

## THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

Paul once predicted “that in the last days perilous times will come: for men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away” (Second Timothy 3:1-5).

I wonder if there’s anyone who would venture to say that Paul’s prediction has not, at least in part, come to pass in The New Age Movement. Business or motivational seminars, books, environmental issues, health care, movies, music, politics, public schools, television—if just one of these things touches your life, then (whether you realize it or not), you’ve been exposed to The New Age Movement (NAM); the NAM, very deceitfully, affects practically every aspect of our world, and we must be aware of it.

### Definition of the NAM

Before we get too deep into this first installment of our series on this subject, it’s important to at least attempt to define this movement. One writer said that “The New Age movement is an umbrella term referring to a variety of people, organizations, events, practices, and ideas. Sociologically speaking, it isn’t a centrally organized movement with one human leader.... Rather it’s a constellation of like-minded people and groups all desiring a spiritual and social change that will usher in a New Age of self-actualization” (Douglas Groothuis, Confronting the New Age, 18).

Another writer said that “The New Age movement is an extremely large, loosely structured network of organizations and individuals bound together by common values (based in mysticism and monism—the world view that ‘all is one’) and a common vision (a coming ‘new age’ of peace and mass enlightenment, the ‘Age of Aquarius’)” (Elliot Miller, A Crash Course on the New Age Movement, 15).

Perhaps the best definition I’ve read, however, is this one: “The New Age Movement is an eclectic (selective), occult-based, evolution-promoting, man-centered, self-deifying, pervasive worldview (philosophy of life) that seeks ... to bring about a transformation of society in order to achieve the ultimate goal of a new world order of complete global harmony. The key idea is that the NAM is a ... philosophy of life that influences one’s daily decisions and actions. It is its own religion, which, like all religions other than Christianity, centers on the individual’s efforts to transform himself, to make himself right with God, yes, even to achieve the status of godhood” (Eldon Winker, The New Age Is Lying to You, 16).

### Four Major World Views of God

To get a clear picture of this movement, it’d help to identify the four major world views of God.

1. **Monotheism is the belief in one God.** Jews hold to one God, Yahweh, in a single entity without Jesus. Muslims hold to one god, Allah, in a single entity with Jesus as his prophet. Christians hold to one God in three entities, Jesus being the Son, second in authority.
2. **Atheism is the belief in no God.** Secular Humanists hold that the very idea of God is irrational and irrelevant. Agnostics hold that they can’t know whether God exists.
3. **Polytheism is the belief in many gods.** Pagans hold to the Greek/Roman mythology of many gods, Zeus being the head god. Mormons hold that the God of the Bible was once a man and that man, too, can become God.
4. **Pantheism is the belief in everything being god.** Hindus hold that god is the one world-soul of which each individual is but a reflection. Taoists hold that man finds peace when he becomes one with nature.

Ultimately, the NAM is both polytheistic and pantheistic in nature.

With the definition and these world-religions information before our minds, it isn't difficult to perceive that the modern day NAM in the United States is an "Invasion from the East," as David Jeremiah put it in his book entitled The Invasion of Other Gods.

Although the NAM is comprised of nearly every type of religion, I believe we can safely say that Hinduism has been the greatest influencer in this "new spirituality" that has swept our country.

## Hinduism's Influence in the US

**What is Hinduism?** Hinduism is so generic that it's the most difficult religion to define, but we do know this much: not only is it pantheistic (the belief that all is God and God is all), but it's also laden with occultic beliefs, rituals, and practices; I'm talking about the magical, mystical, metaphysical, and supernatural, such as psychic phenomenon, reincarnation, and all the varieties of yoga. Connecting Hinduism's pantheism with yoga, let me cite one of the meditations that's repeated during yoga sessions: "I am the light of lights; I am the sun [that which everything revolves around].... In me the whole world moves and has its being.... I existed before the world began.... I permeate and pervade every atom.... Oh, how beautiful I am.... I am the whole universe ... everything is in me." Incidentally, did you know that the term "aum" that's chanted in yoga sessions means, "I AM," which is taken from God's own words to describe Himself (Genesis 3:14)? And did you also know doctors claim that if you tell yourself something long enough or enough times, you'll begin to really believe it?

Doesn't all this remind you of the Satan's words to Eve in Eden: "God knows that in the day you eat of [this fruit] your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing..." (Genesis 3:5a)? Satan promised a revealing of a secret knowledge if she'd disobey God; in other words, to disobey God, to ignore His word, to assert one's own will is the path to enlightenment. (Sounds a little like the mysteriousness found among the Masons and the Mormons.) Satan led Eve to believe that there'd no longer be any distinction between Creator and creature—they'd become one; this is the very foundation of the NAM—man is God. However, God once said to the king of Tyre, "Because your heart is lifted up ... you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas,' yet you are a man and not a god..." (Ezekiel 28:2). God wants us all to remember that we're not equal with Him, that we're not Him and He isn't us, and we're not together everything everywhere; rather, God is in Heaven and we're on Earth (Ecclesiastes 5:2).

