***Meditation  
  
RV88-02***

We are studying worship in the throne room in Revelation 4:6-11. The apostle John has declared that God is a holy God. He has observed that being celebrated within God's throne room. We have seen that that concept is being undermined in the minds of people today by a series of doctrines which demons promote, and which are summarized in the concepts of Eastern mysticism, and which take people eventually to the lake of fire forever. These doctrines declare to us a variety of things. Primarily, they declare that God is not a sovereign Holy Person, but a universal, impersonal cosmic force. These doctrines tell us that man is evolving into the status of godhood.

**John Denver**

This concept is being planted in the minds of young people in a variety of subtle ways, not the least of which is one of the most popular singers of our day, John Denver. John Denver has been a follower of transcendental meditation and of yoga, and is a board member of one of the westernized Eastern mystical groups, the Erhard Seminar Training. Erhard Seminar Training is referred to usually by the letters "EST." One of John Denver's chief gurus (spiritual leaders) is Swami Mukundananda, whose favorite precept is, "Kneel to your own self. Honor and worship your own being. God dwells within you." John Denver has said of up Mukundananda, and another of his gurus Werner Erhard, "They're gods, and they know it. They're running the universe." *Newsweek* magazine, December 20th, 1976, on page 66, says that John Denver uses his music to spread his new secular religion whose godhead is one's own head, really together."

So, it's no secret that Denver uses his music to spread subtly the lie of Eastern mysticism of self-deity. He spreads it to millions who adore listening to his talent being exercised. You perhaps may be among those millions. The objective of John Denver and his music is, in effect, to wean American youth from the superstition of Christianity, and to liberate them from the dependence upon any God except themselves. John Denver has said of himself, "One of these days, I'll be so complete, I won't be a human. I'll be a god."

So, I think that Christians need to consider the philosophy of popular singers who exercise enormous influence on the subconscious of the listeners. I think that Christian parents ought to exercise restraint in the days when they are capable of exercising that restraint on their children in terms of what they listen to. It is not a simple thing to say, "Oh, the music is nice. We'll listen to it anyhow." There is a subtle poison that is being instilled. I hope that by now, in this series of studies, you have caught on to what those poisons are. Many of you have. I am repeatedly being approached by those of you who have heard this series, who are relating to me how appalled you are when suddenly you discover that you've had some area of contact in life, and these ideas are being drilled through. A college student spoke to me yesterday and said, "I can't believe it. I'm hearing everything you've said in my poetry class in college. That was a place that I least expected to discover it. But there it is. Once I'm alerted to it, it's there, and the ideas are flowing, and the influence and the impact is there."

In the book The Cult Explosion by Dave Hunt, there is a testimony by a student named Brad Green that I think is also pertinent to this delusion – that man is evolving into the status of godhood. In The Cult Explosion on page 103, Brad Green says, "I'd been seriously thinking about quitting drugs, because when I would meditate using Yogananda's method, it was so heavy that I didn't need drugs anymore. One night, I hadn't taken drugs for some time. I entered into this breathless state that Yogananda equates with a certain state of meditation. (We're going to look a little more at meditation in this session.) What seemed to happen was that all of a sudden, my breath was gone. My heart stopped beating, and I came out of my body. I was met by this spirit, an ethereal form, that presented itself to me as Yogananda's astral body – this being told me it was Yogananda in his spirit form. That's when all of a sudden my mind went swoosh, and I saw that the whole universe was inside of me. Whole galaxies were coming out of the light that was radiating from me and unfolding into all creation. At that point, I realized that I was God. That was my higher self."

So, concerning this concept of man going to deity, you may say, "That's crazy." But that's because you come from a biblical frame of reference. It is not crazy to average, six-pack Joe American. He is hearing it, and being influenced by the ideas from every source imaginable.

