

# MEDITATION—AYURVEDA THE ANCIENT HEALING TRADITION OF INDIA PART I

## THE GREAT WISDOM OF THE EAST?

While attending a mini seminar on alternative medicine, I was impressed by the enthusiasm of those putting on this demonstration. When asked how these treatments work, the answer was “we do not know but it works.” There was comment about the “great wisdom from the East.” It was insinuated that great knowledge of healing from the past had been abandoned, but it was being resurrected and we were being recipients of it.

This comment brought to memory that which I had learned of the healing methods of the past, from the West and East, but I could not recall any knowledge in the history of medicine that we were neglecting. In fact, I could only give thanks that we had left most of the old knowledge to the past. This was especially true of the basic concepts of anatomy, physiology, and disease including the old concept of its cause. The old world view explaining man’s existence, his purpose in life, and his future, is definitely not in harmony with the Biblical world view.

Therefore, I determined to prepare a presentation about the ancient healing methods of the East. The West has its own history in occult healing modalities, and today we see a blending of the two, hence the expression “East–West.”

Outside of God’s original plan for health and healing, the oldest continuous system of medicine is called *Ayurveda*. It had its beginning in the Indus River valley in northern India sometime before 1700 B.C.

...It was established by the same ancient sages (holy men) who produced India’s original system of meditation, yoga and astrology. Ayurveda has both a spiritual and practical basis,...<sup>1</sup>

The word “Ayurveda” is derived from two words of the Sanskrit language. “Ayus” and “vid,” meaning life and knowledge respectively. Ayus, or life, represents a combination of the body, the sense organs, the mind, and the soul. The Ayurveda healing tradition is an integral part of the Hindu religion. *Vedas* are ancient Hindu books of knowledge said to have been “divinely revealed” to ancient sages (holy men). The Vedas, written in Sanskrit, were started more than 3500 years ago.<sup>2</sup>

The Vedas are believed to embody the rhythm, knowledge, and arrangement of the universe, the secrets to sickness, health and healing. As the living sage of astrology in India, Dr. B.V. Raman has written,

The influences of planets on human diseases appear with such persistence that it is impossible to ignore their effect. The sun and the moon provide the strongest influence on human healing, and their movements indicate changes not only in the seasons but also in human health and behavior.<sup>3</sup>

According to Ayurveda, everything in the material creation is composed of combinations of the five elements: space, air, fire, water and earth. These five elements derive from, and are the manifestations of, an unmanifest and undifferentiated *Creative Principle*, which is One. (universal energy).<sup>4</sup>

The Creative Principle is believed to manifest throughout the universe as *two great antagonistic forces* which continually create, sustain and destroy all that exists in the universe. These forces (in Sanskrit) are called *rajas* and *tamas*, to the Chinese, yin and yang, (dualism). In Ayurveda, there is a belief that three psychic forces govern the mental and spiritual health. This system is derived from astrology.

The basis of all treatments in the Ayurvedic system is the balancing of the life energies within us.<sup>5</sup>

Meditation is a primary and fundamental tool in this balancing therapy which uses diets, herbs, mineral substances and aromas as well.<sup>6</sup>

Ayurveda teaches that the “mind-body” has the intelligence and ability to heal itself. This intelligence is believed to operate in the macrocosm (cosmos)—which also directs the yearly migration of birds, seasons and their changes, the movement of tides, the positioning and movement of the planets and stars in the universe, and also the human physiology referred to as the microcosm.

It is the sole function of Ayurveda to promote the flow of this great intelligence (universal energy) through each and every human being.<sup>7</sup>

In the Hindu thought and in Ayurveda healing tradition, the “Creative Principle,” as an indescribable force, might be referred to as the unified energy field which underlies all of creation. Ayurvedic physicians see man simultaneously as energy and matter and view diseases in the same way.

The previous paragraphs have given very briefly the basic astrological—cosmological foundation from which Ayurvedic medicine is derived. We will now look at how it is applied. The dominant healing practice of India was Ayurveda. It is interesting that there was also conventional medical care. India was known for its advanced surgical skills during the dark ages, while Europe lost its skills and knowledge. So we had alongside each other, without apparent conflict, astrological—based practice of healing, as well as medical practice that was not based on the Hindu religion and cosmology. The basic therapeutics developed in Ayurvedic medicine gradually spread to the world: first to Tibet, then on to China, Japan and to the rest of the East. It also spread to Persia and the Arabian Empire in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. In the middle ages it showed up in Europe<sup>8</sup> and it is evident that in the United States its influence was present in methods of treatment in the 1700’s and early 1800’s.

In Ayurvedic medicine, two forces make up these supposed divisions of energy, together called *life force*. A third division of energy is added and is made up of parts of the other two.

Man is said to have had his *origin* from the mingling of these forces in a proper balance. In Ayurvedic teachings, health depends upon the perfect balance among the three forces.

When imbalance is present in these energy divisions, called *doshas*, dysfunction or disease supposedly occurs. It is believed that balancing the doshas will restore health. Ayurvedic medicine has as *its goal the balancing of doshas*, these divisions of energy.

