

“Wicca is Not a False Religion!”

You sound like a very knowledgeable person but when I was searching the web and came upon your website I was not angry but I wanted to email you and explain something about [the young girl someone took in](#). Well when you said that Wicca is a false religion you are quite mistaken. Wicca is another word or newer version of Paganism which is actually a very old and sacred religion. Paganism was even hundreds of years before Christianity. I am not sending this to you as hate mail but as a young pagan teen who is very tired of religious people saying that we need help. I would very much appreciate if you refrain from speaking about or making false accusations about other religions who do not agree with you.

Thank you for the respectful, gentle way in which you disagreed. I appreciate that so very much!! That says something lovely about you.

My statement about Wicca being a false religion is from a perspective that believes it is opposed to the one true religion. I do realize that may sound arrogant and foolish, and it absolutely would be if Christianity (with its roots in Judaism) were a man-made religion. But it is the one way of connecting with God that originates with Him. All man-made religions, including paganism and Wicca, are the result of man trying to find his way to God, or to various kinds of spirituality. The Judeo-Christian story is God reaching down to and communicating with us, and actually becoming one of us. I do know that Wiccans and pagans worship the creation. But how did that creation get here? It makes sense to worship the one who created it! (And us.)

I do understand that this is a time for you to search out what you believe and how you want to live your life. You are

obviously a smart, thoughtful young lady; I hope you are wise enough to receive this piece of wisdom. As you work your way through this very important part of growing up, don't merely look for *what works*; look for *what is true*.

Blessings to you,

Sue Bohlin

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“Was God Silent Between Cain and Noah?”

One of her reasons my Wiccan friend gives for turning away from Christianity is that God was silent after dealing with Cain and Abel up to the time of Noah and the flood. For nearly two thousand years pagan civilizations thrived, say in Sumeria and Mesopotamia. Where was this monotheistic God at this time in history? In her mind this God is uninvolved and therefore heartless for bringing a flood. Where in the Bible does it say God was involved with man during this time?

God was indeed involved in the affairs of His creation between the time of Cain and Abel and the Flood. The clearest example of His involvement (in a clearly miraculous sense) can be found in Genesis 5:24 “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (see also Heb. 11:5). Clearly, such an event requires Divine intervention.

Obviously, this one example is enough to prove God's involvement in the affairs of men and the world between the time of Cain and Abel and the Flood. But God is actually

constantly involved in the affairs of the world. In the first place, the world only exists because God created it (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; etc.). And the universe is continuously upheld in existence by the word and power of God (Heb. 1:3). Thus, God's involvement with His creation is continuous. And God has revealed Himself to man not only in the Bible and Christ (special revelation), but also in creation (Psalm 19:1-4; Rom. 1:18-23), providential acts of kindness (Acts 14:17), and conscience (Rom. 2:14-15) all examples of what is called general revelation. Such revelation is also continuous and ongoing to all men, at all times, in all places.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn

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Goddess Worship – A Christian View

“The goddess, or Great Mother, has existed since the beginning of time . . . it is out of the primordial depths of her womb that the Universe and all life is born.” –Morwyn, *Secrets of a Witch's Coven*

Reverence for the goddess is becoming prevalent in our day. The goddess is embraced by witchcraft, radical feminism, the occult, and the liberal church. The New Age that is about to dawn upon us will be, according to the occult world, a feminine age. Likewise, those who hold this view believe that this current, masculine age has been an age of destruction and broken relationships among humanity. The New Age with its

feminine energies will bring balance to the destructive aspects of the Piscean Age.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, in her book *Womanguides: Readings Toward a Feminist Theology*, states that

It is to the women that we look for salvation in the healing and restorative waters of Aquarius. It is to such a New Age that we look now with hope as the present age of masculism succeeds in destroying itself.

According to Starhawk, a feminist and a practicing witch,

The symbolism of the Goddess is not a parallel structure to the symbolism of God the Father. The goddess does not rule the world; She is the world.(1)

In order for this feminine age to come into full fruition, a shift in consciousness must take place in the world. This shift in thinking and perception of reality will bring forth the goddess.(2)

According to those who believe in the Great Goddess, Europe was once inhabited by a matriarchal, egalitarian society. Europeans, they claim, worshipped a matrifocal, sedentary, peaceful, art-loving goddess 5,000 to 25,000 years before the rise of the first male-oriented religion. They maintain that this egalitarian culture was overrun and destroyed by a semi-nomadic, horse-riding, Indo-European group of invaders who were patrifocal, mobile, warlike, and indifferent to art.(3)

These Indo-European invaders considered themselves to be superior to the peaceful and art-loving goddess worshippers because of their superior military ability. The matriarchal religion of these early settlers was eventually assimilated into the patriarchal religion of the invaders. As these invaders imposed their patriarchal culture on the conquered peoples, rapes(4) and myths about male warriors killing

serpents (symbols of the goddess worshippers) appeared for the first time. As the assimilation of cultures continued, the Great Goddess fragmented into many lesser goddesses.

