

Spiritual Atheism

And its Danger to 'Aqīdah (Creed) and Reason

50 Questions & Answers



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Translated by : Sabah Temmar B. A'mar

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Verily, all praise is for Allāh. We praise Him, seek His help, and ask His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Him from the evil within ourselves and from the wickedness of our deeds. Whomever is guided by Allāh cannot be led astray, and whomever Allāh misguides cannot be guided. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh without partners and that Muḥammad is His servant and Messenger. Allāh sent him (PBUH) as a mercy to the worlds, providing guidance and giving the good news of Paradise and warning from the torture of Allāh. He (PBUH) conveyed the Message and fulfilled that with which he was entrusted, and delivered the sound advice to his nation. May Allāh reward him (PBUH) for what he did to us the best of the rewards that He bestowed upon any of His prophets. May Allāh send blessings and peace upon Prophet Muḥammad and upon his Family and Companions, and upon all His Prophets and Messengers, and upon those who love them until the Day of Judgement.

To proceed:

This is the book *Spiritual Atheism and its Danger to ‘Aqīdah (Creed) and Reason*. It deals with a serious issue that *has indeed broadly penetrated* Muslim countries—the lands of monotheism—which is the application of Hindu, Buddhist and Taoist pagan practices in their various forms under the names of: “energy therapy”, “utilizing the law of attraction,” “meditation and yoga,” “the macrobiotic diet,” “*reiki* therapy”, “achieving harmony with cosmic energy,” and other philosophies of East Asian religions. This book shows the seriousness of these practices on the sanctity of monotheism and its crime against the blessing of reason. The book is in a question-and-answer format, and all scientific information contained in it is documented by specialized scientific references.

1. What is spiritual atheism and what is the difference between it and materialistic atheism?

There are two categories of atheism:

Materialistic atheism: It is the denial of the existence of the Creator, the prophets, the unseen, the resurrection and the reckoning.⁽¹⁾

Spiritual atheism: It is the adoption of pagan esoteric philosophies that believe in the concepts of the Unity of Being, union between the individual self and the Universal Absolute, cosmic energy...etc and the application of these philosophies in spiritual and therapeutic sports, such as meditation, to create one's own destiny, to attract benefits and ward off harm, and considering these philosophies a way of life and the ultimate goal of existence.

2. What is the Unity of Being (pantheism) and what is its source?

Pantheism (the Unity of Being) is the doctrine that God is not the creator of things but is identical with them i.e., “God is everything and everything is God.”—Glorified and Highly Exalted is Allāh above what they claim! In East Asian philosophies, such as Buddhism and Taoism, there is no belief in a Creator God Who is wholly separate, distinct, independent, and superior over His creation. Rather, they include the doctrine that the world is either identical with God or an expression of His nature.⁽²⁾ They claim that the Universe (Nature) and God are equivalent, and this is what is called the “Unity of Being” (i.e., the unity

⁽¹⁾ I wrote a booklet titled *Get Rid of your Atheism* to explain the problems with materialistic atheism. It is available on the Internet.

Access it here: www.bit.ly/3doNpAQ, Or here:

www.mediafire.com/file/3ndvddfji8dn666/%D8%AA%D8%AE%D9%84%D8%B5.pdf.

⁽²⁾ Padmanabh S. Jaini, *Collected Papers on Buddhist Studies*, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2001).

of the cosmos with God). Two types of pantheism have developed—each identifying and uniting God with the world in a unique way.

The first type is found in Hinduism: Absolute pantheism is found in the Vedanta school of Hinduism which teaches that only one being exists in the world which is God. Everything else that appears to exist, in reality, does not i.e., everything besides God is an elaborate illusion. Hindus believe that God is present in all things and everything in existence is nothing more than an expression and a manifestation of Him.

The second type is found in Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism: they believe in the Unity of Being in its pure atheistic sense. These traditions do not believe in any kind of deity or god. They view the universe as a regular, self-contained, self-operating whole, spontaneously generated and perpetually in motion. Instead of causality, they stress synchronicity i.e., the coincidence of events in space and time. They argue that the harmonious cooperation and synchronic interaction of all things in the universe stemmed from the natural “Way” (a unified pattern or process) in which all things followed, not the commands of a supreme external will or authority, but the internal dictates of their own natures. That is, there is no supreme heavenly ordainer and the material world is all there is.

Both groups are upon the disbelief which invalidates the faith and renders it useless. The foundation of the *‘aqīdah* (creed) of the prophets and of their religion and law is that Allāh is the One and Only Creator. He is distinct from His creatures, and His creatures are separated from Him. He is not incarnate within or united in one single existence with His creation. Let us now present some rational problems with the philosophy of pantheism:

The first problem: If God is incarnated in everything, then what is the point of performing rituals in order to unite oneself with Him to *reach moksha/nirvana*?⁽¹⁾ How does one unite himself with something that is already incarnated in him? After all, isn't God all, and all is God?!

The second problem: according to the pantheistic belief which states that God is incarnated in everything, slips, sins, adultery, murder and everything is identical with God and an expression of His nature. If this is the case, then what is the point of striving to get rid of slips and sins? Why are pantheists so keen to stay away from worldly desires and whims? There is no justification for their eagerness to do good except the pure call of the *fitrah* (Man's natural disposition) that mixes with their flesh and blood. Unfortunately, however, it is a call that is not at all compatible with their creed. Pantheists thus fall into a contradiction in that they believe that everything is part of an all-encompassing, immanent God and all forms of reality are modes of Him, or identical with Him. Hence, whatever humans do or however things turn out must be deemed the action of God (even sin). Nonetheless, pantheists are keen on not committing sins!

The third problem: Belief in the Unity of Being entails the relativity of truth. For instance, according to the pantheistic belief, it is not wrong to worship idols and stones, for idols and stones are, in fact, God. That is, worshiping a stone or an idol has just as much validity as worshiping God as an invisible and spiritual being. Again, the pantheistic deity consists of everyone and everything i.e., everyone and everything is God. So, the idol is God and the stone is God. However, relativism is self-refuting. It asserts that the truth-value of a statement is always relative to some particular standpoint which implies that the same statement can be both

⁽¹⁾ These terms will be explained shortly.

true and false. Thus, relativism itself is false or at least relative to some standpoints i.e., if all is relative, then so is relativism.

Furthermore: Belief in the Unity of Being goes against the most basic axioms of science, reason and observation. It does not answer the question about the origin of the universe. The concept of “self-creation” is utter madness and rationally impossible. That is, something cannot cause or explain its own existence, for this would require it to already exist. In other words, that which needs to be created does not have in itself the reason for its being and cannot “create itself”. Thus, the universe must have the ultimate reason for its existence in another being, whose existence is necessary: God. The philosophy of pantheism should have gone where it belongs—into the dustbin of history—as it has been conclusively proven, more than eighty years ago, that the universe with everything in it has not existed forever. The universe was born i.e., had a beginning. The most famous evidence for the finite age of the universe came from the second law of thermodynamic which states that the universe is constantly losing usable energy and never gaining, and that it would be getting colder, as it expands, and will inevitably lapse into heat death. If the Universe were infinite and eternal, then the heat death should have happened by now. Scientists logically conclude that the universe had a finite beginning—the moment at which it was at its most ordered possible state i.e., “zero entropy”. Other evidence for the fact that the universe did not exist from eternity came from the discovery of radioactivity. The crust of the Earth includes some radioactive or unstable elements which gradually decay into stable elements like lead. The discovery of natural radioactivity is evidence that the universe and the Earth have finite ages as it shows that matter is not eternal and unchanging. If matter had existed for an infinitely long time, all

spontaneous fission and radioactive decay would have ceased by now. That is, if the Earth were infinitely old, eternally existing, and uncreated, then all the radioactive elements would have decayed completely long ago. Furthermore, if the universe was eternal, then the nuclear fusion in the Sun's core would have stopped, and the sun would have essentially become useless to us long ago. The general view of physicists is that matter, energy, space and time erupted into being in a fireball called the Big Bang around 13.82 billion years ago. Before the Big Bang there was no space and time and no physical processes which take place in the background of a classical space-time. That is, scientists consider the Big Bang the "birth" of the universe, and the beginning of time as we know it. Oddly enough, Buddhism and Taoism, to this day, regard the universe as infinite in time and space, necessarily existent, and eternal. Taking these attributes as the characteristic marks of divinity has formed one very important reason for pantheists thinking that the universe itself is in fact God. Only an eternal model of the universe can account for pantheism. Empirical science, however, established that infinitude and necessary existence cannot be attributed to the cosmos. Nonetheless, pantheists persist in believing that the universe always has been and always will be as if they have not yet entered the phase of empirical science in history!

3. What is the "Universal Absolute" or the "Cosmic Spirit" in which the proponents of cosmic energy healing believe?

The Cosmic Spirit or the Universal Absolute is a metaphysical concept—abstract and otherworldly—in East Asian philosophies, namely Taoism, Buddhism and Hinduism. The Cosmic Spirit (i.e., the world-soul) does not mean the soul as we, Muslims, understand it. To pantheists, the Cosmic Spirit is eternal and unchanging, but it is not the

Creator God because in pantheistic religions, as already stated, there is no omnipotent being beyond the cosmos which created and controls the universe. Rather, the universe and God are one and the same and neither exists outside of the other. The end goal of all East Asian philosophies is the joining of the individual self (spirit) with the Cosmic Self (Spirit) to attain enlightenment— having knowledge of the Absolute Truth— through long meditation, complete stillness and immobility for long hours and following extremely austere diets. Pantheists claim that it is possible, through these practices, to unite the individual spirit with the Universal Spirit and thus obtain benefits and ward off harm. The Universal Spirit is called by different names: “The Tao” in Taoism, “Mana” in shamanism, “The Macro” by macrobiotic dietary therapy proponents, “Prana” in Vedic and later Hindu religion and in alternative medicine, and “Chi” in classical Chinese philosophy. It is also known as “cosmic energy”. The purpose of existence is union with the universal spirit. This union is called “*nirvana*” in Buddhism, or “*moksha*” in Hinduism. The funny and sad thing is that the advocates of energy healing and the law of attraction in our countries state, without shame, that the purpose of breathwork (deep breathing and ascension breathing) & meditation courses is learning to achieve *nirvana*. Have we become so dependent on pagans’ rubbish to this extent? The Prophet (PBUH) said: “You would tread the same path as was trodden by those before you inch by inch and step by step so much so that if they had entered into the hole of the lizard, you would follow them in this also.” Any Muslim who says that this universal spirit is a Creator Being has fallen into disbelief, and any Muslim who says that it is a created being has fallen into polytheism (associating Allāh’s attributes with someone else) since they attribute to it some of the Creator’s work, such as predestining the fate of everything and removing afflictions.

4. But the question is: How does meditation make one acquire knowledge or connect with the Universal Spirit?

Meditation is rooted in East Asian philosophies such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism. In these philosophies, meditation is not the same as meditation in its Islamic sense i.e., “contemplation of Allāh’s creatures and wisdom, and reflection on His wonderful design and great bounties and blessings.” According to pantheists and proponents of energy healing, meditation is a practice of complete stillness to empty the mind of all thoughts. For example, the Lotus position is a cross-legged sitting meditation pose, in which each foot is placed on the opposite thigh, is widely used for meditation in Hindu, Tantra, Jain, and Buddhist traditions. Some remain in the lotus posture for 18 hours without eating or drinking. Yoga poses are postures that allow for complete stillness in the body. They are not poses of contemplation! Sitting in yoga positions affects the brains of meditators. They literally experience hallucinations and fantasies and the demons mess with their minds. They think that they have acquired knowledge or that they have opened the portal to other worlds. In reality, however, they experience nothing but auditory and visual hallucinations due to ion channels dysfunction as a result of not eating for long periods. Basically, the severe drop in glucose level leads to deregulated secretions of hormones and a defect in assimilation and perception. This can occur to anyone with too low blood sugar levels after a long period of complete stillness. What the meditator sees is akin to the hallucinations or postoperative delirium occurring following general anesthesia. Extended periods of static meditation and extreme starvation lead to such hallucinations as Mikao Usui, the founder of *reiki*, admitted. Usui confessed that he began to lose consciousness and hallucinate after long hours of starvation and deprivation.

It is important to understand that the true miracles and visions of the prophets happen suddenly and without prior preparation. In addition, people witness them with their own eyes. This is the difference between *awliyā` Allāh* (the friends of Allāh) and *awliyā` ash-Shayṭān* (the friends of Satan). The “stillness of the dead” practiced by the advocates of energy healing, derived from Buddhism and Hinduism, leads to a real kind of demonic possession, weak-mindedness, absent-mindedness and dullness. Imām aḏ-Ḍahabī (RA) said: “When a worshiper, who is devoid of knowledge, practices asceticism, lives in celibacy and starvation, and shuts himself away (withdraws to seclusion), and leaves meat and fruits, and restricts himself to *ad-duqqah* (a dry mixture of Middle Eastern spices, usually eaten by dipping bread into olive oil and then into the mixture) and *al-kesrah* (flatbread which typically contains no yeast), his senses will dwindle and weaken, and he will be haunted by the whims of the self. He will hear a discourse caused by hunger and vigil. That discourse—I swear by Allāh—does not (truly) exist outside (of him). Satan will enter into him and get out of him. He will think that he has connected and united with Allāh, that Allāh has addressed him, and that he has ascended. But Satan will control him and whisper to him.”⁽¹⁾ Satan sits in wait for the Son of Adam (human being) in all his paths. He asked Allāh to grant him immortal status in this life so that he could concentrate on his vendetta against Man: {He said, “For leaving me to stray I will lie in ambush for them on Your Straight Path. I will approach them from their front, their back, their right, their left, and then You will find most of them ungrateful.”} (Qur`ān 7:16-17) Satan is keen to beguile people from the way of Allāh. The devils provide the meditators with some assistance, visions, *mukāshafāt* (revelations in spiritual trances and states)

⁽¹⁾ Shams ad-Dīn aḏ-Ḍahabī, *Siyar A`lām an-Nubalā`*, (Beirut: Mu`assasat ar-Risālah, 1996).

in addition to the hallucinations caused by hunger and thirst. Maryam Nūr, a Lebanese expert in the Macrobiotic diet and alternative medicine, said in a television interview that she sees and talks to aliens whose faces are square—creatures that, she claims, can cure and heal. She said that she knows a Lebanese person suffering from paralysis who was healed when one of these aliens came to him through the wall and placed his hand on him.⁽¹⁾

It is really easy for Satan to deceive these people and to deceive their followers through them! Those who practice meditation, which is not upon the guidance of the Divine Messages, and those who believe in the Universal Spirit are the messengers of the devils to the people. The devils thus have to support them with some revelations and to manifest occurrences that go beyond the norms of nature at their hands to prove their truthfulness to lay people. That is why the Prophet (PBUH) warned against going to fortune tellers, for they are the friends of Satan and his followers: “whoever goes to a fortune teller and believes what he says, has disbelieved in that which Allāh revealed to Muḥammad (PBUH).”⁽²⁾

5. Can yoga be considered one of these pagan meditation practices?

Yes, yoga has its origins in the pagan Hindu and Buddhist meditation practices. Essentially, yoga is built on three main structures: exercise, meditation and breathing. But, as you can guess, the advocates of yoga in our countries are trying to rid *it* of *any* taint of a *pagan*

⁽¹⁾ Fowz bint ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Kurdī, “Maqālāt ‘an al-Fikr al-‘Aqadī al-Wāfid wa Manhajiyat at-Ta‘āmul Ma‘ahu”, *alfowz*, www.alfowz.com/.

Maryam Nūr, “Maryam Nūr tataḥaddathu li Mawḍū‘ li an-Anashr ‘an al-Makhlūqāt al-Gharībah (Maryam Nūr Talks to Mawḍū‘ li an-Anashr (Lebanese Talk Show) about Strange Creatures)”, *Youtube*, uploaded by Rasha Joy, www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Bmd880BBcg.

⁽²⁾ Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan abī Dāwūd*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1998), ḥadīth: 3904, degree of ḥadīth: ṣaḥīḥ.

tradition and present it as nothing more than a physical sport, which is a fraudulent misrepresentation. Traditionally, yoga is a practice that has its roots in Asian philosophies and its aim is joining the individual self with the Absolute or the Universal Spirit. It is generally associated with good health and vitality. But Yoga can be detrimental to health and can even lead to a fatal outcome as it increases risks of injury. It is found that brain injuries can be caused by quick movements and poses that extend the neck or those that stretch the vertebrae extensively. Vertebral arteries can also be injured by extreme neck and head rotation resulting in swelling and production of clots that increase the chances of getting a stroke.⁽¹⁾ People with osteoporosis in particular can be harmed by certain yoga poses because they increase soft tissue and bone injury and may even cause muscle strain.⁽²⁾ Research has proven that yoga as a form of exercise might not be quite as safe as previously thought and that it can do more harm than good. According to a new University of Sydney study, yoga caused musculoskeletal pain in more than 10 percent of participants and even more worrying, exacerbated 21 percent of existing injuries.⁽³⁾ According to Evangelos Pappas, the study's lead researcher, the risk of pain caused by yoga is higher than previously reported. He told *The Guardian*: "Our study found that the incidence of pain caused by yoga is more than 10 percent per year, which is comparable to the rate of all

⁽¹⁾ William J. Broad, "How Yoga Can Wreck Your Body", *New York Times*, 8 Jan. 2012, www.nytimes.com/2012/01/08/magazine/how-yoga-can-wreck-your-body.html.

⁽²⁾ Maria Cohut, "Osteoporosis: Some Yoga Poses May Cause Bone Injuries", *Medical News Today*, 26 Feb. 2019, www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324547.

⁽³⁾ Marc Campo et al., "Musculoskeletal Pain Associated with Recreational Yoga Participation: A Prospective Cohort Study with 1-Year Follow-Up.", *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*, vol. 22, 2 (2018): 418-423, June 02 2017. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbmt.2017.05.022>.

sports injuries combined among the physically active population.”⁽¹⁾ Panic attacks, depression, anxiety, negative thinking, and resurfacing of traumatic childhood memories are amongst the downsides to yoga and meditation. A PhD researcher in psychiatry at the University of Manchester and a mindfulness teacher, Kate Williams, stated that there is a dark side to mindfulness: “Experiences can be quite extreme, to the extent of inducing paranoia, delusions, confusion, mania or depression.”⁽²⁾ Yoga is a philosophy of life, not just a sport.⁽³⁾ Yoga in Indian traditions has a meditative and spiritual core; it is more than physical exercise.⁽⁴⁾ UNESCO has included Indian ancient practice of yoga in its Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.⁽⁵⁾ There is nothing wrong with one wanting to exercise or sit down to rest and calm one’s mind, but Muslims should not imitate ridiculous pagan practices!

6. What is the law of attraction (LOA)?

LOA proponents believe that the universe operates by vibration. According to their so-called law of vibration, everything in the world is made up of energy which vibrates at a specific frequency. They claim that

⁽¹⁾ “Yoga Can be Painful and Can Lead to Injury, Study Says.”, *The Guardian*, 28 June 2017, www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2017/jun/28/yoga-can-be-painful-and-can-lead-to-injury-study-says.

⁽²⁾ Dawn Foster, “Is Mindfulness Making us Ill?”, *The Guardian*, 23 Jan. 2016, www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/jan/23/is-mindfulness-making-us-ill.

⁽³⁾ Karel Werner, “Yoga and the Rg Veda: An Interpretation of the Keśin Hymn (RV 10, 136)”, *Religious Studies*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1977, pp. 289–302. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034412500010076>.

⁽⁴⁾ Mark Cobb et al, *Oxford Textbook of Spirituality in Healthcare (Oxford Textbooks in Public Health)*, (Oxford: Oxford, University Press, 2014), p.362.

⁽⁵⁾ “Yoga Joins UNESCO World Heritage List”, *The Guardian*, 1 Dec. 2016, www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/dec/01/yoga-joins-unesco-intangible-world-heritage-list.

humans, like everything else, are also vibrational energy and they attract circumstances based on the vibrational alignment of their thoughts and feelings. In their terms, vibrational alignment means that the energy one is sending out is vibrating at the same frequency as the energy he desires to experience. That is, vibrational alignment helps one attract his desire because vibrations with similar frequencies are drawn to each other as a result of the law of attraction. LOA folks say, “just *ask* the *universe* for *what you want*, keep your vibration high and the universe is bound to respond.” If asking the universe for something is not major polytheism—open polytheism which can take two forms: associating anyone or anything with Allāh and associating His attributes with someone or something.)—then what is polytheism? Allāh says: {so do not knowingly set up equals to Allāh ‘in worship’}. (Qur’ān 2:22) Setting the universe up as an equal or rival to Allāh and requesting things from it is the essence of disbelief and insanity. Even if LOA proponents say that the “vibrational matching of frequencies” is but a way of *al-akhdh bi al-asbāb*—having recourse to the expedients that Allāh has ordained to attract benefits and prevent harm and everything in the universe happens but by Allāh’s will—this would still be minor polytheism, namely polytheism of causes because the LOA is not among the legitimate means that the Law-giver (Allāh) has made causes to achieve outcomes.

Polytheism of causes is belief that something may be a cause of bringing benefit or warding off harm when Allāh has not made it so. The legitimate means that Muslims can have recourse to in order to attain desired outcomes are of two types. The first type is the religious means stipulated by the Law-giver such as the Qur’ān and supplication. The second type is the material means such as those whose usefulness has been proven by empirical science, namely the laws of the universe that

Allāh has made serviceable unto His servants. Attributing power to a thing when Allāh has not made it so, neither according to the *Sharī‘ah* nor according to the laws of the universe, is minor polytheism. Allāh did not say that the “vibrational matching of frequencies” can bring good or ward off harm. Its proponents claim that LOA is grounded in science, but this nonsense is a mere pseudoscience with conclusions based on erroneous, unfounded and incorrect assumptions. Dr. Michael Shermer, the founding publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, the host of the *Science Salon Podcast*, and a Presidential Fellow at Chapman University, debunked the dangerous and wrong law of attraction—the “risible twaddle” presented in *The Secret*: “a pantheon of shiny happy people assures viewers that *The Secret* is grounded in science: “It has been proven scientifically that a positive thought is hundreds of times more powerful than a negative thought.” No, it hasn’t.”⁽¹⁾ Here is a simple example to explain the difference between having recourse to legitimate means and falling into minor and major polytheism. Think of this: If someone had some sort of ache, and:

- A. He performed *ruqyah* on himself by reciting some Qur’ānic verses: this is a legitimate healing method.
- B. He took a pain-relief medicine: there is nothing wrong with this, for Allāh has ordered that we seek for treatment and He has made medicines a legitimate means of healing.
- C. He wears a talisman as a means of healing: This is polytheism because the patient is seeking treatment by using something that Allāh has not made a source of healing neither according to the *Sharī‘ah* nor according to the laws of the universe.

⁽¹⁾ Michael Shermer, “The (Other) Secret: The Inverse Square Law Trumps the Law of Attraction”, *Scientific American*, June 1, 2007, www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-other-secret/.

If the person says that this talisman is just a secondary cause and healing comes from Allāh, then this is the type of minor polytheism called polytheism of causes. But if he believes that the power of healing comes from the talisman itself then he has fallen into major polytheism. Similarly, the belief that one can attract benefit and ward off harm through the “vibrational matching of frequencies” revolves around major and minor polytheism.