The doshas are identified with the three supposed universal forces:  
sun, moon, and wind.<sup>9</sup>



**Scales with yin and yang**

## **CHAKRAS–AURA**

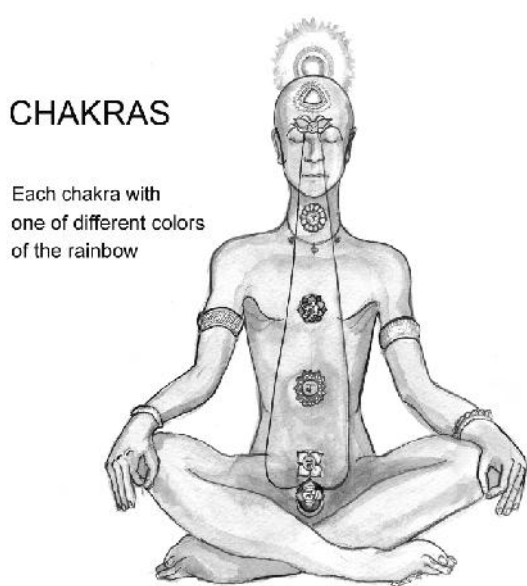
Ayurveda teaches that there are *seven* centers of concentrated, focused, universal energy in the body, which collectively form an *aura*, an invisible light to the “non-sensitive,” which surrounds a person. There are *sensitives* who say they can see the colored light of the aura. These energy centers start at the coccyx area and then are said to be located in the sacral, mid-abdomen, heart, throat, behind the eyes and on the top of the head, all having connection to or close association with the spinal cord. A center is called “*chakra*,” meaning “wheel,” which can be considered a “whirling vortex” of energy. Think of a cyclone as a vortex of swirling cone shaped energy powered by hot air beneath and cold above, representing dualism. Dualism is incorporated in the explanation of the swirling energy of the chakra as being powered by doshas (rajas & tamas) to bring energy balance. Dualism is a foundational concept in Ayurveda and Oriental religions.

Chakras are supposed to promote and regulate the spread of universal energy to the organs of the body, each center focusing on distributing energy to certain organs in its anatomical area. The energy is distributed from the chakras via “*nadis*” which are invisible non-anatomical channels proceeding out from the chakras to carry energy. There is said to be 72,000 nadis.

Ayurveda is founded upon belief in the universal energy theory and postulate that all living objects have an energy field outside of, and surrounding the body, which is said to influence other energy fields. Seven rays of colored lights constitute this energy field, believed to

represent seven endocrine glands. The harmony and energy balance of the individual can be ascertained by observing this aura. Ayurveda also teaches that:

Every animate and inanimate substance, provided its function is not impaired, has an “aura”, which exists because of the life forces inherent in the natural constituents of its form. This life force, whether from mineral, vegetable, animal or human sources, creates a common auric realm or plane, which is a storehouse of pure, untapped energy. On this plane the mineral and vegetable kingdoms are constantly engaged, through their own channels of communication, in transferring their particular life force to the more subtle natures of animals and humans. Thus the aura depicts the sum total of all these qualities and presents a complete and whole picture of the subject.<sup>10</sup>



**Chakras**

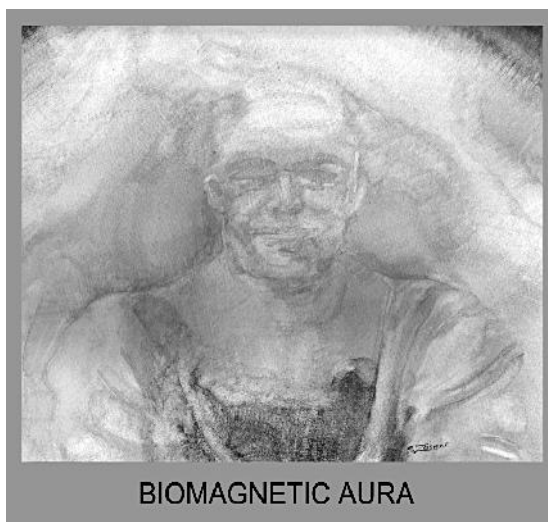
Ann Hill, in her book *A Visual Encyclopedia of Unconventional Medicine*, describes the *aura* as seven rays of the *presumed* human unified energy field, forming seven colors. Each individual is said to have different frequencies of these rays. She tells us that the aura can be drawn by a trained *sensitive*, viewing the aura, or by observing some object an individual has handled. A *sensitive* of special skills is said to be able to determine a person's mental and spiritual state as well as to diagnose illness if present, by inspection of the aura. The nature of the color, bright or dull, reveals and determines the physical condition and/or health, and also a person's spiritual status.