Another demonic doctrine is that man has no old sin nature which separates him from God. We've looked at that. Another one is that religious truths are based on one's subjective inner feelings, and that if you want to find the truth, you look inside of yourself. One of our people gave me a tape to listen, which she had recorded, in which one of the current popular singers was playing on radio a tune called "I'm In Tune." ... I would like to read the words. It is very illuminative. The melody was clever. It was attractive. As you sat and listened, you learned something:

"The truth was all around me,  
but I closed my eyes and ears.  
I went looking for the answer somewhere,  
and now I've learned to listen,  
when I used to only hear.  
And I found the answers inside myself."

(Chorus:) "I'm in tune.  
I can see heaven's heartbeat  
in the stars that shine above,  
and I can feel the power  
of a universal love.  
With all my imperfections,  
there is still a place for me.  
I'm finding how good life can be.  
I'm in tune."

"A thousand different teachers  
try to teach me how to sing,  
but none of them could show me harmony.  
I feel so much better now,  
singing in the key of love,  
with a different drummer keeping time for me."

The words very clearly convey the idea that as he went looking for answers hither and yon, he could not find them, which means that the Bible had nothing to offer. But suddenly he began listening to his inner self, and he discovered that the answers of truth and reality were to be found within himself. So, he's now in tune. In tune with what? He is in tune with a universal mind; that cosmic essence; and, that impersonal deity that we've been talking about – that man is evolving toward in his own godhood. He finds truth through his internal subjective mechanisms. He can feel the power of universal love. Universal love is another expression for the universal mind – the universal essence: "With all my imperfections, there's still a place for me." You might say, "Well, that certainly is true," but not the way he means it. With all our imperfections, there is a place for us, providing those imperfections have been paid for by the death of Christ, and we've received that provision to our own benefit. He says, "With all my imperfections, there's still a place for me," meaning as long as I'm in tune with the universal force, then there is no evil that I must face. I'm finding how good life can be. I'm in tune."

Then that second verse: all the teachers who try to teach him how to sing in harmony. In harmony with what? In harmony with the universal force – that couldn't do it. But when he looked within himself, he found how to do that, and that universal force was love. So, now he's singing better in the key of love, with a different drummer keeping time. What drummer? The drummer of his own self. And we're back to that concept, again, that your truth (your pattern of life) is what's within you, and it has nothing to do with how it applies to someone else. These are amazing words.

It is very interesting that this is the same thing that an evangelical Christian (who does not want content in his teaching) has resorted to. Love is the thing. Forget this stuff about Bible doctrine. Forget the propositions of truth. Forget telling us that our minds have to be soaked in the mind of Christ as it is recorded in Scripture. Just help us to learn how to love one another, and all will be well. It's all around us, folks. We're not just imagining. It is saying that man has no old sin nature to separate him from God. Religious truths are based on his subjective inner feelings.

Another doctrine is that one's personal experiences are more important as a guide to spiritual truth than one's knowledge of Bible doctrine. Another false one is that the law of karma causes one to experience what his conduct deserves in sufferings or blessings. It isn't a matter of the fact that Christ has resolved our bad karma, but that we are going to deal with it, and that we are capable of dealing with it. And no matter how much bad we have done, Satan comes along with the devious lie that, as long as you match it with enough good, that will make it right. You just go out and murder somebody, and then try standing up before a court of law and reiterate all the good that you have done to outweigh that crime, and see whether that judge says, "Well, that's right, you have done enough good. You have covered the crime of murder."

At the heart of this deception, perhaps, is that the doctrine that every human soul at death is reincarnated in another life form, depending on his karma in the previous life – the effects caused by his previous life upon himself. I was reading the comic strip *Prince Valiant* last Sunday morning, and this principle of Eastern mysticism was taught there. All the kids who read *Prince Valiant* came up with that concept subtly instilled in their thinking.

This particular segment begins with the picture of a fellow named Prince Galan who is at an inn. The king's men come charging up on their horses, and Galan climbs up a tree, and he crawls in through a window, so that he's in the rafters above the room below where the king's men have entered.

