

**Rites of passage – Ceremonies that take place when one is born, baptised or welcomed into a faith, marries or dies (Religions include: Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, African Traditional and Hinduism)**

<b>Religion</b>	<b>Birth/Baptism</b> Why is this a special day and what happens on it?	<b>Weddings</b> Why is this a special day and what happens on it?	<b>Death</b> Why is this significant and what happens?
<b>Christianity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Minister sprinkles holy water on baby's head and makes sign of the cross.</li> <li>- Minister names baby giving Christian (first names), so it's called a christening</li> <li>-Symbol of baby now being welcomed into Christian community; water to wash away old life (sin)</li> <li>-Parents and godparents promise to bring up child in Christian faith</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Christians see marriage as a lifelong partnership</li> <li>- Groom and best man wait in church for bride, who enters on arm of father or whoever is giving her away</li> <li>-Wedding is both happy and serious (promises are made)</li> <li>- Usually many guests</li> <li>- Priest establishes that couple are free to marry, vows and rings are exchanged and the union is blessed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When someone dies, their body is placed in a coffin and taken to church, where mourners gather to celebrate life of one deceased</li> <li>- Prayers, readings and hymns remind mourners that the soul of the person will live on and give thanks for this</li> <li>-Eulogy often said – special speech about person who has died</li> <li>-Finally person is cremated or buried in a consecrated graveyard</li> </ul>
<b>Judaism (Jewish)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Boys are circumcised at <b>Brith Milah</b> ceremony, when 8 days old</li> <li>-Family and close friends attend brith and blessings are said. Baby is named.</li> <li>-Girls are blessed and named the first time parents attend synagogue after birth</li> <li>-Children often named after deceased loved one</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Groom covers bride's face with a veil</li> <li>-Held under a chuppah, canopy in synagogue or garden</li> <li>-Bride walks round groom 7 x – she will bring new life into marriage.</li> <li>-At end, groom breaks a glass with shoe – symbolises destruction of temple at Jerusalem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Buried day after die in a simple, wooden coffin</li> <li>-Men wear dark clothes and caps on their heads</li> <li>- Women wear hats and shawls</li> <li>- Special words are said about the person's life</li> <li>-Visitors come to house afterwards</li> <li>- Eat boiled eggs and bagels to remind of cycle of life</li> </ul>
<b>Islam (Muslims)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Muslim call to prayer is said in child's ear</li> <li>-Baby is given taste of something sweet – e.g. date juice</li> <li>-7 day ceremony Aqeeqah ceremony – scalp shaved, parents give money to charity or meat to poor</li> <li>-Some baby boys circumcised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Men and women separated for ceremony and reception</li> <li>- Nikah is held in mosque – groom and all male relatives</li> <li>-Groom commits to marriage and to pay dowry for bride (money/gold coins)</li> <li>-Groom places ring on bride's finger at reception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Muslims are always buried because they believe that their body will live again at the time of resurrection.</li> <li>-Before the funeral the body is washed and wrapped in a shroud of clean cloth. --</li> <li>-Women do not usually attend the funeral but will often visit the grave and take flowers.</li> </ul>

<b>Hindu</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Child welcomed in ceremony in which some honey is put in its mouth and name of God is whispered in ear</li> <li>-10-12 days after born, priest announces baby's name and prayers are said</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Hindu bride provides seat for groom, offers him water, milk, curd and honey</li> <li>-Couple walk round sacred fire</li> <li>-After vows, silk cloths are knotted to symbolise that they are tied together</li> <li>-Offer rice to sacred fire - symbolises life of health and riches</li> <li>-At end of ceremony couple take 7 steps around sacred fire; share a promise/hope at each step</li> <li>-Once married, woman wears a red dot on forehead</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hindus believe soul of person needs to be released by burning in sacred fire as it returns to earth many times</li> <li>- Body wrapped in a cloth and laid in a coffin carried by six male relatives</li> <li>- Special ritual performed by male relative</li> <li>- Three days after cremation, family collect ashes to scatter, if possible on River Ganges, which is their holy river</li> </ul>
<b>African Traditional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Baby must be introduced to clan or family, including the ancestors</li> <li>- Clan gathers for ceremony; usually white goat is sacrificed with a sacred assegai</li> <li>-Baby's mother uses skin from animal to carry baby on her back</li> <li>-Father/grandfather says special words to baby for ancestors to hear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Xhosa and Zulu cultures groom's family pay lobola for the bride - used to be cattle, now usually cash. Lobola is higher if wife has good education.</li> <li>-White flag is invitation to community to attend wedding. Many come before the function - invited to taste food and beer being prepared.</li> <li>-On wedding day, bride and groom walk in front of guests in family home</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-In Xhosa culture, person is buried, but ceremony (which lasts up to 2 days) is held after a few months</li> <li>- The family make traditional beer, some of which is dried out and sprinkled around the house to say goodbye to deceased person and to thank the ancestors</li> </ul> <p>(Hlumisa Jacobs, 6V)</p>
<b>Buddhism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-No special ceremony so people generally follow local customs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Joyous occasion; people do not usually cry and there is happy music</li> <li>-Body usually cremated because Buddha himself was cremated</li> </ul>

Sources of information: [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion)

Usborne book of world religions by Susan Meredith

Rites of Passage by Jacqueline Dineen

Christianity (Eyewitness Guide) by Philip Wilkinson

A faith like mine by Laura Buller