

# BELIEFS



## A CHILDREN'S GUIDE TO RELIGION

SVEN O MAG

Beliefs: A Children's Guide to Religion

Copyright © 2011 Sven O Mag  
<http://svenomag.com/books/beliefs.htm>

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof  
may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever  
without the express written permission of the publisher  
except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

Book design by Sven O Mag  
Images courtesy of [www.rgbstock.com](http://www.rgbstock.com):  
Sigurd Decroos, Lynne Lancaster, Michael Lorenzo, Dez Pain

First CreateSpace Paperback Edition February 2013

ISBN-13: 978-0615751443

ISBN: 061575144X

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013900967

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Celina

Live a good life. If there are gods and they are just, then they will not care how devout you have been, but will welcome you based on the virtues you have lived by. If there are gods, but unjust, then you should not want to worship them. If there are no gods, then you will be gone, but will have lived a noble life that will live on in the memories of your loved ones.

—Unknown, misattributed to Marcus Aurelius

BELIEFS

Have you ever in your head,  
    had the biggest ever thought?  
So boggling to your mind,  
    that it makes you feel distraught?

Maybe lying in your bed,  
    trying hard to fall asleep?  
You can't help but try to find,  
    how and why to questions deep.



Such as, from where do we come?  
    And where do we go?  
What lies beyond the Universe?  
    Does anybody know?

Are you perhaps the only one,  
    reflecting on such themes?  
You try to make the thoughts disperse.  
    Are you as different as it seems?



Thinking as you do is common,  
many answers are conceived.  
'Cause no one knows the final truth,  
these answers need to be believed.

These things have been much dwelled upon,  
throughout our history and years.  
Really since a Stone Age youth,  
was overwhelmed by fears.



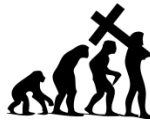
Some people try to gather views,  
maybe publish them in word.  
Then to these, their own beliefs,  
they other people herd.

They could try to reach to you,  
to get you to believe.  
What they to their great relief,  
have managed to perceive.



You may think that people have a choice,  
in what to lay their trust.  
If in anything at all,  
put their faith they must.

People don't have say or voice.  
No—not by far.  
As much as being short or tall,  
it has to do with who you are.



Children believe what their parents believe,  
and their parents they did the same.  
It's very very rare,  
that held beliefs do change.

But when it comes—that deep dark eve,  
'neath the heavens and the stars—  
skywards way you lay your stare,  
and thoughts go past the planet Mars.

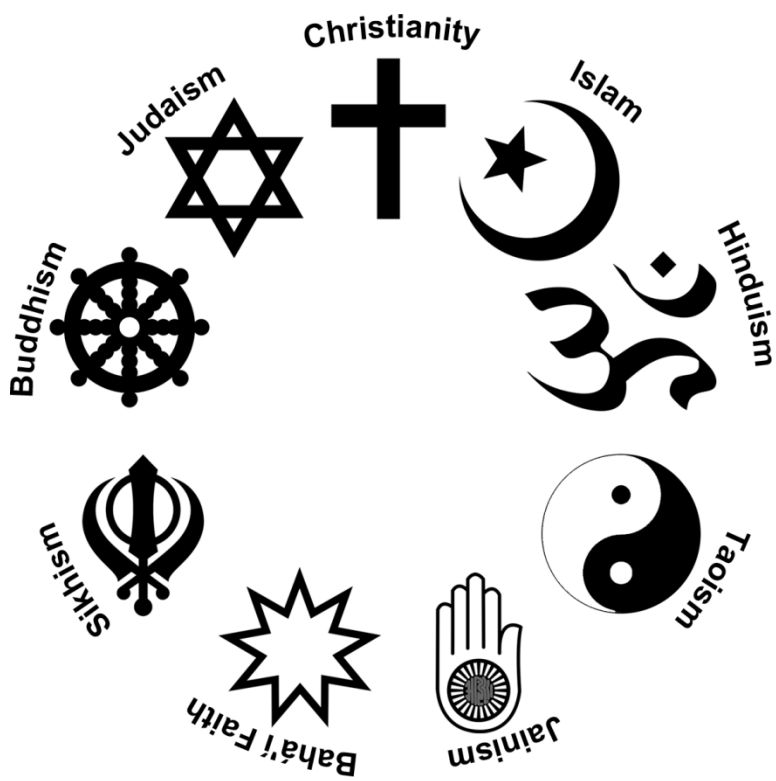
Most people in our world  
belong to one of few.  
Maybe Christian, Muslim, Hindu,  
Buddhist, Sikh or Jew.