This *aura* or *magnetic energy field* cannot be demonstrated by science. It can be perceived only by persons who are *sensitives* or *mediumistic*.<sup>11</sup>

In the chapter on universal energy we learned about the hypothesized concept of the division of universal energy into seven electromagnetic frequency levels. The lowest frequency level is

at the speed of light and all other levels are at a greatly increased frequency speed. This concept is not in harmony with known laws of physics that are understood today. The subject of the seven chakras is not the same as seven frequency levels. The lower chakras in the anatomical positions are said to handle and process energy at low levels of frequency and that higher chakras handle high frequency levels. Chakras are supposed to be able to act as transformers and convert low frequency levels of energy to higher levels, passing the energy up the chain of chakras and vice versa with the top chakras transforming high frequency energy into lower levels, passing it downward to the lowest chakra which is able to pass this energy into the physical body.

The higher frequency levels of energy are believed to come from the cosmos through the top chakra at the top of the head to be passed down the other chakras and eventually throughout the body. As a person is able to raise, by meditation and yoga, his *subtle energies* to the level of the top chakra those energies are interchanged with the energies of the cosmos. Also, plant food is believed to possess mid level frequencies of energy; this, in turn, influences the middle level chakras. Universal energy also comes to the body via the air (prana) we breathe, which is believed to be a major source of subtle energy. The *aura* which is supposedly produced from the sum total energies of the seven chakras and emanates light outside of the body can be felt, seen, and influenced by an *aura* of another, by coming into close proximity, by application of hands, and with special procedures of sending energy over a distance to another.



**Picture of biomagnetic aura**

The root chakra (chakra # 1 at the coccyx) is also regarded as the seat of *kundalini*. The *kundalini* is symbolized as a coiled serpent within the sacral/coccygeal region. The coiled serpent represents a powerful subtle force that is poised and waiting to spring into action. Only when the proper meditative and attitudinal changes have occurred does this force become directed upwards through the appropriate spinal pathway and activate each of the major chakras during its ascent to the crown. The *kundalini* is the creative force of manifestation which assists in the alignment of the chakras, the release of stored stress from the bodily centers, and the lifting of consciousness into higher spiritual levels.<sup>12</sup>

The chakras are said to be in the colors of the rainbow, with each chakra having a specific color. Each aura has a frequency of resonance or vibration and emits a fine electrical current and in turn can receive vital energies from external influences. This is the source of belief in “*vibrational medicine*.” The human body is said to be a symphony of color, including the skeleton. The various colors we apply to the body with:

(a) clothing, walls, illumination, or (b) by mental image-making, counseling and guided meditation, (c) through projection, on the spiritual level, to any person anywhere, is believed to build the forces and strength of the chakras and the aura to effect healing.<sup>13</sup>

When “magenta” an eighth color is added, an octave is produced and then music is also able to influence the chakras. Gems are known to refract light, dividing it into different colors. Sunlight consists of seven colors of the rainbow, so it is believed these refracted sunrays from gems can increase the energy (vibrations) of the chakra specific to each hue of sunlight.

The seven natural colors, with the added eighth (magenta), are used in therapy when there is an energy imbalance. The colors are red, orange, yellow, green, turquoise, blue, violet and the added eighth color, magenta. It is believed that these colors correspond with three musical octaves and with twenty-four vertebrae of the spinal column. Two additional octaves have been added so that infra-red can be applied to the sacrum and ultraviolet to the skull.

...The colour therapist uses the spinal chart which is also employed by the music therapist and astrologer *to dowse* (use the pendulum) out the problem areas of a patient and thus determine which colour is to be used in treatment.<sup>14</sup>

Color therapy can be performed by placing water in a colored glass vessel and letting the sun shine through it. The water is then ingested, thereby applying color therapy to correct imbalances in the aura. This type of treatment is still practiced. It is not necessary to visualize color, as therapy can be administered even to blind people with equal benefit it is believed, by having them drink the sunlight-exposed water.

Nutrition and dietetics figure importantly in many of these healing systems. For example, in the yoga-oriented *Spiritual Nutrition and the Rainbow Diet* (1986), Gabriel Cousens, M.D., states:

By putting foods of various colors over each chakra (spiritual center of the human body), I was able to determine which colors were most enhancing for each chakra.<sup>15</sup>

The aura (composite energy) of a person is also believed to be influenced by sound and/or music. Music therapy is another method of restoring an imbalanced aura.

Each animate and inanimate object is also believed to have a specific energy frequency or vibration. (Not all believers in the aura accept that inanimate objects have an aura.) These vibrations are altered when disorder is present in the body. It is claimed that detection of altered vibrational forces can be done by the hands, Kirlian photography, or by radiesthesia using electronic instruments. Energy therapies and vibrational therapies, of which there are

many varieties, seek to understand this continuous energetic aura, and to interact with it in order to facilitate health and healing.

The above-described beliefs and teachings of Ayurvedic medicine form the foundation of many ideas that are widespread in the field of alternative therapies today. I wish to make it clear to the reader that the above-described beliefs are not accepted in the sciences of medicine, physics and physiology. The detection of the basic energy, which is the center core belief of alternative therapy, cannot be found or measured by even the most sensitive instruments, a discrepancy that cannot be explained by its adherents.

