

Former Yogi: What Really Is 'The Kundalini?'

According to the yogic teachings found in Hinduism, there is an energy at the base of the spine called "the *kundalini*" (in Sanskrit it means "coiled snake"). Yogi Bhajan, the promoter of Kundalini Yoga in the West, called it "the dormant power of infinity."

Adherents teach that it is the impersonal essence of the divine, resident within every human being. Strangely and eerily, it is also called the "serpent power"—because it supposedly 'uncoils' and rises, in serpentine fashion, through the spinal column (the seven energy centers called "chakras") to lift a person up to higher levels of spiritual awareness. Upon arriving at the seventh chakra, metaphorically, the serpent suddenly strikes, and God-consciousness is achieved (a conscious awareness that the soul—called *atman*—is actually one with the impersonal oversoul—called *Brahman*). In other words, this supernatural revelation empowers the practitioner to boldly declare, "I am God!"—which is the absolute opposite of the truth, utter blasphemy and an echo of the original lie told to Eve in the garden.

Hindus and New Agers who believe in the kundalini claim it is a manifestation of the goddess Shakti (also spelled Sakti). Theoretically, when it passes through the sixth chakra (the third eye) and finally reaches the seventh chakra at the top of the head, the goddess Shakti comes into union with the god Shiva (the god of destruction in Hinduism, who is also named "the lord of yoga"). That's when consciousness supposedly expands exponentially. Read that again: it means coming into a supernatural complete union with the "god of destruction" who is also "the lord of yoga."

Rabi Maharaj, author of a wonderful book titled *The Death of a*

Guru, has been a follower of Jesus for many years. However, he was once a very devoted yoga practitioner. In his book, he commented, "When aroused ... [the kundalini] rages like a vicious serpent inside a person with a force that is impossible to resist. It is said that without proper control, the kundalini will produce supernatural psychic powers having their source in demonic beings and will lead ultimately to moral, spiritual, and physical destruction. Nevertheless, it is this kundalini power that meditation and yoga are designed to arouse."

A very popular guru in the '70s, Swami Muktananda, was known for his ability to perform something called "*shaktipat*" (the transference of a kundalini awakening through just a touch, a look, a word or even just a thought). He related his own experience with the "awakening of the kundalini." He encountered a naked ascetic blissfully meditating on top of a pile of human excreta (if you are thinking, *That's really weird*, I agree).

This Hindu "holy man" invited him to come sit on his lap and lick his head. The ascetic then proceeded to initiate Muktananda into Kundalini Yoga. Later that day he explained, "My mind seemed deluded. ... I felt I would soon become insane. ... My entire body started aching and ... the tongue began to move down the throat, and all attempts to pull it out failed. ... My fear grew. ... I felt severe pain in the knot (*manipur chakra*) below the navel. I tried to shout but could not even I saw ugly and dreadful demon-like figures. I thought them to be evil spirits. ... Suddenly I saw a large ball of light approaching me from the front. ... It merged into my head. ... I was terrified by that powerfully dazzling light."

Though not all stories dealing with the "awakening of the kundalini" match the bizarre aspects of this account, still, it should be blatantly apparent that there is a supernatural power involved in this process that is not of God. If the "awakening of the kundalini" were something good, there would

never be concurrent resulting manifestations that are evidently evil or frightening.

4 Observations About the Kundalini

The Serpent Symbol: Many New Agers relate to the serpent as a symbol of esoteric wisdom. According to their perspective, the serpent did not entrap Eve in sin, but rather, he liberated her by revealing the secret to discovering her own divinity. On the contrary, biblically, a serpent is a symbol of Satan and his demonic underlings. In Revelation 12:9, the devil is referred to as a “great dragon ... that ancient serpent ... who deceives the whole world.” A venomous serpent is an agent of death, just as the prince of darkness, who comes to “to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10b). In representing our authority to subdue the demonic, Jesus said, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents” (Luke 10:19a, KJV). He never would have done that if the “serpent power” were truly symbolic of the essence of God within us.