Unfortunately, supporters of the LOA and energy healing in our countries give these pagan practices “two tinges” to make them appealing to the laymen: a *shar‘ī* (Islamic) tinge and a scientific one. As for the *shar‘ī* tinge, they say that the LOA is a matter of having good expectations of Allāh Who said in the ḥadīth qudsī: “I am as my slave expects me to be.” But this is a fraudulent misrepresentation because the practitioners of the LOA think positively, not of Allāh, but of the power of the cosmic energy which, they claim, is present everywhere and flows through our bodies”, and which is “our purifier, our healer, our true wellness.” They think positively of the power and benefits of the LOA. Is this a matter of having good expectations of Allāh? Or is it a matter of having good expectations of the superstitious LOA? They quote the verse: {Allāh would never change a people’s state until they change their own state.} (Qur’ān 13:11) It is well-known that changing one’s state is achieved by doing good deeds and by turning away from disbelief, not through the “vibrational matching of frequencies”, as they claim. They also cite a ḥadīth where the Prophet (PBUH) allegedly said: “Hope for the best and you shall find it.” This is a fabricated (forged) tradition! Of course an optimistic outlook is better than a pessimistic one, for optimism motivates us to take action and have recourse to legitimate means. And yes our thoughts and feelings influence how we experience the world. But

it is utter deception to claim that one can attract good or ward off harm by merely having an optimistic attitude. Proponents of the LOA also rely on the prophetic ḥadīth: “Actions are according to intentions.” But, what in the world does this ḥadīth have to do with the “vibrational matching of frequencies”! This ḥadīth informs us that Allāh judges deeds by intention which is the work of the heart. Imām aḍ-Ḍahabī (RA) spoke the truth when he said: “whoever seeks to combine the knowledge of the prophets with the knowledge of charlatans will dissent from these and these.”⁽¹⁾ As for the scientific tinge, proponents of the LOA promote it as being based on physics. They throw in some scientific jargon to obfuscate the matter and get the uneducated excited. The LOA has absolutely nothing to do with science. The so-called alignment of energy and vibration which the LOA allegedly utilizes has nothing to do with all the known laws of physics. No theory or law in physics supports the claims made in the philosophy from which the LOA springs. Nonetheless, the LOA folks insist that all matter is in a constant state of vibration and our brains translate this into reality. They argue that energy encoded with thoughts and desires leaves people’s brains, travels through the ether around us, and causes the universe to create whatever one is thinking about. They even say that every thought one has has a specific frequency or wavelength of energy. However, there is no such “thought energy” in physics and there is no way to encode any type of energy with positive or negative feelings. Thoughts are just tiny electrical firings between neurons and there is not even close to enough energy to leave the body. Hence, the idea that thoughts can penetrate the skull, go into the world and create entire events is sheer nonsense.

⁽¹⁾ Shams ad-Dīn aḍ-Ḍahabī, *Mīzān al-I’tidāl*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 1963), vol. 5, p. 173.

It is true that every object tends to vibrate at one particular frequency called the natural frequency, which can be determined by two factors: its mass and its elasticity. It thus can be changed either by changing the mass or by changing the stiffness. However, molecules in solids are not free to move in any direction. They only vibrate in their fixed positions. In addition, at absolute zero there is no motion kinetic energy or vibrations. Moreover, since gravitational force is a weak force unless large masses are involved, the magnitude of the gravitational force exerted by the human body is very small and cannot attract anything as the human body mass is quite small. Furthermore, the human body is neutrally charged and therefore neither attracts nor repels anything. LOA advocates regularly talk about vibrational frequencies and how thoughts vibrate. According to them, individual thoughts vibrate at a certain frequency and radiate that frequency out into the world which attracts both thoughts and physical entities that vibrate at the same frequency. They use quantum physics to justify their bogus claim that positive thoughts vibrate at a high frequency and negative thoughts vibrate at a lower frequency. They even claim that quantum physics states that the universe cannot be explained without including the power of the human mind. That is, humans influence the universe around them with their thoughts. Physicists, however, never talk about the “law of vibration” which is supposedly part of the “seven universal laws” because these laws are simply made up. The idea that low-frequency vibration is associated with negative thoughts and high-frequency is associated with positive thoughts is also completely made up. The LOA folks speak about physics principles that they do not actually understand. They present what they have cooked up as hard science, but, in truth, they learn just enough physics vocabulary to impress.

LOA proponents refer to Cleve Backster's work and use it as an argument in favor of their so-called law. They claim that Backster's findings were similar to their belief that human thoughts and conscious intentions influence the material world and produce physical changes. That is, our thoughts go out into the universe as energy and the universe responds to that energy in kind—if we think positive thoughts, we attract positive things into our life, and if we think negative thoughts, we attract negative things into our life. Backster's study of plants began in the 1960s. At first, he attached polygraph electrodes to a *Dracaena* cane plant to measure galvanic skin response and the plant showed readings which resembled that of a human. Backster then tried different scenarios and he reported that the readings went off the chart when he pictured burning the leaf because, according to him, the plant registered a stress response to his thoughts of harming it. He conducted another similar experiment where he observed a plant's response to the death of a brine shrimp in another room. His results convinced him that plants demonstrated telepathic awareness. He argued that plants perceived human intentions and that human thoughts and emotions caused reactions in plants, which could be recorded by a polygraph instrument. He termed the plants' sensitivity to thoughts "Primary Perception". After 1973, he further experimented on yoghurt bacteria, eggs and human sperm and he claimed his results showed "primary perception" could be measured in all living things. Backster's claims have been rejected by the scientific community because controlled experiments that have attempted to replicate his findings have failed and his theory was not accepted since it did not follow the scientific method. An attempt to replicate the plant/shrimp experiments was made by a group of three scientists at Cornell University. The results were published in 1975 in *Science* in a paper entitled: "Plant Primary Perception: Electrophysiological

Unresponsiveness to Brine Shrimp Killing.” The authors concluded: “We believe that we matched, and in several instances improved on, Backster’s experimental techniques, such as controls, shielding, number of observations, methods of analysis, and number of shrimp killed per injection. We obtained no evidence of primary perception in plants. While the hypothesis will remain as an intriguing speculation one should note that only the limited published data of Backster support it.”⁽¹⁾ Mainstream science has largely ignored Backster’s plant/shrimp findings on the basis of the failed replication attempt at Cornell.

Contrary to what the LOA advocates promote, human thoughts and conscious intentions cannot alter physical reality. The claim that people attract what their thoughts are focused on is sheer nonsense. Benjamin Radford, the managing editor of the *Skeptical Inquirer* science magazine whose *Bad Science* column appears regularly on *Live Science* writes: “*The Secret* claims to be based on science, at times borrowing phrases from quantum physics. But the premise behind the book has been disproved...It states that similar things attract each other, so positive thoughts bring positive things and negative thoughts bring negative things. Therefore if we simply think about things we want, we will get them. There is a superficial logic to this, but in physics, it is opposites—not similars—that attract. Regardless, the book’s Law of Attraction has nothing to do with science. One cannot simply wish, think, or feel something into existence. There are other serious problems with the so-called scientific basis for *The Secret*. According to the book, “everything that comes into your life you are attracting into your life by your thoughts.” Is this true? Everyone who plays the lottery thinks about

⁽¹⁾ K. A. Horowitz et al., “Plant ‘Primary Perception’: Electrophysiological Unresponsiveness to Brine Shrimp Killing.”, *Science*, vol. 189, Issue. 4201. pp. 478-480, 8 Aug. 1975. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.189.4201.478>.

winning and being rich (otherwise they wouldn't play), yet very few win. If the Law of Attraction works, why would that be? Shouldn't all of the players win, if all it takes is desire and thought?"⁽¹⁾ The law of vibration on which the LOA is based has its roots in Buddhism, as Buddha famously said “*sabbo pajjalito loko, sabbo loko pakampito*”—the entire universe is nothing but combustion and vibration.⁽²⁾

My response is to the hucksters who are dressing this wishful thinking up as science in order to sell it to gullible people who desperately want a better life and will pay money to hear that they can have it just by lifting their vibration. The LOA is dangerous as it encourages toxic positivity and has victim-blaming at its heart. Its proponents go to extremes in saying that the only reason anyone is poor is because they are blocking money from coming to them with their negative thoughts, and the only reason anyone is sick is because they summoned the disease through persistent thoughts about diseases. That is, if anyone is poor, it is only their fault and if anyone has any disease, they are to blame. This begs the question: We are told that the prophets were severely tested. If nothing can come into one's experience unless they summon it through persistent thoughts, then were the trials that the prophets faced the result of their habitual negative thoughts?! Were they operating at a low frequency? Did they not know how to manifest by getting into a higher vibration that is aligned with what they desired in life?⁽³⁾ Funnily enough, Jerry Hicks, the husband of Esther Hicks—the

(1) Benjamin Radford, “The Pseudoscience of ‘The Secret’”, *Live Science*, 03 Feb. 2009, www.livescience.com/5303-pseudoscience-secret.html.

(2) Ajahn Sucitto, *Turning the Wheel of Truth: Commentary on the Buddha's First Teaching*, (Boulder, Colorado: Shambhala, 2010).

(3) “Qānūn al-Jadhb fī Mizān ash-Sharī'ah (The Law of Attraction in the Balance of the Sharī'ah 2)”, *Shaykh Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Munajjid's official website*, 5 May 2015, www.almunajjid.com/9700.

most prominent LOA guru—died of cancer in 2011! The LOA advocates are either upon a religion which gives better guidance than the religion of the prophets or they are opening the doors of misguidance and blasphemy! Oddly enough, they call their wishful thinking a “law” although it cannot be proven or disproved using empirical evidence. As explained earlier, the LOA gurus have adopted a scientific language to make their new age rubbish sound like a proven fact to the gullible people who are caught under their net.

Furthermore, the blasphemous LOA magnifies the worldly life. It makes earthly desires and possessions the ultimate goal and aspiration. Those who practice this materialistic philosophy start with a drop of desire that the LOA turns into an ocean of desires where they end up practically drowning. The LOA promotes selfishness, egocentricity, greed and materialism. It also venerates Man and bestows upon him a halo of sanctity and greatness. That is because it expresses the belief that humans possess unlimited powers and huge energy to the point that they have the power to create. Its core message is that humans are all “incarnations of God” and they are all their own gods. They thus are able to create their own reality and to control their own destiny. God, if He even exists in their eyes, is nothing more than a universal energy force that humans manipulate by their thoughts and feelings. The LOA thus denies the idea of a sovereign omnipotent and omniscient God Who is in control of everything. Rather, God, in the pantheistic view, has neither will nor *qayyūmiyyah* (i.e., management and sustenance of the whole universe)—far be it from Him. He is Exalted and High above what they say by great sublimity! Undoubtedly the LOA is a serious deviation and is ascribing partners to Allāh in His Lordship: {Yet they worship besides Allāh those

‘idols’ who do not afford them any provision from the heavens and the earth, nor do they have the power to.} (Qur’ān 16:73)

7. What is the problem of the LOA advocates with fate and destiny?

Advocates of the LOA almost deny the concept of fate and destiny which *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah* (The People of the Sunnah and of the Community) believe in. They believe that we are the agents of our own destiny—we fashion our own reality. According to them, we one can manifest any outcomes in our life simply by creating and leaning into vibrations that align with our desires. This is another religion that has its own independent metaphysical beliefs. That is why Dr. Wahbah az-Zuḥaylī, a Syrian professor and Islamic scholar specializing in Islamic law and legal philosophy and a member of the Jeddah-based Islamic Fiqh Academy (an international Islamic institution for the advanced study of Islamic jurisprudence and law), says: “It is forbidden to practice the law of attraction, even through imagination, because it contradicts the fundamentals of monotheism and its end is major disbelief (which invalidates the faith and makes its committer leave Islam.)” One of the fundamentals of monotheism is that Allāh has predestined everything, and Man only pursues the legitimate religious and material means. In Islam, Man seeks outcomes through the causes which Allāh has determined as the means by which those outcomes will take place, and after he exerts himself to the utmost to achieve his objective he is content with fate and destiny. This is the way of the prophets and the essence of *tawakkul* (i.e., reliance on Allāh alone as our source of support and strength.) But the LOA proponents advocate stupid meditation as the way to manifest anything! Just ask the universe for what you want, they say, and it will respond—as if Man is a partner to Allāh in the command, and

as if Nature is a partner to Allāh in creation. Glorified and Highly Exalted is Allāh above what they claim! The inevitable end result of the LOA is ascribing divinity to humanity. Rhonda Byrne, who made the Law of Attraction popular by *The Secret*, writes, “You are God in physical body. You are Spirit in the flesh. You are Eternal Life expressing itself as You. You are a cosmic being. You are all power. You are all wisdom. You are all intelligence. You are perfection. You are magnificence. You are the creator, and you are creating the creation of You on this planet.”⁽¹⁾ Allāh says: {or have they associated with Allāh partners who ‘supposedly’ produced a creation like His, leaving them confused between the two creations? Say, “Allāh is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme.”} (Qur’ān 13:16) If the law of attraction contained a *shubhah* (doubt and misunderstanding) at the level of monotheism only, this would be sufficient to absolutely disprove and reject it, for the issue has to do with faith and disbelief. What can we say knowing that its proponents declare that its fundamentals contradict those of Islam! Belief in something other than what Allāh has commanded and legislated with respect to fate and destiny, pursuing the legitimate means and reliance on Him, lies at the heart of the LOA! ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb came to the Prophet (PBUH) with a book or scroll that he had acquired from some of the People of the Book. He read it to the Prophet (PBUH) who became angry and said: “Are you hesitant regarding it O son of al-Khaṭṭāb? By the One in whose Hand is my soul, I have certainly been sent with that which is pure and clear proof.”⁽²⁾ The Prophet (PBUH) showed this reaction to a book whose original form is authentic. How would he (PBUH) react to those who import pagan blasphemous practices to the

⁽¹⁾ Rhonda Byrne, *The Secret*, (Hillsboro, Oregon: Beyond Words, 2006), p.164.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad al-’Albānī, *Irwā’ al-Ghalīl*, (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1995), degree of ḥadīth: ḥasan.

countries of monotheism?! The fact that the LOA is entirely incompatible with the Islamic *‘aqīdah* (creed) makes it every office holder to ban any program, book or course that calls for or teaches this blasphemous concept. Allāh says: {Let there be a group among you who call ‘others’ to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil—it is they who will be successful.} (Qur’ān 3:104) This is an honor for those whom Allāh has guided to support His religion and keep these pagan practices away from the lands of Islam, for they are more misguided than the belief of the *Qadariyyah* sect—adherents of the doctrine of free will who affirmed *al-qadar* (power of decree) for themselves but denied it for Allāh.

8. Why advocates of the LOA are more misguided than the *Qadariyyah* sect?

The creed of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah* (The People of the Sunnah and of the Community) is that Allāh has created everything, has written down the destinies of all creatures, has a foreknowledge of everything and decreed all things from eternity. Muslims believe that Allāh has created the deeds and actions of the servants, and nothing in this universe can happen except by His will—whatever He wills to be happens, and whatever He does not will to be will never happen. This is the creed of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah* and the righteous predecessors of the nation. The *Qadariyyah* started their sect during the latter time of the Companions. They denied the existence of fate and contended that Allāh does not have knowledge of occurrences beforehand. They claimed that the servants choose and create their own destiny. That is, people are the ones who bring about their own actions, independently, outside the scope of Allāh’s *mashī‘ah* (will) and *qudrah* (power), *khalq* (creative ability) and *ījād* (bringing things into existence). Proponents of the LOA

go even further as they say that Man does not only create his own destiny, but the destiny of all existence around him. They believe that people create their reality with their thoughts—whatever energy they choose to focus their thoughts on is exactly what they will attract into their reality. The claim that the seeds to change the universe are locked up in the human mind and that humans have the ability to create their own reality and destiny by manifesting through meditation is more dangerous than the claim of the people of *Qadariyyah* who denied the existence of fate. According to *Qadariyyah*, Man’s utmost power is to create his own actions, but the LOA folks make Man the creator of his own destiny as well as the destinies of all things around him. They ‘deify’ Man and attribute to him the characteristic marks of divinity i.e., they make him a God and a Creator—we seek refuge in Allāh from misguidance.

9. How did the advocates of energy healing and the LOA make Man a “creator god”?

According to proponents of the LOA, Man can literally create and change the destinies of all things around him. Unfortunately, this blasphemous idea is making inroads into animation targeted primarily at children who are being indoctrinated by seemingly innocent cartoons. I watched an Indian cartoon-movie dubbed into Arabic, targeted at our (Muslim) children, which depicts how Man can turn, through meditation—the practice of being still, tapping into the subconscious mind and connecting to “source energy”—into a gigantic, luminous and immortal being that transcends the material world and changes the destiny of the world. Does this have anything to do with our Islamic creed which states that Man is born and dies a servant of Allāh? Man is subjected to Allāh, controlled by Him, has a limit whereby he stops and

exists according to an appointed term which he cannot exceed by an atom. Islam stresses Allāh’s unlimited sovereignty over all His creation. All the creatures of the worlds are slaves of Allāh: {there is none in the heavens or the earth who will not return to the Most Compassionate in full submission.} (Qur’ān 19:93) Man is inherently weak and stands in need of Allāh: {Humankind was created weak.} (Qur’ān 4:28) The foundation of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah*’s belief in fate and destiny is submission to Allāh and contentment with His decree. Adherents to the Sunnah and the community believe that Man is weak and all he can do to achieve his desired outcomes is have recourse to legitimate means, whereas Allāh has absolute control on the outcome of everything. Our Lord says: {Yet they have taken besides Him gods who cannot create anything but are themselves created. Nor can they protect or benefit themselves. Nor can they control life, death, or resurrection.} (Qur’ān 25:3) We are not the masters of our own destiny. Submitting to Allāh is the end of the story of human fate. This is one of the six pillars of faith which form the basis and foundation of our *‘aqīdah* (creed) as mentioned in the prophetic ḥadīth: “To Believe in the divine decree (*al-Qadar*), [both] the good and the evil.”⁽¹⁾ This ḥadīth has also been narrated with the addition: “the divine decree [both] the sweet of it and the bitter of it.” As humans, we do not know what is best for us in this world and in the Hereafter. That is why we are taught to turn to Allāh and seek guidance from Him, for while we merely speculate, He alone is fully aware of the end result and consequence of every matter. We say in *ṣalāt al-istikhārah* (Prayer of Seeking Counsel): “(O Allāh), decree for me the

⁽¹⁾ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmyyah, 2020), ḥadīth: 8.

good wherever it is and then make me content with it.”⁽¹⁾ This is the foundation of belief in fate and destiny. It is obligatory upon every Muslim to believe in divine decree and predestination. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Were you to spend in support of Allāh’s cause an amount of gold equivalent to the bulk of (the mountain) *Uḥud*, Allāh would not accept it from you till you believed in divine decree and knew that what has come to you could not miss you and that what has missed you could not come to you. Were you to die believing anything else you would enter Hell.”⁽²⁾ Belief in destiny and fate is one of the basic beliefs of Islam. In addition, it is not permissible to place one’s full trust in oneself instead of Allāh. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “(O Allāh), take care of all my affairs and do not leave me in charge of my affairs even for a blink of an eye.”⁽³⁾ Anyone who uses amulets out of belief that they can ward off harm will be entrusted to their care. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “and whoever hangs up something (as an amulet) will be entrusted to it.”⁽⁴⁾ This is our creed and our religion. So what is the matter with those importing absurd ideas and wanting Muslims to implement them! When we tell them that these are pagan, polytheistic blasphemous Hindu and Buddhist ideas, they reply that we do not comprehend the dimensions of these matters. They always accuse us of not comprehending the symbolic meanings of these blasphemous practices so that they can keep their audience which is made of the most incredibly gullible people. In this way, they earn a great deal of money. Deepak Chopra, Robert Sheldrake, Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid, Aḥmad

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Cairo: Dār as-Salām, 1999), ḥadīth: 1162.

⁽²⁾ Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan abī Dāwūd*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1998), ḥadīth: 4699.

⁽³⁾ Muḥammad al-’Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ at-Targhīb wa at-Tarhīb*, (Riyādh: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 2000), ḥadīth: 661.

⁽⁴⁾ Muḥammad at-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, (Dār at-Ta’šīl, 2016), ḥadīth: 2072, degree of ḥadīth: ṣaḥīḥ.

‘Imārah and Maryam Nūr are amongst the most famous advocates of energy healing and the law of attraction in our time. We ask Allāh to guide them. It is worth mentioning that Robert Sheldrake and Deepak Chopra strongly promote what is known as collective consciousness. According to them, we are all tied together by a shared consciousness. They speak about the interrelatedness and inseparability of all things and how all of Nature participates in some giant collective memory. Their teachings are a variation of Hindu and Buddhist pantheism.

10. Do the advocates of energy healing and the LOA in our (Muslim) countries believe that they can create their own destinies?

There is a song by Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid in which he says: “be whatever you want, the decree is settled, what you intend will be...”⁽¹⁾ This is the essence of the LOA—to manifest your own destiny, to create and change the reality around you with your thoughts! Strangely enough, Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid, at the end of his song, performs the Hindu *Añjali Mudrā* (a hand gesture made by placing the palms together in front of the chest). This hand gesture often goes along with the word “*namaste*”, which translates as “I bow to the divinity within you from the divinity within me.” The *Añjali Mudrā* signifies universal connectedness and witnessing the Divine amongst all living things. What is even weirder is that Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid was a guest on the *Rūtānā Khalījīyyah* satellite TV channel where he reiterated the Hindu-Buddhist claim that “all that we are is a result of what we have thought.” He literally said: “Take it as a rule: Your reality is made up of what you focus on.”⁽²⁾ Naturally, he added the usual

⁽¹⁾ I read about this and verified it myself.

⁽²⁾ Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid, “Take it as a Rule, Episode 1: Create Your Own Reality.”, *YouTube*, uploaded by Khalījīyyah, 10 July 2013, www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfrsbIq5WV0, (minute: 7).

religious tinge to support his claim by quoting the verse {Indeed, Allāh would never change a people's state until they change their own state.}(Qur'ān 13:11) I will say this again: we change our state by doing good deeds, pursuing legitimate means and doing everything that is available to us to reach our goals, and by avoiding disbelief and sins—not through the Hindu and Buddhist practices, namely static meditation.

11. Do the advocates of energy healing and the LOA truly sell amulets which attract cosmic energy?

Yes, by Allāh, they do! They sell gemstones, geometric shapes and Hindu and Buddhist symbols, which, they claim, can attract happiness, prosperity, love (a partner or husband), fertility...etc! By Allāh, I saw an advertisement on Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid's Facebook page, which literally said: "13 new items are available now in my shop: pendulums which come in wonderful shapes, and elegant gemstone boxes for home and office decor."⁽¹⁾ Trade in amulets, talismans and idolatries, is very successful in times when ignorance is running rampant and when people are turning away from the religion of the Lord of the worlds. The most famous amulets and therapies promoted by energy healing proponents include:

- a. The three-legged toad: used to attract wealth and prosperity.
- b. The Mandarin ducks: used, as a pair, for good luck and love.
- c. Energy balance jewelry (i.e., energy bracelets, necklaces and chains), energy pens and bio energy disks: they are said to bring more positive energy into one's home and workplace.

⁽¹⁾ Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid, "13 New Items are Available now in my Shop: Pendulums which Come in Wonderful Shapes, and Elegant Stone Boxes for Home and Office (Decor)." *Facebook*, 7 July 2018,

www.facebook.com/ssalrashed/photos/a.10151994717507919.1073741829.147444717918/10155604723377919/?type=3<https://www.facebook.com/ssalrashed/photos/a.10151994717507919.1073741829.147444717918/10155604723377919/?type=3>.