Incidentally, concerning reincarnation, God teaches us that we're mere humans beings in need of salvation with one life to live, while Hinduism says that we're divine and salvation is a process that may take millions of lifetimes to work out; "karma" is working out all our spiritual imperfections through many reincarnations until we finally merge back into God.

**How did Hinduism become part of our American culture?** In the mid 1800's, a Hindu priest named Ramakrishna began to preach the unity of all religions, or, as we hear it said today, "All paths lead to God"; since he held that there really isn't anything but human opinions anyway, Ramakrishna emphasized experience over doctrinal accuracy. After an English aristocrat was placed in a trance from touching Ramakrishna, he began to push for a renewal of spiritual life in Europe and America, establishing his legacy in our western civilization by founding The Vedanta Society (a system of Hindu philosophy based on the Vedas—an assortment of books considered to be divinely inspired by Hindu gods). The roots began to grow stronger when Maharishi appeared in the 1960's to bring a message of utopia to America—a virtual Heaven on Earth called, "transcendental meditation" or "yoga."

Incidentally, the term "hippie" refers to someone who was "hip to" or "in tune to" or "aware of" himself—someone who has "found himself." So it isn't difficult at all to see how the self-movement originated from Hinduism; just remember the yoga quote I gave earlier where "me," "myself," and "I" are all that's emphasized. It seems that Buddhist, Tao, and Hindu ideas came along at just the right time—the 60's and 70's—when people were searching for meaning in life: as Satan tempted Eve with the realization of secret knowledge, so the NAM tempts people with enlightenment through channeled messages, psychic readings, and meditation.

## Five Major Beliefs of the NAM

1. **God is the universe, and the universe is God.** This pantheistic view is illustrated by a character in J. D. Salinger's short story entitled "Teddy," wherein a youngster recalls watching his little sister drink her milk; he said, "All of a sudden I saw that she was God. And the milk was God. All she was doing was pouring God into God." This view says that God is in everything, so whatever exists, whether person, pig, or pickle, is part of God: in fact, a medium name Jane Roberts wrote, "This ... gestalt [psychological phenomenon], which you may call 'God' if you prefer, is ... so unbelievable that ... its energy is within and behind all universes, systems, and fields. It is indeed aware of each sparrow that falls, for it is each sparrow that falls" ([The Seth Material](#)). With this being the primary doctrine of the NAM, it isn't difficult to see how well the theory of evolution goes hand in hand with new age thought.
2. **The cosmos is completely unified.** All reality—God, man, time, space, and energy—are all connected in one divine consciousness. As a person circles the eternal wheel of existence, he regains the divine realization that he, and all existence, is God; this can also be called "monism" or "divine mind" or "universal energy" or even "the force," yes, as in "May 'the force' be with you" from Star Wars. A news report once told of a woman who stood with her eyes closed and her hands grasping the leaves of a tree; she said she was getting nourishment from nature by becoming one with the tree—she was attempting to make a connection with "cosmic consciousness." This "cosmic oneness" is what's behind all the ideas of the New World Order and Religious Syncretism. The New World Order or Globalism refers to the idea of international peace (like the bumper sticker that says, "Visualize World Peace") and international unity—utopia on Earth (something like what the "Jehovah Witnesses" teach). [Incidentally, some call this "aquarianism," as in "The Age of Aquarius." Why? Because an aquarium signifies a collection of hundreds or even thousands of various types of life living in perfect balance and harmony in one ecological system.] Religious Syncretism refers to "a fusion of religions." This belief holds that Muhammed, Buddha, Krishna, and even Jesus were simply men who experienced the higher consciousness of divine oneness and the god or godhood within them. The idea, then, is that one day world utopia will include the fusion of all religions. You and I know, however, that the Bible teaches that God gave spirit only to man (Genesis 2:7 & Ecclesiastes 12:7) and only man is, therefore, accountable for his life (Second Corinthians 5:10)—plants and animals are excluded; you and I also know that the Bible teaches that Jesus is the only way (John 14:6), and that He wasn't a mere man or mere prophet as Muhammed, Buddha, and Krishna (John 14:9).
3. **There's a higher consciousness.** In other words, when we're walking around in a sound body and sound mind, we can't be religious; we must get out of our bodies and minds so that we can ascend to the next level—the higher consciousness. Through trances, mediums, holistic health, martial arts, crystals, and even flowers (as in "the flower children") we can attain the higher consciousness that all is one, all is God, and we are God; then we can be assimilated into the universe, thus fulfilling the true meaning of life.
4. **There's no difference between good and bad.** If everything is God, then what's bad is God and what's good is God, so there can't a distinction; our only "sin" in the NAM is ignorance of our true divine identity. A channeled message from 35,000 year old Ramtha through a Mrs. J. Z. Knight reads, "God ... has never been outside of you—it is you. God, of itself, is holy without goodness or evil.... God simply is. I am here to help you realize that you are an ongoing immortal essence. There is no voice that will ever teach you greater than your own.... Who you are this day is the answer to everything you have ever wanted." People who hold to this view might say, "You're a Christian? Hey, whatever. Just do your thing; whatever works for you is fine with me. We're all part of the universe; we're all part of the same thing anyway." In other words, since there's no sin, it doesn't matter. You and I know, however, that the Bible teaches that there is a difference between good and evil and that we're supposed to distinguish between them, avoiding the evil (Hebrews 5:12-14, e.g.).