I recommend an article found on the Internet, "*Human Auras And Energy Fields*" by Don Lindsay,<sup>16</sup> which discusses the subject of auras and whether or not science can demonstrate such. The following is his summary:

Humans do not have auras. There is no kind of 'energy field' consistently found around humans. I say this for a bunch of reasons:

- \* It is the consensus of the scientific and medical communities.
- \* Proponents have had a lot of years to produce positive evidence.
- \* Negative evidence from equipment.
- \* Negative evidence from photography.
- \* Negative evidence from those who see auras.
- \* Negative evidence from those who feel auras.

For those readers who might wish to further investigate the argument that there is proof of auras, I suggest the following specific article that claims there is scientific proof.

Spring Wolf's Spiritual Education Network  
CHAKRAS & MAGIC  
The Aura  
The Colors of Life<sup>17</sup>

It is important not to confuse the claimed energy of the chakra and aura of Ayurveda, with the bio-electrical activity of living matter. There is certainly electrical activity within our bodies as is demonstrated by electrocardiographs, electroencephalographs, electromyography, etc. To do any of these tests it is necessary to either place needle probes into and under the skin, or to prepare the skin by sanding the outer layer of cells free to make good electrical contact on the skin. With the proper contact, electrical activity is then demonstrated in muscles and nerves. No electrical machines have shown electrical activity of a chakra, or of an aura inside or outside of the body. There is instrumentation that is one million times more sensitive than the living tissue of our bodies. However, these electrical measuring instruments do not show evidence of Chakras—inside or auras—outside the body.

Not all practitioners of Eastern mysticism accept the explanation that universal energy can be explained by conventional physics and object to the term *electromagnetic* in describing such. They believe that universal energy is a spiritual entity and that it cannot be described by common scientific terminology. Many modern scientists who are believers of Eastern mysticism do, however, attempt to explain their beliefs by scientific terms. Some psychics claim to be able

to see the aura, in color, around individuals. When put to the test on these claims, they failed. If light from the believed *aura* did surround our bodies we might see rainbows about us when we are in the rain and the sun shines through the clouds. It would be very easy to demonstrate the colors of the rainbow by an optical prism held near the body if light was flowing from us, but this does not happen. The colors of the rainbow are light wave frequencies that are detected by the eyes of all of us, not just psychics or sensitives.

Dr. Elmer Green, who has his doctorate in physics and is a lifetime believer in Eastern mysticism, explains this concept: This universal energy, which is in question with science, exists in seven levels or degrees. The first level is the materialization of the energy and that is the material world around us. The other six levels are not measurable by instruments because those levels are beyond instrumentation detection. Only the human body is capable of detecting such (see chapter 19 on biofeedback). It is taught that these different levels of energy can exist simultaneously within the human body.

Oriental religions have as their purpose and goal in life to escape the cycle of reincarnation in which they believe they are caught up and to join the spirit world. They do this by a lifelong pursuit of raising the energy levels in the body up through the chakras to bring it to its peak performance at the seventh chakra on top of the head. The religious activities of the Hindu and other oriental religions are all for the purpose of maintaining an unhindered flow of universal energy so as to raise the energy level to its zenith at the top chakra. Meditation and yoga are believed to raise kundalini and clear the chakras to allow the rising of universal energy, and their existence is solely for this purpose. When the universal energy comes in full power to the top chakra, a person's energy level has meshed with the energy of the universe and one experiences enlightenment, the Supreme Self, Lotus, Jewel, **Godhood** status. The reincarnation cycle is then broken and at death of the physical body the soul will assume its position with the spirit world of nirvana.

During the pursuit of immortality status described above, disorder or illness of the physical body may occur. This is understood simply as a interruption of flow of universal energy through the body and corrective measures have been invented to correct and bring about the continued free flow of energy. It is those therapeutic methods that constitute many of present day alternative medical therapies. It is vital to have understanding of the foundational doctrine of the Oriental religions so as to recognize their counterfeit of God's healing system and the false science proclaimed.

Meditation and yoga are simple yet powerful techniques believed to open, activate, and cleanse congested or blocked flow of energy in chakras. Their most common use in America is for "relaxation," however, meditation is far more than that. It opens the mind to connect to the cosmic energies, the universal mind, the *Higher Self*, (*the pantheistic god*). We are told that the Higher Self holds the solutions to many of our problems.<sup>18</sup> Understanding the tenets of Ayurveda and Hindu's basic dogmas is critical to understand therapeutic methods to be exposed later in this book. A vast amount of New Age doctrines and therapies are based upon the principles of what has been presented.

## MEDITATION

*Ayurveda* uses meditation as a primary and fundamental tool for healing. It also promotes yoga, diet, herbs, mineral substances, cleansing practices, and aromas for maintenance or



restoration of energy balance. Meditation and yoga are fundamental *tools* of Hinduism for progression to a higher spiritual plane, with the goal of leaving this life on earth and moving on into the spirit world. In Ayurvedic medicine, meditation is fundamental to accessing the powers of the cosmos in order to bring increase and balance of the energies within a person. It is also a process, physically and mentally, of trying to elevate the believed *divine* attributes within one's self and connect with the god of the cosmos, (Brahman), the ultimate deity of Hinduism. Meditation, whether for health or spiritual reasons, is a way of *connecting with the spirit world*. It is through meditation that blending of the sun and moon energies are said to occur. When a perfect blend is achieved, immortality is said to be the result. Immortality is believed to bring perfect harmony with Brahman, the ultimate Hindu Deity.