- d. Pendulums: are said to help in promoting spiritual and physical healing by locating any blocks in a person's chi (energy).
- e. Pyramid type structures: pyramid power is said to help preserve good health.
- f. Gemstones: are believed to bring positive energy and raise positive vibrations.
- g. Color therapy: the use of colors and their frequencies to balance energy and heal physical and emotional problems within the human body. The scammers who promote this quackery fool the gullible into believing that they can, through different tests, find out which colour will be most beneficial for the type of ailment they are trying to treat. They then sell them the coloured gemstone that fits their needs the best.⁽¹⁾

Indeed, the Prophet (PBUH) was right when he foretold that in the end times some people who call themselves Muslims will unite with polytheists in every affair including worship of idols: “The Hour shall not be established until tribes of my *Ummah* unite with the idolaters, and until they worship idols.”⁽²⁾ How did the Islamic nation return to idolatry so easily?! It is utterly strange that Muslims are wallowing in the swamp of neo-paganism. And it is decidedly odd that gemstones and talismans are being used, to supposedly ward off evil and to attract good, in the countries of monotheists, the countries of Muslims.

⁽¹⁾ Color therapy will be covered in detail later.

⁽²⁾ Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan abī Dāwūd*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1998), ḥadīth: 4252.

12. How come they have faith that amulets can bring about good fortune and avert evil after the time of polytheism came to an end?

Unfortunately, the New Agers often try to disguise the pagan nature of amulets and gemstones, by claiming that they bring about positive energy that helps attract wealth, love (husband / partner), health...etc. This is a lie for several reasons:

- 1) How do the so-called love stones attract love (soul-mate)? Besides, what is the difference between them and ancient polytheistic amulets?
- 2) Scientifically, there is no such thing as positive energy and negative energy, as we will explain shortly.
- 3) Stones, amulets and talismans are neutrally charge and therefore neither attract nor repel anything.
- 4) These pagan practices have no real “attraction” power, in a physics sense, as earlier explained.
- 5) “Attraction” is a concept which is rooted in the pagan East Asian philosophies—it is not a physics concept.

13. What is positive energy, and what is negative energy? Can positive energy truly be attracted?

In physics, energy is defined as the capacity to do work and there is no such thing as positive or negative energy—those are just sign conventions used to denote the direction of energy i.e., whether it is moving from the body to the surrounding or vice versa. The general rule for assigning signs is this: If energy enters the system, its sign is positive and if energy leaves the system, its sign is negative. There is nothing sacred about electrons being called negative charge and protons positive charge. That is, it is just a sign convention which simply tells in which direction the distance is positive and in which direction the distance is

negative. In other words, the labeling of one polarity of charge as “positive” and the other as “negative” is totally arbitrary. It could be done either way and everything would still work out the same. According to scientists, there is real energy all around us—potential and kinetic energy—which they can measure, harness and manipulate. They assert, however, that energy cannot be easily defined as it is not a tangible thing so much as a number. To use their terms, energy is a mathematical property that objects have in our universe. Therefore, energy is a concept that lends itself well to pseudoscience due to its slippery and abstract nature.

Indeed, the term ‘energy’ has been abused by proponents of alternative medicine to make their claims sound scientific. They incessantly talk about “the power to heal using cosmic energy”, “clearing negative energy out of one’s body or home”, “channeling and attracting positive energy”...etc. But, what is this “power” to heal? What do “positive” and “negative” energies look like? There is no evidence for the existence of this form of energy, but that does not stop the so-called energy healers from claiming that they can feel, unblock, or balance it. They have picked up the word ‘energy’ and the physics significance of signs (plus and minus) and used them non-metaphorically, equating the phrase “positive energy” with an optimistic or positive approach to life and “negative energy” with a pessimistic or negative approach. They claim that people and their thoughts are made from “pure energy” and that a process of “like energy attracting like energy” exists through which a person can improve their health, wealth, and personal relationships. They never tire of repeating that “positive attracts positive and negative attracts negative”, that “positive thoughts create positive energy and negative thoughts create negative energy” and that “positive

or negative thoughts bring positive or negative experiences into a person's life.” However, the claim that thoughts are tangible forms of energy that travel the earth and create what people are thinking about within the universe is mere superstitious mumbo-jumbo. Alternative medicine practitioners use the concept of negative and positive ions to support their belief in the existence of positive and negative energy. This is pure and utter nonsense because, except for the superficial inclusion of the words negative and positive, negative and positive charge has nothing to do with negative or positive energy. Again, as earlier stated, conventionally, if work is done on the system, its sign is positive and if work is done by the system, its sign is negative—the sign just tells if energy is added to the system or leaving the system.

Funnily enough, alternative medicine practitioners tell people not to sit in places where they sense negative energy as such places “will wreck their vibration and even cause them ill-health.” Again, there is nothing in physics that is relevant to negative energy and the claim that places can hold negative energy is ridiculous. The advocates of energy healing also claim that places of worship are filled with positive energy—an attempt to titillate the feelings of believers. In fact, places of worship are neutrally charged and therefore emit neither negative nor positive energy. This is true of all places i.e., there is no such thing as a place filled with positive or negative energy. If someone tells you that a place is full of negative energy and you should avoid it, avoid them instead and your life will be better and you will waste less money. It is high time the New Agers stop misusing scientific terms to lend credibility to their bogus claims.

14. Why are advocates of energy healing in our countries keen on organizing outdoor excursions and spending a lot of time in meditation?

Buddhist and Hindu monks live on the fringes of society. They choose not to marry and remain celibate while living individually in huts, with their personal time given up to meditation. They walk around their local villages at mealtimes in what is called an ‘alms round’, holding a begging bowl as they seek food for the day. There are believed to be around five million *sadhus* in India today. The term *sadhu* refers to a mendicant, ascetic, or any holy person within Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism who has renounced all earthly attachments with the unswerving objective of connecting to the Divine. Theravada Buddhists eat usually one meal a day in that they walk to a local village in the morning, receive food in their bowls and return to their monasteries. They believe that the ideal road to achieve enlightenment is to dedicate oneself to full-time monastic life. They spend a great deal of time in meditation, which is deemed one of the main tools by which a Theravada Buddhist transforms himself. Theravada Buddhism holds that *nirvana* is only achievable by monks and nuns, whereas Mahayana Buddhism holds that both monks and laity can achieve *nirvana*.

Advocates of energy healing in our countries want to implement some of the practices of these insane people! They thus make outdoor excursions away from city life, accompanied by specialized meditation trainers to increase the number of hours they spend in static meditation. As previously mentioned, Muslims are called to meditate too, but the difference is that New Age meditation is all about focusing on oneself through the practice of being still—a stillness akin to that of the dead—whereas, in Islam, meditation is all about Allāh i.e., contemplating His

creation and favours. Who said that the purpose of our existence is living on the fringes of society, away from urban life and wasting time in stupid meditation? Why should Muslims imitate these insane people?! Curiously enough, insects seem to be better than Buddhists and Hindus with regard to being aware of the purpose of existence, which is the habitation and cultivation of the earth—a universal requirement for all human beings and a biological necessity, as we all need food, shelter, and clothing for survival. Ants work hard during the summer and gather food when it is available in order to have a supply on hand during winter. They gather enough food for not only themselves but also for the next generation. That is, they not only protect themselves from hard times, but they provide security for their children. Even gut bacteria perform important functions for human health. Life operates according to laws that can be corrupted only by those whose minds and souls are perverse! Buddhism and Hinduism are the religions of idleness, inaction and ignorance of the meaning, purpose and source of existence! Anyone who rejoices in and tries to imitate the practices of these pagan religions, abandoning the guidance of the prophets, is as ignorant and misguided as Buddhists and Hindus are. Arab New Agers try to disguise the pagan nature of meditation and other New Age practices which they present as innocent relaxation and rejuvenation techniques, with no religious content. But actually all of their teachings are rooted in East Asian pagan religions. If the followers of these Arab New Agers do a bit of research, they will easily find the truth behind everything they promote.

15. Is this the reason why Arab New Agers promote withdrawal from people as much as possible?

Yes! They want to apply the teachings of Buddhism and Hinduism, but they are ashamed to do that openly. So they disguise the true nature of these practices by claiming that they are modern civilized neutral methods only designed to reduce stress and physical tension and boost health. They want the Hindu and Buddhist monasticism which wasted the rights of individuals and communities, and which deprived the Buddhist and Hindu hermits from the right to food and marriage. It is Allāh Himself Who has created all good and pure things for Man. Thus, it could not have been His intent to make them unlawful. The fact that Hinduism and Buddhism consider permissible worldly pleasures a barrier to Man's enlightenment is evident proof of their not having been prescribed by Allāh. The Qur'ān advances this argument in refutation of false creeds: {Ask, 'O Prophet,' "Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions Allāh has brought forth for His servants?"} Say, "They are for the enjoyment of the believers in this worldly life, but they will be exclusively theirs on the Day of Judgment. This is how We make Our revelations clear for people of knowledge."} (Qur'ān 7:32) The true religion is one that encourages diligence, mixing with people and socializing with them, offering them sincere advice and guidance—not one that encourages excessive asceticism, monasticism, poverty, passivism and seclusion in valleys and deserts. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "The believer who mixes with people and patiently bears their annoyance is better than the believer who does not mix with people and does not patiently bear their annoyance."⁽¹⁾ Those who impose austerities on themselves and deprive themselves of the good lawful things of provision

⁽¹⁾ Ibn Mājah abū 'Abd Allāh, *Sunan ibn Mājah*, (Cairo: Dār at-Ta'şīl, 2014), ḥadīth: 3273.

waste the rights of people after they have wasted their own rights. Anas ibn Mālik (RA) narrated that Allāh’s messenger (PBUH) used to say, “Do not impose austerities on yourselves and so have Allāh imposing austerities on you, for people have imposed austerities on themselves and Allāh has imposed austerities on them. Their survivors are to be found in hermitages and monasteries.” [Then he quoted], {and monasticism they innovated for themselves; in no way did We prescribe it for them.} (Qur’ān 57:27)’’(1) Monasticism and seclusion from people lead to austerity and failure to fulfill some obligations. This is what the Hindu and Buddhist models of asceticism and monasticism, which deprived people (monks) of their rights, have fallen into. The New Agers in our countries want to make our youth insane like the Hindu *sadhu* hermits and the *Theravada* Buddhist monks wearing saffron-dyed robes which symbolize a monastic life i.e., a life of detachment.

16. Why do Arab New Agers maintain that the truth is relative and that Islam is not the only truth?

There are three reasons that led them to hold that the truth is relative:

The first reason: The ultimate objective of Buddhism and Hinduism—upon which the New Age beliefs and practices are based—is ultimate unity with the Absolute, alternatively called *nirvana* (enlightenment), *moksha* (liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth), *fanā’* (the complete denial of self and the realization of God that is one of the steps taken by the mystic toward the achievement of union with God), and the dissolution in the ultimate truth...etc. These terms and others with similar

(1) Narrated by abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī and al-’Albānī graded it as ḥasan (lit. ‘good’: a ḥadīth whose authenticity is not as well-established as that of ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth, but sufficient for use as supporting evidence) in his checking of *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*, (Beirūt: al-maktab al-Islāmī, 1979), p.181.

denotations are nothing but made up names, for which Allāh has sent down no authority. The New Agers believe that this state—of ultimate enlightenment, when the ego disappears, when Man is no more separate from existence and when he melts into the Absolute—is not tied to any religion. It is called by different names in different religions but it is exactly the same state i.e., the *nirvana* of Buddhism would be the same as that of Hinduism, Christianity or Islam, even if it is called with different names in these religions. Accordingly, the New Agers adopted the doctrine of the relativity of truth—one may follow any religion or no religion at all and they can still achieve this state. That is, what matters is that one attains enlightenment no matter what path they take. Basically, to attain *nirvana* one should follow the path to *nirvana*. Hence, anybody following this path will reach the destination regardless of what they call themselves. Alternatively stated, one can call themselves a Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jain, Jew, etc. to start with but what matters to realize *nirvana* is “the threefold practice” which can be summarized as ethics, meditation, and wisdom.

The second reason: Living in a state of inner peace—a state of mental tranquility which spreads outward—is a prerequisite to union with the Absolute. That is, one should build sustainable peace, from inner peace to external peace (i.e., peace with everything and everyone in the outer world including insects, inanimate objects and all humans) to finally attain absolute peace. That is why most advocates of energy healing therapies are vegetarians out of sympathy for animals and insects which they do not want to harm. However, they are inconsistent, for if having empathy towards animals is the reason why they refrain from meat consumption, they should also refrain from the consumption of all plants. They so conveniently think that there is no cruelty in eating plants, but

plants are not inanimate objects. Rather, just like animals, they are living, breathing things too. For the vegetarians to be consistent with veganism (ideology and ethics), they should stop eating plants. Likewise, they should stop washing their hands so that not to kill all the microorganisms by soap because bacteria are living beings too (i.e., they breathe, reproduce and respond to environmental stimuli.) Further, they should not poop in order not to kill their intestinal flora! The concept of living in peace and maintaining a non-judgmental attitude is what led the New Agers to say that there is no such thing as absolute truth—no one is right or wrong about anything, and everyone can be right at the same time.

The third reason: the belief in the Unity of Being—the state of all things being undivided or joined as a whole. Since the core beliefs of New Agers include pantheism, they see God in the whole world around them. In their eyes, God permeates all things, contains all things, connects to all things, and is found in all things. This belief made them adopt the relativistic approach to truth where no person can declare another to be in error as no one set of beliefs is any more right or wrong than the other.

The concept of the relativity of truth influenced Arab New Agers. The likes of Aḥmad ‘Imārah appeared. ‘Imārah goes so far as to say that everyone will enter Paradise and no one has a monopoly on Truth i.e., no one has the right to maintain that they are the holders of absolute truth. ‘Imārah and like-minded New Agers believe that people can reach Allāh and be from the inhabitants of Paradise even if they do not abide by Islam, for Allāh can be reached through the path of Islam or through any other path as “all paths are the same”. This statement is one of the biggest nullifiers of Islam. There is no path by which one can proceed towards Allāh except through the path of the Prophet (PBUH). Shaykh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abdul Wahāb stated that it is not permissible for anyone

to be free of implementing the prophet's *Sharī'ah* (law system) because it is all encompassing for both the Jinn and mankind, and it is the last of all *Sharā'i'* (laws): "whoever believes that it is permitted for some people to be free of (implementing) the *Sharī'ah* (revealed laws) of Muḥammad (i.e., Islam), just as it was permitted for al-Khidr to be free from the *Sharī'ah* of Mūsā, then he is a disbeliever."⁽¹⁾ This is due to there being a difference between the *Sharī'ah* of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH), which was sent to everyone and the *Sharī'ah* of Mūsā (PBUH), which was sent specifically to the Tribe of Isrā'īl. Therefore, since al-Khidr was not from the Tribe of Isrā'īl and Mūsā was not sent to him as a messenger, the *Sharī'ah* of Mūsā didn't apply to him. Besides, according to the most correct opinion, al-Khidr was a prophet himself whom revelation was sent to, which is why Mūsā went to learn from him. The proof for this is that Allāh said (quoting al-Khidr): {And I did not do these things of my own accord.} (Qur'ān 18:82). That is, it would not be possible for him to kill the child or to set the ship on fire or to rebuild the wall which was hiding the inheritance of orphans except due to revelation. All in all, it is permissible for someone who is not from the Tribe of Isrā'īl to be free from the *Sharī'ah* of Mūsā, but it is not permissible for anyone to be free from the *Sharī'ah* of Prophet Muḥammad (PBUH). Allāh says: {whoever seeks a way other than Islam, it will never be accepted from them, and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers.} (Qur'ān 3:85) The belief in the relativity of truth leads to perennialism—the idea of the universal validity of religions. Perennialists argue that all religions possess validity in the eyes of God and are acceptable to Him. Put differently, all religions are the same and truth can be found in every religion. This viewpoint is major disbelief, for Allāh sent the Messengers, revealed the Books,

⁽¹⁾ 'Abd al-'Azīz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Bāz, *The Nullifiers of Islam*, (KSA: The Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Da'wah and Guidance, 1989), p. 4.

created Heaven and Hell, and will set up the *Mīzān* (The Scales in which people's deeds will be weighed) and place *aṣ-Ṣirāt* (the Bridge which stretches over Hell) on the Day of Reckoning because there is truth and falsehood, because there are believers and unbelievers. The divine laws were sent down but to guide people to the Truth—not to show that all paths are valid to follow. This is the foundation of the Messages, *taklīf* (imposition of divine obligations and accountability before Allāh), religion and faith. Allāh says: {some of you are disbelievers while some are believers.} (Qur'ān 64:2) Indeed, Man was created to be tested: {‘He is the One’ Who created death and life in order to test which of you is best in deeds.} (Qur'ān 67:2) The doctrine of the relativity of truth removes the concepts of divine command, prohibition, forbiddance and vengeance. It also denies the finality (teleology) of the Messages. Indeed, there is no disbelief after this disbelief! This creedal fault led to another fault, namely the denial of *'aqīdat al-walā' wa al-barā'* which literally means the Creed of Allegiance and Renunciation. It signifies loving and hating for the sake of Allāh. As Islamic terms, *al-walā'* is defined as the love of Allāh, His Prophet, His religion (Islam), and His Muslim followers, and the support of Allāh, His Prophet, His religion, and His Muslim followers, and *al-barā'* is defined as the loathing of *aṭ-Ṭāghūt* (which is worshiped besides or instead of Allāh, among which are the idols and the personal desires), and the hatred of all forms of disbelief and its followers).

17. Why do the New Agers in our countries renounce *'aqīdat al-walā' wa al-barā'* (lit. the Creed of Allegiance and Renunciation)?

That is because, as already mentioned, the New Age worldview is based on inherently pacifist philosophies (Hinduism, Jainism, and

Buddhism...etc). For instance, Ṣalāḥ ar-Rāshid's Center is called "Salam International"—"salam" is an Arabic word that literally means "peace". The core message of the New Agers is peace with everything which contradicts the foundation of faith. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Indeed the strongest bond of faith is to love for the sake of Allāh and hate for the sake of Allāh."⁽¹⁾ It is permissible in Islam to show affection to neighborly non-hostile unbelievers as long as we do not express love for the aspects of their religions or deeds that contradict Islam, let alone their disbelief. Shaykh Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Wahāb held that whoever does not hold the polytheists to be disbelievers, or has doubts about their disbelief or considers their ways and beliefs to be correct, has committed disbelief.⁽²⁾ Abandoning the principles of *al-walā' wa al-barā'* (lit. the Creed of Allegiance and Renunciation) is one of the consequences of applying the New Age practices. Nothing has harmed Muslims more than applying these practices and embracing their principles. Unfortunately, one will not make progress in the field of energy healing therapies and the LOA unless they accept to dispute the constants of the *Sharī'ah*. But, our Lord says: {Certainly, Allāh's only Way is Islam. Those who were given the Scripture did not dispute 'among themselves' out of mutual envy until knowledge came to them. Whoever denies Allāh's signs, then surely Allāh is swift in reckoning.} (Qur'ān 3:19).

18. What is the rational problem with the relativity of truth?

In addition to leading to major disbelief and taking out of the fold of Islam, the claim that the truth is relative is also self-contradictory and

⁽¹⁾ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1990), ḥadīth: 18524.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad ibn 'Abdul Wahāb, *Majmū'at Rasā'il at-Tawḥīd wa al-'Īmān*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1994), p.385.

logically incoherent. If the statement “all truth is relative” is objectively true, then relativism is false because there is at least one objective truth—namely, the truth that truth is relative. But if this statement is only subjectively true, then it just means that one believes in relativism. Thus, by claiming that truth is relative, one either contradicts himself or makes a trivial claim with nothing to recommend their belief. As Muslims, we believe that the truth is absolute and not relative. The question would be: are we right in saying that? If relativists say “yes” they will prove their belief (relativism) to be wrong. And if they say “no,” our answer would be: “so you have an absolute truth that says that truth is relative” and this is an utter contradiction.

19. What is cosmic energy?

Cosmic energy is the foundation of all the philosophies of energy healing therapies, the LOA, *reiki*, macrobiotic dietary therapy, *feng shui*, color therapy and pyramid healing. It is also the core of East Asian pagan religions such as Taoism. The followers of all these philosophies and practices derive the secrets of life, existence and health from the so-called cosmic energy or so they claim! Pagans wear what they call energy bracelets, necklaces and medals, which, they claim, focus and diffuse cosmic energy in the body or, in their words, balance the imbalanced *chakras* and help to open blocked *chakras*. Although cosmic energy is the basis of energy healing therapies, there is no physics definition to it, for it is not electromagnetic energy, or gravitational energy, or any of the many different forms in which energy exists. It is, in fact, a religious term that appears throughout traditional East Asian culture—not a description of a material thing that can be tested, manipulated or harnessed. There is no such thing as cosmic energy and there is no credible scientific evidence to

support it: “Of course, New Age energy has nothing to do with mechanics, electricity, or the nuclei of atoms: the stuff of physics. There are no ergs, joules, electron-volts, calories, or foot-pounds in New Age subtle energy, which will remain forever outside the bounds of scientific control or study.”⁽¹⁾ Wilhelm Reich, the physician and natural scientist, claimed discovery of a new form of energy—a subtle biophysical energy which he christened “orgone energy”. He claimed it is the most powerful force in the universe, which charges up living organisms and also exists in the open atmosphere and in high vacuum. However, physical scientists were unable to find the slightest evidence in Reich’s data or elsewhere that such a thing as orgone energy exists.⁽²⁾

Someone might say: Cosmic energy is a “spiritual energy” that Hindus, Buddhists and Taoists believe in, so why do you judge it by physical science? Simply put, pantheism, as earlier stated, is a core principle of their religious traditions. Pantheism is understood positively as the view that God is identical with the cosmos, or else negatively as the rejection of any view that considers God as distinct from the universe. Obviously, the universe is the realm of science. Hence, the followers of these pantheistic traditions are the ones who forced science to examine their beliefs and refute their fundamentals. They claimed that there exists a kind of cosmic energy—a universal life force running within and between all things—that they can mystically harness. Thus, science intervened and proved that this is gobbledygook nonsense which lacks any credibility whatsoever. Despite the lack of scientific support, energy healing proponents continue to promote that we can attract and

⁽¹⁾ Robert T. Carroll, “Energy (New Age)”, *The Skeptic’s Dictionary*, 17 Dec. 2015, www.skepdic.com/energy.html.