According to Merlin Stone, author of *When God Was a Woman*, the disenthronement of the Great Goddess, begun by the Indo-European invaders, was finally accomplished by the Hebrew, Christian, and Moslem religions that arose later.(5) The male deity took the prominent place. The female goddesses faded into the background, and women in society followed suit.(6)

The Goddess and Witchcraft

In the world of witchcraft the goddess is the giver of life. Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D., in her book *Goddesses in Everywoman*, has this to say about the goddess:

The Great Goddess was worshipped as the feminine life force deeply connected to nature and fertility, responsible both for creating life and for destroying life.(7)

Bolen goes on to say that "the Great Goddess was regarded as immortal, changeless, and omnipotent" prior to the coming of Christianity. For witches, the goddess is the earth itself. Mother Earth, or Gaia, as the goddess is known in occult circles, is an evolving being, as is all of nature. Starhawk, in her best-selling book *The Spiral Dance*, says that "the model of the Goddess, who is immanent in nature, fosters respect for the sacredness of all living things. Witchcraft can be seen as a religion of ecology. Its goal is harmony with nature, so that life may not just survive, but thrive."(8)

The witch views Gaia, or Mother Earth, as a biosystem. She attributes consciousness to the earth and believes it to be spiritual as well. In other words, Gaia is a living and evolving being that has a spiritual destiny.

The environmental movement of our day is greatly influenced by

those who practice witchcraft or hold neo-pagan beliefs. Witchcraft is an attempt to reintroduce the sacred aspect of the earth that was, according to its practitioners, destroyed by the Christian world. The goddess is, therefore, a direct affront against the male-dominated religion of the Hebrew God.

Christianity teaches that God is transcendent, is separate from nature, and is represented to humankind through masculine imagery. Witchcraft holds a pantheistic view of God. God is nature, therefore God is in all things and all things are a part of God. However, this God is in actuality a goddess.

A fundamental belief in witchcraft is the idea that the goddess predates the male God. The goddess is the giver of all life and is found in all of creation. "The importance of the Goddess symbol for women cannot be overstressed. The image of the Goddess inspires women to see ourselves as divine, our bodies as sacred, the changing phases of our lives as holy, our aggression as healthy, and our anger as purifying. Through the Goddess, we can discover our strength, enlighten our minds, own our bodies, and celebrate our emotions."(9)

For Betty Sue Flowers, a University of Texas English professor, the women's spirituality movement is the answer to the male-oriented religion of Christianity. At the International Conference on Women's Spirituality in Austin, Texas, Flowers stated that

The goddess is a metaphor that reminds us of the female side of spirituality. Metaphors are important. You can't know God directly. You can only know images of God, and each image or metaphor is a door. Some doors are open and others are closed. A door that is only male is only half open.(10)

The Goddess and Feminism

For many in the feminist world, the goddess is an object of worship. Those in the women's spirituality movement "reject

what they call the patriarchal Judeo-Christian tradition, deploring sexist language, predominantly masculine imagery and largely male leadership.”(11)

According to a *Wall Street Journal* article by Sonia L. Nazario, “women first wanted to apply feminism to political and economic realms, then to their families. Now, they want it in their spiritual lives.”(12)

To understand fully the implications of the women’s spirituality movement, one only needs to read the current literature on the subject. The editors of the book *Radical Feminism* state that “political institutions such as religion, because they are based on philosophies of hierarchical orders and reinforce male oppression of females, must be destroyed.”

The radical feminist believes that the traditional church must be dismantled. Naomi Goldenberg, in her book *Changing of the Gods*, states that “the feminist movement in Western culture is engaged in the slow execution of Christ and Yahweh. . . . It is likely that as we watch Christ and Yahweh tumble to the ground, we will completely outgrow the need for an external God.”(13) The deity that many in the feminist camp are searching for takes on the form of a goddess. Some in the goddess movement, according to a *Wall Street Journal* article, “pray for the time when science will make men unnecessary for procreation.”(14) The radical feminist sees the goddess movement as a spiritual outlet for her long-held beliefs. Mark Muesse, an assistant professor of religious studies at Rhodes College, agrees that “some feminist Christians push for changes ranging from the ordination of women and the generic, non-sexual terms for God and humanity to overhauling the very theology.”(15)

Perhaps the most descriptive word for the feminist movement is “transformation.” Catherine Keller, associate professor of theology at Xavier University says in her essay “Feminism and the New Paradigm” that “the global feminist movement is

bringing about the end of patriarchy, the eclipse of the politics of separation, and the beginning of a new era modeled on the dynamic, holistic paradigm. Radical feminists envision that era, and the long process leading toward it, as a comprehensive transformation.”

