

Hatha Yoga, the Coiled Serpent, & Undiscerning Christians

by Jeremy James



A great many people today are practising yoga, specifically the kind known as Hatha Yoga. They are doing so, they claim, purely for its alleged health benefits and not for any religious or philosophical reason. As a result many Bible-believing Christians have taken up Hatha yoga on the understanding that, if it is treated simply as a set of physical exercises, it will have absolutely no effect on their spiritual life. But they are wrong.

The information in this brochure will show why they are deceived and why yoga (of any kind) is not just incompatible with Biblical Christianity, but hostile to it.

What is yoga?

Yoga lies at the heart of Hinduism. It comprises a number of physical postures (*asanas*) which are held for a set period, during which time the practitioner engages in meditation (*dhyana*), usually with the use of a *mantra*, and breathes in a prescribed way (*pranayama*). There are at least seven systems of yoga, of which Hatha yoga is one. Every system has the same goal, namely to bring the subject into a state of union with the so-called Divine Consciousness.

Accordingly, the word yoga means 'yoked' or joined together in perfect union. The yogi is striving to become one with Brahm, the Hindu godhead. He believes that each person is in essence a divine being who has not yet awoken to his divinity. The purpose of yoga is to awaken this dormant divinity and free the practitioner from bondage, both to the physical body and to the endless cycle of reincarnation.

It is impossible to separate the various physical aspects of yoga from the philosophy in which they are embedded. The yogi believes that all life is *maya*, an illusion, and that only through the disciplines of yoga, both mental and physical, can he transcend the illusion and experience enlightenment (*moksha*). The various techniques that he uses are designed primarily to slow down all of his bodily processes and enter as far as he can into a disembodied state. The more he disengages from the reality around him, the less he is subject to *maya* or illusion. Thus, in a real sense, he is simulating death. His goal is perfect stillness, complete emptiness, the total submergence of 'self' in the great Universal Self. He also believes that his yogic disciplines break down and dissipate his *karma*, the compendium of unresolved past actions, both in this life and in previous lives, that are supposedly holding him prisoner in his physical body.

Is this Biblical?

Now pause for a moment. How much of this is in agreement with Biblical Christianity? The yogi believes that both the universe and his body are an illusion, that he is basically divine, that all human conduct is governed by the unforgiving mechanism known as *karma*, that the soul reincarnates again and again in accordance with its *karma*, and that man saves himself by dissolving his *karma*, transcending the veil of *maya*, and entering into conscious union with the great Universal Self (which Buddhists call the Void).

The Bible teaches – loudly and clearly! – that, not only is all of this completely false, but that it is dangerous. Man is not divine. Creation is not an illusion. Soul does not reincarnate. Sin is not karma. God is not inside man, waiting to be found. And man cannot save himself!

The yogi in his vanity believes all of Satan's lies.

How, then, can a Christian expect to eat at the same table and not be affected?



But the exercises are purely physical!

'Hey, stop right there,' he protests. 'The exercises are purely physical!' Really? If someone were to randomly adopt a bodily posture that happened to match a particular *asana*, then it *would* be physical. But when one deliberately adopts a posture that is intended to influence both his mind and his body, just as the yoga *asanas* do, then it is psychosomatic, and when a breathing technique (*pranayama*) and meditation (*dhyana*) are included, the psychosomatic aspect is amplified.



The whole philosophy of yoga is built on the belief that the human body is an illusion produced by *maya*. This means that, by using these postures, the individual is subscribing one way or another to the philosophy that underpins them – otherwise she (most western practitioners are female) wouldn't be attending a yoga class. The fact that she may dismiss the philosophy as irrelevant or incidental doesn't make any difference.

Hindu Missionaries

Westerners may be surprised to know that Hinduism has its missionaries. They generally spread their religious beliefs in the same way – through yoga. They know, and have demonstrated thousands of times in practice, that if they can get a westerner to take up yoga for its alleged health benefits (or for relaxation), they can fill his mind with a broad range of religious ideas that he would otherwise reject. Westerners naively absorb these ideas, despite their pantheism and their blatantly unbiblical content.

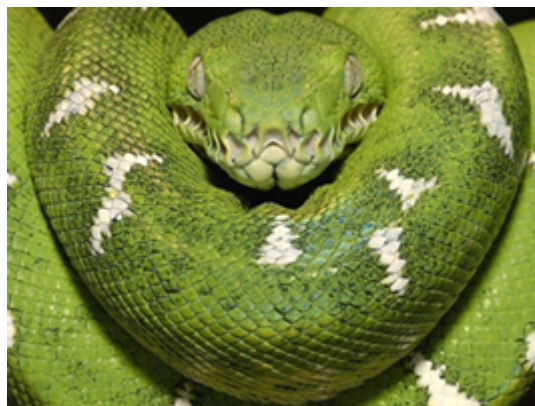
Yoga involves spending a set period of time alone every day in an introverted state. The practitioner empties her mind and remains unnaturally still, as though imitating a corpse. She may enter a light trance which in turn will affect the way she perceives her daily life. It should hardly be surprising, therefore, that many regular practitioners of Hatha yoga drift gradually into the paganism of the New Age movement.

Christians who indulge in this foolishness are putting themselves in harm's way. They have rejected the peace and joy that is found only in Christ and have placed their trust instead in the idolatrous practices of eastern mysticism. Rather than praying to the LORD and rejoicing in their salvation, they have chosen instead to behave like corpses and enter the Void.

The Kundalini or 'coiled serpent'

Any branch of yoga, including Hatha Yoga, can arouse the *kundalini*, an alleged repository of potent psychic energy that Hindus believe is enfolded in their lowest spinal *chakra*. Indian gurus and yogis routinely warn of the suffering the practitioner will endure if he activates this 'coiled serpent' prematurely. In reality, this upsurge of *kundalini* energy is a manifestation of demonic possession, where the torment endured is determined by the number and type of demons involved.

Of course, most yoga instructors in the West neglect to mention any of this. They deny that their brand of yoga has a psychic dimension or that it can open practitioners to unwanted super-natural influences.



Christian Yoga is a Dangerous Lie

Christian Yoga is a dangerous lie. No one who loves the LORD should have anything to do with it:

"But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; All those who hate me love death." (Proverbs 8:36)

If you want inner peace, then turn to Jesus, the source and foundation of all peace. Don't open yourself to harmful supernatural influences by practising yoga and foolishly allowing the fallen angels to enter your life. Yoga acts as an implicit invitation to these entities who, in accordance with their depraved nature, continually roam this world, seeking to ensnare naive and undiscerning souls. Many testimonies (check the Internet) show how they deviously entice their victims with soothing energies and beautiful light. The Bible becomes less 'interesting', the New Age starts to seem more attractive, and very soon the individual is heading into darkness.

Please give careful thought to the wonderful promise in God's holy Word:

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusts in Thee." (Isaiah 26:3)

**Jeremy James
Ireland
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