⁽²⁾ Stephen Barrett, “Some Notes on Wilhelm Reich, M.D.”, *Quackwatch*, 15 Feb. 2002, www.quackwatch.org/11Ind/reich/.

channelize the cosmic energy through focused meditation. They also insist that cosmic energy is essential to lead a happy and healthy life and to expand our consciousness and achieve enlightenment—the conscious self-annihilation toward the achievement of union with the Absolute. Furthermore, in Taoism, the cosmic energy is not only essential to maintain perfect health and cure diseases. Rather, Taoists use the word Tao to refer to the universal energy which is the eternal, life-giving force of the universe. That is, a central tenet in Taoism is that the Tao is the absolute, ever-present source of the Universe, and the seed of its primordial purity resides in all things. Is there any (disbelief) after this? ‘Imrān ibn Ḥuṣayn (RA) related a situation of the Prophet (PBUH) in regard to combating polytheism and saving people from it. He (PBUH) saw a man wearing a ring made of yellow brass, so he asked him: “What is this ring?” The man said: “It is for *wāhīnah* (a protection from my arthritis).” He (PBUH) said: “Take it off, for it will only increase you in weakness and if you were to die wearing it you will be entrusted to it.”⁽¹⁾ And in another narration: “Take it off, for it will only increase your weakness. If you die with it on, you will never succeed.”⁽²⁾ Not only did the Prophet (PBUH) order the man to immediately remove the ring telling him that it would worsen the ailment that he wore it for, but he also told him that if he kept wearing it until he dies, he would be deprived of success in the Hereafter. What would the Prophet (PBUH) say about those who believe that cosmic energy attracts good and wards off harm, those who wear necklaces to “attract, align and balance the flow of energy through the *chakras*”, those who sit/lay down under meditation pyramids to “concentrate or focus cosmic energy and to greatly enhance

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān, *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥibbān*, (Beirūt: Mu’assasat ar-Risālah, 1988), ḥadīth: 6085.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī al-Makkī, *az-Zawājir*, (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1987), vol. 1, p.166.

the activation of the seven *chakras* (energy centers)”, those who use gemstones, pendulums and special colors to focus energy, those who engage in practices (yoga and meditation) to free energy and stimulate imbalanced *chakras* to finally unite their existence with the Absolute, those who believe cosmic energy brings health, wealth and abundance! What, for Allāh’s sake, is the characterization of all this? Is this not the essence of disbelief, idolatry, misguidance and major polytheism? Our Lord says: {Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “Invoke those you claim ‘to be divine’ besides Him—they do not have the power to undo harm from you or transfer it ‘to someone else’.”} (Qur’ān 17:56) And He Almighty says: {so do not knowingly set up equals to Allāh ‘in worship’ .} (Qur’ān 2:22) The Prophet (PBUH) said: “When you ask (for anything), ask it from Allāh, and if you seek help, seek help from Allāh.”⁽¹⁾

20. What is the deal with Kirlian photography? Is it proof that aura energy exists and can be captured?

In 1939, Semyon Kirlian and his wife accidentally discovered an unusual way to take photos. They used a photographic plate and a high-voltage source and they created eerie images surrounded by vibrant light. They were stunned by this new discovery and came to the conclusion that the light was an aura. The proponents of energy medicine claimed that Kirlian photography proved that there is a visible life-force surrounding every living being, and that the patterns of light captured in Kirlian photography are images of the organism’s aura, *Qi*, or metaphysical energy field. But, this claim was rejected by the scientific community, for the truth is much more mundane. Kirlian photography, named after

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad at-Tirmidhī, *Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī*, (Cairo: Dār at-Ta’šīl, 2016), ḥadīth: 2516, degree of ḥadīth: ṣaḥīḥ.

Semyon Kirlian, is a collection of photographic techniques used to capture the phenomenon of electrical coronal discharges. A coronal discharge is an electrical discharge caused by the ionization of gas or fluid surrounding an object. To achieve the halo effect, the photographer lays an object onto an electrified photographic plate or paper. When a high-voltage electrical current runs through that plate or paper, it creates a coronal discharge in the air around the object. Interestingly, in addition to animate subjects, scientists conducted plenty of experiments using a variety of inanimate subjects, including leaves, mushrooms, apples, coins...etc. They concluded that all inanimate objects can be made to emit a corona discharge. This fact does not indicate that they have aura energy, but just indicates that electricity can be pumped into them to the point that the surrounding air becomes electrified and glows. Scientists have thus proved that the colorful shapes are the result of the moisture contained in the subject which transferred onto the plate under the influence of the current. According to specialists, the final image—the form and color of human Kirlian photographs—is influenced by at least 22 factors. Moisture is a principal determinant in that the more moisture present, the brighter and more evident the so-called aura. Other factors include: the room temperature, humidity, atmospheric gases, the level of voltage, the size of the subject, grounding of subjects which may be influenced by leather vs. rubber-soled shoes, or the type of chair the subject sits in (steel) as well as parameters of film development. Notably, however, the biological vitality or the emotional state of the object does not influence the process. Remarkably, Kirlian photographs of the same person, taken only minutes apart, are so different due to changes in water vapor levels that they look like they came from different people. If the Kirlian image were due to a fundamental paranormal energy field, it

should survive in a vacuum (i.e., where there is no water vapor), but it, in fact, disappears.

All in all, Kirlian photographs demonstrate a phenomenon known in physics as cold electron emission or corona discharge i.e., the resulting image appears because of the electrical coronal discharge taking place between the subject and the metal plate.⁽¹⁾ Despite sounding exotic and looking mystical, corona discharge is in reality just as mundane as fluorescent light bulbs and spark plugs—a straight-forward electrical effect. Oddly enough, the fact that both the living and non-living objects photographed displayed the colorful waves did not stop the proponents of energy healing from claiming that Kirlian photography can show the life force of the subject. This claim, however, does not at all stand, for, as mentioned earlier, science explains that the glowing shapes appear due to the water content in the subject, which makes the air around the object become ionized when exposed to high-voltage current. In spite of science having debunked the Kirlian photography myths and explained the physics behind it, the advocates of New Age philosophy and energy healing still vouch for it, insisting that it captures auras—a desperate attempt to support their nonsense, to beautify falsehood and to trick people of good faith into believing that energy healing has some kind of scientific credibility, which helps transfer money into their wallets!

⁽¹⁾ “Kirlian Explained”, *Full Spectrum Presentations*, www.fullspectrum.org.uk/index.php/kirlian-explained/.

21. But what is the explanation for the superhuman powers that the practitioners of esoteric forms of spirituality have, such as the ability to walk over hot coals without pain or burning?

Some practitioners of Hindu and Buddhist pagan rituals appear to have transcendent powers, enabling them to do seemingly impossible things such as walking barefoot across hot coals without burning, and piercing their flesh with hooks and spears without bleeding and without feeling pain. Firewalking has been practiced for thousands of years by people from all parts of the world. Currently, many New Age charlatans use firewalking to make money out of it. However, after in-depth study, scientists came to the conclusion that spiritual powers have nothing to do with the achievement of this seemingly impressive feat. According to them, there are several facts that make it possible to walk on a bed of hot embers without sustaining serious burns or injuries. Firstly, the firewalkers actually walk on embers, and not fire, per se, for they light the fire with charcoal well ahead of time and let it burn down to non-flaming coals. Secondly, the hardwood and charcoal typically used in firewalking events are found to be a good thermal insulator. Thirdly, the walking path of the firewalkers is often covered with ash which is also a poor conductor of heat and helps in slowing down the heat transfer from the coal blocks to the feet. Fourthly, the length of time that the person's foot is in contact with the embers is an important factor to consider. The firewalkers' trick lies in taking a fluent brisk walk—with each step taking less than half a second of contact with the charcoal. In short, the secret of firewalking lies in the low thermal conductivity of the embers and the short contact time between the firewalkers' feet and the hot embers. Similarly, magician and self-described psychic Uri Geller claimed to have psychic powers enabling him to bend metal using the power of his mind,

but he was discredited as a fraud more than 30 years ago. James Randi and others got him to perform under the most cursory scrutiny and he failed. Geller himself has confessed that he is not a psychic with supernatural powers, but just a magician entertainer, and that what he does amounts to no more than a few basic magic tricks.⁽¹⁾

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, those who do seemingly impossible or extraordinary feats are of two types:

The people of (doing that which is seemingly) impossible through

deception and trickery: They are those who use the special properties of certain elements, such as powders and oils, which enable them walk through fire without being harmed and the likes of this. For instance, during Ibn Taymiyyah's time the *Baṭā'ihīyyah* (a Sufi sect) boasted their ability to enter the fire without being harmed. Ibn Taymiyyah exposed their false wonders and told them that they were devilish gimmicks. He suggested that he and they would have a bath with vinegar and hot water, rub their bodies well with detergents and would enter the fire together. This is because he was aware that they used to prepare certain potions (or materials) such as talc powder, the oil (fat) of a frog, citrus peel and other such natural methods (of trickery) which they put on their bodies to walk through the fire without getting burned. Unsurprisingly, the *Baṭā'ihīyyah* backed away and people became aware of their deception and tricks.

The people of (doing that which is seemingly) impossible through the

aid of the devils: they are the magicians who use the devils to do extraordinary feats through magic such as the shamans of Southeast Asia who practice black magic. They are also swindlers and tricksters, but way more dangerous than the previous type as they do not use mere trickery.

⁽¹⁾ Wikipedia Contributors, “Uri Geller”, *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 19 Aug. 2022, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uri_Geller.

Instead, they make use of the devils in performing magical feats. That is, what they do is not “sleight-of-hand” magic in any sense of the word. Magic is basically an agreement set up between the *sāḥir* (the practitioner of witchcraft) and a *shayṭān* (devil) which says that the *sāḥir* must commit illegal or polytheistic acts in return for the devil’s assistance in obeying the *sāḥir*’s requests. Both the *sāḥir* and the devil agree to mislead people and corrupt their beliefs. The common people think that the practitioners of spiritual exercises who perform seemingly extraordinary feats are *awliyā’* (the friends of Allāh) and they think that those extraordinary feats are from the *karāmāt* (miracles) of *awliyā’*, but they are, in fact, achieved from the satanic states of being in which the devils come and make certain things happen, like flying in the air, walking on water, not feeling the pain of burning or beating and the likes. There are many such examples throughout history such as al-Ḥārith ad-Dimashqī who appeared in Syria-Jordan in the time of ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān and claimed to be a prophet. His *shayṭān* (devils) used to take his feet out of the leg irons and prevent weapons from penetrating his body. Marble slabs praised Allāh when he rubbed his hand over them. He used to see people walking and riding up in the sky and would say that they were angels when, in reality, they were nothing but the *Jinn*. When the Muslims captured him and prepared to kill him, the executioner thrust his spear at him, but it would not penetrate his body. ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān said to him: “you forgot to say *bismillah* (in the name of Allāh). The executioner then said *bismillah* and killed him.⁽¹⁾ This indeed is the condition of the people of the satanic states—their devils pusillanimously abandon them and flee when that which drives them away is mentioned to

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad Ibn Taymiyyah, *The Decisive Criterion between the Friends of Allāh and the Friends of Shayṭān*, Translated from the Original Arabic by abū Rumaysah, (Birmingham: Dār Us-Sunnah Classic Collection, 2005), p. 116, www.fliphtml5.com/eooj/pcgt.

them such as *āyat-ul-kursī* (Qur’ān 2:255). During the Islamic caliphate, the *aṭ-Ṭuruqiyyah* (the heads of *ṣūfī* sects who paid complete allegiance to their shaykhs and followed in their footsteps) used to stick swords into their bodies without bleeding. Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) explained that while *karāmāt* are the result of faith and pious practice, the satanic states are the result of that which Allāh and His prophet have interdicted. Shaykh Ḥāmid Ādam—one of the greatest *ṣūfīs* of our time who had 261 *Jinns* (demons) in his control through practicing *taṣawwuf* (sufism) for 17 years and who finally repented—confesses that what happens to the shaykhs who are taken to be *awliyā’* are satanic states of being where they are aided by the devils in the performance of extraordinary feats. These claimed *awliyā’* enter into the satanic states of being through practice of what involves polytheism, innovated worship, and doing that which Allāh made unlawful until the devils come to them and they are able to perform extraordinary feats which the ignorant take as miracles. The *shaykh* said that during one of his *khalwas* (*khlawh*: seclusion or retreat) a devil spoke to him and asked him to look up in the sky. He did as commanded and he saw all the Arabic letters, from *alif* to *yā’*, written in a very large size. The devil asked him, “have you ever seen such a thing in the sky?” to which the sheikh replied in the negative. The devil then told him, “this is *al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūz* (lit. The Preserved Tablet: the spiritual tablet in which everything that happened and that will happen is written.)” and asked him to look a bit further. The shaykh did as directed whereupon he saw letters which appeared to blur or shake. “Can you read any of these words?”, the devil asked him. The shaykh once again replied in the negative. Here, the devil told him, “you will, God willing, be able to read them in the future but on a few conditions. If you were not one of Allāh’s *awliyā’* (friends) you would not have reached this stage. I will, God willing, serve you but on a condition. You have passed the first test, but

there are more tests to come. For now, you will have to just accept all of the conditions, but you will have to implement them as the need arises (i.e., when the shaykh has a request that he wants/needs the devil to grant him).” The conditions given to the shaykh are a list of sinful acts, including: taking the Qur’ān to the toilet, writing Qur’ānic verses with *najāssah* (dirt), not to pray ‘*aṣr*, not to lead people in congregational prayers, not to fast, slaughtering for other than Allāh, praying without ablution...etc. The shaykh accepted to perform all these sinful acts and started by not fasting for three days. Accordingly, the devil granted him his wishes (requests made by people visiting him seeking witchcraft.) He also gave him lots of talismans to use.⁽¹⁾ So, the practitioners of spiritual exercises experience many satanic states which resemble the *karāmāt* (supernatural wonders) with which Allāh honors His allies.

Shaykh Ibn Tyamiyyah also mentioned *karāmāt* which are from the devils who seek to lead pious people astray with them. He personally knew people, whom plants spoke to, telling them things which are useful—which was none other than a devil which has entered into the plant. The *shaykh* also knew others who were addressed by stones and trees which would say to them: “Congratulations O Ally of Allāh!” And as soon as they recite *āyat-ul-kursī*, that disappears.⁽²⁾ It is noteworthy that the symptoms of ascension, as listed in “Understanding Ascension and Coping with the Symptoms and Side Effects”, compiled and edited

⁽¹⁾ Shaykh Ḥāmid Ādam, “As-Sāḥir at-Tā’ib Yaḥkī ‘an Ta‘āmulihi ma‘a al-Jinn (A Repentant Sorcerer Speaks about his Dealings with the Jinn)”, *YouTube*, uploaded by Hatim Farouk, www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_2F2ETfUsA.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad Ibn Taymiyyah, *The Decisive Criterion Between the Friends of Allāh and the Friends of Shaytan*, Translated from the Original Arabic by abū Rumaysah, (Birmingham: Dār Us-Sunnah Classic Collection, 2005), p. 127. <https://fliphtml5.com/eooj/pcgt>.

by Humanity Healing,⁽¹⁾ are indeed identical to the signs of Satan's touch (Satan possession) in every aspect.⁽²⁾ In a nutshell, the extraordinary feats performed by the practitioners of esoteric forms of spirituality are either mere tricks involving deception through specialized knowledge and use of materials and gadgets, or magic that involves the devils. For 10 years, the Canadian-American stage magician, author and scientific skeptic who extensively challenged paranormal and pseudoscientific claims, James Randi has offered a US\$1,000,000 to anyone who can demonstrate paranormal phenomena under scientific scrutiny. Not surprisingly, high-profile TV psychics won't touch the offer with a ten-foot pole. Doubtlessly, nobody has passed the preliminary exam in 10 years.⁽³⁾ This shows that most of the seemingly extraordinary feats are mere illusionary tricks involving deception!

22. Do planets affect humans?

Unfortunately, the proponents of energy healing and the macrobiotic diet in our countries believe that planets have influence over humans. They divide planets into masculine and feminine, hot and cold. They also classify foods into yin foods (feminine) and yang foods (masculine). The macrobiotic diet is based on the Chinese philosophy of the two opposing yet complementary forces—*Yin* and *Yang*. The health and harmony of both body and mind are believed to depend on a balance between the two forces. According to macrobiotic philosophy, food also contains *Yin* and *Yang* qualities. The idea behind this theory is that

⁽¹⁾“Ascension Stimulus Package”, *Humanity Healing*, www.humanityhealing.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Ascension-Stimulus-Package.pdf.

⁽²⁾ Fowz bint ‘Abd al-Latīf Kurdī, *alfowz*, www.alfowz.com/.

⁽³⁾ “Skeptic Revamps \$1M Psychic Prize”, *Wired*, 12 Jan. 2007, www.wired.com/2007/01/skeptic-revamps-1m-psychic-prize/.

different foods possess different energy fields, which need to be balanced to achieve optimum health. According to astrology, food is directly related to the planets. Astrologers believe that eating astrologically (depending on the zodiac signs) shall bless one with that planet's favorable effects, make them healthy and change their luck and destiny. Ibn al-Qayyim (RA) harshly denounced astrology whose practitioners believed that human personalities and events are influenced by heavenly bodies. He (RA) said: "And from their nonsense in this regard, which caused the wise people to laugh at them, is that they classified stars into two categories: hot and cold, and they made the hot ones male and the cold ones female, and they said that the sun is male and the moon is female."⁽¹⁾ The New Agers believe that the planets can influence and change the course of human destiny. That is, they ascribe to inanimate objects the ability to decide the course of human destiny and dispose of all things in the universe in perfect order! They forgot that Allāh says: {And He has subjected for your benefit the day and the night, the sun and the moon. And the stars have been subjected by His command. Surely in this are signs for those who understand.} (Qur'ān 16:12) Instead of perceiving the stars for what they are and for what Allāh made them i.e., 'subserving to humans', they claim that they can control humans and influence their destiny! The claims concerning the influence of the planets are of three kinds:

That which is permissible: that is the statement that the planets have tangible, physical impact on Earth. For example, Earth's tides are dominated by the combined effect of the gravitational pull of the sun and the moon as well as the other planets since they have a gravitational pull of their own.

⁽¹⁾ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Miftāḥ Dār as-Sa'ādah*, (Jaddah: al Majma' al-Fiqhī al-Islāmī, 2012), vol. 2, p. 152.

That which is polytheism and misguidance: that is the belief that events may be predicted by studying the courses and relative positions of the stars and planets which, they claim, are by Allāh's Ordainment and Will.

That which is disbelief: that is the belief that the heavenly bodies themselves decide the events of our daily lives. This is the core belief of astrologers who claim that "fate is all in the stars" i.e., the stars and planets decide our fate.

It is such a disgrace to ascribe the divine *attribute* of governing each and every thing in the whole physical and metaphysical existence to inanimate planets, which run according to God-given laws and are subservient to mankind. This is the very kind of disbelief committed by the former nations! Moreover, the belief that the pattern of the stars and planets at the time of one's birth influences someone's personality, behavior, relationships, career...etc and decides his destiny is irrational nonsense. How will astrologers explain the contradiction that thousands of people born at the same moment of time, and hence carrying same birth charts, do not have similar lives? Some scholars have said: "I wish I knew what the astrologer would say about a thousand people who have boarded a ship—people of different conditions and different ranks, including the king and the subjects, the scholar and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the old and the young—who have all been encompassed by the decree of drowning at the same hour in spite of their different fortunes (horoscopes), and their being born at different moments of time, with different star degrees? If the astrologer, may Allāh make him among the disgraced on the Day of Judgment, says that they were drowned by the bad luck of that (ship) they boarded', then it would be necessary to conclude that this bad luck invalidated all the fates which have been

decided depending on when each one of these people was born, and which are all different and with implications specific to each one of them (i.e., fates personalized by *birth date*). It is pointless to try to predict the *destiny* of people based on their *time of birth*. *Birth dates are no indication of who will be wretched and who will be blessed. All that remains for astrologers is the opposition of the Great Qur'ān.*'⁽¹⁾ Indeed, the poet did well when he said:

*The astrologer has decided that my destiny depending on when I was
born,
*
makes it inevitable for me to die from drowning.
Tell the astrologer on the morning after a flood,
*
was everyone born on the planet of drowning?*⁽²⁾

Zodiac signs are a load of rubbish—not science. Astrologers' claim that the alignment of stars and planets (where each planet and constellation was in the sky at the moment of one's birth) influences human characteristics and the course of human lives is utter nonsense—a delusion of the past nations. The Prophet (PBUH) said: "he is not one of us whoever draws omens or omens are drawn for him, or foresees for people or people foresee for him, or performs magic or magic is performed for him."⁽³⁾ And he (PBUH) said: "If anyone acquires any knowledge of astrology, he acquires a branch of magic of which he gets more as long as he continues to do so."⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ Hayfā' bint Nāṣir ar-Rashīd, *at-Taṭbīqāt al-Mu'āṣirah li Falsafat al-Istishfā' ash-Sharqiyyah*, (Jaddah: Markaz at-Ta'sīl, 2016).

⁽²⁾ (In astrology, each planet is correlated with a particular concept that can help predict when and how a person will die. The astrological 8th house determines whether one will die a natural death or an unnatural death by accident, fire, disease, violence, drowning or suicide.)

⁽³⁾ Muḥammad al-'Albānī, *as-Silsilah aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*, (Riyādh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1995), vol. 5, p. 228.

⁽⁴⁾ Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan abī Dāwūd*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1998), ḥadīth: 3905.

23. What are the 5 powerful elements?

According to Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism, the five elements are: wood, metal, earth, water and fire.⁽¹⁾ Until recently, I thought that the 5 elements were the actual elements as defined by the substances, but after reading the book of Dr. Hayfā' bint Nāṣir ar-Rashīd, may Allāh preserve her, *at-Taṭbīqāt al-Mu'āṣirah li Falsafat al-Istishfā' ash-Sharqiyyah*, I came to learn that the five elements are not elements in the sense of physical elements as in the 118 Chemicals of the Periodic Table of Elements. Instead, they are stages of yin-yang transformation. The reason being, Buddhists, Taoists and Hindus were speaking of processes rather than substances, for they were looking at the world in terms of energy, as opposed to matter. Their theory of the five elements explains how *Qi* (the cosmic energy) cycles through various stages of transformation. According to them, *Yin* and *Yang* continuously adjust to one another and transform into one another in “a never-ending dance of harmonization.” Hence, the five elements are often referred to as the “five phases of transformation”. According to these traditions, the five elements are brought into being through the binary universal forces, *Yin* and *Yang*—the two principle cosmic energies, which are complementary, inseparable, and in balance with each other—and everything in the universe comes from the five elements. Each element, it is claimed, is associated with one of the planets in our solar system. Fire is paired with Mars, wood with Jupiter, water with Mercury, earth with Saturn and metal with Venus. Moreover, each element is associated with different body organs. Wood is linked to our liver and gallbladder, fire to our heart and small intestine, earth to our spleen and stomach, metal to our lungs and large intestine, and water to our kidney and bladder. All things are

⁽¹⁾ See the term *dhātu* in Frank Lee Woodward, translator, *Some Sayings of the Buddha*, According to the *Pāli* Canon, (London: Buddhist Society, 1974), p. 527.

classified according to the theory of the five elements. Even the Seasons in Nature correspond to the Five Elements. The followers of the five element theory believe that imbalances in the five elements cause illness.

Indeed, the five elements are a return to ancient paganism, to the attachment to the planets, shapes, symbols, talismans and all the biggest forms of blasphemy. The claim that the five elements—wood, fire, earth, water, and metal—make up the world is outdated. Today, we know everything in the world is made up of atoms which can be classified by type. Each different type of atom is an element. Scientists have found 118 elements present in Mendeleev Periodic Table. Water, wood and earth are not elements, but rather compounds i.e., combinations of two or more elements. Science has disproved the Eastern philosophy claim that all things in the universe *were* generated by the five elements. The only chemical elements that were present in the beginning of our universe were the three lightest atoms in the periodic table i.e., hydrogen, helium and lithium. Strangely, people persist in believing in this superstitious theory even after science has shown it to be a pseudoscience. To this day, Buddhist temples, such as the Temple of the Reclining Buddha (known as Wat Pho in Thai) in Thailand, well-known as a centre for traditional massage and medicine, use massage to address imbalances of the five elements in the body. Stranger still, the major principle of energy healing therapies and the macrobiotic dietary therapy is balancing these elements. Most tragic of all, these pagan superstitions for which there is no authority in any religion, which lack scientific support, and which have blasphemous implications causing one to fall into major disbelief which nullifies faith, are still so prevalent in the countries of monotheism!

