

Upper 4 consider the arguments for life after death

IT'S JUST A FLESH
WOUND!



This term in Upper 4 RS we have been considering whether there are any good reasons to believe in life after death. Most religions have some conception of a soul which lives on after bodily death so we began by looking at some of the philosophical arguments for the existence of the soul. One such argument, known as the argument from divisibility, was put forward by René Descartes. His starting point was a philosophical principle known as Leibniz's Law of the Identity of Indiscernibles (Leibniz's Law for short) which states that if two entities share identical properties, they are the same things. A corollary of this then is that if two things have different properties, they must be distinct entities. We then used the famous clip from Monty Python in which the Black Knight is defeated after having all his limbs cut off in battle. We then asked the question, was he still the Black Knight even after his body had been cut up into pieces? Almost unanimously, Upper 4 classes agreed that he was. Descartes therefore would argue that, since the body can be divided but the self cannot, a person must exist as distinct from their physical body. If Descartes is right, this opens the door for believing that we can persist beyond physical death.

We have now moved on to ask the question of whether there is any empirical evidence to support belief in the continuation of a soul beyond death. Chat to those in Upper 4 to find out more about the evidence they have seen.

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