

Hinduism 101 – Floyd Nolen Jones, Th.D., Ph.D.

Under the disguise of “New Age”, Hinduism is fast growing in the West. Many New Age teachings are presented under the guise of being scientific and medical, but in reality they are simply Hindu practices. The word *Hindu* comes from the Persian word *Hind*, the name of the Indus River region of northern India.

Everything is god

1. To the Hindu the entire world, universe and everything in them *is* god. Their god is an impersonal neuter force which is part of everything in existence. They make no difference between creature and creator – both are one. This is the ultimate reality: everything is part of a formless, indefinable, unknowable *force* (as in Star Wars and possibly Dan. 11:38!) that is called Brahman.

In the West, Brahman is often called the “god force.” Brahman is all and all is Brahman. Hindus believe that the worship of its many gods will lead to understanding Braham, the Creator.

The goal for all Hindus is to achieve “self-realization” – to come to realize that they themselves *are* Brahman. The essence of every living thing is *atman*, its spirit or soul, which comes from Brahman. Indeed, the human spirit is considered to *be* Brahman. Hence, the ultimate goal is union with (to become one with) Brahman, but the soul cannot achieve this in one lifetime. Yoga manuals often refer to this gaining contact with, and control of, the human spirit as a “state of God consciousness.”

Brahman is not a god as Christians think of God. Brahman is everything and yet, at the same time, nothing. As can be seen from the very difficulty of trying to define Brahman, the entire concept goes against all logic and everything in our physical world. To compensate, Hindu’s add the notion of “*maya*”.

Everything is Nothing

2. *Maya* is the concept that everything which we see, touch, or feel in the physical world is actually only an illusion – it doesn’t really exist. When a Hindu reaches an advanced state of “self-realization” he has so withdrawn from the physical world into the spirit world that he no longer has a conscious awareness of anything in the physical world.

When this state is reached the person is incapable of caring for oneself and can no longer

communicate with the physical world. Western medicine would describe such as a permanent “catatonic” state.

These people are worshiped in India and other lands as great gods. Their every bodily need is cared for by their worshipers as if they were babies. They never speak or move on their own. Here in the West, we would consider such a person as insane, yet millions of people in our own country are trying to reach such a state.

Try, Try Again

3. In Hinduism, the soul is not born and does not die. It supposedly passes from body to body from one life to another in an endless cycle until it becomes pure enough to be reunited with Brahman. A person can come back as a human, frog, dog, bird, bug, horse, or even a plant etc. (*transmigration*, New Agers teach *reincarnation* in which we only come back as people).

The only escape from this supposed terrible burden of transmigration is to attain unity with Brahman. When accomplished, the person no longer reincarnates at death but continues to exist in a formless spiritual state. In Eastern Hinduism, transmigration/reincarnation is considered a curse. Showing a total lack of understanding as to the true nature of this religion, many westerners see reincarnation as something desirable.

You Pay For Your Misdeeds (Sins)

4. *Karma* is the Hindu law of cause and effect. Every act, thought, or word produces an effect. A person’s deeds in one life will determine what they come back as in the next life. Since these “effects” cannot all be dealt with in one lifetime, the person must continually come back to live out the consequences of the acts they committed in previous lives. Moreover, there is no such thing as the Western notion of “good” karma, there is only karma. As it is impossible to “live” without committing wrong acts which in turn produce more karma, future lives are demanded in order to pay for these. It is an endless cycle from which the Hindu ever seeks escape.

Thus, only the attainment of a state of total inactivity or withdrawal from the physical world will bring this vicious cycle of karma to an end. There is no forgiveness in karma. Each person must suffer for his own deeds.

Until outlawed in 1947, the Hindus also had a *caste* or hereditary social order. In order of rank, the castes were: (1) Brahmins (intellectuals and

priests), (2) the warriors and rulers, (3) artisans and agriculturalists as well as (4) Sudras, the unskilled laborers. *Pariahs*, the untouchables or outcasts, belonged to no caste at all. The doctrines of reincarnation and the law of karma were used to justify the place and rank of each person in this system. It was taught that a person was in a low caste because of his previous life. He could be reborn into a higher caste if he lived righteously and obeyed caste rules. Although prohibited, this system still continues in many rural villages.

Escape Into Nothingness

5. There is only one escape from this whole terrible unending cycle. That is into a state of *nirvana*. This is when the soul (*atman*) achieves union with Brahman. Nirvana is similar to our concept of heaven except that it is not an actual place. Rather, it is a state of being. It is *nothingness* which is considered to be a blissful absence from feeling either pleasure or pain through the pure extinction of personal existence.

When this state is reached, the person is said to have been absorbed into Brahman or *pure Being* – a state of nothingness. Only by reaching nirvana through the realization that they do not exist as actual corporal beings can a person escape from the terrible endless cycle of living out his karma.

Demon gods

6. As everything and everybody *is* god, it naturally follows that there are thousands of Hindu gods. However, a few receive more worship than others. One of their foremost gods is Shiva, the god of destruction. His wife is Kali (the mother goddess of power, illness, and death). Shiva is represented in drawings as having a cobra coiled around his neck or head. The serpent or cobra is worshiped extensively throughout Hinduism.

Shiva is often referred to as a “god of light” by various yoga teachers. They represent Shiva as something very desirable. Yoga students are taught to “reach for Shiva or light”.

Vishnu is considered a god of love. They believe he has come to earth numerous times in different forms, and they worship these *avatars*. Special honor is given to Rama and Krishna, two of the supposed greatest incarnations of Vishnu.

The average Western yoga student has no idea of whom or what Shiva really is. When they reach out to the “light of Shiva”, they unwittingly are reaching out to a demon god.

Techniques For Escape

7. Of course the mind naturally resists the idea that we don’t actually exist and that all is an illusion. Thus, various practices are followed in Hinduism to enable a person to reach the state of nirvana and to escape from the endless wheel of reincarnation. *Yoga* and *meditation* are the two most important tools, but alcohol and drugs, while repeating over and over some mantra (the name of a demon), are also widely practiced.

Yoga literally means “to yoke,” or “bind together”. The goal of yoga is to blank out the mind, stop all movement of the body, cut off all sensation of the physical world, and thereby attain union with Brahman in a state of nothingness.

The various yoga practices are specifically designed to induce a trance state of mindlessness which is supposed to draw the person into union or oneness with Brahman.

What actually happens is that as the person meditates to blank out his mind, they open themselves up to demon possession. These demons then create all kinds of experiences in the spirit world, and a link between the soul and demon is forged. Many experience astral projection and direct contact with demons which masquerade as various Hindu gods (called “familiar spirits” 15 times in the Bible: e.g., Lev. 19:31).

Finally

Hinduism had no historical founder. The “laws of the Vedas” (prayers and praises to the powers of nature) were supposedly revealed to spiritual men called *rishis* who lived at an early period along the banks of the Indus and Ganges rivers. Their philosopher, Ramakrishna (AD 1826-1886) taught the pagan lie that all religions are alike and all are searching for the same truth.

Note: Yoga has but *one purpose only* – union with Brahman. It cannot be separated from the demonic religion which created it. Yoga is specifically designed for the purpose of opening up the practitioner to the entrance of demons.

Sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with New Agers, and indeed with anyone involved in Eastern religions, is very difficult. Remember, we are dealing directly with the demonic powers in or around these people – the Word of God calls them “lying spirits” (1 Ki. 22:22).

Only the power of the Lord Jesus Christ can overcome the many obstacles encountered in bringing these deceived people to salvation.