The leader of the king's men declares, "Timur (the tyrant) needs laborers. Scum like you will not be missed."

As the helpless patrons recoil, Galan recalls one of Wang Chong's demonstrations. From his purse, he takes a magnet, and dangles it on a thread. In the next frame, he dangles this magnet down, and jerks the sword out of one of these tyrant's hands. They recoil in amazement that this sword goes flying up in the air, at which time the men that they're about ready to conscript into labor take a barrel of flour and throw it in the eyes of the king's men. They then proceed to kill them all.

In the next-to-the-last frame, then, they're all lying dead on the floor. The men who are going to be taken into servitude stand over them with their weapons. When the dust clears, Galan is a hero, and the rabble have scored a bloody victory over the king's minion. The man who gave Galan the boot earlier says, "I fear the next life will not be kind to black guards like these. No doubt they will return as insects, or rats, if they are lucky." Suddenly, he slaps his palm upon the table, and the last picture frame shows him squashing a bug on the table. He says, "See. Already they're back," and he laughs a throaty laugh.

There it is – reincarnation. If you're really bad, you could return as a stinkbug. If you're not so bad, maybe you'll return as a rat. But you're going to pay for it. That is the concept. It's a satanic notion.

Another false doctrine of demons is that chanting the mantra puts one in touch with powers in the universe to be used to supplement one's human powers. And indeed, as we have pointed out, there are about eight basic mantras (eight basic chants, or sounds). They are vibrations which indeed put the person who practices them into contact with real demonic power.

**Meditation**

The concept of salvation in Eastern mysticism is to arrive at full godhood and be absorbed into the universal force. The means for achieving this godhood is the cycle of reincarnation based upon your previous lifestyle or karma. During each lifetime, you may earn merit for good karma through the practice of meditation. So, the next false doctrine (a doctrine of demons) is this one of meditation which is widely promoted, even in Christian circles. The idea of meditation is that it is used to achieve a state of altered consciousness so that you can experience God. It's designed to transcend your own senses so that your mind is disconnected from your soul. It is disconnected from control over your soul. The process is to concentrate on something to the exclusion of everything else. It seeks to progressively experience a thought until one arrives at its source – that being the god which is within you. It's a type of self-hypnosis which is practiced to give one a sense of relaxation and peace.

Someone will immediately come along and say, "What do you mean? Here's this person. He sits before a picture of his guru. He folds his feet into the lotus position, and the room is filled with incense. He has gone through a series of rituals, and he sits there and he repeats his chant over and over again. He repeats his mantra over and over and over again until, in a self-hypnotic state, his mind disconnects from control, and he enters a world out there of amazing powers, and from which he gets amazing information. As the result of that, he has built good karma for his next life."

The challenge (the attack on that), of course, is always that this is what the Bible teaches. How can you condemn meditation when the Bible indeed makes a great deal of it? Notice Joshua 1:8, where we read, "This book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate therein day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success." This is a verse that is worth remembering, because it tells us that meditation is the technique that makes us prosperous, and that enables us to have good success in life. That's what it says. You can't get around it. The Bible does say that. Meditation is a technique which will lead to prosperity (money in the bank), and it will lead to good success in your lifestyle.

Psalm 1:2-3 may be added to this: "But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night." And as the result of doing that: "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters that bring forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper." There you have it again. Those who meditate are going to be like a tree which is nourished by water and becomes fruitful. The person will prosper.

Psalm 19:14 illustrates the same principle: "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." It's a practice that God commands to believers.

However, notice that the meditation, first of all, was clearly upon Bible doctrine. It is upon the Word of God that the believer meditates. He does not meditate by disconnecting his mind from reality, and simply moving off into a detached condition where his mind has been wiped blank.

There are certain objectives of meditation that the Bible also lays out for us for which God commands meditation.

One is in Psalm 77:12, "I will meditate also of all Your works, and talk of all Your doings." There are certain objects for meditation. What do we meditate upon? We don't meditate on just an empty blank nothing. One of the things we meditate upon are the works of God.

