# Ancient Civilisation and Current Religions Views on Mediumship & Life after Death

## Introduction

Religious beliefs regarding life after death vary substantially based on imprecise grounds of assumptions and faith. In 1800s, people developed a firm belief of life after death, having experienced certain occurrences of the subsistence of a personality even after their mortal death. In that era, spiritualism reached its peak of popularity, being a mediumship to provide relevant answers to all the queries of believers regarding life after death. Majority of the religions argue in favour of the existence of life after death that could be proven by communicating through mediumship with the ones residing within the spirit world (Starr, 2000). Most of these arguments root to the theory that the mortal world is divided into dimensions, one hosting the mortals or the living and the other hosting the dead (can be either heaven or hell). There are people from different religions who strongly believe in the existence of God and any other creative force or energy (often referring to life) that cannot be killed off but can only transform into another form of energy. Similarly, on the other hand of the spectrum, there are religions believing that life continues after death in another form and hence, interaction between the spiritual and the physical world is possible. Some even believe that when one dies, they wait in another spiritual form until called by God, which is known as Judgment Day (Starr, 2000).

From the ancient time of civilisation, individuals have developed a belief in the existence of soul even after the death of the physical body. In different civilisations, people thus argue on diversified beliefs of spiritual presence and the ‘infinite intelligence’ that can be witnessed in the natural world, whereby mediumship is referred as a communicative practice through which physical world can connect with the spirits of discarnate humans (McMinn, 2014). Stating precisely, mediumship is the process, whereby a human is utilised as an instrument known as a Channel or Medium. The purpose of this medium is allied with the presentation of information from one dimension of the mortal world to the other dimension of the spiritual world (First Spiritual Temple, 1996). Spiritualists believe in such form of communication, holding the perception that mediums are gifted to perform the communication accordingly. Additionally, spirituals also believe that spirits are more knowledgeable regarding ethics and moral issues than humans because they belong from higher spheres, often holding knowledge of the mortal world with the human lack in their consciousness (McMinn, 2014).

Majority of the believers of current religions, having faith in life after death, rely their arguments on the teachings of their traditions or scriptures. For instance, the sacred texts in Judaism, Christianity and Islam preach regarding afterlife. In Buddhism, reincarnation holds substantial significance, which is based on particular tradition in which Buddha recognised his past-life existence before attaining enlightenment (Starr, 2000). According to the spiritualists and different scholars, there are different types of mediumships practices in the different civilisations through the history of spirituality. Evidences suggest that among those, mental mediumship, trance mediumship, physical mediumship, channelling, direct voice and psychic senses are practice in the current era as well (McMinn, 2014; Leonard, 2005). Considering these aspects of ancient civilisation and current religions along with their beliefs regarding life after death, it can be regarded as a spiritual phenomenon that is followed by people from ancient times until date, making its expanse into different traditions, cultures and religions around the world (Leonard, 2005). Nonetheless, a close observation to the aspect shall reveal that both ancient and current religions have different views on life after death and mediumship. Based on this notion, the objectives of the paper are:

* To evaluate evidences of early civilisations, including Aztecs, Mayans, Ancient Egyptians and North American Indians, concerning their beliefs on life after death, soul survival and mediumship practices and with substantial proof of psychic medium
* To use evidences and highlight current religions such as Islam, Kabala, Buddhism and Hinduism, Christianity, Scientology, Christian Spiritual Church’s perspectives regarding mediumship and life after death