24. Is astral projection real?

According to esoteric philosophies (Buddhism, Taoism and Hinduism), in addition to physical bodies humans have “astral bodies”, referred to as etheric, energetic, or subtle bodies. Astral projection is the supposed act of the etheric body leaving the physical through meditation and other pagan ritual practices. Those who engage in astral projection believe that the etheric body has the ability to travel to other realms in space and time. However, the etheric body is nothing more than a pagan conception that has no evidence supporting it, neither in the *Sharī‘ah* nor in empirical science. Those who claim to astral travel in fact experience hallucinations as a result of the austere practices and exercises they use to progressively prepare their “subtle” body to travel outside the physical body. They believe that fasting is one of the techniques for raising levels of personal energy and willpower from which they can draw upon for projecting. Hence, they eat very lightly or abstain from food altogether for days. Besides, they engage in day long meditation which they deem an opportunity to slow down and disengage from life’s hurried pace. Further, they use what they call “controlled sleep deficit” where they accumulate a sleep deficit in a regimental way as the resulting state puts them, in their words, in the ideal sleep/body awake trance state.⁽¹⁾ As the blood glucose levels become very low, the person might experience pre-coma symptoms, such as disorientation—an altered mental state where a person may not know their location and identity, or the time and date—as well as delirium, delusions, hallucinations. Interestingly, there are cases of patients having experiences suggestive of astral projection from brain stimulation treatments and hallucinogenic drugs, such as ketamine,

⁽¹⁾ Robert Bruce and Brian Mercer, *Mastering Astral Projection: 90-day Guide to Out-of-body Experience*, (Woodbury, Minnesota: Llewellyn, 2004).

phencyclidine and DMT.⁽¹⁾ Psychologist Donovan Radcliffe has written that astral projection can be explained by delusion, hallucination and vivid dreams.⁽²⁾ These hallucinations will go away with just a nourishing meal and mental rest, no more, no less. In 1978, Ingo Swann claimed that he has the ability to astral travel to Jupiter and observe details of it. Swann's claimed observations were later compared to actual findings and information. According to an evaluation by James Randi, who dedicated his life to exposing paranormal claims and pseudoscience, Swann's accuracy was "unconvincing and unimpressive" with an overall score of 37 percent.⁽³⁾ There is no known scientific evidence that astral projection as an objective phenomenon exists. It has thus been characterized as pseudoscience. Brian Regal wrote: "Other than anecdotal eyewitness accounts, there is no known evidence of the ability to astral project, the existence of other planes, or of the Akashic Record."⁽⁴⁾

25. What about the body's energy pathways and acupuncture, especially that it is gaining global popularity?

Acupuncture is by far the most famous form of pseudoscience that highly educated people fall for. It is rooted in ancient Taoist philosophy which views a person as an energy system in which body and mind are unified, each influencing and balancing the other. Acupuncture is based on a superstitious system of meridians. Its practitioners believe the human

⁽¹⁾ Robert L. Park, *Superstition: Belief in the Age of Sciences*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), pp. 90-91.

⁽²⁾ Donovan Rawcliffe, *Occult and Supernatural Phenomena*, (Mineola: Dover Publications, 1998), p. 123.

⁽³⁾ Charles M. Wynn et al., *Quantum Leaps in the Wrong Direction: Where Real Science Ends--and Pseudoscience Begins*, (Washington, D.C: Joseph Henry Press, 2001), p. 95.

⁽⁴⁾ Brian Regal, *Pseudoscience: A Critical Encyclopedia*, (Berkeley: Greenwood, 2009), p. 29.

body has more than 2,000 acupuncture points connected by pathways or meridians which create an energy flow (*Qi*) through the body that is responsible for overall health. According to them, disruptions in these energy pathways cause illness. Hence, the goal of acupuncture is to unblock one's stuck *Qi* and restore and re-balance its flow to organs, glands and body tissues, and so restore health. However, acupoints and meridians are not recognized by anatomists or physiologists, for they are not real anatomical structures. They are mere pre-scientific myths as scientists have found no evidence that supports their existence or that of *Qi*. The conditions claimed to respond to acupuncture include chronic pain (neck and back pain, migraine headaches). In 1990, three Dutch epidemiologists analyzed 51 controlled studies of acupuncture for chronic pain and concluded that the efficacy of acupuncture in the treatment of chronic pain remains doubtful.⁽¹⁾ In the early 1970s, a number of enthusiastic reports were published about the effectiveness of acupuncture in combating addiction to heroin, alcohol, and cigarette smoking. Studies were conducted to examine whether compelling evidence from clinical research exists that acupuncture is efficacious as a therapy for these addictions, but this claim was not supported by results from sound clinical research.⁽²⁾ K. Streitberger and J. Kleinhenz did an amazing study at the University of Heidelberg where they developed a placebo acupuncture needle, with which it should be possible to simulate an acupuncture procedure without penetrating the skin. In a cross-over experiment with 60 volunteers they tested whether needling with the

⁽¹⁾ Gerben Ter Riet et al, "Acupuncture and Chronic Pain: A Criteria-Based Meta-Analysis.", *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, vol. 43, 11, (1990): 1191-9. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0895-4356\(90\)90020-p](https://doi.org/10.1016/0895-4356(90)90020-p).

⁽²⁾ Gerben Ter Riet et al, "A Meta-Analysis of Studies into the Effect of Acupuncture on Addiction", *The British Journal of General Practice*, vol. 40, 338, (1990): pp. 379-82.

placebo needle feels any different from real acupuncture. The findings were interesting: Of 60 volunteers, 54 felt a penetration with acupuncture and none of the volunteers suspected that the needle may not have penetrated the skin.⁽¹⁾ In 2004, at the same university, a randomized placebo-controlled, patient and observer blinded study was designed to investigate whether acupuncture at P6 is effective in preventing postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV) compared to placebo acupuncture without additional antiemetics within 24 hours after surgery. A secondary objective was to determine whether there is a difference when acupuncture is applied before and when it is applied after induction of anaesthesia. Female patients, scheduled for gynaecological or breast surgery, were randomly assigned to two groups receiving either acupuncture or placebo acupuncture. Authors Streitberger and Kleinhenz concluded: “According to the definition of the primary outcome variable, PONV occurred within 24 hours in 46 patients (43.4%) in the acupuncture group and in 54 patients (50.9%) in the control group. The absolute difference of -7.5% was not statistically significant. Subgroup analysis showed no difference between application before and that after induction of anaesthesia in the acupuncture group as well as in the placebo group. In our study, we could not prove our hypothesis that acupuncture is more effective than placebo acupuncture in the prevention of PONV.”⁽²⁾ This study is of great significance because the prevention and treatment of postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV) is one of the

⁽¹⁾ Konrad Streitberger and Julia Kleinhenz, “Introducing a Placebo Needle into Acupuncture Research”, *The Lancet*, vol. 352, 9125 (1998): 364-5. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(97\)10471-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(97)10471-8).

⁽²⁾ Konrad Streitberger and J. Kleinhenz, “Acupuncture Compared to Placebo-Acupuncture for Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting Prophylaxis: A Randomized Placebo-Controlled Patient and Observer-Blind Trial”, *Anaesthesia*, vol. 59, 2 (2004): 142-9. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2044.2004.03577.x>.

popular uses of acupuncture in alternative treatment centers. The National Council against Health Fraud (NCAHF) believes:

- Acupuncture is an unproven modality of treatment.
- Its theory and practice are based on primitive and fanciful concepts of health and disease that bear no relationship to present scientific knowledge.
- Research during the past twenty years has failed to demonstrate that acupuncture is effective against any disease.
- Perceived effects of acupuncture are probably due to a combination of expectation, suggestion, counter-irritation, operant conditioning, and other psychological mechanisms.
- The use of acupuncture should be restricted to appropriate research settings.
- Insurance companies should not be required by law to cover acupuncture treatment.
- Licensure of lay acupuncturists should be phased out.⁽¹⁾

Acupuncture is one of the most widely spread superstitions in our countries, which must be strictly confronted. Studies show acupuncture to be no better than a placebo. However, while placebo drugs do not cause people to have negative side effects, acupuncture can cause serious side effects, including bacterial infections, hepatitis B and C, and possibly even HIV, severe muscle spasms and nerve damage. What is even more dangerous is that acupuncturists do not make a proper disease diagnosis, which is why patients experience a worsening of symptoms. Acupuncture is thus a waste of valuable time. That is, the problem with acupuncture and all alternative healing methods is that they may delay a person from

⁽¹⁾ William T. Jarvis, "Acupuncture: The Position Paper of the National Council against Health Fraud", *The Clinical Journal of Pain*, 7 2 (1991): pp. 162-6. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1097/00002508-199106000-00012>.

taking advantage of the latest technological diagnostic methods and treatments. Most importantly, it is a practice that has pagan roots, as it grew out of the ancient pagan religions of Southeast Asia. But someone might say that the insertion of extremely fine needles into the skin at specific acupoints does indeed relieve pain. Although this is true it has nothing to do with clearing energy pathways. Rather, it is the result of triggering the activation of the pituitary gland which releases endorphins, the body's natural pain-killing chemicals. Basically, this means that acupuncture works by stimulating nerves that signal the brain to release pain-relieving hormones, including beta-endorphins, which can help suppress pain and greatly boost overall mood and sense of well-being. Acupuncture is not a cure but rather a temporary relief of pain which has nothing to do with the philosophy of energy pathways. In a word, there is absolutely nothing magical, esoteric, or mystical about acupuncture. But, as usual, the proponents of energy healing rely on premises that may be true and dress them up with pagan philosophy.

26. What is the macrobiotic diet (or macrobiotics)?

A macrobiotic diet is a fad diet drawn from Zen Buddhism—a mixture of Indian Buddhism and Taoism. It is based on ideas about types of food to balance the supposed yin (relatively negative forces) and yang (the relatively positive ones). According to Zen paganism and Taoism, it is important to balance the *Yin* and *Yang* of the body, which can be achieved through eating the right foods, meditation and slow breathing. Followers of the macrobiotic way believe that burning candles in one's house brings love into their life, that amber stone increases self-confidence, and that the green color is a mystical color that heals and offers relief from many disorders related to the kidney. In addition, they

claim that the house should be designed as per the teachings of *feng shui* and *vastu shastra*, both of which provide guidance on how to look at our homes as an extension of our bodies, minds, and hearts. A pair of Temple Lions should be placed at the entrance to one's house, as they are believed to have powerful protective benefits. The three-legged toad should be used as a *feng shui* adjustment to attract wealth and prosperity. Geometric shapes should be added to one's decor to bring more positive energy into their home. Further, it is important to keep a pyramid in the house to sit in it for the purpose of receiving more cosmic energy. The macrobiotic lifestyle, a holistic approach to life, is achieved through these practices that allegedly promote well-being and longevity. A house whose inhabitants believe in the superstitious macrobiotic "way of life", of which the yin-yang view of the world life is a key component, is bound to be full of amulets, talismans and paganism. Honey and milk will never be found in the kitchens of the strict followers of macrobiotics, because both are yin foods and thus not allowed. Allāh says: {Ask, 'O Prophet,' "Who has forbidden the adornments and lawful provisions Allāh has brought forth for His servants?"} (Qur'ān 7:32) On the other hand, barley, especially fermented barley, is regarded as a very yang food in the macrobiotics philosophy and dietary system. It is also believed that the macrobiotic diet could prevent and cure serious illnesses including cancer. However, there is no scientific evidence that this diet can prevent or cure cancer. In fact, many esteemed macrobiotic teachers and counselors themselves have died of cancer in the last ten years. Several studies have been conducted on the macrobiotic diet and every one of them found serious deficiencies in infants and children who had been on this diet. A population-based study on the nutritional status of children consuming macrobiotic diets was carried out in the Netherlands. Results showed that these children suffered "deficiencies of energy, protein,

vitamin B12, vitamin D, calcium, and riboflavin, which led to retarded growth, fat and muscle wasting, and slower psychomotor development.”⁽¹⁾ The macrobiotic movement is nothing more than a re-establishment of old pagan ideas into our modern life—after all it has evolved out of the Buddhist and Taoist paganism.

27. Did macrobiotics contribute to the demise of Steve Jobs?

Steve Jobs, the founder and chief executive of the tech giant Apple Inc, was a proclaimed Buddhist. His doctors did a biopsy and were overjoyed to learn that Jobs had an unusual form of pancreatic cancer that was treatable through surgery. They thus recommended immediate surgery to stem the disease’s progression, but he refused and opted for a special macrobiotic diet. Against the advice of his doctors, Jobs waited 9 months to begin treatment in earnest, but by then the cancer had spread from his pancreas to the surrounding tissue, although what he had was a type of tumors which are usually pretty indolent and progress only slowly. Doctors stated that as Jobs went on a macrobiotic diet for nine months, the tumor progressed, and took him from the high end to the low end of the survival rate. Immediate surgery, they believe, would have cured him or at least greatly extended his life, and his death was definitely due to the delay in therapy due to his wanting to “go alternative”—trying to heal his cancer “macrobiotically”. The advocates for macrobiotics have distanced and excused themselves of any blame and responsibility. Instead of taking this negative publicity as an opportunity to reflect on the overall social impact of macrobiotics, they

⁽¹⁾ P. C. Dagnelie and W. A. van Staveren, “Macrobiotic Nutrition and Child Health: Results of a Population-Based, Mixed-Longitudinal Cohort Study in The Netherlands,” *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, vol. 59, Issue 5, May 1994. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/59.5.1187S>.

suggested that Steve Jobs did not understand or practice macrobiotics properly. If only those who are successful in beating cancer and other diseases are the ones who practice macrobiotics correctly, then by this logic renowned macrobiotic leaders such as Aveline Kushi, Herman and Cornelia Aihara and so many others, and even macrobiotic pioneer, George Ohsawa, himself are among those failures of macrobiotics. Did these folks not understand macrobiotics correctly? Were they cheating on their macrobiotic diet? Did they not practice what they preached? A flurry of articles has shown up following the death of Steve Jobs asserting that “alternative medicine” killed him and wondering “How could such a smart man do such a stupid thing?”⁽¹⁾ Steve Jobs is a prominent example that these non-conventional healing practices do not work. He is thus added to the list of famous people who died treating terminal diseases with woo rather than with medicine.

28. What is *feng shui*?

Feng shui is an ancient Chinese traditional practice stemming from the Taoist belief in *Qi* (the life force that inhabits everything) made up of *Yin* and *Yang* elements which are opposing but complementary forces that cannot be separated. According to Taoists, people can improve the flow of positive *Qi* in their lives and keep the negative *Qi* away by balancing *Yin* and *Yang* elements. *Feng shui* is a method of balancing *Yin* and *Yang* and improving the flow of *Qi* by arranging furniture, decorations, buildings and even whole cities in a beneficial way. The ancient Chinese people believed that arranging things to create positive *Qi* would ensure good health, improve interpersonal

⁽¹⁾ David Coursey, “Cancer: ‘Think Different’ May Have Killed Steve Jobs”, *Forbes*, 21 Oct. 2011, www.forbes.com/sites/davidcoursey/2011/10/21/cancer-think-different-may-have-killed-steve-jobs/?sh=59713677a3a4.

relationships, and bring luck and prosperity. Modern *feng shui* experts and practitioners hold the same belief. Their goal is to create a sacred space of *home* where *Qi* can *flow* smoothly and nourish the inhabitants. They claim that “feng shuing” one’s home helps to get rid of stuck and negative energy and welcome only positive energy. *Feng shui* dictates the precise places to set furniture, stipulates what colors to select for walls, furniture, artwork, pillows, and other home accessories, incorporates different letters, numbers, plants, shapes and angles to enhance and shift the *flow* of *Qi* in a *home* to make it supportive and nourishing. The *feng shui* philosophy originated in astrology, with the belief that the movements of stars and planets affect peoples’ homes, the spaces they live in, and their lives. The belief that the architecture or structure of a place, the position of its furniture and fixtures, the direction one sits or sleeps play a major role in attracting wealth, health and happiness in their life goes against the guidance of Islam. It is tantamount to polytheism! Muslims are taught to put their trust in Allāh and not *feng shui*. Allāh alone has absolute and total power and control over all things: {But all matters are by Allāh’s Will.} (Qur’ān 13:31) To believe that *feng shui* amulets, talismans and symbols can bring prosperity, wealth and health to their owners is utter falsehood. The prophet (PBUH) said: “Indeed incantations (*ruqā*), amulets (*tamā’im*) and love spells (*at-tiwalah*) are *shirk* (forms of polytheism).”⁽¹⁾ Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) said: “Making talismans and claiming that they can bring benefits and ward off harm is major polytheism.”⁽²⁾ The *feng shui* belief in cosmic energy, as has previously been detailed, revolves around major and minor polytheism. If the foundation of monotheism was challenged with a *shubhah*—a matter

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad al-’Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’ aṣ-Ṣaḡīr*, (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), ḥadīth: 1632.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū’ al-Fatāwā*, (al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Noble Qur’ān, 2004), vol. 9 p. 34.

which is not entirely clear i.e., in the region in between the obvious states *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*)—or a dubious thing, this would have been sufficient to completely stay away from this thing, for the issue has to do with faith and disbelief, and avoiding *shubuhāt* (dubious matters) safeguards religion while indulging in them leads to falling into the *ḥarām*. Keeping away from *shubhah* in this respect is the adequate choice of every sane and wise person. What can we say knowing that these New Age philosophies, such as *feng shui*, challenge the foundation of monotheism at every moment! Other modalities claiming to help people bring balance and harmony to their inner and outer environments are *vastu shastra*, often referred to as “Indian *feng shui*” and BioGeometry.

29. Is there any scientific evidence for the claim that the pyramidal shape is magical and filled with a mysterious energy and power? Does sitting inside a pyramid boost positive energy and improve physical health? Are pyramid-shaped containers effective at preserving food placed in them?

In physics, as explained earlier, there is no such thing as positive and negative energy. There is just energy, which may be electromagnetic, thermal, or mechanical. The labeling of “positive” and “negative” was completely arbitrary. There is not one iota of truth in the claim that a certain place can pour positive energy onto people and wash the negative energy away. It is mere New Age woo-woo. Likewise, the claim that some shapes, gemstones and colors repel negative energy is pure nonsense and charlatanism! People thought that putting dull razor blades in a pyramid-shaped holder restores them to sharpness, and that food stored in pyramid-shaped containers never gets moldy or rotten. However, pyramid power is pseudoscience and tests have failed to

provide any evidence for it. Still, even today there are those who swear that the magical effects of pyramids are real. Dr. ‘Abdel Moḥsin Ṣāliḥ, who was awarded his PhD in Microbiology from Cairo University Faculty of Science, and who is a member of the Egyptian Society of Applied Microbiology, had a long career in debunking the myth of pyramid power. He carried out applied research after obtaining permission from the Antiquities Authority. He entered the Great Pyramid and placed food in it, leaving it for two full days. He placed a similar sample of food outside the pyramid. Surprisingly, the food inside the pyramid had spoiled much faster than the sample outside. He reported the findings of his experiments in his book *al-Insān al-Ḥā’ir Bayna al-‘Ilm wa al-Khurāfah* (The Man Confused between Science and Myth). Dr. Ṣāliḥ stated: “If pyramids can keep the dead body from decomposing and rotting away, why then did Egyptians preserve the dead body through mummification—the process which involved deliberately drying or embalming the flesh using chemicals or natural preservatives—before it was placed in a coffin and sealed in a tomb (inside the pyramid)?... Besides, if this theory is correct, why do we not implement it in our lives? That is, these food materials that spoil the fastest, if placed under a pyramidal shape for a few hours or days, it is impossible for them to rot, as claimed. All people have to do is build small and cheap pyramidal shapes in their homes, and preserve in them cooked food, milk, meat, soup and other food materials that spoil quickly. This is more economical than the refrigerators that consume electrical energy, which we are in greater need of for other matters. Besides, this great discovery will doubtlessly save meat and poultry companies, which use refrigeration systems, a lot of money. Let there be a large pyramidal shape instead of these large refrigerators that require around-the-clock maintenance to last for about 10-15 years only, while the pyramidal shape can last for tens or

hundreds of years! This nonsense is still widely spread amongst the masses and the elites. Thinkers and writers have spoken about it in our television channels and radio stations. And I have heard it with my own ears from those who occupy high positions. If they are that convinced that pyramids have a mysterious power that can preserve food, they ought to instruct people to make these model pyramids in their homes so that they would preserve their onion, garlic, meat and fish inside them. Since it is imperative to conduct experiments first to have the final say in matters that cause us distress, even if they are trivial, we, in turn, made a model pyramid out of cardboard, and a model box out of the same cardboard, and we put in both samples of fish, meat, and cubes of potatoes. The pyramid-shaped container was no more effective than the box at preserving the food items, as they were rotten to the same degree. Another idea occurred to us. We said to ourselves the Great Pyramid is in our country, and it will cost us nothing but a trip to Jizah (Giza) to conduct the same experiment inside the pyramid. So we wrote to the Antiquities Authority asking permission to conduct a number of experiments under its supervision, and we are grateful that it agreed to that. We put samples of meat inside sterilized glassware and other samples of soup broth in test tubes inside an underground crypt that extends about 70 meters underneath the pyramid and in the King's Chamber above a crypt that faces upwards. We also placed similar samples outside the pyramid for comparison. Two days passed. We had earlier recorded the temperatures inside and outside (the pyramid), and the temperature outside was 8-10 degrees higher than inside on average. We took out the samples and found that they all smelled repulsively. There was no significant difference between items in the pyramid and items outside. Since the nose cannot decide that accurately, we took another step that falls into the core of our specialization. We performed

bacterial count (i.e., the process of determining the number of bacteria) in the meat samples using one of the methods of bacterial analysis, and the number of bacteria per gram was as follows: samples outside the pyramid 14000000000 billion/1g, samples in the King's Chamber 28000000000 billion/1g, samples in the crypt underneath the pyramid: 58000000000 billion/1g. These numbers indicate a clear fact. The growth of bacteria on meat inside the pyramid was greater than its growth outside. The difference in bacteria number ranged between 2-4 times. This means that rotting or decomposition was faster inside the pyramid than outside it, although the temperature inside was lower and, as a rule, lower temperature always leads to slower growth and reproduction. But it seems that the conditions inside the pyramid were very favorable for greater reproduction, despite the difference in temperature. The inevitable result: we have shattered one of the dominant myths. The rotting and the appearance of unpleasant odors mean that the bacteria organisms have begun to attack the organic matter and feed on it, and nothing inside the pyramid prevented it from doing so.’⁽¹⁾

30. What about re-programming the subconscious mind and using its power?

One of the most prevalent myths among people is the notion that a person uses only 10 percent of their brain, and that it is possible to “unleash” untapped human potential by unlocking the vast untapped potentials of the subconscious mind. The popular belief that we only use 10% of our brain, which leads people to speculate that awakening the remaining supposedly dormant 90 percent allows otherwise ordinary

⁽¹⁾ ‘Abdel Moḥsin Sāliḥ, *al-Insān al-Ḥā’ir Bayna al-‘Ilm wa al-Khurāfah*, Issue 15 of *Silsilat ‘Ālam al-Ma‘rifah (The World of Knowledge Series)*, (Kuwayt: National Council for Culture, Arts & Letters, 1998), pp. 222-229 (paraphrased).

human beings to display extraordinary mental abilities, is one of the most common misconceptions among the public. The truth is that we use all of our brain all of the time: “the popular notion that large parts of the brain remain unused, and could subsequently be activated, rests in folklore and not science. Though specific mechanisms regarding brain function remain to be fully described—e.g. memory, consciousness—the physiology of brain mapping suggests that all areas of the brain have a function and that they are used nearly all the time.”⁽¹⁾

31. But is there such a thing as the subconscious mind and can it be re-programmed?

Energy healing philosophies state that people can tap into their subconscious mind—the realm of infinite healing and psychic powers within them—but scientifically, there is no such thing as the “unconscious” or “subconscious mind”. The unconscious mind is not recognized in brain anatomy and physiology because its central feature is that it is completely inaccessible. That is, it is essentially outside the realm of science—it is impossible to observe, measure and test it.⁽²⁾ Some psychological scientists have used the term “subconscious mind” metaphorically to describe the reservoir of all past events and memories as well as feelings, thoughts and urges that are outside of our conscious awareness and largely inaccessible. They did not use it in the sense of an anatomical organ or entity that can be tapped into or re-programmed.⁽³⁾

⁽¹⁾ Benjamin Radford, “The Ten-Percent Myth,” *Skeptical Inquirer: The Magazine for Science and Reason*, vol. 23, no. 2, March/April 1999,

www.skepticalinquirer.org/1999/03/the-ten-percent-myth/.