Religion is the common name,  
for all of these and more.  
Wherever in the world you go,  
it's hard to them ignore.



They give you answers that you seek,  
they tell you what life is.  
Most say there is an afterlife.  
All try to give you bliss.

They explain the way the world was made,  
and maybe how it ends.  
For some they are a perfect means,  
to make some faithful friends.



Judaism is not that big,  
but has spawned a whole lot more.  
The Tanakh, Torah, Talmud,  
are texts that they explore.

A special place for this exploring,  
the Jewish house of prayer,  
is the Synagogue they go to,  
a place that all Jews share.

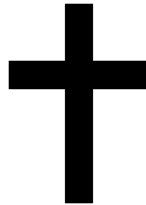


One particular Jew named Jesus,  
two thousand years ago,  
had some specific words and teachings  
that the whole world ought to know.

Thought of as the Son of God,  
he Christ was given name.  
Thus giving this new religious faith,  
the name that brought it fame.

Though really only one,  
confusing as it may be,  
Jesus and the Holy Ghost,  
together with God makes three.

Jesus preached of man's acceptance,  
of every fellow man.  
He believed in loving and forgiveness.  
This brought him many a fan.



He himself was not accepted,  
and Christ for mankind died.  
Adding his story to the Torah,  
Christians the Bible made as guide.

Sunday is the holy day,  
the day you go to Church.  
To hear a pastor's knowing words,  
or one's own soul go search.

Christianity's the biggest faith,  
with Islam nigh behind.  
Together these two faiths comprise  
more than half mankind.

Islam's Muslims also share  
belief in that same Deity.  
Though they do not at all care  
for the Christian Holy Trinity.



Muhammad is the Muslim prophet,  
he himself a mortal man.  
With help from angel Gabriel,  
God's words emerged as the Koran.

The mosque is the place of worship,  
for Muslims in each state.  
Kneeling down and facing Mecca,  
they tell their God he's great.

The eastern faith of Hinduism  
is with the western ones at odds.  
The biggest difference might well be,  
that they have many gods.

Vishnu, Krishna, Shiva and Rama,  
these are only four.  
Take a look in any book:  
there are many many more.



The Vedas, or the Vedic books,  
are ancient Indian scripts.  
As the foundation of their faith,  
Hindus must with them come to grips.

The Temple is the place they go,  
to bring an offer sweet.  
It also represents the place,  
where gods and mankind meet.

A relatively modern faith  
is also found out east.  
A difference from other ones  
is that Sikhism doesn't have priests.

Baptized Sikhs must take good care  
that they always have a place,  
for things that they are bound to wear,  
on their person, called five Ks.



A Sikh's a holy soldier,  
defender of things dear.  
Faith and justice for one and all,  
this is very clear.

Guru Granth Sahib  
is their written creed.  
It's what all Sikhs read,  
when they guidance need.



Buddhism too,  
is an eastern belief—  
one that in the figure Buddha  
has a popular motif.

Buddha was a man,  
who became enlightened—  
which means that his senses  
were all much heightened.



Having no gods,  
but a belief that a human mind,  
with reason can end suffering,  
and open the eyes of blind.

Of karma and rebirth,  
you might already have heard.  
You do not have to read,  
the Tipitaka's every word.

These were some.

There are many many more.

But I'll leave it up to you,  
to open up that door.

Religions are plenty,  
but are they always good?  
That there are problems with religion  
should be understood.



Now's not the time to be naive.  
Let's try not to be ideal.  
Much of the world's despair  
is brought about by religious zeal.

Religion is, to many folks,  
the only path to choose.  
However, many people,  
all beliefs refuse.



