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Revision

Test yourself: Pascal's thoughts

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After reading the article on pp. 12–15 of the magazine, see if you can answer this true or false quiz.

| Statement | True or false? |
|---|----------------|
| Pascal published a book on the conic sections in algebra when he was 17. | |
| Modern computers are also descendants of his calculating machines — a proto-computer that he made in 1752 still works. | |
| Pascal's mother had died when he was very young and from 1646 the remaining family all became closely associated with a religious movement based in a convent at Port-Royal. This movement, led by Jean Giullebert, was a splinter group from the Catholic sect known as Jansenism. | |
| Paschal's personal journey reached its peak late on the night of Monday 23 November 1654, between 10.30 p.m. and 12.30 a.m. He had a sort of personal epiphany of the type that is often described as a religious experience. | |
| Pascal held that people's greatness comes from not realising that they are inconsequential and wretched. | |
| Pascal's wager forms a neat, self-contained adjunct to the arguments of natural moral law. | |
| For Pascal it is not the heart, but reason that craves God. | |
| For Pascal, Descartes was merely depicting a sort of 'God of the Gaps', filling in the limited space available before contemporary science could take over and provide answers. | |

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| <p>He realised that people's paradoxical natures (characterised by both intellectual potential and wretchedness), is met by a divine paradox. This entails both the omnipotence of divine glory and the weakness of Christ.</p> | |
| <p>Pascal lived at the same time as another great Enlightenment figure, Spinoza (1632–77).</p> | |

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