The above is the Hindu plan of salvation (counterfeit of God's plan), the journey to nirvana, their heaven. It is centered in the dogma of *Self—Divine within*. By physical and mental acts it is believed that the divine within can be manipulated, resulting in progression to immortality, nirvana, and godhood. Physical disorders are considered simply a spiritual malady. Therapeutics is anticipated not only to relieve physical and mental distress but to restore the individual to the path of progression to godhood.

Ayurveda declares the *essence* of the human being to be the *One*, the *Creative Principle*, *The Eternal Essence*. A Hindu physicist might describe this essence as the *ultimate unified energy field*, which Ayurveda says underlies all of creation. Humans are seen as energy converted to matter and disease as deranged energy. This life energy, also called *prana*, is believed to be enhanced through meditation, yoga, deep breathing, herbs, cleansing, and foods. Life energy (prana) is proclaimed to increase with deep breathing of air *through the nose*.

Of all the many forms of treatment described in the Ayurvedic texts, there is one which holds a pre-eminent position—the *practice of meditation*. This is the fertile soil upon which all other forms of therapy take root. Strictly speaking, without meditation the true healing potential of Ayurvedic medicine cannot be realized.<sup>19</sup>

The English word *meditation* has two definitions

1. study, contemplation, pondering, on or about a subject by an active thought process
2. putting the mind into a passive, neutral—no thought mode, stilling the mind, ridding our mind of all thoughts, *the silence*, and so develop an altered state of consciousness.

In our discussion of *meditation* in the Ayurveda system we refer to this second definition. To enlarge upon the above definitions think of it in this way: study, contemplation, and pondering can be thought of as looking outward and upward, while the passive mode puts our thoughts inward and downward.

How does one bring about the non-thinking state? We find an answer in *Meditation as Medicine* by Dharma Singh Khalsa M.D. It is achieved by the powerful effects of:

1. the breath
2. a mantra (repetition of word or phrase)

- 3 focusing the mind
4. posture and movement including finger positions <sup>20</sup>

Of the four acts given above in performing meditation the *two* most common and important are attention to *breath*, and repetition of a *mantra*. As the mind focuses on the breathing pattern and at the same time on the repetitions of a word or phrase a thoughtless state of the mind is triggered. The word *mantra* is from the Sanskrit language with the syllable “*man*” meaning “to think” and “*tra*” referring to liberation of thinking.” By an act and process that stops the mind from thinking, the mind is *stilled*. The subject of movement will be explored further in the discussion of yoga. Meditation and yoga go together like a hand in a glove. Yoga will be presented later in the next chapter.

Meditation is practiced in many forms and by many names, some we probably have not recognized as being meditation. In his book *Meditation as Medicine*, Dr. Khalsa lists the following practices as being considered meditation using a common element—relaxation.

- Prayer—contemplative prayer, breath prayer, silence; (uses breath & mantra)
- Visualization—an *act of creation* by imagination, using god—power from within
- Sufi meditation—found in Islam, “whirling Dervishes,” feverish dancing
- Guided Imagery—similar to visualization, minimizes thinking in words
- Mindfulness—Buddha type meditation, mind wanders as it focuses on breath
- The Relaxation Response—meditation, named so as to disguise, by Benson M.D.
- Transcendental meditation—with secret mantra, brought to USA by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and popularized by the “Beatles”
- Zen Buddhist meditation—way to enlightenment, world view—one is all, all is one
- Native American meditation—drums, psychedelic herbs, crystals
- Movement meditation—t’ai chi, Qi gong, martial arts, yoga exercises
- Medical meditation—meditation combined with yoga and specific postures of body, limbs and fingers. Khalsa says—this type is the most powerful type of meditation.<sup>21</sup>

Continued practice of meditation over time is perceived to cause gradual changes in the mystical subtle-energy flow through the chakras. They are slowly activated and cleared of any obstruction of flow, such as past traumatic emotional events, that of frustration, or anger, etc. Over time meditation will initiate a rise of *kundalini*—*serpent* power which is believed to be in the bottom chakra, forcing its climb up the subtle energy pathways (chakras) and within the spinal cord on its journey to the crown chakra and *enlightenment*—*godhood*.

Meditation and yoga are fundamental *tools* of Hinduism for progressing to a higher spiritual plane, with the goal of leaving this life on earth and moving into the spirit world. In Ayurvedic medicine, meditation is fundamental to accessing the powers of the cosmos in order to bring increase and balance of the energies within a person. It is also a process, physically and mentally, of trying to elevate the believed divine attributes within one’s self and connect with the god of the cosmos, (Brahman), the ultimate deity of Hinduism. Meditation, whether for health or spiritual reasons, is a way of connecting with the spirit world. It is through meditation that blending of the sun and moon energies are said to occur. When a perfect blend is

achieved, immortality is the result. Immortality is believed to come from being in perfect harmony with Brahman, the Hindu Deity.