⁽²⁾ Thomas Baldwin and Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 792.

⁽³⁾ David E. Stannard, “The Problem of Logic”, Chapter 3 of *Shrinking History: On Freud and the Failure of Psychohistory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

The subconscious mind that the advocates of subconscious mind reprogramming talk about is a superstition just like the superstition of cosmic energy. In 1987, the U.S. Army Research Institute supported a research project by the National Research Council which evaluated the techniques for enhancing human performance in many areas including Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP). The research team investigated whether or not NLP, whose proponents claim can be used to rewire and reprogram the subconscious mind, is effective when tested with modern scientific techniques i.e., whether it can claim to be an evidence-based therapy. The National Research Council submitted three study reports to the Army where it presented the findings about the techniques examined, and conclusions about evaluation procedures:

- Enhancing Human Performance: Issues, Theories, and Techniques (1988).
- In the Mind's Eye: Enhancing Human Performance (1991).
- Learning, Remembering, Believing: Enhancing Human Performance (1994).

Interestingly, it was stated in the first report that “the committee finds no scientific evidence to support the claim that NLP is an effective strategy for exerting influence; there are no existing evaluations of NLP as a model of expert performance.”⁽¹⁾ Three years later, the second report confirmed the research findings presented in the first report and commended the US army for dismissing NLP as a method for improving performance. All references to NLP were omitted by Dr. Druckman in the third report which is very telling.⁽²⁾ Funnily enough, the promoters of the

⁽¹⁾ Daniel Druckman & John A. Swets, *Enhancing Human Performance: Issues, Theories, and Techniques*, (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1988).

⁽²⁾ Fowz bint ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Kurdī, *Ḥaqīqat al-Barmajah al-Lughawiyyah al-‘Aṣabiyyah: al-Uṣūl, al-Maḍāmīn, al-Mukhrajāt*, (2004).

power of the subconscious mind claim that we should “switch off” the conscious mind and reprogram the subconscious mind—by means of auto-suggestion and hypnosis—which will then take over and create one’s plans to achieve prosperity. Nothing could be more dangerous than the absence of consciousness. Let us suppose that the subconscious mind is real—although we know it is a myth as earlier detailed—and let us suppose that we only use 10% of our brains—although we know this too is a myth—and let us suppose that it is possible to tap into the subconscious mind—even though scientific research refuted this claim—but let us for the sake of argument accept all these claims. The question would be: Do these claims justify the manipulation of consciousness, the switching off of the conscious mind and the shutting down of the senses in order to supposedly communicate with the subconscious mind, activate it and unlock its power? The mind is one of the five necessities that the *Sharī’ah* came to preserve. It warned against the manipulation of it and provided a way to safeguard it from anything that might harm its ability and functions in order to use it in what it was created for. Conversely, the NLP folks call for changing it or switching it off—all for the sake of supposedly activating the subconscious mind.

32. What is the truth about hypnosis?

Advocates of energy healing therapies promote their practices claiming that hypnosis is used in medicine and is a powerful medical treatment for a range of conditions. Indeed, hypnosis is utilized to aid in the treatment of specific symptoms or health conditions, but “hypnosis” is another term abused by energy healing proponents. It is so typical of them to take a medical/scientific term and attribute to it their pagan rituals and practices, thereby the common people mistake charlatanism for

medicine! Medical hypnosis is a trancelike state that resembles sleep, but it is induced by a person whose suggestions are readily accepted by the subject. No clinical hypnotherapist can force the subject into a hypnotic state—this happens only in old Arab films! That is, a hypnotherapist cannot hypnotize someone into doing things against his will. In other words, hypnosis is a voluntary altering of one’s own consciousness—the subject is always in control. Hypnotherapy, the use of hypnosis in psychotherapy, is the induction of a deeply relaxed state. The psychotherapist makes the patient sit in a comfortable position in a quiet, dim room which helps him to relax and focus. He gets the patient to a place of full relaxation where he can openly recount his mental and emotional problems. The patient in a hypnotic state seems sleepy and zoned out, but in reality, he is in a state of hyper-awareness, increased attention, concentration and suggestibility. Again, the psychotherapist does not at all control the mind of the patient.⁽¹⁾ In an article entitled “Top 12 Myths about Hypnosis”, one of the most famous clinical hypnotherapists in the US, Ramdas Menon, lists hypnosis myths that are really common in popular culture. I will quote two here:⁽²⁾

MYTH #1 A hypnotist can control and force me to say or do things against my will. This is a very prevalent myth that is completely wrong. In hypnosis it is actually the client who is always in control, not the hypnotist. A person in the hypnotic state determines their own level of participation in the process. Hypnosis can never be used to make you do something that you do not want to do.

⁽¹⁾ William C. Coe et al., “Hypnosis as Role Enactment: Focus on a Role Specific Skill”, *The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, July 1972, 15 (1): pp. 41–45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00029157.1972.10402209>.

⁽²⁾ Ramdas Menon, “Top 12 Myths about Hypnosis”, *Ennar Hypnosis*, 08 May 2013, www.ennarhypnosis.com/myths.html.

MYTH #10 During hypnosis you are asleep or unconscious. FALSE. With eyes closed and body relaxed, a hypnotized person may appear to be asleep. When that person emerges from hypnosis it might look as if they have awakened from a nap. However this is not the case. During hypnosis you are not asleep or unconscious and you will be able to hear and to think at all times. Although your body is very relaxed, your mind is actually more alert than usual, in a state of heightened awareness.

All in all, hypnosis is a state of mind where the patient is very focused on and more receptive to suggestions being made to him. It allows the patient to remember events perfectly well including traumatic memories. But contrary to popular belief, it does not render the patient unconscious and under the hypnotherapist's spell. Nevertheless, the advocates of energy healing, as their custom is, misuse scientific/medical terms to gain acceptance among the people. Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) described the method of misusing terms to deceive people, saying: "These people resorted to broad dubious terms that are open to several possible meanings or interpretations in the languages of the nations, and they incorporated in them meanings that are not understood from them in the languages of the nations. They then pieced them together and they composed lengthy compilations on them, building some of them upon some others. And they magnified their view and made it awe-inspiring to those who do not understand it."⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad ibn Taymiyyah, *Warding off the Conflict of Reason and Transmission*, (Riyādh: Maktabat ar-Rushd, 2006), vol. 1, p. 247 as cited in Fowz bint 'Abd al-Laṭīf Kurdī, *alfowz*, www.alfowz.com/.

33. What is the Om Mantra?

The Om Mantra is the most well-known mantra in Hinduism. It is commonly chanted in energy healing practices and in yoga and meditation. In Hinduism, Om is one of the most important spiritual symbols.⁽¹⁾ The Om Mantra is also used in Buddhism and Jainism where it is chanted in temples. The syllable Om refers to the unity of *Atman* (self within) and *Brahman* (the Universal Self).⁽²⁾ It is often found at the beginning and the end of chapters in the Vedas and other Hindu texts. It is a sacred spiritual incantation made before and during the recitation of spiritual texts, during *puja* and private prayers, in ceremonies of rites of passage such as weddings, and during meditative and spiritual activities such as Pranava yoga.⁽³⁾ Doubtlessly, the Om Mantra is a pagan polytheistic incantation used by East Asian religions. This incantation has blasphemous connotations that are clear to every Muslim, such as the concept of union with the Absolute. *Mantra* is a Sanskrit word, like many New Age terms, and it means incantation. Strangely, however, the advocates of energy healing and yoga practitioners in our countries imported the Om Mantra among all the paganism and polytheism rubbish that they imported and introduced it to Muslims. In the past, ‘Amr ibn Luḥayy al-Khuzā‘ī was thrilled with the idols that the people of the Shām lands (Levant) were worshipping and thus introduced them in the lands of Arabs. He was the first to change the religion of Abraham and set up idols. The Prophet (PBUH) said about him: ‘I saw ‘Amr ibn Luḥayy

⁽¹⁾ James Lochtefeld, “Om”, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, vol. 2: N-Z, (New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2002), p. 482.

⁽²⁾ Annette Wilke and Oliver Moebus, *Sound and Communication: An Aesthetic Cultural History of Sanskrit Hinduism*, (Boston, MA: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 435–456.

⁽³⁾ Alexander Studholme, *The Origins of Om Manipadme Hum: A Study of the Karandavyuha Sutra*, (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2012), pp. 1–4.

dragging his Intestines in Fire.’⁽¹⁾ It seems that the Arab advocates of energy healing, like ‘Amr ibn Luḥayy, are thrilled with the pagan incantations, and are keen on shamelessly introducing them to the countries of monotheism! Some of them did not have the audacity to use the word “Om” and replaced it with “IM”. So instead of chanting “Om” they chant “IM”. This might sound funny but it is indeed a cause of concern. What do we Muslims have to do with these blasphemous incantations? Allāh says: {Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “Invoke those you claim ‘to be divine’ besides Him—they do not have the power to undo harm from you or transfer it ‘to someone else’.”} (Qur’ān 17:56) Ibn Taymiyyah (RA) said: “foreign incantations of protection include the names of men from among the *Jinn* who are supplicated, whose assistance is sought, and who are sworn on by those they glorify, so the devils obey them (those who seek the assistance of Jinn and devils and, in return, committing polytheistic) because of that in some matters. This is a kind of magic and polytheism.”⁽²⁾

Due to the polytheistic implications of the Om mantra, some Arab advocates of energy healing resorted to the use of the Names of Allāh instead of it, which they repeat a certain number of times during their practices—as a way to “Islamicize” Asian paganism. The Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas was asked about this matter, and its answer was: “after studying the *istiftā’* (request for a legal opinion), the answer of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas was as follows: Almighty Allāh says: {and to Allāh belong the best names, so invoke Him by them. And leave [the company of] those who practice deviation concerning His

⁽¹⁾ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmyyah, 2020), ḥadīth: 904.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, (al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Noble Qur’ān, 2004), vol. 1, p. 362.

names. They will be recompensed for what they have been doing.} (Qur'ān 7:180) And the Prophet (PBUH) said: “Allāh has ninety-nine Names, i.e., one hundred minus one, and whoever believes in their meanings and acts accordingly, will enter Paradise.” And among them is the greatest name of Allāh which when Allāh is asked with it He gives, and when he is supplicated by it He answers. Only Allāh, the Most Glorified and the Most High, knows the number of His names, Exalted and Glorified is He, and all of them are beautiful. They must be affirmed and the meanings of perfection, majesty and greatness of Allāh that they indicate must be affirmed. It is forbidden to commit *ilhād* (deviation) regarding them by negating them, or negating some of what is in them (of attributes) from Allāh though He affirmed them to Himself, or negating what they indicate of (Divine) Perfection, or negating what they contain of the great attributes of Allāh. From deviation in the names and attributes of Allāh is what the pretentious “Karīm Sayyid” and his student and son claimed in a leaflet that they distribute to people that the beautiful names of Allāh have a healing power for a huge number of diseases. And that by means of various accurate methods for measuring the energy inside the human body, it was discovered that each one of the Beautiful Names of Allāh has an energy that stimulates the immune system to operate at optimum efficiency in a particular organ in the human body. And that Dr. Ibrāhīm Karīm was able, by using the law of resonance, to discover that the mere mention of one of the names of Allāh leads to enhancement of the vital energy pathways in the human body. And he said: “It is known that the Pharaohs were the first to study and establish measurements of the vital energy pathways in the human body using the Pharaonic pendulum.” Then he mentioned a number of the Beautiful Names of Allāh in a table claiming that each one of them has a benefit for the body or is a cure for a type of body diseases. He illustrated

this by a drawing of the human body, placing on each one of its organs a name from the Names of Allāh. This action is invalid because it is deviation in the names of Allāh, and it is a misuse of them. What is lawful (acceptable) concerning the names of Allāh is supplication to Him by them, as the Almighty said: {so invoke Him by them (His Beautiful Names).} (Qur’ān 7:180) and affirming what they contain of the great attributes of Allāh because each name of them contains an attribute of Allāh, the Glorious & Exalted. It is not permissible to use them for anything other than invoking Allāh by them, except with evidence from the *Sharī‘ah*. And whoever claims that they benefit with such-and-such or cure such-and-such without evidence from the *Sharī‘ah*, is saying things about Allāh of which they have no knowledge. And Almighty Allāh said: {Say, “My Lord has only forbidden open and secret indecencies, sinfulness, unjust aggression, associating ‘others’ with Allāh ‘in worship’—a practice He has never authorized—and attributing to Allāh what you do not know.”} (Qur’ān 7:33) It is obligatory to destroy this leaflet, and the aforementioned and others must repent to Allāh from this deed, and not return to anything of it that is related to ‘*aqīdah* (creed) and legal rulings.” This was the *fatwā* (legal opinion) of the Standing Committee for Issuing Fatwas. The use of the Beautiful Names of Allāh in energy healing practices is from deviation in the names of Allāh. Whoever desires everlasting bliss let him adhere firmly to the threshold of servitude.⁽¹⁾ And let him not be deceived by any of the polytheistic pagan philosophies and practices.

⁽¹⁾ Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Madārij as-Sālikīn*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2010), vol. 1, p. 464.

34. What is transcendental meditation, which the proponents of the Law of attraction (LOA) and yoga in our countries advocate?

Transcendental Meditation (TM) is used in many practices of the advocates of energy healing, yoga and the LOA. It is a form of silent mantra meditation advocated by the Transcendental Meditation movement. TM technique consists of silently repeating a mantra (a word or phrase) while sitting comfortably, breathing slower and more deeply, with eyes closed until one allegedly transcends all thoughts and experiences “Being”—a state of inner peace and pure consciousness beyond the thinking process and physical perceptions. There is no doubt that concentration and quiet contemplation are a beautiful thing, but the practitioners of transcendental meditation use this meditation technique, which involves deep breathing, as a way to achieve *samadhi* or complete *union* with the *Transcendent Absolute*—the individual and the cosmic merge together into one. They believe that when they breathe, in addition to the oxygen, they also take in a lot of *prana*—the vital force or cosmic energy that makes up the entire cosmos. In their words, breath is the external manifestation of *prana*. Therefore, they hold their breath so that to keep the *prana* in their bodies—to absorb it. The goal of transcendental meditation is not to calm the mind as some think. Rather, its end goal is to achieve union of individual *prana* with cosmic *prana*. Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a Hindu religious leader who introduced the practice of transcendental meditation to the West, did not promote it as a sport or psychotherapy. Instead, he expressed his teachings in spiritual and religious terms.⁽¹⁾ The practice of transcendental meditation includes many seed mantras invoking Hindu deities. Although some advocates of energy healing in our countries promote this practice as being non-

⁽¹⁾ Lorne L. Dawson, *Cults and New Religious Movements*, (Hoboken, New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p. 54.

religious, the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit upheld the federal ruling that Transcendental Meditation was essentially “religious in nature” and therefore could not be taught in public schools.⁽¹⁾ Should we believe the US Court of Appeals, which agreed with the district court’s finding that the course called “the Science of Creative Intelligence—Transcendental Meditation (SCI/TM)” was religious in nature and therefore banned teaching it in public school, or should we believe the advocates of energy healing in our countries who sell expensive courses to get desperate people to part with their money? The goal of practicing Transcendental Meditation is clear: ensuring that the cosmic energy in our body is in harmony with universal cosmic energy. Does this have any bearing with Allāh’s religion? The mere belief that salvation lies within us, and can be achieved by reciting mantras and through transcendental meditation, without any outside guidance, is the essence of disbelief. These mantras and meditation practices are the respected alternative to altering consciousness with drugs in the West. They are spirituality without any legal restrictions or obligations! What is the matter with us, Muslims, importing these absurdities?

35. How does transcendental meditation disrupt social relationships?

The problem with transcendental meditation is that it makes you live in your own bubble, completely detached from your community. Scientific research has found that meditation makes people antisocial and leads to decreased prosocial behavior. Meditators become distant toward those around them and many of them have reported that they have trouble integrating back into society. Others become so comfortable in their solitude that they almost look down on socializing as some sort of trivial

⁽¹⁾ “Malnak v. Yogi”, *Leagle*, www.leagle.com/decision/1979789592f2d1971763.

act. Meditation also increases selfishness because it puts an emphasis on the individual and negates the collective. That is, people who practice meditation put their needs over those of others. Meditation creates a person who is submissive to his own desires—someone with a fragile personality lacking, strength of will and character, who does not enjoin good or forbid evil! It creates someone who does not care about anything or anyone. Just sit down. Sit still. Shut up. And maintain your focus on your navel or a candle! This is what Buddhism, Hinduism and other pagan religions teach. Transcendental meditation has nothing to do with the kind of meditation recommended by the prophets—contemplation of the blessings, favors and wisdom of Allāh—which creates leaders, scholars and thinkers—people who enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, who strive with their wealth and their lives in the way of Allāh, and who are aware of the problems facing their nation. Unfortunately, the advocates of meditation in our countries want meditators of the pagan type, and all their practices are drawn from the pagan type, even with the same blasphemous mantras. But they may try to cover their practices with some Islamic tinges in order to throw dust in the eyes. Many of them do not even bother to throw dust in the eyes. East Asian religions are keen on transcendental meditation because their followers believe that consciousness, not sense experience, is the source of knowledge. According to them, the practice of “pagan” meditation brings people into a higher state of consciousness. In their eyes, the way to achieve salvation is not through the prophets and the Divine Messages, but through the practice of silence and stillness (i.e., meditation), ritual practices and chanting blasphemous mantras.

36. What is quantum timeline healing?

Advocates of quantum timeline healing assert that health and wellbeing are governed by quantum phenomena. They purport that quantum timeline healing draws from quantum mechanics, psychology and neurophysiology. According to them, the human being has an infinite number of selves, one for every moment in Creation. They claim that it is possible to use quantum physics to edit and heal one's timeline, clear up their *karma*, and free up the energy from the past. In their words, in timeline healing, the soul is guided into a deep meditation and is taken back in time to heal the selves that have experienced trauma or negative programming. Once the healing is complete, the higher aspects of the client that went back in time return to present time and the soul now has a new timeline that includes the healing that was received by the past self. Proponents of quantum timeline healing misuse scientific terms such as the word "quantum" and distort, misappropriate and integrate scientific ideas into their nonsensical practices. Likewise, astrologers claim that they can produce an astrological personal timeline report *which charts the entire arc of one's life by month and year. This chart, they claim, helps them to recognize repeating patterns and key turning points in their life so they can plan for a better future.* In their terms, a timeline report tells one, based on their own personal birth chart, exactly what planetary influences are at play in their life, when, and how these influences will be relevant to them—it tells one about their future by lining up planetary events as they affect them from day to day, month to month, in chronological order. In layman's terms, this report is where one will find the answers about what is in their future. Astrologers are like all the fortune-tellers, augurs, magicians, prognosticators, palmists, etc who claim to predict the future. The astrological personal timeline is no

different from all the various methods and mediums claimed to be sources of information about the unseen—among which are palm-reading and cup-reading—but with a modern touch! Our Lord says: {Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “None in the heavens and the earth has knowledge of the unseen except Allāh.} (Qur’ān 27:65) Predictive astrology is viewed as fortune-telling in Islam—a demonic practice. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “‘*Iyāfah, at-Ṭīrah and at-Ṭarq* are all practices of *al-Jibt* (divination/come from the devil.)’”(1) ‘*Iyāfah* is the practice of making birds fly by threatening them and the interpretation of omens from their flight—if they flew to the right, it is taken as a good omen, and if they flew to the left, it is a bad omen. *At-Ṭīrah is taking evil omens. At-Ṭarq* is geomancy by drawing lines. Astrologers are mere soothsayers who use a pseudo-science—astrology—as a basis to predict future events with reference to the movements of stars.

37. What is gemstone therapy?

Gemstone therapy is an alternative form of healing whose practitioners believe that gemstones carry certain vibrations, which have the effect of changing a person’s aura when placed within it. They believe that the human aura consists of nine colours and the body’s energy balance gets disrupted by any deficiency of these colours leading to illness. Gemstones thus heal by restoring the balance to the original composition of the nine colours. **The basic principle of gemstone therapy is the** potent healing powers and energy assigned to each gemstone. Followers of Eastern philosophy and pagan beliefs believe that gemstones and crystals can redirect and re-channel energy flow with their

(1) Abū Dāwūd as-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan abī Dāwūd*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1998), ḥadīth: 3307.

unique energetic vibrations— helping to unblock areas of the energy field that have become “stuck”, allowing for positive healing energy to flow into the body, while negative and disease causing energy flows out. The type of gemstone that the patient needs is determined according to his ailment, horoscope, birth date and aura color. The patient can hang the stone, use it for a ring, infuse water with it and drink it, swallow its powder, or use it as a massage tool (apply it to the body, focusing on certain pressure points and *chakras*) in order to affect the energetic body so that the patient obtains not only health benefits, but also success and prosperity.⁽¹⁾ What is the difference between this nonsense and incantations and amulets? The prophet (PBUH) said: “Indeed incantations (*ruqā*), amulets (*tamā'im*) and love spells (*at-tiwalah*) are *shirk* (forms of polytheism).”⁽²⁾

38. What is aura?

Aura, according to esoteric philosophies, is an unseen spiritual energy field consisting of seven auric layers (also known as subtle bodies), *each* of a different *color*, that surrounds the human body. The etheric body is the first or lowest layer in the human aura said to be in immediate contact with the physical body. Its name comes from the word “ether”, denoting a state intermediate between energy and matter! Science fiction indeed! *The second layer* of the *aura* after the etheric *layer* is the emotional *body*, the third is the mental body, the fourth is the astral body, the fifth is the etheric template body, the sixth is the celestial body and the seventh is the ketheric template/causal body.

⁽¹⁾ Hayfā' bint Nāṣir ar-Rashīd, *at-Taṭbīqāt al-Mu'āṣirah li falsafat al-Istishfā' ash-Sharqiyyah*, (Jaddah: Markaz at-Ta'sīl, 2016).

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad al-'Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḡīr*, (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), ḥadīth: 1632.

One of the goals of energy healing is to attract positive cosmic energy in order to boost the aura which is believed to be vital to an individual's health and well being. Color therapists claim that all the colors of the spectrum are visible in the aura of a healthy human. They purport to use a variety of techniques to diagnose illness and identify imbalances within the aura—a lack of one or more colors within the body. They claim that every color contains an energy vibration and the body's energy flow can be corrected or enhanced by its exposure to an appropriate color.

