The Catholic Christian tradition holds that humans were called by God to 'be fruitful and multiply' (Genesis 1:28), meaning to give life, to protect and sustain and nurture all of creation. Therefore, humans are the carers of God's creation. The Catholic Catechism states that in God's plan man and woman have the vocation of respectfully subduing the earth and all in it as stewards of God. (CCC 339). It is also believed that humans possess a kinship with the natural world not only as its carers but also as benefiting from the plants, animals and environment that provide beauty, food, protection, and companionship. (CCC340)*

**Question 2c.**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	17	23	29	22	9	<b>1.8</b>

Successful answers showed clearly why the stated beliefs about the relationship between ultimate reality and humans lead to the beliefs about the relationship between humans and the rest of the natural world. Some responses made the connection the other way round.

Better responses noted that the beliefs in part a. and part b. are also connected because of what is believed about ultimate reality in the selected tradition. Responses with no supporting sources received a maximum of three marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Because humans were created in God's image and likeness, (Genesis 1:26) Catholic Christianity believes that humans are to be co-creators with God, involving protecting, maintaining and creatively developing to allow all of God's interdependent creation to flourish and prosper. (CCC340). Due to the belief that God can be found in all things, (CCC344) and that humans should seek God in all things, it is believed that in order for humanity to fulfil its obligation to love God, humans must support and develop all aspects of God's creation as God is fully present within all of it such that 'the skies proclaim the work of his hands'. (Psalm 19:1)*

**Question 3**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	5	5	8	15	15	18	14	11	6	3	1	<b>4.6</b>

Responses required a brief statement to identify the person and the significant life experience, and better responses provided historical context such as a date and place, possibly a situation. One to two marks were given for this context.

Successful responses:

- conveyed information that directly answered the question and addressed the ideas in the statement
- explained what they understood by the term 'unchanged'
- addressed the claim that keeping religious beliefs unchanged was or was not 'the best approach'.

Better responses did this consistently with each point in their argument.

Successful responses showed whether the person's beliefs remained the same or changed for a time or throughout the significant life experience, or how the person may have altered their religious beliefs. Such responses drew on some or all of the following in their explanation of whether and how the person remained unchanged in their beliefs, in terms of their:

- level of adherence to relevant religious beliefs
- understanding of relevant religious beliefs
- faith in relevant religious beliefs.

These points had to be considered prior to, during and after the significant life experience.

The member's engagement with the related expressions of the belief/s was not required, though some students included it to demonstrate why the belief changed or remained unchanged. Responses with no supporting sources received a maximum of eight marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*American Orthodox Jew, Marc Weiner had the significant life experience of the premature death of his son Avi and the subsequent the breakup of his family. In dealing with his significant life experience Weiner would both agree and disagree with the statement as he dealt with the impact of his significant life experience.*

*Prior to Avi's death Weiner accepted the Jewish belief that God is just and merciful, and rewards those who do good deeds and punishes those who sin. He also held that Jewish belief that the meaning of suffering is retribution. Talmud Shabbot 55a states that there is no suffering without iniquity. Thus Weiner engaged in the ritual of prayer to strengthen his connection with God and to receive benevolence from him and he kept the ethical practice of the Sabbath Strictures to reduce his chances of suffering (Of God and Weinerville).*

*Initially however, when Avi died Weiner rejected these beliefs about God and suffering. He could not understand how a 'loving God could have done this to him'. (Looking for his lost smile) He stopped observing Shabbat because he no longer thought it could eliminate suffering. So for Weiner at that time the way he coped with the impact of his significant life experience (a definite down in life) was to alter dramatically some of his beliefs and practices, thus disagreeing with the statement.*

*Nonetheless Weiner would eventually agree with the statement, that the best way to deal with the trials of life is to stay with some of one's religious beliefs and practices. Weiner had continued to partake in ritualised prayer and through that he came to realise that 'instead of blaming God he simply cried out to him for help' and found help. (Looking for his best smile) Weiner reaffirmed the beliefs about a just and merciful God and accepted that although he did not know why Avi died that God was comforting him through his grief and would forgive his lack of faith.*

*However, Weiner would disagree with the statement in relation to the belief about the meaning of suffering which he now saw as a divine mystery. His significant life experience had taught him that he would never be able to penetrate the mystery of God. This understanding of suffering*

was reinforced by Pirkei Avot 4:19 'it is not in our power to explain why the righteous suffer or why the wicked are at ease'.

#### Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	8	4	8	12	14	16	15	12	7	3	1	4.6

The question required students to analyse how particular aspects of religion were involved in their detailed study of a significant challenge to a religious tradition or denomination. It was not enough to merely state the aspects involved, or to discuss only one aspect. Responses that dealt only with one aspect received a maximum of five marks, depending on the thoroughness of the analysis.

Better answers showed an understanding of the various ways that aspects of religion could be involved, such as:

- as a focus of the challenge
- as a source of the challenge
- to form the basis of the stance taken
- to be used in designing and implementing the supporting responses
- to be influenced or impacted upon in a negative or positive way as a result of the stances and supporting responses.

They also gave precise examples for each of the ways of involvement of aspects they mentioned, and showed ability to synthesise studied material. Students were required to draw on relevant sources to support their response. Responses with no supporting sources received a maximum of eight marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*One of the most significant challenges in Jewish history was the destruction of the holy, Jerusalem based Second Temple in 70CE during the Roman-Jewish war. The crux of the challenge presented itself in the aftermath –the uprooting of Jews in an alien diaspora and effectively exile for the overwhelming majority of Jews. This challenge affected many aspects used in the expression of Judaism, both as the targets of the challenge and as the means by which Jews responded to the challenge. One aspect challenged was beliefs, such as the belief that God is omnipotent. As the Temple-God's supposed dwelling place-was destroyed, many Jews questioned God's existence given He did not prevent the destruction of his own House. Others gave more emphasis to the understanding of God as the just judge and saw the destruction as God's judgement on the wrongdoing of the Jews.*

*The aspect of rituals was similarly threatened as many rituals, especially sacrificial ones, dependent on the Temple, were unable to be performed. To replace these, Torah study was ritualised, 'learning of the Law (of sacrifice) replaced holy rituals of the temple'.*

*Also involved was the aspect of social structure as with the destruction of the temple the role of the priests was also ended. So Rabbis and other authorities rebuilt the Jewish social structure as rabbi based. Rabbis were to lead the Jews in the learning of the Law and interpreting how to live the Torah.*

*The aspect of Texts was also involved as many Jewish texts were burned in the Temple's destruction. Similarly, the aspect of Spiritual experience which had been focused on the activities and place of the Temple were no longer available so synagogues became the places for communal gathering, prayer and ritual to communicate with and encounter the divine. To heighten the experience of the spiritual Rabbis proposed that during prayer Jews should face the direction of Jerusalem.*

*Obviously the destruction of the Temple also negatively affected the aspect of places, spaces, times and artifacts as all of these were part of the worship practised in the Temple.*

### Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	8	5	9	13	18	17	14	10	6	4.3

For each religious belief chosen, students had to show whether the tradition agreed/disagreed, fully or in part, with the claims in the statement. Responses had to include more than one well-explained belief about life and more than one well-explained belief about death from the perspective of the selected tradition.

Successful responses dealt with both the purpose of life and the meaning of death, though not always in equal parts. Some responses dealt with both ideas together, others treated them separately. Responses with no supporting sources received a maximum of six marks, depending on the quality of the response.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*The beliefs of Islam contradict this statement as it is taught in the Quran that life does have purpose and that there is an afterlife therefore giving death meaning.*

*Islam believes that Allah created humans and has given them the special purpose to love and worship him. 'I have not created men except that they should serve Me' (Quran, 51:56). God also made humans with special dignity and responsibility for the rest of God's creation. 'You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You.' Quran 3:191 Life is seen as a test to determine who is pious. Thus life is important and has purpose. 'Allah is He who created death and life to test you as to which of you is best in deed.' Quran 67:2*

*Death is seen as a stage in existence, the end of the worldly life and necessary in order to move to the final stage of eternal life with Allah in Heaven or to punishment in Hell if a person has not lived according to the purpose of their existence.*

*The Prophet Muhammad on numerous occasions in the Hadiths intoned Muslims to perform good deeds to attain heaven in the afterlife.*

*The purpose of life is also shown by the Prophet in an example recorded in the Hadiths when he stated that Muslims are to please Allah and perform their prayers as this life has the purpose of a test to enter the afterlife.*

*The Prophet was a living example of the purpose of life being to worship Allah and through his example Muslims can see their life's purpose and attain the meaning of their death which is to return to their creator.*