

# Religion

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Lecturer “ The Body and the Soul” Different religions have got several scholars who wrote theories that have shaped the foundations of the religions over the mills of time. Different scholars and teachers taught using different media on a wide range of topics. The topics ranged between life, spirituality, humanity and death among others. This paper shall discuss two scholarly inputs from different religions on death. The paper shall focus on Attar and The Bhagavad Gita.

Attar (Abū Hamīd bin Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm) was a Muslim poet from Persia who taught theories of Sufism. He had great influence on Sufism and Persian poetry. His ideas on life were that the soul was bound in the body awaiting its release and the eventual return to its original source in the other world. This transformation can be experienced during the present through personal purification. In many of his teachings, Attar has exemplified the essence of a pure life and the mortality of the human body (Attar, 19). In one of his many poems, Attar writes,

“ Life be it long or short is composed of few breaths. Whoever is born must also die. You were nourished for death; and you were brought into the world in order to be taken away from it.” (Attar, 13).

For purposes of this paper, emphasis will be laid on the statement, “...You were nourished for death...” The statement summarizes the whole poetic line. Attar tries to show that mankind is naturally mortal. All that a man goes through prepares him for the life after in the next world. The spiritual growth of a human being is a process of ‘ nourishment’. In short, according to Attar, Mankind lives to die. The ultimate result of life is transformation to the afterlife through death (Attar, 23).

Learners of Attar's theories should therefore live their lives nourish themselves spiritually for the next stage of their lives. It makes them realize that they are mortal and they should be prepared for the death and the afterlife (Attar, 24).

Still on the topic of religious theories, we should look at The Bhagavad Gita, a Hindu devotional book. The book also offers insight and guidance on death and how mankind should be prepared for it. The book states in part, "The soul never takes birth and never dies at any time nor does it come into being again when the body is created. The soul is birthless, eternal, imperishable and timeless and is never terminated when the body is terminated" (Zaener, 11).

The Bhagavad Gita has the same notion in it with the Attar poetry. It shows that the soul is eternal and imperishable. It is, just like in Attar's case, housed by the body but when the body is terminated, the soul lives on (Zaener, 14).

Mankind should therefore know that their souls can neither be born nor destroyed. They should live exemplary lives since once the soul goes after the body perishes it never comes into being. It is their duty to utilize their lives when they have the chance since they will not get it again (Zaener, 14).

In conclusion, these two religious scholarly items on death have shown that mankind should do their best in life when they can since they are mortals. The spirit and the body are not the same; the body only carries the spirit and it is perishable (Zaener, 24)

Works Cited

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Zaener, Robert Charles, (1969), *The Bhagavad Gita*, Oxford University Press.  
Attar, Farid Al-Din (2007), *50 Poems of Attar*, Re Press.