Opposite Spiritual Perspective: The approach in New Age circles and Far Eastern religions is to look within in order to find God, then to awaken this “serpent power” through various means (yoga, meditation, chanting mantras and so forth). They believe that this “coiled energy” is a divine essence that all human beings already possess, but it must be discovered. In stark contrast, the Bible teaches that our sins have separated us from God, that He is external, that we are in a fallen state and that true salvation happens when the presence of God enters into us from without. That happens the moment that we are cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus and we are born again. These two views cannot coexist.

Dangerous Side Effects: Most gurus and yoga teachers warn their students about the danger of a premature arousal of the kundalini because of the possible negative side effects. In contrast, there is absolutely no account in the Bible of the Spirit of God moving on a person to their detriment. No

repentant person, receiving Jesus into his or her heart, has the kind of weird and frightful encounters Muktananda described, to the point of even feeling insane. Only good, healthy, enriching things result from contacting the real Creator. There is no lurking danger present when communing with the Lord of glory. No person filled with the Holy Spirit in the Bible lamented the experience because it resulted in a manifestation of evil, psychic powers. The true power of God saves, heals, delivers and grants soundness of mind. Therefore, the source of this “serpent power” could not be God, but rather, the evil one, who masquerades as “an angel of light,” and his subordinate demons—who have crafted this experience as a substitute for, and a counterfeit of, the real experience of God (2 Cor. 11:14). Those who yield to this dark demonic influence are, at times, granted supernatural experiences that can seem beautiful, enlightening and ecstatic to woo them away from the true source of eternal life. Remember, Jesus warned that Satan comes to “steal and kill and destroy” but He added the promise, “I came that they may have life” (John 10:10b, MEV) The word translated “life” is *zoe*, which means divine life, the life of God’s Spirit. Until Jesus comes in our hearts, contrary to the Eastern perspective, we are devoid of this divine essence, “dead in [our] trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1).

Chakras : The whole idea of the kundalini is interwoven with a belief in chakras. The existence of these supposed swirling energy centers in the body has never been proven scientifically. Furthermore, the idea of chakras is based on the belief that God is an impersonal force on which to meditate, not a personal God with whom to commune (as the Bible reveals). Furthermore, each chakra is associated with a specific deity in the Hindu pantheon—so people who ascribe to “Christian yoga” who say they also believe in the chakras (and yet are unaware of this connection) are unknowingly guilty of breaking the first commandment. I concluded shortly after I found Jesus that the chakras are imaginary, but that evil

spirits use that occult imagery to infiltrate the souls of those who meditate or do yoga in order to grant false spiritual experiences and prevent them from encountering the true God and true salvation.

My Deliverance Story and My Invitation

In closing, let me briefly share why I believe I can speak with authority on this subject. In 1969, after a near-death experience, I began desperately searching for truth. During that impressionable phase of my life, I met Yogi Bajan. Believing his sect of yoga could be my answer, I dropped out of college to study under him full time. Eventually, I became a teacher of Kundalini Yoga at four universities and ran a yoga ashram in Tampa, Florida. Several hundred students considered me their “guru” (a title that means “one who leads you from darkness to light”). Then I encountered Jesus—the true light of the world—and everything changed dramatically.

If you are interested in reading a detailed account of my conversion, go to my comparative religion website ([\(\)](#)) and download a free copy of my mini-book titled *The Highest Adventure: Encountering God*. Also, if you know someone who is having kundalini manifestations and needs deliverance, get in touch with me through the website, and we will seek God in that person’s behalf. {eoa}

A product of the Jesus Movement, Mike Shreve has traveled evangelistically since 1970, sharing the gospel around the globe with an emphasis on healing and the prophetic. His insightful book comparing over 20 religions that clearly shows the exclusivity of Christianity is titled In Search of the True Light. A video version of his podcasts can also be seen on He has a second podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network titled Discover Your Spiritual Identity: a study of the names and titles of the children of God. To pursue this subject more deeply (“What Really Is the Kundalini”), listen to Episode 114 of Mike Shreve’s podcast titled Revealing the True Light.

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