## Discussion on Ancient Civilisations’ Spiritual Beliefs on After Life Communications

### Aztecs

Aztec was one of the native ethnic groups of Mesoamerica, which is today commonly referred as Mexico. The Aztecs lived in this region from the 14th century to the 16th century. This ancient civilisation had an in-depth belief on life after death, which is remarkably different from several of today’s contemporary cultures (Dockray, 2013). Aztec civilisation believed that after death, the most pious souls are bestowed with specific tasks to assist their Gods. The life after death, according to the Aztecs was not decided on individual’s lifestyle but on their characteristics of death or in the manner that their accepted death. The death of warriors, death through sacrifices, death at the time of childbirth and similar other forms of death were all recognised as fearless, implying that the individuals embedded with a respectful afterlife (Dockray, 2013). Aztecs also believed in rebirth, which is observable from their thoughts that warriors came back into the form of butterflies and hummingbirds to make the nature beautiful by assisting the Gods (Donn, n.d.). Most courageous and honourable death in Aztec civilisation was the deaths of warriors, who were thus believed to receive the most significant position in the God’s kingdom. Additionally, any other death rather than normal deaths in Aztec civilisation were connected with pleasant afterlife. For instance, Aztec people who died due to natural causes were believed to serve the ‘Lord of the Dead’. Aztecs believed that there are 9 levels of hells, which must be experienced by every soul that wanted to re-arrive at the land of the ‘Lord of the Dead’ (Dockray, 2013; Hathaway, 2003).

Aztecs assumed that it was a difficult, painful and dangerous journey to the land of the ‘Lord of Dead in afterlife for those people, who went through a natural death. Aztecs women who died at the time of childbirth were however believed to serve the God to help the Sun in changing it places. On the other hand, those Aztec people who died because of lightening, diseases, drowning or any kind of accidental deaths, were perceived to be chosen for serving the God of storm and rain, while their afterlife would be surrounded by flowers. This ancient civilisation purely believed that life after death was a chance for individuals through which they could serve for their Gods (Donn, n.d.). With regard to soul survival, Aztecs trusted on the cycle of four years, according to which soul should return to the earth after four years in the form of birds, beasts or clouds to give happiness, glory and ease to those living (Varner, 2007). Aztecs also assumed about the rebirth of souls after four years of God’s serving in the forms of different animals and insects. Arguably, though, there was a lack of evidence related with the direct mediumship and communication with souls or the psychic mediums during the then period (Briggs, 2010). However, in the history of Aztec civilisation, scholars found the presence of necromancer, who could utilise magic spells and associated with unnatural activities. They might have a connection with the spirits but there was no prominent evident that would support this ideology (Pye, 1993).

### Mayan

Mayan civilisation was a prominent and progressive group of Mesoamerica that was known as a dominant society among others. Mayan civilisation was one of the secured societies flourishing within the region of Mesoamerica, with the virtues of its geographic borders and indigenous population. Mayan civilisation portrayed the ultimate prophecy regarding the powers and influences in sixth century A.D. (A&E Television Networks, LLC., 2017). Mayans had significant prejudices on spiritualism and its related activities. Mayans were believed to be a spiritualistic civilisation, more conservative than other ancient civilisations. They had belief in great powers and destructive natures of God, having them show respect towards it. They believed that there were different routes of life after death. The Mayan civilisation also believed that souls were bound into the mortal physical body by birth and death was a way to free those caged souls. Through death, the soul could be separated from the physical body (Mark, 2012). According to the Mayan myths, the free souls could take two types of afterlife forms, i.e. they would ascend either to paradise (light) or to the underworld (darkness). Based on the myths, the ascension practice was related with the righteousness of an individual on earth (Mafli, 2012; Mark, 2012). Mayan civilisation believed in endless journey of individual’s life as well. Additionally, they developed belief on the concept of sacred heart, which could form through the psychic components (Nancy, 2015).

According to the Mayan myths, independent components of physical body were not quantifiable, as when the physical body died, certain parts of it were destroyed and rest (soul) travelled to the underworld. In the underworld, they were capable to erase their memory of all the prior history and start a new life. Mayans also believed that the cyclical process of life existed within a ‘cosmic space’ held by the components of a ‘Sacred Tree’. The Sacred Tree’s branches segregated the heaven and the underworld into 13 and 9 levels respectively (NancyB, 2015). According to the recent researches on Mayan civilisation, Ceiba tree was recognised as the communication bridge of existence levels within heaven, earth and the underworld. In Mayan civilisation, the deaths for warriors, sacrifices and childbirth were honoured as prestigious demises from physical bodies. The survived souls then were believed to travel to another space, where no scarcity of foods and drinks were present. According to the ancient Mayan prophecy, this earthly paradise was situated at the centre of the Ceiba tree (Reincarnation after Death, 2016).