Another aspect of this transformation is the blending of the sexes. The feminist movement seeks a common mold for all of humanity. Jungian psychotherapist John Weir Perry believes that we must find our individuality by discovering androgyny. He states, “To reach a new consensus, we have to avoid falling back into stereotypes, and that requires truly developing our individuality. It is an ongoing work of self-realization and self-actualization. For men it means growing into their native maleness and balancing it with their femaleness. For women, it’s the same—growing into their full womanhood, and that includes their masculine side.”(16)

This process sounds more like androgyny or sameness than it does individuality.

This paradigm-shift is nothing less than the reordering of man’s understanding of God, a shift in thinking of God through predominantly masculine imagery to seeing and experiencing God as a goddess, the mother of life.

The Goddess and the Occult

In the world of the occult, also known as the New Age, the goddess is believed to be resident within the individual and simply needs to be awakened. In other words, the individual is inherently divine. Starhawk, a witch who works with the Catholic priest Matthew Fox at his Institute of Creation Spirituality, says that an individual can awaken the goddess by invoking or inviting her presence. Starhawk tells us that “to invoke the Goddess is to awaken the Goddess within, to become . . . that aspect we invoke. An invocation channels power through a visualized image of Divinity.”

Starhawk continues, "We are already one with the Goddess—she has been with us from the beginning, so fulfillment becomes . . . a matter of self-awareness. For women, the Goddess is the symbol of the inmost self. She awakens the mind and spirit and emotions."(17)

Jean Shinoda Bolen, a Jungian analyst and clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California, answered the question, What ails our society? by saying, "we suffer from the absence of one half of our spiritual potential—the Goddess."(18) Individuals who follow New Age teaching believe that the male-dominated religion of this present age has done an injustice to humanity and the ecosystem. Therefore there must be a balancing of energies. The male energies must diminish and the feminine energies must increase in order for the goddess to empower the individual.

The New Age of occultism promises to be an age of peace, harmony, and tranquility, whereas the present dark age of brokenness and separation continues to bring war, conflict, and disharmony. So it is the goddess with her feminine aspects of unity, love, and peace that will offer a solution for mankind and circumvent his destruction. For many in our society, this appears to be the answer to man's dilemma. However, an occult solution that denies Christ's atonement for sin cannot fully meet a Holy God's requirement for wholeness.

For the pagan, the goddess represents life and all it has to offer. "The Goddess religion is a conscious attempt to reshape culture."(19) This reshaping is nothing less than viewing man and his understanding of reality from a female-centered perspective, the focus of which is on the Divine as female. Therefore considerable emphasis is placed on feminine attributes, ultimately focusing on eroticism and sexuality. "Women are clearly the catalyst for the formation of the new spirituality. It is women above all who are in the process of reversing Genesis . . . by validating and freeing their sexuality."(20)

A major part of this transformative process is the empowerment of women. The rise of the goddess is a direct assault on the foundation of Christianity. This new spirituality affirms bisexuality, lesbianism, homosexuality, and androgyny through the expression of transvestitism.

As this revival of the goddess continues, a growing lack of distinction between male and female will become the norm. Jungian psychotherapist John Weir Perry believes that "both current psychology and ancient history point to an emerging transformation in our sense of both society and self, a transformation that includes redefining the notion of what it means to be men and women."(21)

The Bible clearly indicates that men and women were created as distinctive beings, male and female. The rising occult influence in our society seeks to undermine the biblical absolute that gives our culture stability. Once again the Bible rings true as it states, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables."(22)

The Goddess and the Liberal Church

The message of the goddess has gained a hearing in the church as well. The philosophy of the goddess is currently being taught in the classrooms of many seminaries. Mary Daly, who considers herself to be a Christian feminist, says this about traditional Christianity: "To put it bluntly, I propose that Christianity itself should be castrated."(23) The primary aim of this kind of "Christian" feminist is to bring an end to what she perceives as male-dominated religion by castrating the male influence from the religion.

Daly continues by saying, "I am suggesting that the idea of salvation uniquely by a male savior perpetuates the problem of

patriarchal oppression.”(24)

Rev. Susan Cady, co-author of *Sophia: the Future of Feminist Spirituality* and pastor of Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, is one example of the direction that Daly and others are taking the church. The authors of *Sophia* state that “Sophia is a female, goddess-like figure appearing clearly in the Scriptures of the Hebrew tradition.” *Wisdom Feast*, the authors’ latest book, clearly identifies Jesus with Sophia. Sophiology presents Sophia as a separate goddess and Jesus as her prophet. The book takes liberty with Jesus by replacing Him with the feminine deity Sophia.

