

# As Christians, Should We Practice Yoga?

An issue many Christians disagree about is whether or not it is ok for Christ's believers to practice yoga. As a result, the purpose of this article is to analyze what yoga is, and to determine what the scriptures reveal about the subject. In an effort to explore the topic fully, it seems clear that we should first understand what yoga is by considering where it originated from, and what it was designed to do. With this examination of the knowledge behind yoga, we should be able to determine, as I have now determined that the religious nature of yoga can not be separated from the physical practice of it because of the spiritual bondage that results by participating in yoga.

I hope you will agree after reading my research that yoga is not a practice for Christians to engage in, and that denying the truth is a dishonesty to ones self, as well as to God.

## Where Yoga originated

Yoga derives its name in a formal setting, because it means "to yoke", and/or yoke with Brahman, who is considered the "Infinite," and/or the "Universal Spirit," the impersonal force Hindu believer's call God. Hinduism is the religion that cherishes this state of mind as an altered state of consciousness, because it believes in releasing ones mind by considering yourself free from all earthly bondage through endless reincarnation.

Yet, yoga derives its beliefs from text's called the Hindu Vedas, whose heritage can be traced to a carnal man named Patanjali, who was an accomplished religious leader. Hindu Vegas spoke of a God named "Siva" as one of the earths most powerful of three Gods, and was known within the Hindu religion as the "Destroyer". Siva would prove to be called many names within Hinduism, but is commonly referred to in the Hindu religion as "Yogi Swara," or the "Lord of Yoga."

The basic premise of yoga, however, is the fundamental belief in the unity of all existence. As a result, God, man, and all of creation are one divine reality.

Yoga is also defined in this alternate religion as a "Union", so it alternately means that the practice of yoga encompasses a union of the body, breath, mind, lower and higher energy centers, and ultimately, peace in ones self and God, which results in a "higher self".

One of the leading contemporary authorities on kundalini yoga is a man named Gopi Krishna, who claims in his article *"The True Aim of Yoga,"* that *"The aim of yoga is to achieve the state of unity or oneness with God, Brahman, [and] spiritual beings."*

A further study of Krishna's opinion reveals that the study of yoga is a way to control the vital energy he himself proclaims as "prana" through specific breathing techniques accompanied by certain psycho mental phenomena asana (physical postures). In other words, all of the techniques explained by Krishna fall under a category named asana and pranayama, which is the physical position our body can ascertain through symbolic bodily gestures.

Nevertheless, the practice of yoga is intended to validate an occult theory, because its core belief teaches its believers that EVERYTHING is divine. Moreover, it emphasizes that everything is not only divine, but that it ultimately is equal to everything else—including the God us Christians acknowledge as the Alpha and Omega, the devil, and even the HIV virus.

Yoga theory also teaches everything in the outer nature is "maya" or illusion. For example, in the practice of yoga, only the inner spirit is man divine; his outer nature (body, personality, etc) are ultimately a delusion that separates him from awareness of his real inner divinity. However, to accomplish this feeling through yoga, a person learns through mediation techniques to separate their "spirit" from their "physical body", thus slowly dismantling the outer personality (the illusionary part),

and it is easy to see that doing so is not biblically sound. Why? God never asks us in the Bible to destroy who we are, our personality, etc.

**Note:** This is why I have found that people who practice yoga for physical and mental reasons ultimately are victims of a “confidence game” in that they are promised better health. Little do they suspect, however, that yoga’s goal is to destroy them as self-thinking individuals!

I hope you are now further peaked to read more of what I revealed about the Hindu religion through the popular practice of yoga, and I encourage you to read on, because my excessive research has revealed more.

I have discovered that one of the most authoritative texts on yoga theory finds, within the Hindu perspective in Pantajali's text (entitled *Yoga Sutras*), that eight "limbs," or parts, of yoga are defined within the context of basic Hindu belief. These beliefs include the concepts of reincarnation, karma, and moksha, or liberation.

Pantajali explains each of these limbs as each being spiritual in nature, and together they are able to form a “being” named Yama. Yama represents concepts like self control, restraint, as well as to the many Gods it worships, including Krishna, Brahman, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Prayahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi, all who of which give the practice of yoga a specific rule of law to follow, and find, the inner peace it promises.