Next Sunday afternoon, at the 4:30 fellowship meeting, on our rally day, we are going to give you an opportunity to execute Psalm 77:12: "That you may talk of the Lord's doings in your life," and "that you may meditate upon what He has done," and you may stand up and share with believers what He has done. The result of that kind of meditation will bring prosperity and blessing to your own life. It's a good thing to stop sometime and to take account of what God has done for you. The trouble with Americans is that we don't have enough misery, like other people in the world do, to be able to be aware of what God has done for you; not the least of which is that He gave you the breath; He gave you the capacity; He gave you the means; and, He gave you the motivation to be here today in this service to advance your spiritual life, and to take another step up on your eternal rewards and prosperity and blessing. There are a lot of people that wish they could be in this room at this moment. There are a lot of people that wish they could have access to what you have access to. There are a lot of people that are looking for what you have, but don't even know what they're looking for, and thus they never find it.

Another object of meditation is told us in Psalm 119:97: "O, how I love Your law. It is my meditation all the day." The word "law" here is referring to the Word of God: "How I love the Word of God. That's what I think about, on and off, all day long – how I love Bible doctrine. As I move through my day; as I face various circumstances; as I face various situations; and as I'm confronted with making decisions, how I love to reach back there into my human spirit and draw out the Word of God that I have stored there to give me guidance and application at that point in time.

Sometimes I can tell when people do not have an area of doctrinal understanding stored in their human spirits, because they want to take an action which is contrary to the Word of God. They have not meditated upon that particular point. So, in time of need in their lives, it is not there to guide them, and consequently, they do not prosper and enjoy good success.

We meditate upon the works of God in our lives. We meditate upon the Word of God, and then, perhaps supremely of all (this should guide you in these times of public testimony in which we gather), Psalm 63:6 tells you what you should meditate upon, and what should primarily be on your lips as you testify. Psalm 63:6 says, "When I remember You upon my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches." Here, the psalmist says, "I lie in bed and I think about You, God. I think about You the person. I don't think about just the fact that doctrine will work in my life and make me successful. It will do that. I don't just lie there and rejoice in all the fantastic things You have done for me: the health you've given me; the happiness; the prosperity; the effectiveness; the service; the fulfillment of life; and, the meaningful relationships. I have all those things, but I think ultimately about You." And that's a good thing to observe.

Sometimes our testimonies slip off into saying, "I'm so glad for so-and-so because they have been an influence for something." And we stop with so-and-so, instead of carrying it to the fact and to the realization that the agent is unimportant. The focus of our attention should be the object of the Lord that we have been carried to. Our testimonies should concentrate on the person of God Himself; on His works; on His Word; and, on His person.

That's vastly different than the meditation of Eastern mysticism which is based upon the meaningless repetition of a certain phrase, or of a certain sound to the point of self-hypnosis. Biblical meditation, obviously, always involves the rational mind and the conscious thought. In Psalm 49:3, this is indicated: "My mouth shall speak of wisdom, and the meditating of my heart shall be of understanding." When it says, "My mouth shall speak of wisdom," that is content. That is specific truth: "The meditation of my heart (of my mind) shall be of understanding." I'll have understanding content. I won't be a blank mind. My mind will have understanding. So, biblical meditation always involves your rational, controlled thinking and conscious thought.

Meditation upon the Word of God is important because we are told in the book of Romans that it transforms the mind from human viewpoint to divine viewpoint. Every sensitive Christian, when he learns some basics about the Word of God, very quickly becomes aware of the fact that He came into the Christian life with a mind saturated with human viewpoint. And that is for whatever reasons: your parents reared you with human viewpoint; your religious system reared you with human viewpoint; or, the people you associate with are all shot-through with human viewpoint, so that's what you pick up. That's the context of your understanding for whatever reason. A wise Christian realizes early on that he's got a problem – that that human viewpoint has to be replaced by divine viewpoint. That's why the tremendous verse of Romans 12:2 is the guidance when Paul says, "Be not conformed to this world (that is, its system of thinking), but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Do not be conformed to this world. The Greek means, "Do not be cut out to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind – by your mind being renewed from human viewpoint to divine viewpoint via the intake of doctrine, so that you may demonstrate in your experience that good, acceptable, and perfect will that God has for you."