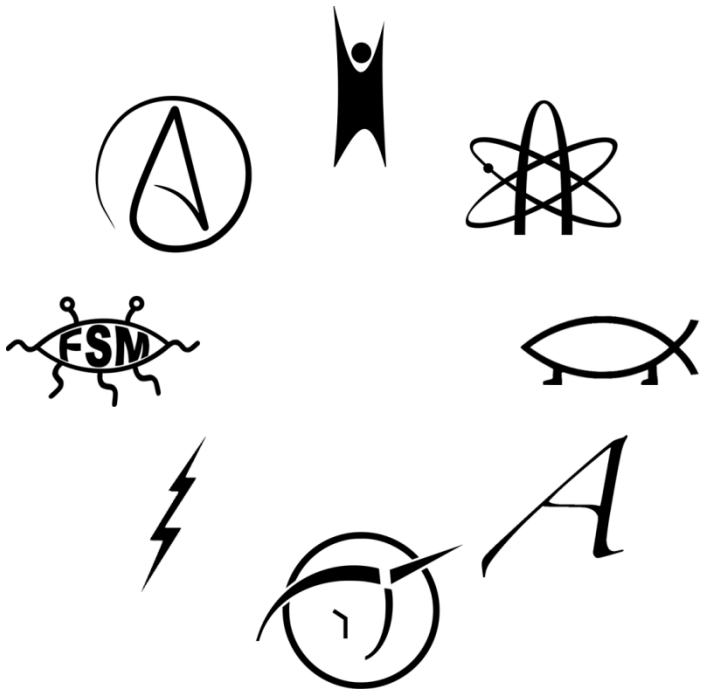
People in this category,  
number quite a few.  
They believe that every faith,  
tells many things untrue.

They instead rely on reason,  
in science and on mind.  
Through rational mentation,  
worldly proofs they try to find.



Atheist, Humanist, Agnostic,  
Freethinker, Nontheist,  
are names you might call people,  
who in non-belief persist.

Secular ideologies  
see meaning in this life.  
Intrinsic moral ethics  
clear up all laic strife.

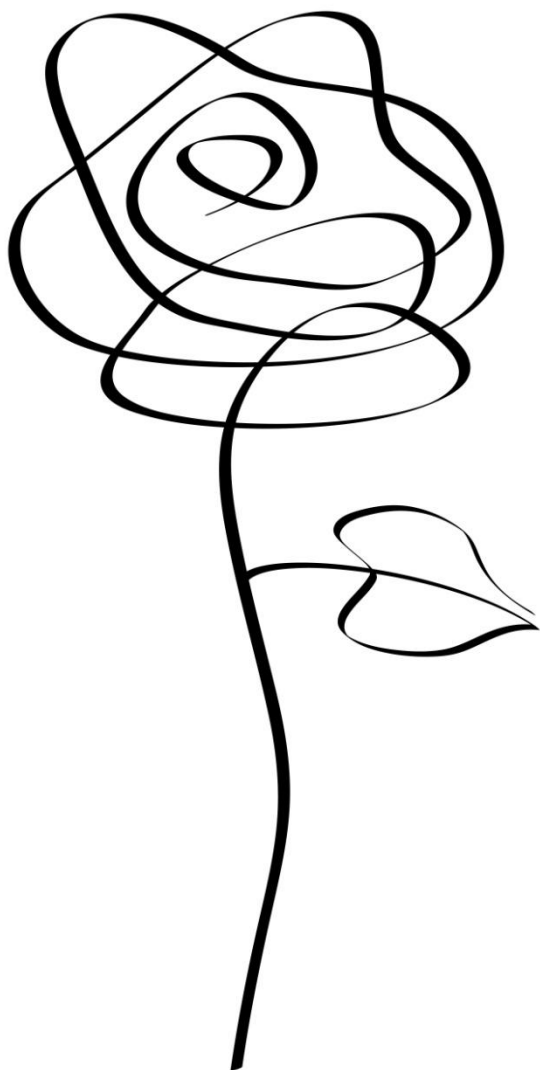


Now, the lesson to receive  
is that you have a choice—  
to believe or not believe—  
in that you should rejoice.



We are all equipped,  
with a most wonderful tool—  
a kind of built in lens.

Far from a script,  
it imaginations fuel—  
it's called your common sense!



## RELIGION/GENERAL

"Beyond doubt the best presentation on belief that I have ever seen. A daring mix; an extremely well executed depiction of a subject matter few appreciate."

—Eric Matthews

"Without exaggeration, *Beliefs* is an exceptional assemblage of both rhymes and reason."

—Ken Mason

Have you ever in your head,  
had the biggest ever thought?  
So boggling to your mind,  
that it makes you feel distraught?

If you have, or if your children have, this book is for you!

In fifty poetic verses, Sven O Mag takes you on a journey from introspection, through a discussion of the world's main religions, to considerations of reason and understanding. *Beliefs* is an artistic and thought-provoking introduction into one of the main aspects of most of our modern and ancient cultures.

The idea for the book, which is the first in a planned series on controversial subjects, came from considerations of the fact that religion is an extremely important part of today's societies, but nevertheless not taught appropriately and accordingly in school.



Sven O Mag is a philosopher and student of history. As to not starve his family, he works as an IT network security professional in Silicon Valley. Please visit him at [www.svenomag.com](http://www.svenomag.com).