Confusing? I thought so too! But to further authorize my article, I felt I should note how deceptive the nature of yoga can be to us Christians! Furthermore, I encourage you seek the sources I have cited and find out more for yourself!

**Note:** Because I have discovered that the eight steps of Hindism/Yoga are interdependent, so it appears as though the physical exercises of yoga can not be differentiated from its spiritual meaning because the eight steps mentioned are designed to prepare the body and mind for a “spiritual change”.

As Christians, you may be asking, as I had, the following question. “What is wrong with practicing physical exercises that are inherently good (physical benefit or exercise), even though it is basically wrong?”

This is, however, answered through the final aim of pranayama that yoga is based on. When the yogi becomes perfect, there will be nothing in nature that is not under his control. As a result, if he orders the gods or the soul of the departed to come, they will come at his bidding. All of the forces of nature will obey him as slaves, for He who has controlled prana controls his own mind and all minds, as well as all of the bodies that exist. *Rammurti S. Mishra, Yoga Sutras: The Textbook of Yoga Psychology, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1973. Back 979:592. Swami Nikhilananda, Vinvekananda, the Yogas and Other Works, New York: Ramakrishna and Vinvekananda Centre, 1953. Back 979:592.*

**NOTE:** It can be concluded that the aim of the pranayama is to arouse the coiled up poser in the muladhara chakra called kundalini. The whole nature surrounding yoga claims that changes will occur and the door of [psychic] knowledge will open. As a result, you will never need to go for books based on knowledge, because your own mind will become your own book, which contains the infinite knowledge you need to live. So I ask, is this not contradictory of your **Christianity**? If so, than the words, prana, god, and occult energy in yoga are one and the same, because a person who practices yogic breathing (pranayama) is by definition attempting to manipulate occult "divine" energy.

Now that I have attempted to define what yoga is and its true purpose, the next question appropriate to ask is what the Bible says about the occult, and how Christians should combat its forces.

## The Christian Perspective

### Who is our God to Us, Biblically?

#### Reference

Deut6:4, Isaiah 44:6  
Numbers 23:19, Hosea 11:9, Malachi 3:6  
Isaiah 48:12  
Isaiah 45:23  
Isaiah 43:11  
Isaiah 43:15  
Genesis 18:25  
Psalm 27:1  
Deuteronomy 32:3-4  
Isaiah 48:17  
Isaiah 45:24  
Isaiah 44:24  
Psalm 139:7-12  
1 Kings 8:39  
Isaiah 40:10-31  
Genesis 1:1  
Psalm 102:26-27  
Malachi 3:6  
Exodus 34:14  
John 4:24

#### Description

He is One and only One (not multiple)  
He is God, not a man, and does not change  
He is the Alpha and Omega, beginning and end  
He is Lord  
He is Savior  
He is the King  
He is the Judge  
He is the Light  
He is our Rock  
He is our Redeemer  
He is Righteousness  
He is regarded as Husband  
He is Omnipresent  
He is Omniscient  
He is Omnipotent  
He is Preexistent  
He is Eternal  
He is Immutable  
He is the Receiver of Worship  
God is Spirit

### God rejects false religions.

*<sup>4</sup>For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly<sup>5</sup>. But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire<sup>6</sup>. For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. <sup>7</sup>The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people<sup>8</sup>: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt<sup>9</sup>. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; Deuteronomy 7:4-9*

God's chosen people were warned that their sons could possibly be turned away when following other gods if they were not careful. To prevent this from happening, God told his children to utterly

destroy those things that have to do with the false religions, their altars, images, groves, etc. Also, God said that the other nations will try to turn them away from the Lord your God, and that he despises false religions and its follower's false ways.

Why is it then that Christians today choose to walk in disobedience by engaging in non-acceptable spiritual practices such as the physical movements practiced in yoga?

*<sup>19</sup>And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish<sup>20</sup>. As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God. Deuteronomy 8:19-20*

It is easy to see that practicing yoga is to “walk in the way of religious practice according to yoga.” As stated in yoga's description, one can not separate the physical movements of yoga and use them out of innocence. It just does not work that way! *Leviticus 5:17* also states that we are guilty of our iniquity (sin) even if we do so out of ignorance, so one can never claim ignorance of occult activity before God.