*Transcendental meditation* was brought to the USA by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi in 1957 and popularized by the Beatles music group, and is a slight variant style of meditation. A secret mantra word is given to each initiate. Unbeknownst to the initiate, the word is a title or name of a Hindu god.<sup>20</sup> Hunt and Weldon comment on this secret mantra in *America The sorcerer's New Apprentice* stating that from authoritative texts, not only is the mantra the name of a Hindu god, but by reciting it over and over one is calling on that god to possess them. TM (Transcendental Meditation) worked its way into the New Jersey Public School system and parents sued saying that it was a religion, but TM lawyers argued that it was a science. The New Jersey Federal Court decided it was a religion and banned its presence in the schools. (Malnak V. Yogi, 440 F. Supp. 1284-1977) The decision was appealed, and on Feb. 2, 1979 the first court decision was upheld. TM thereafter took out every word in their written material that would indicate that it was religious, and it has since spread across the US as *science*. Below is the pledge to Maharishi that every teacher of TM has to sign.

"Serve the Holy Tradition and spread the light of God to all those who need it."  
Yet every TM teacher claims in his public lecture, "TM is not a religion."<sup>22</sup>

Dave Hunt in *Yoga and the Body of Christ* pages 12-16 exposes the planned and designed missionary movement of Hinduism that has spread to the world. He shares with the reader that the largest missionary organization in the world is Hindu—India's *Vishva Hindu Parishad* (VHP). Also, in January 1979, this organization sponsored a second "World Congress on Hinduism" in Allahabad, India and with 60,000 delegates attending. This organization had first attempted their mission activities by promoting religion, but that was not successful. So they made a change by presenting it as science. A speaker at the 1979 congress made the following comment:

Our mission in the West has been crowned with fantastic success. Hinduism is becoming the dominant world religion, and the end of Christianity has come near.<sup>23</sup>

The VHP organization has centers all over the world, with a branch in the USA called Vishwa Hindu Parashad of America, Inc.

We were warned long ago concerning mind therapies and spiritualism coming in as science:

The sciences of phrenology, psychology, and mesmerism have been the channel through which Satan has come more directly to this generation, and wrought with that power which was to *characterize his work near the close of probation*. . . <sup>24</sup>

In these days when skepticism and infidelity so often appear in a scientific garb, we need to be guarded on every hand. Through this means our great adversary is deceiving thousands and leading them captive according to his will. The advantage he takes of the sciences, *sciences which pertain to the human mind*, is tremendous. Here, serpent-like, he imperceptibly creeps in to corrupt the work of God.<sup>25</sup>

The practices of yoga and meditation are not without their dangers. Suicide is high among the instructors, demon possession, psychopathology, psychosis, epileptic seizures, hallucination, blackouts for hours, eyesight problems, extreme stomach cramps, mental confusion, sexual licentiousness, severe nightmares, anti-social behavior, recurrence of psychosomatic symptoms and depression requiring psychiatric care.<sup>25</sup> So severe and so common are abnormal reactions to meditation and yoga that in 1980 John Hopkins University School of Medicine professor Stanislave Grof (expert in LSD) and his wife Christina (instructor in Hatha Yoga) organized the "Spiritual Emergency Network" (SEN), now headquartered at California Institute Of Transpersonal Psychology in Menlo Park, California. By 1988 the organization (SEN) was coordinating 35 regional centers and utilizing 1500 professionals in attempting to handle psychological emergencies resulting from the mind altering practices of meditation and yoga.

Dr. Khalsa tells us in his book that the *Relaxation Response*, which Khalsa identifies as a *form of meditation*, made popular by Harvard's Herbert Benson M.D.

...He [Benson] made meditation palatable to the medical community.<sup>26</sup>

The Office of Alternative Medicine, or OAM, which is a part of the National Institutes of Health has funded many studies on meditation. A 1994 report stated that:

... "over a period of 25 years, Benson and colleagues have developed a large body of research." "meditation in general and the relaxation response in specific have slowly moved from alternative to mainstream medicine, although they are still overlooked by many conventional doctors."<sup>27</sup>

The techniques used in Benson's Relaxation Response are identical to those used in all other forms of meditation, namely concentration on breathing, posture or position of comfort, passive attitude, and use of a mantra.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, there have been people who have not recognized the Relaxation Response for what it is, and using a Biblical term or verse as a mantra have felt it was just what its name speaks of, a simple measure to bring relaxation. Unfortunately it is much more than that. It, too, is a technique to still the mind, to bring in passivity to the thinking and allows an altered state of consciousness. There are physiologic changes in our autonomic nervous system when the relaxation response is used, even the amount of oxygen consumed is reduced, and apparently many healthful changes can occur without use of drugs. Yet in that state we open our mind up to the possibility of contact with and control by powers of darkness.