This transformation that Paul is speaking about here in Romans does not take place mystically as in Eastern mysticism cults. The transformation involves meditating on the clear meaning of a text of Scripture, and it involves our positive response to it. This is declared to us in Psalm 119:9, where the psalmist says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to Your Word." Verse 11 says, "Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." How does a person keep from an immoral lifestyle? How does a person avoid doing that which is evil? By functioning as per the Word of God that he has learned. He has learned the Word of God, and he applies the Word of God. He has hidden it in his heart, which is the word for the mentality of the soul. So, the transformation of the mind takes place by meditating (or learning) the Word of God.

The purpose, of course, of Eastern mysticism is to raise your psychic consciousness. You do that by shifting your mind into neutral. The focus then is contact with a demon spirit through the endless repetition of the mantra. There is no influence on the devotee to reject sin in his life. But he is told to pretend it doesn't exist, because it's unreal. It creates a sense of oneness with all things, giving the impression that one is at peace with God. It gives you this sense of feeling – the experience that Brad Green described to us in the previous session in that quote that I read you.

Biblical meditation, on the other hand, centers on appreciating and worshiping the holy transcendent Lord God.

So, meditation is a legitimate biblical principle, but not the mindless, self-hypnotic meditation of Eastern mysticism. You must make the difference in your understanding. When you talk to people about meditation, they may say, "Oh, yeah, man, I'm into meditation. That's big. Every morning I start with meditation. That's big stuff with me." You better ask a few questions to find out what kind of meditation they're all deep and hot into. You will find that it is not biblical meditation that is centered upon God's works; upon God's Word; and, upon God's person.

**Material Illusion**

There is another rather important doctrine that Eastern mysticism teaches, which Satan has invented in order to destroy human beings in hell. That is the doctrine of material illusion. That is the doctrine that the material world is not real. Sometimes we use that expression: "Man, that is unreal." The Eastern mystic says, "Boy, you're right. That's exactly right. It's unreal." You'll come up to a person, and you'll say, "Man, you're unreal." Eastern mysticism says, "You're right. That person isn't there. That person is unreal." This is an ancient heresy. Back in the beginning of the New Testament church, it was called gnosticism. Eastern mysticism holds that the cosmic force, which is deity, produces the illusion of material existence.

**Maya**

This illusion in Eastern mysticism is called Maya. You might want to learn that term. The Eastern mystic says, "Oh, that's just Maya." What does he mean? He means it's an illusion. It doesn't exist. What you look at (that is material) does not exist. The satanic factor in this (the stinger) is that if material things are not real, neither is anything associated with material things – like sin and human actions. They don't exist. They're not there.

In the news, somebody recently raped a small 18-month old child. When he was taken into custody, everybody was outraged. His remark was, "What's the big deal? I've done this before." You would say, "The guy is crazy. How can anybody be that absolutely brutal?" But probably, without that man knowing what he thinks, someplace along the line, the subtle impression has been picked up that anything material is not real. So, nothing is really happening. As the gurus like to say, "The only problem that man has is thinking that he has a problem. It's an illusion. Material things are Maya, and everything associated with them are also Maya.

So, all that is real and eternal cannot be material in nature. This applies both to the mind and the body of man. This is what the Eastern Mystic says – that the only material thing is Brahman. Brahman is what they refer to as "the force." That is the only material thing that exists. Brahman is the one who has created the material world which is an illusion. Man's ignorance of the one reality causes him, consequently, to accept what is not so. Man thinks he has sickness; man thinks he has pain; man thinks he has sorrow; and, man thinks he has death, and none of these things exists. It's all illusion. It's all Maya. Salvation in Eastern mysticism is to come to the point where you recognize that these things do not exist. And we're being taught this in a very subtle way in a variety of ways.