Another example of how goddess theology (feminist spelling for theology) is making its way into the liberal church is through seminars held on seminary campuses. One such seminar, “Wisdomweaving: Woman Embodied in Faiths,” was held at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University in February of 1990. Linda Finnell, a wiccan and one of the speakers, spoke on the subject of “Returning to the Goddess Through Dianic Witchcraft.” Two of the keynote speakers were of a New Age persuasion. In fact, one speaker, Sr. Jose Hobday, works with Matthew Fox and Starhawk at the Institute for Creation Spirituality.

A growing number of churches in the United States and around the world are embracing the New Age lie. Many churches have introduced A Course in Miracles, Yoga, Silva Mind Control, Unity teachings, and metaphysics into their teaching material. Some churches have taken a further step into the New Age by hiring individuals who hold a metaphysical world view.

Whether the individual seeks the goddess through witchcraft, the feminist movement, the New Age, or the liberal church, he or she is beginning a quest to understand and discover the “higher self.” The higher self, often referred to as the “god self,” is believed to be pure truth, deep wisdom. This truth or wisdom embodies the basic lie of deification. As Christians

we must learn to discern every spirit lest we become deceived.

Notes

1. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance* (New York: Harper & Row 1989), 23.
2. Elinor W. Gadon, *The Once and Future Goddess* (New York: HarperCollins, 1989), xiv.
3. Ibid., xii-xiii. See also Linnie Levy, *Of a Like Mind* (Madison, Wis.: OALM, 1991), vol. viii, no. 3, pp. 2-3.
4. See also Zsuzsanna Emese Budapest, *The Holy Book of Womwn's Mysteries* (Oakland, Calif.: Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, 1986), 12.
5. See also Gadon, *The Once and Future Goddess*, xiii.
6. Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Goddesses in Everywoman* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 21.
7. Ibid., 20.
8. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 25.
9. Ibid., 24.
10. Carlos Vidal Greth, "The Spirit of Women," *The Austin-American Statesman*, 5 Mar. 1991, sec. D.
11. Ibid.
12. Sonia L. Nazario, "Is Goddess Worship Finally Going to Put Men in Their Place?" *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 June 1990, sec. A.
13. Naomi Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1979), 4, 25.
14. Nazario, "Goddess Worship."

15. Deirdre Donahue, "Dawn of the Goddesses," *USA Today*, 26 Sept. 1990, sec. D.
16. John Weir Perry, "Myth, Ritual, and the Decline of Patriarchy," *Magical Blend* 33 (January 1992): 103.
17. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 99.
18. Jean Shinoda Bolen, "The Women's Movement in Transition: The Goddess and the Grail," *Magical Blend* 33 (January 1992): 8.
19. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 11.
20. Donna Steichen, "The Goddess Goes to Washington," *Fidelity Magazine* (December 1986): 42.
21. Perry, *Decline of Patriarchy*, 62.
22. 2 Tim. 4:3.
23. Alice Hageman, *Theology after the Demise of God the Father: a Call for the Castration of Sexist Religion* (New York: Association Press, 1974), 132.
24. Hageman, *Theology*, 138.

"How Do I Help This Young Teenage Wiccan?"

My husband and I are taking care of a 15-year old girl while

her dad and step-mom (who are Christians) are on vacation. However, she just recently moved in with them. Previously she was living with her mom in another state. We were discussing Christianity with her last night and asked her what she believed in. She stated she believed in reincarnation and Wicca. Also, she doesn't believe in Satan which is really a contradiction. She says she went to the public library and checked out books on Wicca and studied them and she can cast spells. Of course, her dad and step-mom are not aware of her beliefs or that she practices Wicca. I searched your website using the word "Wicca" and read all of the articles so I understand some of what it is. However, I'm not sure what approach would be effective in ministering to her about Christianity and where to point out that Wicca is a false-religion. Are there other articles on your website with more information on Wicca specifically and how to minister to someone with these beliefs? What suggestions do you have? What scriptures can I point her to?

Whoa. You DO have your work cut out for you, don't you?

If I were you, I'd go beneath the girl's Wiccan beliefs to the heart issues that drew her to Wicca in the first place. Wicca is appealing because it offers the lure of personal power, and it is particularly appealing to those who are feeling powerless. Which would seem to describe this young girl whose parents have divorced and she's being shuttled between them. . .? Personal power is the draw to be able to cast spells for those who perceive themselves as personally powerless.

Since she's a teenager, she's not interested in lectures, but longs to be heard and listened to. She's dying for real conversation with someone who honestly cares about her. So I would ask her, "Tell me about what drew you to Wicca in the first place. How did you hear about it? Tell me about the spells and why that's interesting to you."