*<sup>4</sup>Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee<sup>5</sup>. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Deuteronomy 9:4-5*

*<sup>1</sup>These are the statutes and judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land, which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth<sup>2</sup>. Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree<sup>3</sup>: And ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place<sup>4</sup>. Ye shall not do so unto the LORD your God. Deuteronomy 12:1-4*

God drove out the nations because of their wickedness, and this wickedness is the worship of false gods and false ways. God has provided one way for mankind to reestablish their relationship with him. As a result, if man tries to approach God in any other way besides what he has provided, there is no faith and trust in God and his provision.

Remember, it is written that it is impossible to please God without faith. *Hebrews 11:6*. Jesus said that a man who tries to enter heaven by any other way than through him is like a man coming to a wedding feast without the proper clothing.

*<sup>12</sup>And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless<sup>13</sup>". Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth". Matthew 22:12-13*

This is the very thing the nations driven away from Israel did, and they attempted to reach heaven by their own ways, and not through God's way.

*<sup>30</sup>Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise Deuteronomy 12:30*

God now warns behind thus not to even enquire after the nations false gods, as well as not to enquire how they served their gods. Yoga movements were developed for the body to achieve the state of unity or oneness with Brahman, and this is the very thing that God has commanded his children not do, for we should have no part in any false religions.

**Note:** It is obvious how alluring yoga can be to us all, because we use its movements for physical improvement; however the deception behind the movements are forbidden by God according to the his Law within the Bible's text. How Christians are snared into disobedience by a lack of knowledge (Hosea 4:6) thus limiting God's blessing appears to be a venue for the Evil one to operate.

*<sup>9</sup>When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations<sup>10</sup>. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch<sup>11</sup>, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer<sup>12</sup>. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee<sup>13</sup>. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. Deuteronomy 18:9-13*

How Christians can see Hinduism as an alternate religion unworthy of God's grace, but still accept yoga as a legitimate practice (one and the same) in God's eyes is beyond me, especially after reading my research and validating the sources I have given. As Christians today, we cannot believe we are exempt from the law in Jesus Christ, and that we can live in disobedience and get away with it!

Nevertheless, it is possible for a Christian to be filled with the Holy Spirit and be deceived. Yes, it certainly is possible for a Holy Spirit filled Christian to be deceived if one isn't listening to the Holy Spirit's leading. As a result, the answer is to call on the Holy Spirit to protect us in all areas of our life, especially in spiritual matters. Remember, our God is a gentleman, and He will not force His will upon any of us who do not ask for Him to work in our lives. In fact, we need to ask God into our hearts and our lives so He can forgive us, save us from our sins, and bless us to become his Children (John 1:12).

Satan, however, does not wait to be asked into our lives. He takes advantage of any disobedience we GIVE him, and then uses it as a foothold in our lives for the purpose of limiting God's blessing. Satan accomplishes this by gaining a foothold to work on us Christians, and this causes us to be tempted in sin. When that happens, we begin to focus more on the sin we commit, rather than the work we could be doing for the Lord.

*<sup>16</sup>But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth<sup>17</sup>: But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee<sup>18</sup>: That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God. Deuteronomy 20:16-18*

# Remember, Christians Need to Stay Away From Practices Based on False Religions, Such as Yoga!

The false ways of the nation's religions are not to be practiced by God's children, so live for the Lord God Almighty! If we want God's blessing in our lives and everything He promises, we need to live in obedience. God wants, however, to give us the things He sees best for his children, so I believe that the thesis of this article can be summed up through the following verses provided to us in Deuteronomy 28:1-14:

*<sup>1</sup>And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth<sup>2</sup>: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God<sup>3</sup>. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field<sup>4</sup>. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep<sup>5</sup>. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store<sup>6</sup>. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out<sup>7</sup>. The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways<sup>8</sup>. The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee<sup>9</sup>. The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways<sup>10</sup>. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee<sup>11</sup>. And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers to give thee<sup>12</sup>. The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow<sup>13</sup>. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them<sup>14</sup>: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them. Deuteronomy 28:1-14*

**Note;** This is not a promise just for the Israelites who lived in this recorded time of history, for it was promised to us as well. We have been promised that we are God's chosen people as well, because He gave His life so our sins could be forgiven. So, ask Him today to forgive you for practicing Yoga do so TODAY!! And surely your sins will be forgiven, washed clean by his blood (Col. 1:14).

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