










# What does it mean to be human?

## Theology and Social Science



Worldview		A particular <b>philosophy</b> or <b>belief</b> about life and the world around us.
Lenses		The <b>ideas, experiences and beliefs</b> that affect <b>how we see</b> the world around us.
Religion		An organised system of belief in and worship of a superhuman power.
Social Science		The <b>study</b> of <b>human behaviour, society and culture.</b>
Identity		The way we see ourselves and where we belong.
Dualism		The idea that a person is made up of 2 parts – a body and a soul or spirit.
Physicalism		The idea that a person is only made up of one part – the physical body.
Genesis		The <b>first book</b> of the <b>Old Testament</b> in the Bible telling about the <b>creation</b> of the world and of <b>life</b> on earth
Interpretation		An opinion or viewpoint about what something means.

<h3>Origin Accounts</h3> <p>Two types of origin stories</p> <p><b>Foundation myths</b> - how particular person or place came to be. E.g.: Romulus and Remus.</p> <p><b>Creation myths</b> – description of how the world came to be. E.g.: Ancient Egypt and sun-god Ra.</p> <p><b>Why are they important to humans?</b></p> <p>Part of a universe of meaning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the world seem more purposeful</li> <li>• Point to humans</li> <li>• Give explanations of why humans are the way they are</li> <li>• Give explanations of what it is to be human</li> </ul>
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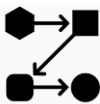


## What are the different interpretations of Genesis and the nature of humans?

<p><b>God is like a strong ruler, who is the king of all of creation.</b> So it is <b>the job of humans – all humans – to worship</b> (show love, respect and loyalty) to God. That's part of what it means to be human.</p>	<p><b>God chooses to create the universe.</b> It doesn't happen by accident – it is purposeful. This tells many religious people that <b>life has a meaning and a purpose</b> because we are part of a universe made on purpose.</p>	<p>God says that <b>every part of the creation is "good"</b>. This tells many religious people that looking after the natural world and environment is an important part of human life.</p>
<p>In the story, God says that different parts of the creation are "good". <b>When God creates humans, that the phrase "very good" is used.</b> For many religious people, this shows that humans are the most special part of creation. <b>Humans are special</b> because they are <b>created in the "image" of God.</b></p>	<p>In the story, God creates <b>men and women</b> and <b>tells them to have children.</b> For some religious people, this tells them that family life and having children is extremely important. For some, it is interpreted as a God-given <b>duty.</b></p>	<p>In the story, God creates for six days, but <b>rests on the seventh.</b> This tells many religious people that <b>rest is important and built in to the universe.</b> Many might treat one day of the week (Saturday in Judaism and Sunday in Christianity) as a particularly special or even holy day and do things differently on that day.</p>

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Sustainability		Ensuring that we don't damage the earth or its wildlife whilst meeting our own needs for food, clothing and energy.
Paradise		A place or situation that is perfect and beautiful.
Khalifah		A guardian or steward of the earth. The God-given responsibility to care for the earth.
Cosmology		The study of the origins and the nature of the universe.
Big Bang Theory		The theory that all time and space began around 15 billion years ago with a cosmic explosion.
Homo sapiens-sapiens		The scientific term for human beings; literally translates [from Latin] as wise-wise man.
Evolution		How a life-form slowly develops and improves over long periods of time.
Young Earth Creationist		Religious believers who reject scientific theories of the origin of the universe in favour of the Genesis account of creation.
Theistic Evolutionist		A person who believes in both God and the scientific theory of evolution.

Beliefs in Action: Living Sustainably	
<p><b>Sadeh Farm</b></p> <p><b>Jewish community farm and inclusive environmental community.</b>  <b>Retreat centre</b> which enables the Jewish community to engage with <b>issues of climate change</b> and <b>environmental responsibility.</b>  <b>Opportunity</b> for children and adults to spend time outdoors in nature.  <b>Fellowship programme</b> for future <b>Jewish environmental leaders</b>; educational trips; grows food; engages in regenerative agriculture and much more.</p>	<p><b>A Rocha</b></p> <p><b>International Christian environmental and conservation charity.</b>  A Rocha believes that there needs to be <b>more than talk about the environment</b> – there needs to be action.  Believes that being different and making a difference is an important part of being a Christian.  Huge number of projects including global plastic clean-up. Elephant preservation, dry grassland maintenance, Eco-Churches and sustainable farming.</p>
<p><b>The Qur'an, Creation and Humans</b></p> <p>Humans made from different coloured clay – they are diverse and connected with the. Humans have a soul and are the finest of creation. They have freewill. They are khalifas – responsible for the wellbeing of the earth. Humans are made to have companions and companionship. Humans have the capacity to be tempted or to sin. Humans can feel guilt and remorse.</p>	<p><b>Cosmology and Humans</b></p> <p>The known universe expanded out from a single point which was extremely hot and dense 13.7 billion years ago (The Big Bang). Universe has grown and expanded, and as parts of it cooled, stars and planets formed. Earth is 4.5 billion years old. Humans are made out of cosmic matter and elements found in the wider universe.  <b>“We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the Universe. That makes us something very special” - Stephen Hawking</b></p>
<p><b>Out of Africa Theory and Humans</b></p> <p>Scientific evidence suggest that human beings as we know them emerged on the Earth about 200,000 years ago. Humans evolved from an ape-like ancestor and that this ancestor came originally from Africa. This ape-like ancestor had to adapt to many different changes in the environment in Africa. Around 100,000 years ago, the first descendants of these early humans walked out of Africa. Fossil evidence suggests they followed coastal and river routes, where they could hunt and fish. As they grew in number, they eventually arrived in Europe 40,000 years ago.</p>	<p><b>Scientific and Religious Worldviews</b></p> <p><b>Young Earth Creationists</b> see Genesis as a literal truth and a word-for-word historical description of Creation. They reject scientific theories.  <b>Theistic Evolutionists</b> see the Genesis account as important but not a literal truth. They believe that evolution is the process through which God chose to create life and the Big Bang is how he chose to create the universe.  <b>Atheistic Evolutionists</b> would accept the scientific theories of the Big Bang and Out of Africa. They see these as naturally occurring and not triggered by God or Gods.</p>