Let's go back to our movie Star Wars again. The concept of Maya was taught there in a very dramatic way – that the material world is illusion, and that it doesn't exist. The first time around I didn't catch it. But once I began thinking about the doctrine of Maya, I gasped when I saw it, because it was so clearly portrayed. Without your having to name it, you got the impression, and you got the understanding. In the next six or seven star war movies that are coming down the line, you may be assured that you're going to get it again and again and again.

In Star Wars, Obi-Wan Kenobi and Darth Vader finally come across one another in one of the corridors on the Death Star space station. They face off for that battle with their two light sabers. As the battle rages back and forth, they finally come to a close-up crossing of the light sabers. Obi-Wan says, "You can't win, Darth. You can strike me down. I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine."

What was he saying? He was saying, "Darth, you can't win." I'm the good side of the force," as we've already seen: "And you can't cut me down, because I'm still going to be there after you cut me down." Finally, after a few more maneuvers, we see that Luke is startled in watching this battle, and they're trying to get into the spaceship to escape from the Death Star. Obi-Wan Kenobi tells Luke to get aboard the spaceship. Then Obi-Wan takes his light sword, and he holds it up in a salute like position, and he permits Darth Vader to slash him with his light sword, and to strike him down. As Obi-Wan is hit by the light sword of Darth Vader, his clothing collapses to the ground, and he's gone. Why? Because the material substance of Obi-Wan never existed. It was an illusion. So, when he was killed (that is, transported out into another life), the material showed that it never was there, and it just disappeared, and his clothing collapsed to the ground. Darth Vader emphasizes the point then by going over and putting his boot down on the clothes and stomping it several times to show that Obi-Wan was simply gone. That scene was teaching the doctrine of Maya – the illusion of the material body.

Actually, Eastern mysticism views the material universe as a joke which has been played on man by the god Krishna. It's a joke that he doesn't intend to continue. It's just an illusion.

If you're acquainted with Christian Science, you realize that this doctrine of Maya (the unreality of material things) is at the heart of everything that your Christian Science friends believe – those tremendously fine, prosperous, moral people that you know who follow the concept of Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy. The concept is that there is no sickness; there is no pain; there is no death; and, there is nothing that is associated with the material body. It's all an illusion. Mrs. Eddy said that it should be viewed as a deception of the mortal mind. Consequently, evil also is only an illusion. Since God is good, and everything is God, there can't be any evil. So, if a man rapes an 18-month old baby, it doesn't make any difference. It can't be declared to be evil, because he's part of deity. Anyhow, the pain and suffering that that entailed was only an illusion. It never existed. So, there's no need for the death of Christ to pay for a non-existent world of evil.

However, the biblical view is something else. The Bible clearly declares in Genesis 1 that God created a world as real existence in time and space. The world that God put together in creation really was there. And God's creation was not evil. Genesis 1:31 tells us that, when God finished, it was very good indeed. It was contaminated eventually by sin, including the contamination of the human body. But God is real, and so is His material creation, separate from Himself. The world that we know (the material world) is the result of God's responsible and determinate will. Consequently, the body that you have is real. The body that Jesus Christ had is real. The body that died on the cross was real. The Bible makes it clear that, when Jesus Christ died, He didn't disappear like Obi-Wan did because his body was an illusion. It actually was there. It was sacrificed for sin.