Ask the Lord to open opportunities for you to tell her about

what the true God is like—tenderly loving and kind. Wiccan teachers tend to bash the image they hold of the Christian God, not understanding who He really is. People who are drawn to a loving, kind goddess are really looking for the feminine side of God, which we can see in the Psalms and in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem. You may be able to ask her about her understanding of the Lord Jesus, and if she's open, you might be able to tell her about not only His personality and how He proved His love for her, but—amazingly—He promised (and delivered!) personal, supernatural power for those who trust Him! There is FAR more power in Christ living His life through us, empowering us supernaturally, than any spell or charm in any witchcraft book ever penned.

It's not surprising that she doesn't believe in Satan; Wicca doesn't believe in an evil entity. It's really about pantheism, with a non-personal deity that permeates everything. Unfortunately, not believing in Satan doesn't keep him from attacking people. Those who refuse to acknowledge a personal devil are more vulnerable to spiritual warfare than anybody.

I found a couple of articles on the web you may find helpful. The first is from Leadership U., Probe's sister site, on teen witchcraft.

<http://www.leaderu.com/theology/teenwitchcraft.html>

The second is from the Christian Research Institute on "Witnessing to Witches."

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/6535/wittowit.htm>

I do hope this helps. I pray God will empower your words and let her see His love flowing to her through you.

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“You are Intolerant, Arrogant, Loud-Mouthed Bullies”

Re: Your article on [Wicca](#). I'm using the same measure that so called "Christians" use to condemn others: the Bible. I do not see better people here. I see a bewildering growth of intolerance, and what is worse, of arrogance. My recent contacts with "Christians" have exposed me to a movement of arrogant, loud mouth bullies. I'm am not judging your heart Sir, but your aggression towards other groups. Christians are not to judge others, that is God's job. Christians are to love their neighbor as they do themselves. They are to hate what is "bad", not who is "Bad".

I think that Mr Grimassi's letter shows that he is a better "Christian" than you are Sir. I'm not a Wiccan, but from what I have seen from your narrow side, I would rather involve myself with the type of gentleness displayed by this Wiccan man, than with the spiteful arrogant status-worshipping bullies who call themselves "Christian."

Please take an honest look at what you have done. You begin your letter by complaining about the behavior of so-called Christians (who may, of course, not really be Christians at all). But why should you consider yourself justified in writing such hateful things about Christians? After all, even if some so-called Christians have behaved badly, why should you have the right to behave the same way?

Just look at some of the hateful things you've said about Christians in your letter: You refer to Christians as

intolerant, arrogant, loud-mouthed bullies (but I personally know many Christians who are not like this at all). You conclude by lumping all Christians together and denouncing them as “spiteful arrogant status-worshiping bullies”.

Then you say that you’re not judging my heart, but my aggression toward other groups. But what is it that you’re doing? Aren’t you demonstrating the same aggression toward Christians which you say I’m demonstrating toward Wiccans? Indeed, isn’t your unprovoked aggression against me even WORSE than my alleged aggression against Wiccans?

Actually, I sincerely bear no ill will toward Wiccans at all. Not the slightest bit. Raven Grimassi and I had a very cordial e-mail exchange about my article. Like you, I had a very high opinion of the way he expressed himself in his letter to me. He was very kind and courteous in every respect. And I did my uttermost to be just as kind and courteous to him.

Now about judging, it’s important to understand that Jesus does not condemn all human judgments. If you carefully read Matt. 7:1-5, you will see that what Jesus warns against is hypocrisy. As Jesus says in v. 5: “You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.” The assumption, of course, is that once the plank is removed, the brother will see clearly enough to judge his brother rightly and without hypocrisy. Indeed, if Jesus forbid all human judgment, it would be impossible to administer church discipline against sinning Christians within the church (something which the Bible clearly commands us to do).

But that’s not all. The Bible also urges Christians “to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3). Paul tells Titus that church leaders “must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it” (Titus 1:9). These passages tell us that

truth in doctrine is important and that we need to stand up for it, even refuting those who oppose it. Does this make Christians arrogant? Does this make Christians spiteful bullies? What is my defense against such accusations? Simply this.

What if Christianity is true? What if, as Jesus Himself claimed, there is no other way to God but through Him (John 14:6)? What if people who reject Christ, or who attempt to find salvation through some other religion, really will spend eternity in Hell? Would it be truly loving not to warn people of this potential tragedy? Would it really be loving not to attempt to persuade them to embrace Christ while they still have opportunity? Would it really be loving to say nothing at all? For my part, I honestly don't think so.

Our ministry exists to share with others the arguments, evidence and reasonableness of biblical Christianity and to try to convince them that no other religion will ultimately save their souls. If Jesus really was who He claimed to be, then (in my opinion) it would be very unloving indeed to simply let people perish and not try to convince them to give their lives to Christ before the day of final judgment. The Bible warns us that we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and that those who have rejected Him will perish eternally. Frankly, I don't want this to happen to anyone.