The sacred book of Mayans named Popol Vuh further notes that underworld’s path was full of tests that the survived souls were needed to overcome to reborn after death until they received salvation. The steep stairs of the underworld went down in blood and water. These elements were projected as the symbol of destruction in afterlife of Mayans, through which they were able to return to their original state and be prepared for rebirth. Mayans also believed that priests and shamans of their societies came from the underworld, due to which they held knowledgeable positions in the society and were treated with highest of sanctity (Reincarnation after Death, 2016). Mayans were believed in communication of different world through a medium. According to the Mayan myth, shamans and priests were the individuals within the society, who had the power to communicate with other times and worlds (Jenkins, 2012). The use of crystal skull was also used by this ancient civilisation’s high priest at the time of the ‘esoteric rites’ performances. It was also utilised for communicating to other worlds and the spiritual realm to gain knowledge (McMinn, 2014). Mayans myths portrayed their beliefs in spirit guides, named as ‘Wayob’. These spirit guides or Wayob appeared in individuals’ lives through the different physical forms to transfer essential notes/knowledge from the Mayan spiritual realm that is again believed to be a key source to their advanced socio-demographic lifestyle in the ancient era (Mark, 2012).

### Ancient Egyptian

Ancient Egypt is often noted as the greatest civilisation in the Mediterranean world. This ancient civilisation existed in the world for nearly about 30 centuries. Their monuments, artifacts and objects were the prominent amenities through which information could be recovered (A&E Television Networks, LLC., 2017). Ancient Egyptians had several accomplishments and richness in their religious traditions, especially about their beliefs on afterlife and soul survival and mediumship. Religion was one of the important aspects of Ancient Egyptian lives and their societal norms. Rituals and events related to death and afterlife were also essential aspects for this preeminent civilisation. People of Ancient Egypt believed in life after death and took significant attempts to ensure a prosperous afterlife. For Ancient Egyptians death was a temporary interruption/pause in life, after which life could again continue. In order to ensure the comfortable afterlife for individuals, Ancient Egyptians proceeded with different rituals and procedures including mummification, lavishness in tombs and funerals. In the tombs/Pyramids, Ancient Egyptians buried various artifacts with the mummy, including furniture, everyday items, cloths, foods and several precious items of the individuals, which were intended for the utilisation of dead individuals in their afterlife (IP Factly, 2016).

Ancient Egyptians believed in soul survival and its realm. In relation, Ancient Egyptian myths stressed that immediately after the death, the spirit’s heart was weighted with the feather of Truth and Justice Goddess Ma’at’s headdress in the ‘Hall of the Two Truths’ under the observation of Anubis, their believed and most respected jackal-headed God (Canada Museum of History, n.d.). Based on the weight of the spirit’s heart the type of the afterlife was decided. The spirit’s heart could be light or heavy weighted than the feather. The folklore says that if it was lighter, the soul could pass the test but if it was heavier, the heart was destined as evil. The evil heart was vexed and devoured by demon Ammu. The entire myth hence described the long journey before the afterlife (IP Factly, 2016; Byrne, 1969). Additionally, ancient Egyptians believed in the Ka (life force), Aj (the force of divine inspiration of life) and Ba (spirit), which was the different components of the physical body, holding significance in the afterlife (IP Factly, 2016; Egypt Past, n.d.).