Attempts to scientifically prove the existence of the alleged aura emanations and the seven subtle bodies have repeatedly met with failure. There is no evidence to support this nonsense.⁽¹⁾ The claim that the human being aura is part of a hidden anatomy, comprised of centers of vital force (*chakras*), reflecting a person's state of being and health is not supported by scientific evidence and is thus considered pseudoscience.⁽²⁾ In response to question No. 20, a detailed explanation of Kirlian photography, which the New Agers called aura photography, was given. They claimed that it captures auras, while it is merely a natural reaction of photographic film to the corona effect of high voltage electrical energy. The aforementioned question “why does empirical science have the right to act as the arbiter and judge that the Hindu and Buddhist religious perceptions are wrong?” can be raised here. And, as earlier stated, it is because these religions believe in the Unity of Being—the doctrine that the universe conceived of as a whole is God and that there is

⁽¹⁾ Rebecca Long et al., “Perception of Conventional Sensory Cues as an Alternative to the Postulated ‘Human Energy Field’ of Therapeutic Touch.”, *Scientific Review of Alternative Medicine*, 3: p. 53-59, (1999),

www.researchgate.net/publication/230683042_Perception_of_Conventional_Sensory_Cues_as_an_Alternative_to_the_Postulated%27Human_Energy_Field%27of_Therapeutic_Touch.

⁽²⁾ Terence Hines, *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2002), p. 362.

no God but the combined substance, forces and laws that are manifested in the existing universe. And the physical universe, the world we see around us, is the scope of science. *On the other hand, science* cannot investigate the *metaphysical* matters because they *are outside the realm of material* phenomena. That is why science does not talk about matters of the soul which the Divine Messages describe as matters of the unseen. That is, the soul is metaphysical—beyond the scope of matter and the laws of Nature and thus outside the scope of science. Aside from that, the question of the superstition of absorbing cosmic energy to boost the aura remains. What does this superstition have to do with the teachings of the prophets? What does this fantasy have to do with righteous deeds and belief in Allāh, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day—the only way of salvation? Instead of God, the New Agers look to humans themselves as a source of salvation. They believe that salvation is attained through the union of the individual self with the Cosmic Self—the union of the individual energy with cosmic energy. Now, which way should we choose: the way of the prophets or the way of pagan practices and primitive superstitions?

39. What about color therapy?

It is an alternative therapy purported to use the seven colours of the light spectrum to balance the *chakras* to heal physical and emotional problems within the human body. According to its advocates, color therapy is used to provide the seven auric bodies, which come with specific colors, with cosmic energy, for color in the form of energy permeates through the aura. Color therapists in energy therapy centers in our countries use a number of testing methods and techniques (Iuscher test, kinesiology, dowsing, colour diagnostic chart...etc) to diagnose their

patients—find what colours they are lacking. These so-called diagnosis methods are used to deceive people who are ignorant and gullible. Following the diagnosis, the therapist asks the patient to surround himself with the color that he is lacking in a number of different ways: coloured gemstones, candles or lamps, fabrics and foods, bath foams and soaps, crystals, glass prisms, wands, colored eye lenses, lasers...etc. The most ludicrous and charlatanic way to allegedly revitalize energy levels and achieve inner power enlightenment is colour breathing meditation—mentally picturing a colour that represents how one wants to feel (e.g. happy, calm, serene), whilst letting go of the colour that represents the stressors in their life. Color therapy is considered pseudoscience.⁽¹⁾ And it is regarded by health experts as quackery.⁽²⁾ According to the American Cancer Society, available scientific evidence does not support any claims that use of light or color therapy is effective in treating cancer or any other illnesses.⁽³⁾

40. What is *reiki* therapy?

Reiki is an energy healing technique in which a *reiki* master places his or her hands near (as close as possible without touching) the fully clothed patient's body in a series of positions around the neck, abdomen and feet with the intention to open blocked *chakras* and guide the flow of “life force energy” through his body to promote healing. *Reiki* practitioners claim that they can do in-person as well as remote healing—

⁽¹⁾ William F. Williams, *Encyclopedia of Pseudoscience: From Alien Abductions to Zone Therapy*, (New York: Facts on File Inc., 2000), p. 52.

⁽²⁾ Jack Raso, *Mystical Diets: Paranormal, Spiritual, and Occult Nutrition Practices*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1993), pp. 256-257.

⁽³⁾ Terri Ades, *American Cancer Society Complete Guide to Complementary & Alternative Cancer Therapies*, (Atlanta, Georgia: American Cancer Society, 2009), p. 210.

they do not even have to be in the same building as the client. They argue that it is absolutely possible to send *reiki* energy from a distance. They go so far as to say that they are able to send a very specific frequency of healing energy by using their imagination, a photo of the receiver, *reiki* symbols, the receiver's name. Even funnier, they assert that they can use a surrogate object, such as a doll or stuffed animal, to represent the person they are sending energy to. Basically, they set their intention that this surrogate object represents the receiver of *reiki*. Then they draw the *reiki* symbols over the object with their hands and place their hands on it to send it energy. They use the specific hand positions on the object as if they were conducting an in-person healing session. This shows that we are indeed living in a world of magicians and charlatans! There is no such thing as *reiki* energy and there is no science involved in *reiki*. Clinical research does not show *reiki* to be effective as a treatment for any medical condition.⁽¹⁾ It is used as an illustrative example of pseudoscience in scholarly texts and academic journal articles.⁽²⁾ Studies reporting its effectiveness have had methodological flaws.⁽³⁾ Jann Bellamy, a retired attorney in Florida who offers free services for organizations that educate consumers about science-based medicine, believes that *reiki* is an unethical, fraudulent and deceptive practice.⁽⁴⁾ In 2011, William T. Jarvis of The National Council Against Health Fraud stated that there “is no

⁽¹⁾ Jill Russell and Amy Rovere, “Reiki”, *American Cancer Society Complete Guide to Complementary and Alternative Cancer Therapies*, (Atlanta, Georgia: American Cancer Society, 2009), pp. 243–45.

⁽²⁾ David Semple and Roger Smyth, “Ch. 1: Psychomythology”, *Oxford Handbook of Psychiatry*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 20.

⁽³⁾ M. S. Lee et al., “Effects of Reiki in Clinical Practice: A Systematic Review of Randomized Clinical Trials”, *International Journal of Clinical Practice (Systematic Review)*, 62 (6): 947–54, (2008).

⁽⁴⁾ Jann Bellamy, “Reiki: Fraudulent Misrepresentation”, *Science-Based Medicine*, 12 June 2014, www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/reiki-fraudulent-misrepresentation/.

evidence that clinical *reiki*'s effects are due to anything other than suggestion or the placebo effect.’’(1)

In 1996, then 9-year-old Emily Rosa managed to get practitioners of “therapeutic touch”, *reiki*'s identical twin, to submit to scientific testing. Using nothing but cardboard and a towel, Emily managed to pretty thoroughly debunk this popular therapy. Therapeutic touch, like *reiki*, does not involve touching. Healers move their hands above a patient, claiming that they can heal them through manipulating the “energy field” that they say surrounds all humans. The basis of Emily’s simple experiment was their claim that they can feel the energy field above the human skin. Her test ended up being published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* when she was just 11, making her the youngest person to be published in a peer-reviewed medical journal.(2) Emily’s experiment setup was quite simple. She would get practitioners to sit behind a cardboard screen, with a towel over their head and their arms placed through two holes. She would then flip a coin and she would place her hand a few centimeters above their left or right hand depending on whether the outcome was head or tails. Identifying which of their hands Emily’s was hovering above was all the practitioners had to do, which should be easy since they claim to have the ability to sense “human force fields” and detect illnesses. Although therapeutic touch proponents, as with other alternative practices, are typically reluctant to submit to scientific testing, when Emily approached them it was different, since she was nine and the results would be used for a fourth-grade science fair. Hence, 21

(1) William T. Jarvis, “Reiki”, *National Council Against Health Fraud*, 2011.

(2) Gina Kolata, “A Child’s Paper Poses a Medical Challenge.” *New York Times*, 1 Apr. 1998, www.nytimes.com/1998/04/01/us/a-child-s-paper-poses-a-medical-challenge.html.

agreed to be a part of her experiments. She gave 14 practitioners ten chances to prove their abilities, and tested 7 practitioners 20 times each. Emily told the *Washington Post*, “If they go to a clinic and they heal people, then you would expect them to feel the energy field all the time.” However, it was only 44 percent of the time that they managed to identify which hand Emily had placed hers above. Emily told the *Los Angeles Times*, “They were correct about half the time—about what you’d expect from guessing. Of course, they came up with excuses. One said the room was too cold. Another complained that the air conditioning blew the force field away.” At the time, therapeutic touch practitioners claimed that Emily’s experiment did not debunk their therapy because patients had benefited from it. But, wouldn’t the effectiveness of their therapy have been proved with further scientific testing if there was a true benefit to it? This little girl has debunked the most common myths, including the aura enclosing the human body, cosmic energy and all the so-called holistic healing modalities (*reiki*, touch therapy, light therapy, acupuncture...etc)!

41. What are the 7 chakras?

Believers in *chakras* claim that *chakras* are the *energy centers* of the *body*. According to them, energy can run through the body freely when all of its *chakras* are open. There are believed to be seven main *chakras* that *run* along the spine, starting from the tailbone and working their way up to the crown of the head. The bottom 3 *chakras* are associated with masculine energy, the top 3 *chakras* with feminine energy and the middle *chakra* with both. Each *chakra* is associated with a different color and it is alleged that there are *chakra* gemstones that

correspond to the body *chakras* which help unblock or balance them. Additionally, every *chakra* has a *chakra sound* associated with it—a seed *mantra*—that “activates its vitality and dormant potential”. It is claimed that each *chakra* is connected to one of the seven layers of our auric field, and that the seven *chakras* are connected through channels—subtle energy pathways—called meridians through which life-force flows. The meridians are divided into *Yin* and *Yang* groups. Acupuncture and massage are said to activate energy meridians to harmonize *Yin* and *Yang* and restore energy balance. *Chakras* are prominent in the occult physiological practices of certain forms of Hinduism and Tantric Buddhism.⁽¹⁾ However, the *chakra* system is a woo-woo pseudoscience! As mentioned earlier, even Emily Rosa’s experiment has debunked all the superstitious pagan concepts and practices related to cosmic energy, which are the result of sticking the human mind into what lies beyond the powers of human perception.

42. What is the meaning of *Yin* and *Yang*?

Yin and *Yang* is a philosophical concept that describes interconnected opposite forces in the Chinese religious traditions—Taoism and Confucianism. In Chinese cosmology, the universe creates itself out of a primary chaos of material energy, organized into the cycles of *Yin* and *Yang* and formed into objects and lives.⁽²⁾ That is, all things and all phenomena of the universe *came* into existence through the *interaction* of *Yin* and *Yang*. *Yin* is considered weak, negative, female and destructive, while *Yang* is considered strong, masculine, male and

⁽¹⁾ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, “chakra”, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 10 Oct. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/chakra.

⁽²⁾ Wikipedia Contributors, “Yin and Yang”, *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 21 Aug. 2022, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yin_and_yang.

creative. The idea of seeking harmony between *Yin* and *Yang* is common in many energy healing practices. It is claimed that *Yin* and *Yang* produced the Five Elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water), which in turn gave birth to all of manifest existence. Each element is allegedly controlled by a planet (Mercury = earth, Venus = water, Mars = fire...etc). The belief that the stars create events is major polytheism, for it is regarding a created and subjugated thing as a creator that subjugates. Belief in the planets and belief in Allāh can never be combined in the heart of a believing servant. The Prophet (PBUH) said in the ḥadīth qudsī that Allāh said: “(Some of) My slaves got up believing in Me, and (some of them) disbelieving in Me. Whoever said: “We have been given rain through the favour and mercy of Allāh” is a believer in Me and is a disbeliever in the star. And whoever said: “we have been given rain because of such and- such star” is a believer in the star and is a disbeliever in Me.”⁽¹⁾ According to Taoism, the universe created itself from chaotic energy which it transmuted into order. That is, there is no omnipotent being (God) beyond the cosmos that created and controls it. This is indeed the essence of atheism. Taoism and Confucianism believe in the self-creation of matter and are thus atheistic religions. The Vatican warned Catholics against the New Age movement which it deemed to be incompatible with and hostile to the core beliefs of Christianity.⁽²⁾ Notwithstanding, the New Agers in our countries are still trying to Islamicize these pagan practices!

⁽¹⁾ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmyyah, 2020), ḥadīth: 71.

⁽²⁾ “A Christian Reflection on the New Age”, Vatican,

www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/documents/rc_pc_interelg_doc_20030203_new-age_en.html.

43. What is reincarnation?

Reincarnation is a central tenet of the Indian religions such as Buddhism, most Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism and most Paganism.⁽¹⁾ It is the philosophical or religious concept that the non-physical essence of a living being begins a new life in a different physical form or body after biological death.⁽²⁾ These religions believe that reincarnation is an endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth, and they consider the release from the cycle of reincarnations as the ultimate spiritual goal. This liberation is called *moksha* in Hinduism and *nirvana* in Buddhism. But who said that the repeated births are suffering? If you ask people whether they wish to be reborn after death to experience life again, many of them will not hesitate to answer in the affirmative. All the more so, if they were given the choice between *moksha*, about which they know nothing, and repeated births, they would definitely opt for the latter. Moreover, the negative *worldview*—the notion that the human *life* is one of *suffering*—is *false*. Human existence consists of lots of good and countless blessings. *Moksha* and *nirvana* are an illusory liberation or salvation from a suffering that does not actually exist! The philosophy of reincarnation is ridiculous as it contradicts all rational and scientific axioms. Many objections have been made against it. I will address the four strongest and most common ones:

⁽¹⁾ Gavin D. Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁽²⁾ Mark Juergensmeyer & Wade Clark Roof, *Encyclopedia of global religion*, (London: SAGE, 2011), pp. 271–272.

The first objection (Tertullian’s objection): Simply put, why are not babies born with the mental abilities of adults if there is reincarnation?⁽¹⁾

The second objection: The philosophy of incarnation is based on the eternal cycle of births, deaths and rebirths.⁽²⁾ It is thus inconsistent with modern science because it claims an infinite series of prior incarnations, whereas science asserts that there was a time when humans did not exist. Buddhists and Hindus did not know that science will one day establish that human life has a beginning, and that the universe itself had a beginning and has not existed forever! The conclusion that human life begins at sperm-egg fusion and that the universe began with the Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago is uncontested and objective. These scientific facts stand in direct conflict with the foundation of Buddhism and Hinduism. Saṃsāra (i.e., the endless cycle of birth, rebirth and redeath) is the biggest myth in the history of mankind.

The third objection: Reincarnation philosophy holds that when a person dies, he returns to earth in another body to work out his or her *karma*. If this claim is true, then there should be the same number of people now as before. But population obviously grows. Therefore, reincarnation is not true. It has been conclusively proven that there was a time in which Earth did not exist, and that during the history of Earth, there have been periods when there were no living creatures. According to scientists, for many thousands of years, there were fewer people roaming the Earth than would live in a mid-sized city today. Researchers who studied the increasing number of people living on our planet over the last 12,000 years concluded that the change is mind-boggling: the world population

⁽¹⁾ Robert Cogan, *Critical Thinking: Step by Step*, (New York: University Press of America, 1998), pp. 202–203.

⁽²⁾“Reincarnation, Saṃsāra and Karma”, *Holistic-Online*,
www.1stholistic.com/prayer/hindu/hol_hindu-samsara-and-karma.htm.

today is 1,860 times the size of what it was 12,000 ago.⁽¹⁾ So, the number of humans on Earth is not a fixed figure. Hence, how can there be a beginningless endless eternal cycle of death and rebirth? If reincarnation is true, where do the new souls come from, since the population is growing? It seems that the founder of the philosophy of reincarnation was a monk who was born, and who lived all his life, in a cave—knowing nothing about the world outside of it! *One can only laugh at reincarnation because its claims are just ridiculous and go against everything we know about science. No sane person would believe in this nonsense!*

The fourth objection: If reincarnation is true and we have lived previous lives, why don't we remember those lives? Why is it that only reincarnation proponents remember their past lives? The first major reincarnation claim in the West in modern times was made by U.S. housewife Virginia Tighe (who was, to protect her identity, given the pseudonym Ruth Simmons by Bernstein in his book *The Search for Bridey Murphy*) who said that she was the reincarnated spirit of a 19th-century Irish housewife named Bridey Murphy who had been dead for a hundred years. Almost every biographical detail related by Tighe was thoroughly checked by reporters who were sent to Ireland to track down the background of the elusive woman, but no one could prove that anyone named Bridey Murphy had existed. Thus, some researchers came to the conclusion that the best way to discover the truth was to check back to Tighe's own childhood. Some pretty damning biographical details were unearthed by investigators. As a young child in Chicago, Tighe had lived across the street from a woman named Bridie Corkell whose maiden name

⁽¹⁾ Nick Routley, "This is How Many Humans Have Ever Existed, According to Researchers", *World Economic Forum*, 4 Apr. 2022, [www.https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/04/quantifying-human-existence/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/04/quantifying-human-existence/).

was Murphy. She also had a Scotch-Irish aunt, which explains why she knew so much about Ireland. Researchers who investigated the case noted that many of the elements Tighe described in Bridey’s life corresponded to ones in her own childhood.⁽¹⁾ They thus concluded it to be the result of cryptomnesia—a memory glitch in which a person weaves together forgotten strands of old memories and mistakes them for a new experience.⁽²⁾ *And they considered any paranormal interpretation of the case to be thoroughly disproven due to correlations with Tighe’s past life and discrepancies with the Ireland of the Bridey Murphy story’s time. All in all, the entire concept of reincarnation is a superstition and wishful thinking which contradicts the most basic axioms of science and common sense. There is absolutely zero scientific evidence to support it—not even circumstantial evidence. Paul Edwards, professor of moral philosophy at New York University, who was the editor-in-chief of MacMillan’s Encyclopedia of Philosophy from 1967, says: “Reincarnation is a fantasy that runs counter to modern science.”*⁽³⁾

44. What is telepathy?

Telepathy is allegedly the ability to communicate directly mind to mind—without using any known human sensory channels or physical interaction. Some may refer to the story of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (RA) and Sāriyah (RA) as an instance of telepathy, which is a false claim that people should be warned about. This was an inspiration by Allāh and a

⁽¹⁾ Melvin A. Gravitz, “The search for Bridey Murphy: Implications for Modern Hypnosis”, *The American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, vol. 45, 1 (2002): 3-10. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00029157.2002.10403492>.

⁽²⁾ Laura Smith, “When this Irish Housewife was ‘Reincarnated’ in Denver in 1956, America Went Crazy for her Story”, *Timeline*, 25 Sep. 2017, www.timeline.com/bridey-murphy-reincarnated-tighe-f97c302a88b6.

⁽³⁾ Paul Edwards, *Reincarnation: A Critical Examination*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books 2001).

special *karāmah* (a miracle given by Allāh to His friends i.e., His true servants) for ‘Umar (RA).⁽¹⁾ A variety of tests has been performed to demonstrate telepathy, but there is no scientific evidence that the power exists. Hence, it is not explained as a paranormal power, but as the result of fraud, self-delusion and/or self-deception.⁽²⁾ Physicists assert that the claims in parapsychology regarding telepathy across spatial or temporal distances, apparently without a mediating physical process are at odds with the scientific consensus.⁽³⁾

A panel commissioned by the United States National Research Council to study paranormal claims stated: “despite a 130-year record of scientific research on such matters, our committee could find no scientific justification for the existence of phenomena such as extrasensory perception, mental telepathy or ‘mind over matter’ exercises...Evaluation

⁽¹⁾ What occurred was that ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (RA) sent out a detachment and appointed a commander named Sāriyah. While ‘Umar was delivering a *khutbah* from the pulpit, he began to shout, “O, Sāriyah! Move to the mountain! O, Sāriyah! Move to the mountain!” When the messenger of the army came, he said, “O, Amīr al-Mu’minīn (Commander of the Believers)! When we met our enemy, we were defeated, but then we heard a voice calling, ‘O, Sāriyah! Move to the mountain!’ We moved to the mountain and turned our backs to it, and then we defeated them.”

As explained earlier, empirical science has the right to act as the arbiter and judge that the Hindu and Buddhist religious perceptions are wrong because these religions believe in the Unity of Being—the doctrine that the universe conceived of as a whole is God and that there is no God but the combined substance, forces and laws that are manifested in the existing universe. And the physical universe, the world we see around us, is the scope of science. *On the other hand, science* cannot investigate the *metaphysical* matters because they *are outside the realm of material* phenomena. That is why science does not talk about matters of the soul which the Divine Messages describe as matters of the unseen. That is, the soul and *karāmat* (the miracles given by Allāh to His friends) are metaphysical—beyond the scope of matter and the laws of Nature and thus outside the scope of science.

⁽²⁾ Felix Planer, *Superstition*, (London: Cassell, 1980), p. 218:

“Many experiments have attempted to bring scientific methods to bear on the investigation of the subject. Their results based on literally millions of tests, have made it abundantly clear that there exists no such phenomenon as telepathy, and that the seemingly successful scores have relied either on illusion, or on deception.”

⁽³⁾ Willem B. Drees, *Religion, Science and Naturalism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

of a large body of the best available evidence simply does not support the contention that these phenomena exist.”⁽¹⁾ The scientific community thus considers parapsychology pseudoscience.⁽²⁾

45. What about neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)?

According to Master NLP Practitioner, Elena Mosaner, NLP is an approach that can be used to program the mind for better habits, to help shift perceptions, change behaviors, heal wounds or traumas, meet goals easily...etc.⁽³⁾ It operates through the conscious use of language to bring about changes in someone’s thoughts and behavior. The evidence in favor of NLP is limited to anecdotes and personal testimonies. As NLP became more popular, research was conducted on it but there is no empirical research supporting its core aspects, namely the *NLP* model of eye-accessing cues—which postulates that a person’s preferred sensory mode of thinking can be revealed by observing eye movement cues and sensory predicates in language use and that to access certain types of information one’s eyes will move in certain directions—and the representational systems—a collection of models and methods regarding how the human mind processes and stores information and the claim that swifter and more effective results could be achieved by matching one’s preferred system: “there is no scientific basis for its methods about representational systems and eye movements.”⁽⁴⁾ The consensus scientific opinion is that

⁽¹⁾ Thomas Gilovich, *How We Know What Isn’t So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life*, (New York: Free Press, 1993), p. 160.

⁽²⁾ Mario Bunge, “Why Parapsychology Cannot Become a Science”, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 10 (1987), pp. 576–577.

⁽³⁾ Morgan Mandriota, “All about the Basics of Neuro-linguistic Programming (NLP)”, *PsychCentral*, 7 October 2021, www.psychcentral.com/health/neurolinguistic-programming-nlp.

⁽⁴⁾ Bruce A. Thyer and Monica G. Pignotti, *Science and Pseudoscience in Social Work Practice*, (New York: Springer Publishing Company, 2015), pp. 56–57, 165–167.

NLP is pseudoscience.⁽¹⁾ Dr. Daniel Druckman led a research committee working for the US National Research Council. This committee found little if any evidence to indicate that it is effective as a strategy for social influence, and no scientific support for NLP's assumptions that by tracking another's eye movements and language, an NLP trainer can shape the person's thoughts, feelings, and opinions.⁽²⁾ Interestingly, Dr. Druckman omitted all references to NLP in the latest revision of his text on enhancing human performance, which, in Von Bergen's words, is the most telling commentary on NLP. According to Barry Beyerstein, NLP is based on outmoded scientific theories and its explanation of the relationship between cognitive style and brain function was no more than crude analogy.⁽³⁾ Tomasz Witkowski took all of the academic work on NLP, including that which purports to support its theory, and put it to the test. He published a paper entitled "Thirty-Five Years of Research on Neuro-Linguistic Programming. NLP Research Data Base. State of the Art or Pseudoscientific Decoration?" What is so powerful about this paper is the fact that Witkowski used NLP's own database to expose its "supporting evidence", and found it wanting. After 35 years of research devoted to the concept, Witkowski writes: "my analysis leads undeniably to the statement that NLP represents pseudoscientific rubbish, which should be mothballed forever."⁽⁴⁾

⁽¹⁾ Christopher F. Sharpley, "Research Findings on Neuro-linguistic Programming: Nonsupportive Data or an Untestable Theory?", *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 34 (1): pp. 103–107, 1 Jan. 1987.