I will pray for you.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“Where Was God Between Cain and Abel, and Noah?”

I am conversing with a Wiccan. One of her reasons for turning away from Christianity is that God was silent after dealing with Cain and Abel up to the time of Noah and the flood. For nearly two thousand years pagan civilizations thrived, say in Sumeria and Mesopotamia. Where was this monotheistic God at this time in history? In her mind this God is uninvolved and therefore heartless for bringing a flood. Where in the Bible does it say God was involved with man during this time? I must say this got me thinking. Can you please help me out here?

God was indeed involved in the affairs of His creation between the time of Cain and Abel and the Flood. The clearest example of His involvement (in a clearly miraculous sense) can be found in Genesis 5:24 – “And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him” (see also Heb. 11:5). Clearly, such an event requires Divine intervention.

Obviously, this one example is enough to prove God’s involvement in the affairs of men and the world between the time of Cain and Abel and the Flood. But God is actually constantly involved in the affairs of the world. In the first place, the world only exists because God created it (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16; etc.). And the universe is continuously upheld in existence by the word and power of God (Heb. 1:3). Thus, God’s involvement with His creation is continuous. And God has revealed Himself to man not only in the Bible and Christ (special revelation), but also in creation (Psalm 19:1-4; Rom. 1:18-23), providential acts of kindness (Acts 14:17), and conscience (Rom. 2:14-15) – all examples of what is called general revelation. Such revelation is also continuous and ongoing to all men, at all times, in all places.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“Who Are You to Say Who the TRUE God Is?”

Who I am is irrelevant and this letter is meant with no intent on harming anyones feelings, as the matter of religious preferences is a very delicate one. I have to say that I was offended by [the advice given to a couple taking care of a young Wiccan](#). I came across this part, “tell her about what the TRUE God is like.” Now in all fairness who are you to say who the true God is??? Are you saying that all other religions are wrong? Maybe I am jumping to conclusions. This next sentence also grabbed my attention: “Those who refuse to acknowledge a personal devil are more vulnerable to spiritual warfare than anybody.” Now I realize that there is not one ultimate devil in Wicca, but there is one in Christianity. Because this girl does not share your beliefs or even those of her parents, there is no need to tell this as advice to someone. The people of Wicca believe that evil is created by man-kind, but they still know it is there and try to use their gifts to do good and never harm anyone or thing. If a Wiccan uses their power to give anything bad or take anything good they are forbidden to use the craft and are no longer allowed in their coven to practice The Craft. Also I feel the need to point out that you do not need to practice ‘Magik’ to be Wiccan.

I have friends of all faiths, Christians, including people

from Pentecostal, Mormon and Orthodox churches, Muslims, people from the Jewish faith and to no surprise I do know many Wiccans. I have to say that we all talk and share our different views on religion and I have never heard any one try to convince someone that their God is the true God or that because they do not believe in "Satan" they are "more vulnerable to spiritual warfare" than anybody. I just want you to think more clearly about what you are writing. I do not want to start an argument, I just wanted you to hear my views. I am sure I am not the only one who thinks this. One more thing, you also said, "We believe that there is one God." Well this is obvious as you are Christian as I believe it, but not everyone does think there is one God. Rather than trying to convert this girl shouldn't this couple have been told to tolerate her religious beliefs and help to practice it safely and carefully with the respect that she deserves. This girl does not have Christian beliefs, it should not be put upon her to change her mind and her beliefs. By all means use your faith to help people not change people.

Dear friend,

If you didn't like what we say on our website, you're probably not going to like my reply either. I am not seeking to offend you or anyone else, but it makes sense you would take offense given your worldview.

The root of the problem is the difference between our position and what you believe is our extremely different perception of religion and truth. I would guess that you see these issues like a restaurant menu where everyone can choose whatever they prefer, and it's inappropriate to tell the other diners that their choice of an entrée is wrong. Our perception of religion and of truth is more like a team of doctors looking at a patient's symptoms; when it's a matter of life and death, they'd better get the diagnosis right instead of merely settling for personal preference! ("Oh, it looks like acne to me." "Well, I think it's eczema, but you can call it acne if

you want.” “I know a melanoma when I see one, and this is skin cancer!” “Naw, cancer’s too harsh a diagnosis, nobody likes to hear that, so I’m gonna stick with acne.”)

Just as cancer will kill a person and thus a doctor does him no favors to tell him anything except the painful truth, our worldview is that man-made religions lead to spiritual death and only one—a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ—leads to life. We don’t base this simply on our preference, but on historical evidence that God has spoken to us through His word and through Jesus Christ.