Contextually, according to the ancient Egyptian myths, after death Ka required essential nourishment of life, which was the reason behind lavishness of tombs. The people of the then civilization would curve different foods and drinking items on the walls of tombs, which they believed to be usefully for the Ka. Mummification process was another reason to ensure Ka’s survival in the afterlife. Moreover, ancient Egyptians also believed in eternity through afterlife or a new life, which was acknowledged by the Ba (IP Factly, 2016; Egypt Past, n.d.). Based on the evidences of witch or wise women’s presence in ancient Egypt and their communication with spirits, it can also be inferred that ancient Egyptians believed in mediumship very strongly. In ancient Egypt, at times women were supposed as the superior medium (Massey, 2007). Ancient Egyptians also believed in different modes of channelling for the communication with the dead individuals’ spirits. Dream channelling was one of the common forms of mediumship in ancient Egypt. Pharaoh Amenhotep IV was famous for his ‘vision of monotheism’ that he was believed to have witnessed in his dreams. The historical evidences obtained from ancient Egypt further portrayed the universal pattern of mediumship, according to which “the dead person's spirit (or ba) retains the attributes of the living embodied person (or du), so that a priest in life remains priestly after death, and a peasant remains a peasant” (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2016).

### North American Indians

North American Indians lived in the Northern part of present America. This ancient race was enlightened by Columbus as India (The Latin Library, n.d.). The religious beliefs of North American Indians were multifaceted and comprehensive. Based on the religious lifestyle of North American Indians, it was stressed that their lives were garnered with beliefs of supernatural powers and communications with the world of spirits. Reincarnation in afterlife was a common phenomenon that North American Indians believed quite strongly (Jefferson, 2009). Considering the reincarnation belief of North American Indians, there were certain other values improvised within this community. According to their tribal myths, rebirth was allied with the concept of free soul, which was able to leave the physical body at the ‘state of trance’ (sleep). This free soul was perceived as the transporter of physical consciousness. Additionally, the North American Indians’ myths also supported the cycle of life, according to which after death, free soul left the body and travelled to the spiritual realm. It ultimately returned in the physical world through the reincarnation (Sunny Rays, n.d.).

Besides the free soul, North American Indians also believed in vital/life soul, which was able to provide life and energy to the physical body. Sub-tribes within North American Indians might also believe in single potential soul that could reincarnate in more than one body. Additionally, other sub-tribes of this race depict signs that they had developed beliefs in more than two souls (Sunny Rays, n.d.). Most often, the concept of two souls was vastly believed by majority of North American Indians. According to their myths, they were predestined to die when the individual’s free spirit would be caught in the world of dead. North American Indians further believed that every living creature, inclusive of fauna and plants also had souls. According to the North American Indians tribal beliefs, at the time of sleep, free spirits used to leave the physical body, but at the same time, vital/life soul would still reside in the individual’s body. However, to reach a conscious state, the free soul should come back to the physical body, without which the physical remained unconscious and death came (Danchevskaya, 2013).

These evil spirits had the power to send the individuals’ souls to any other creatures’ physical body and entered in place of the person’s body and caused illness. The medicine man in North American Indian tribe was considered as the medium, who could communicate with the spirits and drive them out from the individuals’ physical bodies to cure their diseases. Precisely, the tribal beliefs portrayed that not the physical body of the medicine man but his soul was communicating with the soul of affected individuals, which was the only means for the evil soul to leave the body. Moreover, the tribe also believed that medicine man could communicate with the spiritual world and interact with the world of dead. Considering the concept of medicine men in North American Indians, it can also be stated that they believed in mediumship (Danchevskaya, 2013). Overall, among the majority of tribal groups of North American Indian beliefs regarding life after death were strong and vastly present (Ojibwa, 2015). Additionally, among the North American Indians one belief was deep rooted that the soul of the individual had to be travel a long way after the physical death of the body (Moffett, 1980).

## Discussion on Current Religions’ Views on Mediumship & Life after Death

Death is something in life, which one can be sure about its occurrence. It is perhaps owing to this reason that different religions have developed beliefs regarding its implications. Ideas regarding what exactly happened after death and its association with the existence on earth is one of the primary aspects of all religions even in the contemporary world today (BBC, 2014a). Based on this notion, the following discussion highlights the current religions’ beliefs regarding mediumship and life after death.