These meditation or relaxation techniques have demonstrated as mentioned previously decrease in oxygen consumption by the body, lower hydrocortisone blood levels, increase in immune factors (including increased leukocytes), and it calms brain wave activity, changing from beta wave to alpha and even on to theta the level of a trance.. These benefits remain for several hours following meditation. Yes, these methods do have an effect on our physiology, however we must determine what is the source of this power and influence upon our systems.

Has there been a comparison of this apparently harmless technique with other forms of meditation? Yes, it was compared to Transcendental Meditation, the results of which are summarized in the following statement:

Tests at the Thorndike Memorial Laboratory of Harvard have shown that a similar technique used with any sound or phrase or prayer or mantra brings forth the same physiologic changes noted during Transcendental Meditation: decreased oxygen consumption; decreased carbon-dioxide elimination; decreased rate of breathing. In other words using the basic necessary components, any one of the *age-old* or the *newly derived* techniques produces the same physiologic results regardless of the mental device used.<sup>28</sup>...

Are these changes from simple relaxation of our muscles, or is there another power apart from our Creator God at work? If another power, then from where? That is the question. Have I made accusation against innocent techniques? A question I have asked multiple times of my self. Well, I find that those involved in leading out and teaching in the field of meditation and yoga have included the Relaxation Response technique as one of their own, but simply changed to an acceptable name.

How an individual becomes interested in, or starts practicing yoga and/or meditation has much to do with whether they continue. When a doctor recommends this practice to deal with certain medical problems the tendency to stay with it greatly increases. Frequent articles appear in medical literature proclaiming the medical benefits of yoga and meditation, so we see an ever increasing acceptance by the medical profession.

Herbert Benson M.D., a Harvard University Medical School professor and president of the Mind/Body/Medical Institute in Chestnut Hill, Mass., tells in his book *The Relaxation Response* that his research group has studied all the forms of meditation used down through millennia by various religions. His research found certain essential acts paramount to reaching the altered state of consciousness and/or autonomic nervous system influences sought by the act of meditation. These are: comfortable position; muscular relaxation; deep rhythmic breathing; use of a mantra; all to bring the mind to a state of “**passivity**.” The mantra can be a word, phrase, sentence or even a Bible verse.

You may have been surprised to see “prayer” listed as one of the forms of meditation. How can that be? Is not prayer a dialogue with God? The Bible has recorded many prayers, and Christ prayed and taught his disciples to pray. Daniel chapter 9 reveals Daniel pleading with God to forgive Israel and fulfill His pledge to return them to Canaan; John 17 contains a prayer that Christ prayed to His Father in heaven the night of his arrest. Are we to look at those prayers in the Bible as falling under the definition of “meditation” as we have previously defined it? The King James version of the Bible has fourteen places where the word meditate is used and six times for meditation. King David utilized that word the most, with Psalms 119 as the focus of its use:

O how love I thy law! it (is) my meditation all the day. (Ps. 119: 97)

But his delight (is) in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Ps. 1: 2)

What is the real difference in the use of the words *meditate* and *meditation* as they are used in the Bible in contrast to their meaning in the preceding paragraphs? Prayer, as found in the Bible, reveals man seeking God and opening his heart to him, inviting Him to be Lord of his life. The definition as understood in the use of meditation in previous paragraphs is the same definition as for a “mystic” that is:

...someone who uses rote methods to tap into their inner divinity.<sup>29</sup>

Biblical style prayer:

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. (Matt. 6: 7, 8)

Few Christians would choose to be involved in the standard meditation and yoga practice, but is it possible that they might choose to do so when it has been given a new name and are told it is a way to come closer to God? Is that happening? Yes, it is sweeping through the Christian world community. The words of Paul ring out:

Now the spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrine of devils. (I Tim 4: 1)

An early book to reach millions of people by promoting an apparently benign form of meditation was *Creative Visualization* in 1978 by Shakti Gawain. Ray Yungen tells us that this book could well be called the *mystics bible*. This book promoted improved creativity, career achievements, relationships, health and relaxation and peace. It caught on with the public as few books do and gained the attention of people that were not of the New Age community. Below is a quote from the book:

Almost any form of meditation will eventually take you to an experience of yourself as source, or your higher self...Eventually you will start experiencing certain moments during your meditation when there is a sort of “click” in your consciousness and you feel like things are really working; you may even experience a lot of energy flowing through you or a warm radiant glow in your body. These are signs that you are beginning to channel the energy of yourself.<sup>30</sup>  
(emphasis authors)

Ray Yungen, an Evangelical minister has researched and followed for thirty-five plus years the movement that is promoting a special type of prayer referred to as contemplative prayer, centering prayer, sacred space, silence, etc. The methods used in these prayers fit the criteria for mystic meditation. Yungen has written a book *A Time of Departing* which identifies and traces the origin, ancient history, recent history and present influence and use of these mystical prayer techniques. He lists in his book authors who have written books promoting these prayer practices. These books have sold beyond belief. One set of authors sold fifty million

copies, another author 20 million and a third 7 million. Since then, there have been scores of books on the same topic by as many different authors.