I know you were concerned at my advice to the couple who were caring for a girl who was dabbling in Wicca. If all religions were equally valid, then my advice would certainly be off-base. But we are staking our lives on the belief that they are not. For this couple to tolerate her religious beliefs when they are completely committed to the ultimate truth of Christianity would be like seeing a cancerous lesion on her skin and “tolerating” her skin condition by ignoring it. What appears to be kindness would end up being the cruelest thing in the world when they knew what would save her.

I know our worldview is unpopular in today’s world, but we are convinced it is far more in alignment with reality than the one that says “everybody do what they want, it’s all okay.” We believe it’s not okay.

It leads to a kind of spiritual death far worse than cancer.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Wicca: A Biblical Critique

Michael Gleghorn examines some of the fundamental doctrines of Wicca, offers a biblical critique of those doctrines, and highlights the differences between Wicca and Christianity.

The Goddess and the God

By some estimates, Wicca “appears to be the fastest growing religion in America.”^{1} But what exactly is “Wicca” anyway? One scholar writes, “The modern religion of Wicca, otherwise known as Old Religion, Magick, Witchcraft, the Craft, and the Mysteries, is part of the neo-pagan movement.”^{2} In this article I hope to accomplish two things. First, I want to outline some of the fundamental doctrines of Wicca; second, I want to offer a biblical critique of those doctrines.

Let’s begin with Wiccan theology. Although some Wiccans are devoted exclusively to the Goddess, most worship both the Goddess and the God. Raven Grimassi, a Wiccan scholar, has written, “The Source of All Things, also known as the Great Spirit, is generally personified in Wiccan belief as a Goddess and a God.”^{3}

It’s important to point out that the Goddess and God are merely *personifications* of this ultimate source of all things. The Source itself is both “unknowable” and “incomprehensible.”^{4} It is perhaps for this reason that some “Neo-Wiccans” have simply abandoned such personifications altogether, choosing rather to view the gods as simply “detached metaphysical concepts.”^{5} But for those who embrace such personifications, the Goddess has often been associated with the moon (and has thus sometimes been called the *Queen of Heaven*).^{6} She is also known in three aspects, corresponding to the three stages of a woman’s life: Maiden, Mother, and Crone.^{7} She was alleged to have reigned “with a male consort called *The Horned One* who was a nature god and was also

associated with the sun.”{8} Interestingly, this god was not only viewed as the consort of the Goddess, he was also her son as well. Each year he was born of the Goddess, became her lover, and died-only to be reborn once more the following year from his own seed! This was known as the Year God cycle and was associated with the fertility of the land and the annual cycles of seedtime and harvest.{9}

Interestingly, modern Wicca shares many similarities with the ancient fertility religions of Canaan, religions specifically condemned by God in the Bible.{10} For instance, the Wiccan Goddess is revered by some as the *Queen of Heaven*, by others as *Astarte*.{11} But in the Bible, the worship of Ishtar, the queen of heaven, and Astarte, or Ashtoreth, is repeatedly condemned, as is the worship of her consort, known sometimes as Baal, sometimes as Tammuz.{12} Thus in Judges 2:11-13 we read: “Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord . . . they provoked the Lord to anger . . . they forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtoreth.” But if the only true God rejected the ancient Canaanite religions and their practices, would His reaction to modern Wicca likely be any different?

The Watchers

“The Watchers is a concept common to most Wiccan Traditions, although they are viewed differently by the various systems within Wicca.”{13} Raven Grimassi describes these “Watchers” as “an ancient race who have evolved beyond the need for physical form.”{14} However, he is quick to add that, historically, the “Watchers” have been conceived in a diversity of ways. For instance, in the early Stellar myths the Watchers were “gods who guarded the Heavens and the Earth.”{15} Later, he says, “the Greeks reduced them to the Gods of the four winds, and the Christians to principalities of the air.”{16}

The connection, observed by Grimassi, between the Wiccan

concept of the Watchers and the Christian concept of angels may find some validation in the Bible. In Daniel 4:13-17, the pagan king Nebuchadnezzar relates a dream to Daniel. He tells him that during the dream a “watcher, a holy one, descended from heaven” and pronounced a judgment that is said to be “by the decree of the watchers . . . a command of the holy ones . . . that the living may know that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind.” Most conservative commentators understand the “watchers” in this passage to be angels. One commentator writes, “The king is probably referring to the angels which were known to him through the Babylonian religion.”[{17}](#) But that these beings are indeed the biblical angels seems evident from the fact that they are acting as *messengers* of the Most High God.[{18}](#)

In light of this connection between the “watchers” and angels, it is interesting to note that “Rabbinic and Cabalistic lore” made a distinction between good and evil Watchers.[{19}](#) This distinction parallels the biblical distinction between good and evil angels, or angels and demons. Indeed, Grimassi notes, “In the *Secret Book of Enoch*, the Watchers . . . are listed as rebellious angels who followed Sataniel in a heavenly war.”[{20}](#) We find a similar incident recounted in Revelation 12:7-9, where we read of a heavenly war in which Michael and his angels cast Satan and his angels from heaven to earth.