### Islam

In the Islamic religion, there is a common teaching that Allah has complete control on everything that happens. However, Allah also provides their followers with free will through which they can select between wrong and right, and hence become responsible for their individual actions. This preparation is intended towards their eternal life in the future (Akhirah) (BBC, 2014). The term ‘Akhirah’ is used in this religion signifying life after death. During this transition, the deeds are shaped and the sprit is moulded, which can be for both worse and better (AAIIL, n.d). The followers believe that the sprit enters into an intermediate condition of Barzakh and is tormented, until the judgment day arrives. The Qur’an highlights that on the Day of Judgement, the unrighteous are send to Jahannam and the righteous are send to Jannat. According to Qur’an, life after death posses two stages, crossing over by two worlds even after death, which is termed as purgatory (Ahlul Bayt DILP, 2017). The second stage however refers to the world of Great Judgement. The Islamic religion believes in the concept of life after death, which includes instances emphasising that when this belief is discarded by a group of individuals despite the Prophet’s warning to his followers, the group is punished by their Allah (Ahlul Bayt DILP, 2017). The Muslims however do not believe in re­incarnation but rather refer to their Islamic teachings in which there is a continuous progress of the soul that cannot return after death (AAIIL, n.d.). However, it is believed that in Islam religion only, Allah has the authority or can communicate with the dead. In this religion, mediumship is acknowledged through evil Jinn and black magic, which has been described in both Hadith and Quran. However, the Quran strictly prohibits this practice that is also regarded as a sin (The Revival, 2008).

### Kabala/Kabbalah

Kabala is referred to an occult theosophy and philosophy that has long been practiced by the Jews. The term implies “to receive” and is indicated to heavenly exposure received by the Jews and then passed on to the following generations via oral tradition (Miller, 2009). Kabbalah is referred at the Jewish mysticism system. The Kabbalist assumes death as illusion and believes that after death the soul seeks to precede spirituality. Thus, in Eastern religions the Kabbalah empathises upon reincarnation (Miller, 2009). At the initial stages, this was the Judaism’s mainstream but later was identified with those having their faith that Kabbalah was an occultic tradition, which illustrated true meaning related to Hebrew Scriptures. These Scriptures were however hidden from everyone and was only known to one that was spiritually prepared to obtain it. The basic theoretical presupposition for Kabbalah is that it views world as a release of spiritual God’s essence. In Kabbalah, one has thought power is regarded as highest among three psyche’s powers, such as speech, thought and action (Torah Science Foundation, n.d.).

The Kabbalah illustrates that at the time of death the physical body dies and begins to disintegrate but the sprit exists and ascends back to the place from where it came. The Kabbalists hypothesized three different principles associated with life after death, emphasising Nefesh associated with etymological derivation, Ruah linked with conscience and the Neshamah with Divine Spark (Kazlev, 2005). The Nefesh stays for a short time within the grave incubating over the physical body. However, the Ruah rises to the earthly paradise in compliance through its virtues while the Neshamah directly goes back in native home (Kazlev, 2005). The Kabbalahists employ clairvoyance and divination to acknowledge and foretell events or to obtain information about occult events. The practical Kabbalah is referred for using references to the secret sciences, which includes psychic readings, reading tea leaves, mediumship and spirit guides (AllAboutReligion.org, 2017).