5. **Experience is conclusive.** In other words, we validate what we believe through experience—"I know this is real because I feel it" or "because it happened to me"; subjectivism has become the norm in our religious world: "I saw the UFO with my own eyes." Or, "I spoke with my dead husband." Or "I saw a 500 foot Jesus who talked to me." Or "God spoke to me and told me to tell you such and such." Or, like the Mormons say, "I know this is absolutely true because I feel it in my heart." Since each of us is divine, we create our own realities, truth becomes relative, and "If it feels good and right to you, then go for it." (Incidentally, we must be cautious of self-help books and motivation seminars such as The Forum, Lifespring, and EST.)

You know, it's nearly impossible to talk to people who've had a "spiritual" experience until they open up to the idea that unless their experience is based on biblical truth, it's unreliable; people have forgotten that Satan masquerades as an angel of light (Second Corinthians 11:13-15).

### Conclusionary Remarks

Due to such a belief system, it isn't at all difficult to see how it has led many to Satanism. See, if you commit yourself very deeply to the NAM, Satanism is the logical conclusion. If you become self-absorbed, if you come to believe that you are your own god and that, therefore, there's really no right or wrong in what you think, say, or do so that you have come to feel unconditionally good about yourself, then you'll want to show your appreciation to the one who pointed you to this knowledge, a knowledge that God didn't want you to have.

Listen to a quote from another woman who some consider to be the grandmother of the modern NAM, Helena Blavatsky: "The [name] Satan ... belongs by right to the first cruelest 'adversary' of all other gods—Jehovah, not to the serpent which spoke only words of sympathy and wisdom.... The Great Serpent of the Garden of Eden and the 'Lord God' are identical.... Satan ... is the real creator and benefactor, the Father of Spiritual mankind. For it is he ... who opened the eyes of [man].... And he who was the first to whisper, 'in the day ye eat thereof ye shall be as Elohim, knowing good and evil,' can only be regarded in the light of a savior. An adversary to Jehovah, ... he still remains ... the ever loving messenger ... who conferred on us spiritual instead of physical immortality." Talk about blasphemy! What patience our God must have! See, in the mind of some, Satan would be one of those who long ago attained to the totality of the higher consciousness of his godhood, and he only wants to help us attain it as well.

Preachers have warned us for many years about how changing the names of sinful activities doesn't change their sinful nature. Listen to one NAM proponent: "One of the biggest advantages we have as New Agers is once the occult, metaphysical, and New Age terminology is removed, we have concepts and techniques that are very acceptable to the general public. So we can change the names and demonstrate the power, and in doing so, we can open the door to millions who normally would not be receptive."

Since many designations and names of New Age beliefs and practices have already changed, it's a MUST that we know what the NAM stands for in order that we may be aware of its very deceptive ways of penetrating our thinking with notions that sound good and right. Here's an example of why. A few years ago a U.S. News and World Report poll asked, "Do you believe in God or a universal spirit?" and 93% said "Yes." A "universal spirit," however, could now refer to anything from a platypus to a plant. "One nation under God" has lost its meaning in our world of pantheism and polytheism. Since the Lord's church probably doesn't really recognize the need to, I urge Christians to be sure the people we talk to about God understand where we're coming from—that we are absolute monotheists—people who believe there is one, and 'only' one, God (Deuteronomy 6:4 & Ephesians 4:6) and that He (Yahweh) exists outside the universe that He created.

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[Tony E. Denton, October 2000. ASiteForTheLord.com]