Furthermore, it was that very body which was raised again, and is now in heaven. Acts 1:9 tells us that Jesus went to heaven in that body. Mark 16:19 indicates to us that it is that very same body of Jesus Christ that ascended to heaven. It was the body that Thomas touched, and saw that it was indeed bearing the wounds of His crucifixion. The Bible says that evil is real, and that God's holiness demands a payment, consequently, for the violation against God's absolute righteousness, and it will be executed against the real body. The people who spend eternity in the lake of fire; all those relatives of yours who rejected salvation by grace; all those friends of yours who rejected salvation by grace; and, all those people in public prominence who rejected salvation by grace (like Princess Grace of Monaco) are going to discover that their bodies are real, and they're going to be in those bodies for all eternity in the lake of fire.

You better go back and reread a little bit of the book of Revelation as it describes that place. It will make the hair stand on the back of your neck. It is a horrible place to be. The justice of God demands that those who have rejected the provision that He has made for sin is going to be exercised upon that real body. Don't kid yourself that your body is not real. The Word of God reveals to us, furthermore, that the old material heaven and earth will be replaced by a new one. 2 Peter 3:10-13 describe for us how all this old world is going to be simply brought to nothing by an act of God, and then renewed: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and earth also, and the works that are in it shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God in which the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which dwell righteousness."

There is going to be a new material heaven and a new material earth free of sin. Revelation 21:1 says, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea." It is clear, at the very end of the Bible, that the material universe continues on forever. This is further indicated in Revelation 21 by the observation that, in this new heaven and this new earth, which will be purged of all evil, there will be no pain, no sorrow, and no death, because they are real. Revelation 21:4 says, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither should there be any more pain. For the former things are passed away."

The lake of fire for unbelievers is also a real material place in space and time, and it exists forever. Revelation 20:10 says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beasts and the false prophet are. And they shall be tormented day and night, forever and ever." And do you know what that means? It means that all those people you knew who rejected salvation by grace will never have a second of peace and eternity. It will be pain, pain, pain. What an enormous, horrible tragedy for somebody to have to go out of this life in some kind of terminal illness of physical pain, having rejected Christ and the grace basis of salvation. And then for people to look at that dead body and say, "How peaceful that person looks," and to realize that they have gone from excruciating pain in this life to excruciating, unending pain in the next life. I've heard people look at individuals who are lying in a coffin, and say, "Well, at least there's no more pain for them now." I happened to know that those people were Christ rejecters, and the pain was just beginning. They were kidding themselves in thinking that they had no more pain.

It's a real place on a real material body. Revelation 21:8 says, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolatries, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. Those who are guilty of evil, unpaid for by the death of Christ, are going to be in the lake of fire. There is no Maya here. There's no illusion. The material world actually does exist.

However, for the Christian, it's different. The Bible also takes the trouble to tell us that for us it's going to be an eternity in heaven, in our physical bodies, in a condition of enormous bliss; perfect health; and, perfect physical structure. I can't say perfect appearance. I don't know about that, because I do know that we will recognize one another. So, I'm sorry to say there's not going to be much change. You're pretty well stuck with what you've got, but what you have is going to be super.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 says, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." These verses are telling us that the very bodies that have deteriorated in the grave are going to be raised. The material body is real, and it is eternal. Your body is as eternal as your soul and spirit.

1 John 3:2 makes this grand declaration: "Beloved, now we are the children of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." And how is Jesus Christ now? He is in a physical body, seated at the right hand of God the Father. When we see Him we shall be like Him. We too will be human beings in our material, glorified bodies in heaven, even as He is. We will be free of death; no more sorrow; no more pain; and, no more tears.

There are a variety of other doctrines that we won't touch on in Eastern mysticism that are of lesser nature. We may just mention them in passing. But there are some serious implications about these doctrines of demons, the major ones of which I trust you are now alerted to. This deception of these doctrines has entered Christianity, not the least of which is through the technique of hypnosis. Next time, we're going to look in on that. We have Christians who are getting rid of their weight, and they're getting rid of their smoking through hypnosis. They're getting rid of their mothers-in-law through hypnosis. They're doing everything under the world through hypnosis. And to them, it's just one of those cute little things to do at work, so what's wrong with it? I'm glad you asked that. Come back next time and find out.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1982

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