### Buddhism

The Buddhism philosophy for reincarnation is different from the other religion perspectives, as they believe that there is no such eternal sprit, soul or self but exists only ‘stream of consciousness’, which probably associates life with life (Nagaraj et.al, 2013). The major focus of this religion is particularly on individual spiritual development based on their belief that they often struggle for enlightenment by developing morality, wisdom and meditation practices. As per the Buddhist tradition, the destiny of an individual after death is decided by the manner in which they live their current life. They further believe that individual’s Karma gives a base to them to determine their position for next life. The beliefs of Tibetan Buddhism however imply that after death, the soul of the deceased begins a 49-day procedure for making adjustments, which is segregated into three phases, named as ‘bardo’ (Ahlquist, 2007). The Tibetan Buddhist are thus of the opinion that death is not an end, as the sprit seeks out for attachment to a new life and body. On the other hand, the followers of Zen Buddhists contradict the concept of afterlife, but have a faith that there exists a constant energy continuation (Ahlquist, 2007). Moreover, the Buddhist does not acknowledge the practice of psychic mediumship, owing to their perception that such activities are not regarded as Buddhist practice but is looked merely as traditional practice (Dhammananda, n.d.). Life after death in this religion is hence believed as a cycle called ‘samsara’. With the help of karma and ultimate enlightenment, after death the soul is expected to depart from samsara and gain nirvana, which indicates an end to all the suffering. However, after death, if the soul fails to gain nirvana they are believed to be unable to escape from the rebirth and death cycle, leading to their rebirth in 6 possible conditions, which heaven, human life, asura, hungry ghost, animals and the hell (Tang, n.d.).

### Hinduism

Hinduism has different teachings regarding life after death and mediumship. Hinduism religion acknowledges reincarnation, which is a belief that after the demise of the physical body the soul (atman) passes in a new life and body. Hindus generally believe in Karma in which a sum of all good and bad actions (Pearson Education Ltd, 2009). Hence, as per this religion all living beings are by default part of this reincarnation process, but the ultimate objective of any Hindu is probably to break this cycle/process of reincarnation and gain ‘Moksha’. It is also believed that when the soul gets free from this process, the person arrives to be with the Brahman (Pearson Education Ltd, 2009). Hinduism religion teaches that individuals attempt repeatedly to identify permanent happiness within this world, which is referred as ‘Maya’. Their sprit can take rebirths several times, which is known as ‘samsara’ (reincarnation). The Brahaman is considered as the supreme soul in which the Hindus typically believe. Furthermore, Hinduism believes that life after death follows four courses (Adiswarananda, n.d). The first is devayana, which is referred as a way related to God, followed by souls that are spiritually advanced leading in pure life in which one devotes meditation on the Brahman. However, if one does not succeed in gaining complete self-knowledge prior to their death, they usually journey to Brahmaloka, which is the highest heaven to obtain liberation (Adiswarananda, n.d). The second course is referred as pitriyana, which is a way related to fathers, followed by philanthropists and ritualists. Through this path, the soul refurbishes to Chandraloka, which is the lunar sphere, following which they enjoy happiness as they receive a reward based on their good deeds and hence again return to earth until their earthly desires are met. The third course takes one to hell to be reborn as sub-human species. It is after compensating for their evil actions in hell that the human souls are allowed to be reborn on earth. Finally, the fourth course usually is not applied to those sprits that have obtained self-knowledge after or before death. It implies further that after death these souls may move to any other realm (Adiswarananda, n.d.).

Dr. Ian Stevenson, while studying Hinduism, claimed to have discovered more than 3,000 evidences of reincarnation in which majority of the children said to remember their past live (Martin, 2016). However, in this religion, mediumship is perceived with substantial doubt. In the Eastern traditions including Buddhism and Hinduism as well, psychic mediumship is considered as a common aspect, acknowledged in their scriptures, such as Vedas. In Vedas, particularly in Upanishads, the psychic mediumship is acknowledged as a natural byproduct of establishment within an individual’s enlightenment pursuit (Ireland, 2013). It is owing to this reason that at often instances Hinduism is referred as an occult religion that had begun from several occultic practices, which includes mediumship, sorcery, magic and many more. The occult powers and communication with the spirit in this religion is more and is acknowledged in the form of tantra shastra and black magic. However, in this religion, such communication is regarded as inconsistent and often involving a spirit that has does not gain moksha (Ireland, 2013).

