



University of Connecticut
Center for Survey Research & Analysis

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***Hartford Courant / CSRA Poll:*
 Nutmegers and the Bible – It's All Good**

Connecticut residents are firm believers in the positive elements of the Bible, but they are somewhat skeptical when it comes to the darker side of things, according to a new statewide survey jointly sponsored by the *Hartford Courant* and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut. Results of the *Courant / CSRA* poll show that while 70% believe that God "absolutely" exists, a much lower 40% absolutely believe that Satan does. Residents extend this positive outlook to their image of God. Their Almighty is a merciful, rather than vengeful, one.

	God	Satan
Absolutely exists	70%	40%
Probably exists	19	24
Probably does not exist	4	13
Definitely does not exists	4	17

The Positives

Overall, 70% of residents believe absolutely that God exists, and another 19% feel God "probably" exists. Only 9% feel God either may not, or absolutely does not exist. Catholics are more positive about God's existence than are Protestants – 81% of Catholics say God absolutely exists, compared to 65% of Protestants. This difference is one of certainty, however, not general belief. Overall, 95% of Catholics and 94% of Protestants believe God is more likely to exist than not.

	All	Catholics	Protestants
Absolutely exists			
God	70%	81%	65%
Heaven	53%	58%	51%

A majority of residents are also absolutely certain about the existence of Heaven. Fifty-three percent of Nutmegers believe absolutely in the existence of Heaven, and another 30% feel Heaven probably exists. Six percent of residents believe Heaven probably does not exist, and 7% feel it absolutely does not. Here again, Catholics demonstrate more certainty – 58% feel Heaven absolutely exists, compared to 51% of Protestants.

Angels are also thought more likely to exist than not – 48% of residents think angels absolutely exist, and another 27% feel angels probably exist. Nineteen percent of Connecticut residents think that either angels probably or definitely do not exist.

The Negatives

Interestingly, while overwhelming proportions of residents believe in the existence of some of the good things associated with the Bible, far fewer believe in some of the key negative aspects. In stark contrast to the 70% who believe God absolutely exists, only 40% are certain that Satan does. Another 24% of residents believe that Satan probably exists, and 30% are either absolutely or probably sure that the devil does not exist. While residents are more skeptical about the devil's existence than about God's, they are still more likely to believe in Satan's existence than not – 64% think that Satan at least probably exists.

Exists:	Satan	Hell	Demons
Absolutely does	40%	38%	27%
Probably does	24	28	30
Probably / Definitely does not	30	28	36

Satan's realm – Hell – is also in relative doubt. Just over a third – 38% -- absolutely believe in Hell, compared to the 53% who believe Heaven definitely exists. Another 28% think Hell probably exists, and an equal 28% believe it either probably or absolutely does not. Twenty-seven percent of Nutmegers believe that demons absolutely exist, and another 30% believe they probably do.

The one thing in the survey that residents do not believe in is the coming of Armageddon. When asked whether Armageddon will eventually happen, only 41% believe it either absolutely or probably will. Thirty percent believe Armageddon probably will not happen, and another 15% say it definitely will not. Fourteen percent of residents are unsure about the likelihood of Armageddon.

Religious denomination makes no real difference in whether residents believe in the darker side of scripture. Catholics and Protestants in Connecticut are equally likely to believe in Satan, hell and demons.

The Nature of God

In the age-old debate over the Old and New Testaments' differing portrayals of God as vengeful and merciful respectively, Nutmegers come down firmly on the merciful side. Among those residents who believe in God, nearly three-quarters feel the term "merciful" describes God "very well." Another 17% believe merciful describes God "somewhat well, and only 5% feel it does so either "not very" or "not at all" well.

Describes God:	Merciful	Vengeful
Very well	73%	8%
Somewhat well	17	12
Not very well	4	16
Not at all well	1	57

The term "vengeful," on the other hand, does not apply to God, according to residents. A 57% majority of residents who believe in God say vengeful describes God "not at all well." Another 16% feel it does not describe God very well, and only 20% think it describes God at least somewhat well.

This survey was conducted by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut, among 488 adult residents of Connecticut from August 15 – August 21, 2007. The data are weighted according to U.S. Census figures for age and education in Connecticut, as well as by household selection probability. A random-digit-dial technique was used to select respondent households (sampling both listed and unlisted telephone numbers). Respondents were selected randomly within households. The margin of sampling error for the survey is ± 4.4 percentage points. Questions that may affect each other are separated throughout the survey.

In your opinion, how well does the word "MERCIFUL" describe God - Very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not at all well?

Very well	73%
Somewhat well	17
Not very well	4
Not at all well	1
Don't know (vol.)	4
Refused (vol.)	1

In your opinion, how well does the word "VENGEFUL" describe God - Very well, somewhat well, not very well, or not at all well?

Very well	8%
Somewhat well	12
Not very well	16
Not at all well	57
Don't know (vol.)	7
Refused (vol.)	1

Does GOD absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exists	70%
Probably exists	19
Probably does NOT exist	4
Absolutely does NOT exist	4
Don't know (vol.)	3
Refused (vol.)	1

Does SATAN absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exists	40%
Probably exists	24
Probably does NOT exist	13
Absolutely does NOT exist	17
Don't know (vol.)	6
Refused (vol.)	0

Does HEAVEN absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exists	53%
Probably exists	30
Probably does NOT exist	6
Absolutely does NOT exist	7
Don't know (vol.)	4
Refused (vol.)	0

Does HELL absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exists	38%
Probably exists	28
Probably does NOT exist	15
Absolutely does NOT exist	13
Don't know (vol.)	6
Refused (vol.)	1

Do ANGELS absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exist	48%
Probably exist	27
Probably do NOT exist	11
Absolutely do NOT exist	8
Don't know (vol.)	6
Refused (vol.)	0

Do DEMONS absolutely exist, probably exist, probably NOT exist, or absolutely NOT exist?

Absolutely exist	27%
Probably exist	30
Probably do NOT exist	21
Absolutely do NOT exist	16
Don't know (vol.)	6
Refused (vol.)	0

Do you think ARMAGEDDON will absolutely happen, probably happen, probably NOT happen, or absolutely NOT happen?

Absolutely happen	18%
Probably happen	23
Probably NOT happen	30
Absolutely NOT happen	15
Don't know (vol.)	14
Refused (vol.)	1