What makes the practice of these special prayers so popular is that mediators using the prayer methods do get the “click” that Shakti Gawain spoke of. People are convinced they have been touched by the Holy Spirit and have experienced God. Eastern doctrine of *pantheism*—god **is** everything, has been altered a bit and made more deceptive to the Christian by teaching that God **is in** everything—*panentheism*. This becomes the world view of those using the mystical prayer practices. The Bible does not support these views.

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, you are complete  
in Him which is the head of all principality and power. (Col. 2: 9,10)

I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither  
my praise to graven images. (Isaiah. 42: 8)

Contemplative prayer and synonym names uses the basic principles of regular meditation that is, position of comfort, deep rhythmic breathing and use of mantra. This mantra may be some Bible name or verse but used in repetition. Then there is the emphasis on bringing the mind to a passive state, emptying of the mind, by concentration on the breath and mantra. This alters consciousness which is the key to all occult training and can bring the individual to the “click” spoken of before, and now the individual is certain he has experienced the Holy Spirit and God.

Yungen traces the ancient history of the contemplative (meditation) movement to medieval monks known as the *Desert Fathers* living in the wilderness of the Middle East who, in turn, most likely had borrowed the practice from the Far East. The Catholic mystics (**especially Ignatius Loyola**) over centuries kept the practice of meditation through prayer alive. It was picked up again in our age by Thomas Merton (1915—1968) a Catholic scholar who was to the contemplative prayer movement as was Martin Luther King to the civil rights movement. So too, Catholic scholar Henri Nouwen (1932-1996) had a strong part to play in promoting contemplation prayer to Catholics and mainline protestants as well. The movement continued to pick up momentum as two monks joined in the fray, Thomas Keating and Basil Pennington. Yungen tells us that these monks blended their Catholic Christianity with Eastern mysticism and produced *centering prayer*.

The movement is also referred to as “Spiritual Formation.” One of its centers for spreading the contemplative prayer in this country is the Shalem Institute located near Washington D.C. and founded by Episcopal priest Tilden Edwards. Its purpose is to spread the practice of mystical prayer to Christianity. Thousands have taken training at this center, trained to be spiritual directors propagating mystical prayer. Another Episcopal priest, Matthew Fox, has influenced not only Catholics but also mainline Protestants, in promoting “God in everything.” In his book *The Coming of the Cosmic Christ*, Fox makes the following comments:

Divinity is found in all creatures.... The cosmic Christ is the “I Am” in every creature.<sup>31</sup>

Without mysticism there will be no “deep ecumenism,” no unleashing of the power of wisdom from all the world’s religious traditions. Without this (mysticism) I am convinced there will never be global peace or justice since the human race needs spiritual depths and disciplines, celebration and rituals to awaken its better selves.<sup>32</sup>

Mysticism is leading many Christians into what is termed *interspirituality*, (a merging together of all faiths). It has as its basic tenet that divinity (God) is in all things, and the presence of God is in all religions and through mysticism this state is recognized. Once again let us consider the words of Ray Youngen:

Former New Age medium, Brian Flynn, in his fascinating book, *Running Against the Wind*, explains it as a uniting of the world’s religions through the common thread of mysticism. Flynn quotes the late Wane Teasdale (a lay monk who coined the term interspirituality) as saying that interspirituality is “the spiritual common ground which exists among the world’s religions.”<sup>33</sup>

In time, evangelical Protestants were infected with this movement. Richard Foster wrote a book *Celebration of Discipline* and is a prominent leader. He brought in “breath prayer” — that is, picking a single word or phrase and repeating it in conjunction with the breath. There have been scores of other ministers leading the charge and writing books, continuing its spread like a tsunami. The movement of mystical prayer has powered the formation of the *Emerging Church* which is an ecumenical movement including pagan, animist, Hindu, Catholic, protestant, Islam and all religions. The goal of the Emerging Church is to gather all religions under one banner. *Feelings, not thus saith the Word*, seems to be the measuring criteria in this movement.

If you consider carefully the above history of the development of the mystical prayer movement you will recognize that spiritual formation, contemplative prayer, centering prayer, silence, mysticism, and interspirituality have been introduced and promoted by clergy, not coming from the laity. The watchman on the wall will need to keep their eyes on fellow watchmen and sound the alarm when mysticism is recognized in the church.

I have only touched on this subject but that is enough to put out an *alert*. I suggest you obtain the book by Ray Yungen, *A Time of Departing*, and read it carefully. You will be shocked, I am sure but will gain a deeper understanding as to where we are in time. The words of the book *The Great Controversy* by E.G. White come to mind at this moment:

...Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience....

...The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by seeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists,



who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long expected millennium.

Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer.<sup>34</sup>

I will close this section with the following quote from Ray Yungen:

...Mysticism *neutralizes* doctrinal differences by sacrificing the truth of Scripture for a mystical experience. Mysticism offers a common ground, and supposedly, that commonality is *divinity in all*. But we know from Scripture there is one God and there is no other but He.<sup>35</sup>

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