### Christianity

The Christians believe in afterlife as similar to other religions already discussed. This belief provides a hope to the Christians that if they particularly consider the teachings of Jesus as well as accept Jesus as their Saviour and Lord, a new life through rebirth awaits them (BBC, 2014). Some of the Christians believe that when one dies, no sooner does the sprit exit from the body, which is then judged immediately either to be placed in hell or in heaven. The spirit may also be send to purgatory, which can be referred as a waiting room in which the soul can clean its sins and be released for heaven (Ahlquist, 2007). The sayings in the Holy Bible also claim Jesus opining that “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies”. Hence, by this particular statement, Jesus is believed to have made afterlife possible (BBC, 2014). Stating precisely, the Christian religion particularly believes that life after death is completely based on Jesus Christ’s resurrection and hence, it is a part of humankind planned by God. With consideration to the resurrection of Jesus one can get an evidence of life after death. Life after death in this religion is acknowledged as a process in which the dead are supposed to rise for their judgement (Ahlquist, 2007).

The Bible condemns mediumship and spiritism although, it provides no specific reason to trust the fact that individuals who have been deceased should be contacted further (Got Questions Ministries, 2017a). Hence, it can be inferred that the Bible is against the use of psychic mediumship, stereotyping it as an occult and dark practice. The Bible clearly highlights that attempts for mediumship to make a contact with the deceased is wrong and such prohibitions are made to protect the humankind from deception and lies (Got Questions Ministries, 2017a). Following are the reasons based on which the Christians believe in life after death.

* The first and foremost reason to believe the fact is having an eternal life because Jesus himself promised that only his core followers, who would follow his path would seek an eternal life
* The most common evidence is Jesus himself because God had send Jesus to the Earth so that the human could conquer death
* The third reason is to have resurrection related to body because when Jesus took rebirth after his death had rose with the body, He gave a strong proof of “resurrection”

 (BBC, 2017; Got Questions Ministries, 2017a)

Immortality is also a common belief among this religion. Majority of the Christians infer the Bible’s teachings on life after death to signify the fact that humans on earth may have spiritual existence even after death. However, majority of the Christians reject the notion of reincarnation (BBC, 2017). Although the psychic medium is considered as the bridge between the spiritual and physical world, in Christianity does not acknowledge such activities. Hence, it can be inferred that they have faith in life after death but not in mediumship. However, there are Christians who perform such activities particularly those who are unaware of the condemnation made in Bible regarding the performance of such activities (BBC, 2017). The teachings present in the Bible also imply that communicating with the dead are impossible and one must not attempt because the sprits are unable to communicate with the living. The belief has been noted in Luke 16 (Rhodes, 2006; Zukeran, 2005).

### Scientology

The term ‘scientology’ is derived from Latin and Greek words, which implies study of the truth. In the modern context, it is also regarded as new stream of religion. The scientologists provide credibility to the notion that man is an everlasting and a spiritual being. The unique quality of this religion implies that it considers Supreme Being but does not embrace its devotion. This religion acknowledges in past life. The common belief among the scientologists is that one can only take rebirth into human bodies, whereby spritual counselling and auditing sessions can be used as common forms through which one can recall their past life experiences (Ahlquist, 2007). It is the 21st century religion offering a gateway to achieve freedom. This religion directly makes contact with the spirit not with the mind or body. Contextually, the major objection of Scientology is to ensure spiritual enlightenment. The doctrine of Scientology thus explains that once the physical body is dead, the sprit exists and decides to inhabit with the new born. Comparatively, it can be called as reincarnation, although in Scientology, such an existence of the sprits is known as Thetan (Church of Scientology International, 2015; CBS, 2009). Followers of this religion believe that human beings are immortal because they follow a chain of rebirths. To be noted in this regard, as compared to other religions, Scientology has only a few beliefs to articulate regarding afterlife, God and religious ideas, refusing the concepts of afterlife to an extent (ReligionFacts, 2016).