⁽²⁾ Daniel Druckman, "Be All That You Can Be: Enhancing Human Performance", *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, vol. 34, Issue number 11, Nov. 2004, pp. 2234-2260 (27). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2004.tb01975.x>.

⁽³⁾ Barry L. Beyerstein, *Distinguishing Science from Pseudoscience*, prepared for The Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development, Dept. Psychology, Simon Fraser University, 1995.

⁽⁴⁾ Tomasz Witkowski, "Thirty-Five Years of Research on Neuro-Linguistic Programming. NLP Research Data Base. State of the Art or Pseudoscientific

NLP courses are generally attended by people with intensely disturbed personalities suffering social isolation and depression. Such people are deceived by the NLP gurus claiming that NLP can be used for individual psychotherapy for problems as diverse as phobias and schizophrenia. They fall for NLP practitioners advertising online, making grand claims such as, “the comprehensive training that covers everything you need to know to succeed in any area of life”. These practitioners state that NLP can help just about anybody become just about anything. They even go so far as to say that if someone can do something, anyone can learn it. They want people to think that NLP is the only thing that separates the average person from Einstein or the World Champion Log Lifter! However, objective and fair investigations for over 35 years have shown that NLP is bunk. The fact that anecdotes and testimonials are the main evidence for the claim that it works reveals only how well the NLP trainers teach their clients to persuade others to enroll in more training sessions.⁽¹⁾ NLP has thus been categorized by sociologists and anthropologists—amongst others—as a quasi-religion belonging to the New Age and/or Human Potential Movements.⁽²⁾ Medical anthropologist Jean M. Langford categorizes it as a form of folk magic—a practice with symbolic as opposed to physical efficacy—that is able to effect change through nonspecific effects (*e.g.*, placebo). Langford stated that “NLP is akin to a syncretic folk religion that attempts to wed the magic of folk practice to

Decoration?”, Polish Psychological Bulletin, 41 (2), 1 Jan. 2010. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/v10059-010-0008-0>.

⁽¹⁾ Robert Todd Carroll, “Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)”, *The Skeptic’s Dictionary*, 29 Oct. 2015, www.skeptidic.com/neurolin.html.

⁽²⁾ Peter B. Clarke, *Encyclopedia of New Religious Movements*, (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 440–41.

the science of professional medicine.”⁽¹⁾ Bandler and Grinder, the founders of NLP, were and continue to be influenced by the shamanism described in the books of Carlos Castaneda from whom they have borrowed several ideas and techniques and incorporated them into NLP.⁽²⁾ NLP has been characterized as a type of “psycho shamanism” by Tye.⁽³⁾ Unfortunately, despite being discredited by science, NLP is still popular and the youth in particular continue to cling to it. Oddly enough, its proponents describe themselves as NLP Master Practitioner or NLP Master Trainer and even International Coach although there is no central regulating authority for NLP instruction and certification.⁽⁴⁾ In fact, the names NLP and Neuro-linguistic Programming are not owned by any person or organization and they are not trademarked intellectual property.⁽⁵⁾ Devilly described the multitude of training and certifying associations as “granfalloon, i.e., proud and meaningless associations of human beings.”⁽⁶⁾ As for the claim that NLP can by-pass the conscious mind to work directly with the unconscious mind and reprogram it, I have explained the absurdity and falsehood of it in detail in the answer to question 31.

⁽¹⁾ Jean M. Langford, “Medical Mimesis: Healing Signs of a Cosmopolitan ‘Quack,’” *American Ethnologist*, 26 (1): 24–46, 07 Jan. 2008. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1999.26.1.24>.

⁽²⁾ Terrence Lee McClendon, *The Wild Days NLP 1972–1981*, (Scotts Valley, California: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 1989), p. 41.

⁽³⁾ Marcus Jacques Choi Tye, “Neuro-linguistic programming: Magic or myth?”, *Journal of Accelerative Learning & Teaching*, 19 (3–4): pp. 309–42, (1994).

⁽⁴⁾ Trademark Status & Document Retrieval (TSDR), “NLP the Society of Neuro-Linguistic Programming not ltd. Division of Training and Research.” United States Patent and Trademark Office, 28 Aug. 2022, www.tsd.uspto.gov/#caseNumber=73253122&caseType=SERIAL_NO&searchType=statusSearch.

⁽⁵⁾ Patrick E. Merlevede, “NLP Archives—Frequently Asked Questions about NLP”, *Merl’s World on NLP*, 27 Jul. 2001, www.users.telenet.be/merlevede/nlpfaq35.htm.

⁽⁶⁾ Grant J. Devilly, “Power Therapies and Possible Threats to the Science of Psychology and Psychiatry”, *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 1 June 2005. 39 (6): pp. 437–45. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/j.1440-1614.2005.01601>.

46. Have the New Age practices – energy healing modalities, astral projection, the law of attraction ... etc- benefited the human race?

What strikes anyone who thinks the New Age practices through is that despite their proponents' grand claims regarding their power—which supposedly can completely change the life of individuals and the whole world as well, as they allow people to utilize all their mental energy and the power within them to attract everything they want, to manifest their destiny and control what is happening in the Universe, to get healing...etc—we seek refuge with Allāh from disbelief, not one of these New Age folks has benefited humanity with anything valuable. It is no exaggeration to say that the New Age gurus themselves do not act on their teachings. Rather, they make millions from selling online courses, seminar tickets and energy healing services, and merchandising various products including pagan amulets and talismans. That is, it is through business that they make money. The energy healing modalities are mere “*money-making scam*”. Likewise, the law of attraction is a product and people are the market. If New Age gurus (i.e., self-help gurus, life-coaches, spiritual healers...etc) could manifest money out of thin air by using the power within them they would not go through so much trouble to sell people their courses and products. In truth, they target a gullible, ignorant and distressed demographic to whom they sell “hope”, “the power of the mind”, “abundance”, “the illusion of control”...etc. In a word, they do not use their teachings, be it the LOA, astral projection, or any other New Age rubbish, as a tool. Instead, they sell them as a product—a one-size-fit-for-all solution. They beautify falsehood, promote pagan practices and sell such obvious woo-woo to swindle people out of their senses and money. Further, they lure their likes to become certified trainers and healers and start their own training and healing businesses.

The Internet is flooded with their advertisements along the lines of “attend a two-day course and become an international coach for just 30,000 Saudi riyals!”, “Become a certified reiki master, a mentor of ascension meditation or a yoga instructor in just 2 weeks!” Is there any fairer and more accurate description to these practices than “deception and selling illusion”? Why are the regulatory institutions in our countries allowing these illegal and immoral practices? Selling expensive courses packed with thousands of empty promises of health, wealth and happiness is the only thing that the New Age gurus succeeded in doing par excellence. Not a single one of them has made a valuable scientific contribution, or helped create real economic growth, or came up with sound philosophical thoughts, or produced new knowledge that they gained, for example, from astral projection, which they allege can help people find answers to their problems! Even those who claim to use the New Age practices to speed memorization are scammers as not a single jurist or scholar has ever emerged thanks to their coaching. Unfortunately, we are before some of the most ridiculous practices and the biggest scams in history— the fake guru industry! Fake gurus have been on the rise all over the world. They are selling the dream of becoming rich and happy to millions of people through their courses which are nothing more than a means to siphon money out of the pockets of the gullible to enrich themselves! Unfortunately and strangely, people are returning to ancient paganism. They are being fooled by the New Age practices simply because their proponents hide their true pagan nature behind a scientific, religious or pragmatic appearance! Indeed, Allāh has spoken the truth when He said about mankind: {they are truly wrongful ‘to themselves’ and ignorant ‘of the consequences’}.} (Qur’ān 33:72)

47. What if these practices benefited some people (they work for some)?

Suppose someone said that these practices work for him and help him relax, would this be sufficient to make them permissible? This claim is from the biggest falsehood, as something can be one of the major prohibitions although there may be some benefits in it. For example, the Qur'ān acknowledges that wine has some benefits. Nonetheless, wine-consumption and wine-trade are one of the major sins in Islam. As long as these superstitious practices have roots in blasphemous pagan traditions, embracing and practicing them is the worst crime. Just because these practices work for some does not mean that engaging in them is not polytheism. Magic, for instance, does bring about some positive outcomes to people and some even recover from diseases thanks to it. Notwithstanding, it is the greatest form of disbelief! No real science is available to support the New Age superstitious practices. They cure nothing! They are not the immediate solution for all of life's challenges! The anecdotal evidence that supports them is no more than the result of the placebo effect combined with confirmation bias. The problem is that while the New Age practices help some people, they do not help for the many more people, who thus become more depressed and psychologically vulnerable. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Allāh did not make your cure in what He made unlawful to you.”⁽¹⁾ Ṭāriq ibn Suwayd asked the Prophet (PBUH) about wine which he made only to be used as a medicine. He (PBUH) replied, “it is not a medicine. It is a disease.”⁽²⁾ Just because something brings benefit is not evidence of the permissibility of using it as a means of healing or achieving any desired

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad al-'Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḡīr*, (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), ḥadīth: 1767.

⁽²⁾ Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmyyah, 2020), ḥadīth: 1984.

outcome. If someone thinks that something forbidden can bring benefit then that is the devil causing delusions in their mind, as Ibn Taymiyyah said: “This is how the devils appear for every people with what they do not renounce.”⁽¹⁾ A rare benefit may appear in something unlawful in order to cover what it comprises of disbelief, magic and major sins so that the hearts of the weak in faith will incline towards it. Some people asked the Prophet (PBUH) regarding the soothsayers. He (PBUH) said, “they are nothing (i.e., liars).” They said, “O Allāh’s Messenger (PBUH)! Sometimes they tell something which comes out to be true.” The Prophet (PBUH) said, “That word which happens to be true is what a Jinn snatches away by stealth (from the Heaven) and pours it in the ears of his friend (the foreteller) with a sound like the cackling of a hen. The soothsayers then mix with that word one hundred lies.”⁽²⁾ Rarely does anyone benefit from pagan practices, and this benefit does not occur except through some kind of devil worship.

48. What about human resources development courses?

Unfortunately, these courses have been wronged at the hands of the New Agers. Using scientific attributes and misappropriation of evidence-based ideas is so characteristic of pseudoscience. Thus, the New Agers used a name close to “human resources development” for their courses in order to promote them to institutions and scholars. Human resources development courses—such as planning, goal setting and time management courses, or courses related to social aspects, such as the art of parenting and family relationships courses, or skill development courses such the art and skills of dialogue, communication and public

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad Ibn Taymiyyah, *an-Nubuwwāt*, (Riyādh: ‘Adhwā’ as-Salaf, 2000).

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Cairo: Dār as-Salām, 1999), ḥadīth: 7561.

speaking skills, language skills, and computer skills...etc, and courses related to psychological aspects, such as motivation courses and stress management in the workplace courses and such like beneficial courses—are effective evidence-based courses that have nothing to do with the aforementioned New Age pagan practices.⁽¹⁾ But the New Agers offer what they call personal development or self-improvement courses—notice the similarity between human resources development courses and personal development/self-improvement courses. This similarity in the terms used to describe the courses confused many people, and individuals and groups interested in human resources development courses have fallen prey to all the so-called personal development/self-improvement scams. The biggest problem is that the New Age practices have begun to seep into human resources development courses, such as the art of public speaking and influencing courses, to whose scientific material is added the nonsense of the New Age philosophies. Therefore, people should be careful and aware of the content of human resources development courses to make sure that no pagan philosophies are mixed with their useful exercises!

49. What are the sources of disbelief in East Asian paganism?

a. The origin of the universe: In Chinese cosmology, the universe created itself out of a primary chaos of material energy, organized into the cycles of *Yin* and *Yang*. *Yin* and *Yang* produced what are known as the “Five Elements” (wood, fire, earth, metal and water), which in turn gave birth to all of manifest existence. This is major disbelief and a creed that no prophet or messenger has conveyed or approved.

⁽¹⁾ Fowz bint ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Kurdī, *alfowz*, www.alfowz.com/.

b. Denial of the Creator: East Asian religions do not believe in a God who is distinct from His creation—a God beyond the cosmos who created, sustains and controls it. That is, they do not believe that when Allāh willed the creation of the cosmos, all entities that were to be created came into existence.

c. Belief that the universe is eternal: This is a direct denial of the texts of the *Sharī‘ah*, which states that “Allāh existed eternally and nothing else existed.” That is, only Allāh existed without a beginning before creating any of the creation. Interestingly, the claim that the universe is eternal has been scientifically disproved about 80 years ago. It has been conclusively established that the universe had a beginning i.e., time, space and matter are not eternal, but created.

d. Belief in the Unity of Being: It is the belief that everything that exists is God Himself. In other words, the Creator is one with all of His creation and is incarnate in it.

e. Disbelief in the prophethood of Muḥammad (PBUH) and in all the prophets and their Books as well as the angels, the Last Day and predestination: This is outright disbelief which invalidates faith and renders it useless on the Day of Judgment.

50. What should someone who has, out of ignorance, engaged in some of the New Age pagan practices do?

To be fair, most of those who engage in the New Age pagan practices in the Arab countries are from the common people (as opposed to the people of knowledge i.e., the elite). They have been deceived into believing that these practices have valid scientific foundations, namely that they are based on physics. These common people thus thought that utilizing these practices is simply a matter of having recourse to

legitimate expedients that Allāh has made means of achieving outcomes which is no negation of reliance on Him. Unfortunately, many of them went so far as to regularly practice meditation. They have also become attached to the so-called energy gemstones and bracelets—believing they can bring benefit and ward off calamities. They have even immersed themselves in the law of attraction—asking the universe for what they want. In fact, they have engaged in these practices for a long time that corrupt concepts have become entrenched in their minds. Overall, there are two categories of Muslims who engage in the New Age practices. The first category is those who, out of ignorance, think that these practices are a matter of having recourse to legitimate expedients. They thus have not reached the point of knowingly and deliberately being attached to other than Allāh, which is pure disbelief. God willing, this category will not be punished and is excused for *they engaged in these practices due to nothing but ignorance of their pagan nature. The second category is those who engage in these practices while knowing their true nature, and whose hearts have become attached to them besides Allāh. It is obligatory upon Muslims of both categories to immediately quit these practices, to throw away all the books about energy healing and the law of attraction, to stop attending courses dealing with the same matters, to destroy all energy geometric shapes, talismans, amulets, gemstones and necklaces, and to sincerely repent to Allāh, return to the path of the prophets and the righteous and forsake the path of pagans and infidels.*

As a final note:

Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism cannot be considered religions in the traditional sense of the word “religion”, for these philosophies do not believe in the Creator and in the Resurrection. Moreover, these philosophies cannot be considered atheistic in the sense of materialistic atheism because of their basic tenets, namely the doctrine of the Unity of Being, according to which God is not the creator of things but is identical with them i.e., “God is everything and everything is God”, the concept of *karma*, which is somewhat a system of reward and punishment, and the belief that the ultimate goal of life is to reach *nirvana* or *moksha* i.e., union with the universe and the Absolute and release from *samsāra* (the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth). Therefore, the accurate characterization of these philosophies is that they are philosophies of “spiritual atheism”. These philosophies grew rapidly in the Western society which had a genuine yearning for a deeper spirituality—for something which touches the heart and for a way of making sense of a confusing and alienating world, but without any religious obligations that may deprive one from living a life of self-indulgence and sensual delights. The teachings of these philosophies were introduced to the West through gurus (teachers of spiritual and religious knowledge). Strangely, some Muslims who were influenced by these philosophies have attempted to cover them with a thin crust of Islamic terms and spread them in our countries. But the claims, pagan practices and the spiritual atheism remained the same. The main theme of Arab New Agers’ programs is living in harmony and union with the universe, which is a core concept of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. Their Web pages are flooded with advertisements promoting energy amulets, necklaces, gemstones, talismans, geometric shapes that allegedly can

attract cosmic energy. And they sell courses for young men and women to learn yoga poses, meditation, tips on how to reprogram the subconscious mind, heart-opening mantras and lots of other pagan absurdities. Hindu gurus are now coming to our countries and selling courses to spread these pagan practices—to teach Muslims how to meditate...etc. But these gurus, who are supposedly “ascetics” use psychological tricks to part gullible and desperate people from their hard-earned money and grow their bank accounts. Today, our youth are convinced that they have the ability to achieve anything in the world through meditation—the power of manifestation—as if they had never read what the Almighty Allāh said: {Say, ‘O Prophet,’ “I have no power to benefit or protect myself, except by the Will of Allāh.”} (Qur’ān 10:49) Belief in the law of attraction, which states that our thoughts and intentions create our reality and destiny, and the belief that purity of the soul—enlightenment—is sought through the priests of East Asia, have become prevalent in our countries. So people who are Muslims entered paganism again, and the seeking of assistance from other than Allāh—rituals, incantations and mantras—has returned to the nation of monotheism: {and some men used to seek refuge with some jinn—so they increased each other in wickedness.} (Qur’ān 72:6) Allāh is the One whose help is sought!

A conclusion to be read carefully:

It is the duty of the Muslim nation to return to its religion and come to itself. And it is the duty of the people of knowledge and reform in our countries to clarify the danger of the New Age practices and their extreme misguidance, for this is one of the duties that Allāh has enjoined upon them. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “In every successive century those who are reliable authorities will preserve this knowledge, rejecting the distortions made by the ignorant, the plagiarisms of those who make false claims for themselves, and the interpretations of the extremists.”⁽¹⁾ The “distortions made by the ignorant” are so evident in the New Age philosophies. As for the “interpretations of extremists” who interpret the legal (religious) texts to make them conform to the pagan practices that they call for—this is so characteristic of the advocates of energy healing. There is nothing more dangerous than these distortions and interpretations. Distorting the legal text by taking it out of its meaning and out of what the Law Giver (i.e., Allāh) intended with it and misrepresenting it is one of the biggest forms of misguidance. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “I only fear for my *Ummah* from the misguiding *'a'immaḥ* (i.e., leaders who will lead people astray).”⁽²⁾ The Prophet (PBUH) sternly warned against the distortions that will be made by the *imāms* of misguidance. That is why it was narrated that no one commits a greater crime than those who distort the religious texts. The Prophet (PBUH) said, “The most hated persons to Allāh are three: (1) A person who deviates from the right conduct, i.e., an evil doer, in the *Ḥaram* (sanctuaries of Makkah and Madīnah); (2) a person who wants the traditions of the Pre-Islamic Period of Ignorance to remain in Islam (3)

⁽¹⁾ Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1990), vol.7, p. 39, degree of ḥadīth: ṣaḥīḥ.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad al-'Albānī, *as-Silsilah aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*, (Riyādh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1995), vol. 4, p. 110.

and a person who seeks to shed somebody's blood without any right.”⁽¹⁾ Whoever seeks, in the name of the *Sharī‘ah*, to introduce into Islam a pre-Islamic tradition, an esoteric philosophy, remnants of pagan ideas and pagan amulets and incantations is one of the most hateful people to Allāh. The true Muslim does not transgress the law of his Lord and does not innovate in religion by introducing the ways of the pre-Islamic period into it. Rather, he abides by the path of the divine law and does not deviate from it. Al-’Awzā‘ī said: “patiently stick to the Sunnah, stop where the people (i.e., the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions) stopped, say what they said (as regards religion in terms of creed and worship) and refrain from that which they refrained from (do not indulge in matters that they abstained from), and follow the path of your righteous predecessors, for indeed what was sufficient for them is sufficient for you.” Abū al-’Āliyah said: “Do not deviate from the straight path to the right or to the left, and adhere to the Sunnah of your Prophet and beware of these whims and desires.” These whims and desires have led people astray and have wasted their afterlife for a small worldly gain. What wisdom is there in the destruction of the Muslim’s religion for a trifle of this worldly life? By Allāh, those who accept to sell their religion for the practices of the *Jāhiliyyah* (pre-Islamic period of ignorance) are so weird. The Prophet (PBUH) will disavow such people. He (PBUH) said: “some people will be driven away from my Cistern as the stray camel is driven away and I shall call out to them, ‘Will you not come? Will you not come?’ Then it will be said (to me): ‘they changed things after you,’ so I shall say, ‘Then away with them, away with them, away with them!’”⁽²⁾ And he (PBUH) said, “Some of my companions will come to me at the Cistern in the

⁽¹⁾ Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Cairo: Dār as-Salām, 1999), ḥadīth: 135.

⁽²⁾ Muḥammad al-’Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘ aṣ-Ṣaḡīr*, (Beirūt: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), ḥadīth:3698.

Hereafter, until I recognize them. They will be taken away from me, then I will say: I will say: ‘O Lord, my companions.’ It will be said (to me): ‘you do not know what they innovated after you were gone.’”(1) They have changed the religion of Allāh and what the *Sharī‘ah* intended. Allāh told the Prophet (PBUH) that he has no concern with such people in the least: {surely, you ‘O Prophet’ you have nothing to do with those who have divided their faith and split into sects.} (Qur’ān 6:159) Beware of letting the constants of your religion get shaken because of the temptations and claims of the New Agers. Stick to the religion of your Lord “even if you were to bite (eat) the roots of a tree till death overtakes you while you are in that state.”(2) Our Lord says: {Indeed, that is My Path—perfectly straight. So follow it and do not follow other ways, for they will lead you away from His Way.} (Qur’ān 6:153)

It is the duty of the preachers and the students of knowledge to refute these rubbish, pagan and *Jāhili* (ignorant) ideas, to warn people about them and to restore pure monotheism to their hearts.

And it is the duty of institutions to form committees to observe the violations in *‘aqīdah* (creed) that are committed by the New Agers in our countries in their TV shows and in the courses they sell, and to educate and alert the public about this imported pagan thought. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “Allāh will raise for this nation at the end of every hundred years someone who will renovate its religion for it (i.e., renew its religious understanding).”(3)

(1) Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, (Beirūt: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmyyah, 2020), ḥadīth: 2860.

(2) Muḥammad al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Cairo: Dār as-Salām, 1999), ḥadīth: 7084.

(3) Muḥammad al-’Albānī, *as-Silsilah aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah*, (Riyādh: Maktabat al-Ma‘ārif, 1995), ḥadīth: 599.

Books that I recommend:

- *At-Taṭbīqāt al-Mu‘āṣirah li falsafat al-Istishfā’ ash-Sharqiyyah* (Contemporary applications of the Philosophy of Oriental Medicine), (Jaddah: Markaz at-Ta’sīl, 2016), by Hayfā’ bint Nāṣir ar-Rashīd.
- *Maqālāt wa ‘As’ilah wa Ajwibah Ḥawla ‘Abraz at-Taṭbīqāt li al-Maḍāhib ar-Rūḥiyyah al-Mu‘āṣirah* (Articles, Questions and Answers about the Most Prominent Applications of Contemporary Spiritual Doctrines) collected and arranged by Khulūd ash-Shawīsh as-Sālim.
- *‘Athar al-Falsafah ash-Sharqiyyah wa al-‘Aqā’id al-Wathaniyyah fī Barāmiy at-Tadrīb wa al-Istishfā’ al-Mu‘āṣirah* (The Impact of Eastern Philosophy and Pagan Beliefs on Contemporary Training and Therapy Courses) by Fowz bint ‘Abd al-Laṭīf Kurdī.
- *Ḥarakat al-‘Aṣr al-Jadīd: Maḥmūhā wa Nash’atuhā wa Taṭbīqātuhā* (The New Age Movement: its Meaning, Origin and Applications) by Hayfā’ bint Nāṣir ar-Rashīd.

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