### Christian Spiritual Church

The Christian Spiritual Church is also known as Spiritualist Church, which has deep roots within the ancient practices of communicating with the soul of the deceased. These Churches provide services including Mediumship so that evidence is offered regarding the spirit’s existence. The National Association of Spiritualist Churches opined that the dweller of the world of Spirit to an extent can foresee future events with less or greater accuracy. These Spiritualist Churches to a large extent believe in the process of mediumship and recognise the spiritualism as a religion (BBC, 2014). For instance, the Alton Christian Spiritualist Church takes into account both Christianity and Spiritualism in unfolding the unknown truths (Price, n.d.). In New York 1848, this ancient practice detonated into, which its present believers express as “Modern American Spiritualism”. This process commenced with the Fox sisters. Mrs. Fox heed loud cracks, pops and thumps deriving from girls’ room. When things were investigated, it was discovered that the thumps accurately responded to all the questions and eventually the girls claimed to be in contact with the spirits. The noises that were received later were recognised as code through which the spirits could respond, spell words as well as provide direction. This incident had spread a belief among the community as a whole (Got Questions Ministries, 2017). However, after 40 years in an interview one of the sisters claimed the incident to be hoax. This confession was not certainly not welcomed by the Church of Spiritualism. Believers also refused to acknowledge such revelations as fact, especially the witnesses and the neighbours, insisting that although such communication had initiated with prank but spirits had been manifesting them. People claimed that such recantation was due to consumption of alcohol, for which the statements of the three sisters were not to be believed. This persistence continues within the Church of Spiritualism in which there is no evidence of the recantation (Got Questions Ministries, 2017). The Church of Spiritualism is a domain through which communication with the deceased via mediumship is believed as possible. The spiritualist does not believe in the concept of hell or heaven, as they particularly believe that the life of the human continues after death in which there is better opportunity to progress and better oneself in every phase in the afterwards. Hence, it can be inferred that an attempt to unite Christianity with several occult practices was a key contributor to have led to the creation of the Christian Spiritualist Churches. It is commonly believed by Christian Spiritualists that the Satan has authentic powers and spiritualists deny such existence, which probably provides the spirits more power and freedom (Got Questions Ministries, 2017).

## Conclusions

To justify the presence of afterlife beliefs, spirituality, psychic medium and membership, different views were taken into consideration in this study, ranging from the ancient civilisations such as Aztecs, Mayans, Ancient Egyptians and North American Indians to modern beliefs of the present century. The findings obtained through this research revealed that majority of early civilisations had developed potential beliefs on the afterlife. For instance, the Aztec civilisation was believed to have faith in the form of death that a person suffers to have a respectful afterlife. The death of warriors and mothers were recognised as sacred and honourable in earlier civilisations. Sacrifices were given to the almighty God to get a peaceful afterlife. Aztecs, Mayans and ancient Egyptians believed in the concept of the heaven and underworld similar to each other, wherein souls were believed to travel for their afterlives and further reincarnations. North American Indians believed that in certain circumstances, especially is a person could hold the potentials of a medium, two souls within a single physical body could exist. Correspondingly, however, the ancient Egyptians believed in Ka, Aj and Ba in physical body. Current religions, including Islam, Kabala, Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity, also show their belief in life after death prophecies. In Islam, reincarnation is not considered as a religious belief, but they do believe in mediumship, while Kabbalists are developed principles for their afterlife journey. However, Buddhists do not acknowledge the practice of psychic mediumship. In the context of afterlife, it is evaluated that both Hindus and Buddhists have a shared belief on ‘Karma’. Nonetheless, Hindus acknowledge the black magic and mediumship in their religions. Considering these aspects and evidences of ancient and present religions’ perceptions towards life after death and mediumship, it can be inferred that ancient civilisations had more prominently developed beliefs on the journey of afterlife along with communication with spirits. On the other hand, there are certain contradictions highlighted in present religious views due to the disbeliefs on mediumship, but they all are having fate on afterlife.

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