With this in mind it is interesting to note that Richard Cavendish, in his book *The Powers of Evil*, “lists the Watchers as the Fallen Angels that magicians call forth in ceremonial magick.”[{21}](#) This remark is especially noteworthy when one considers Grimassi’s comments concerning “the relationship that exists between a Wiccan and the Watchers.”[{22}](#) Grimassi points out that “every act of magick that a Wiccan performs is observed and noted by the Watchers.”[{23}](#) Furthermore, he says, “There is a definite link between the ‘powers’ of a Wiccan and their rapport with the Watchers.”[{24}](#) But since the God of the Bible clearly prohibits magic, is it likely that these

“Watchers” should be thought of as good spirits (inasmuch as they oppose the ordinance of God)?[{25}](#)

The Art of Magick

Wiccans view magick as a genuine possibility because of humanity’s intrinsic connection both to Deity and a supernatural order. Raven Grimassi states: “The art of magick is one of creation. . . . The power to create from *thoughts* is linked to the divine spark within us. We create in accordance with the divine formula that created all things.”[{26}](#)

But how is this possible? Grimassi explains, “The astral plane is the link between the divine world and the physical. . . . Whatever manifests on the astral plane will eventually manifest on the physical plane.”[{27}](#) And human thought can manifest on the astral plane.[{28}](#) Thus, for one accomplished in the art of Wiccan magick, the power to secure a desired effect in the physical world is alleged to begin with the careful creation of a thought-form on the astral plane.[{29}](#) Grimassi continues: “Thought-forms begin to appear in the astral material, which then become vehicles for the spirits or deities that have been invoked (through which they will respond to the desire of the magickal intent).”[{30}](#) If done properly, “the magickal seeds planted in the astral plane” will eventually bear fruit on the physical plane.[{31}](#) This is the basic theory behind Wiccan magick. And one practitioner has boasted, “No matter what type of coven magic is used, it is usually effective.”[{32}](#)

Might there actually be some truth to this? Indeed, there might. The book of Exodus tells us that the Egyptian magicians were able to duplicate, by means of “their secret arts,” the initial plagues God brought upon Egypt![{33}](#) Furthermore, the text never hints that this was done by any means other than some genuine secret power. In light of this we might ask why God is so opposed to the practice of magic. After all, couldn’t such power be used for good, as well as evil? But God

specifically warned the Israelites: "There shall not be found among you anyone" who practices divination, witchcraft, sorcery, or spiritism.[{34}](#) Why is this?

Could it be that the "secret power" of magick is due, not to its various rituals, symbols and gestures, but rather to the supernatural intervention of spirit beings? In Acts 16 we read of a demon-possessed slave-girl described as "having a spirit of divination . . . who was bringing her masters much profit by fortunetelling."[{35}](#) This passage clearly ties the power of divination to demons. With this in mind, it's interesting to remember Grimassi's admission: "There is a definite link between the 'powers' of a Wiccan and their rapport with the Watchers."[{36}](#) Wiccans view the Watchers as a race of highly evolved spiritual beings.[{37}](#) But these beings are linked with angels and demons in other religious literature (including the Bible).[{38}](#) Is it possible that God prohibits magic because He wants to protect people from involvement with demons?

The Summerland and Reincarnation

Like Christians, Wiccans do not believe that physical death is the end of personal existence. Nevertheless, in its details the Wiccan doctrine of the "afterlife" differs substantially from the biblical view. How so?

To begin, Wiccans do not accept the biblical doctrines of heaven and hell. Rather, they believe that after physical death, "Wiccans pass into a spirit world known as the Summerland . . . a metaphysical astral realm of meadows, lakes, and forests where it is always summer. It is a Pagan paradise filled with all the lovely creatures of ancient lore, and the gods themselves dwell there."[{39}](#) The Summerland is viewed as a place of rest and renewal for the soul before its rebirth into the physical world.[{40}](#)

The belief in the soul's rebirth into the physical world, also known as reincarnation, is another way in which Wiccan

doctrines differ from those of biblical Christianity. Though the doctrine of reincarnation is completely unbiblical, many Wiccans actually believe it is taught in the Bible. Raven Grimassi cites John 9:1-3 as evidence that even Jesus and His disciples believed in reincarnation!{41} In this passage Jesus' disciples ask Him about a man born blind: "'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.'" Grimassi comments: "Jesus does not denounce the question of this man's existence prior to this birth, but explains that [his blindness] had nothing to do with his sins prior to his present life." {42} But is this interpretation correct? Is Jesus really affirming that this man existed *prior* to his present life?

It's important to understand both the disciples' question, and Jesus' response, from within the historical context of first century Judaism. "The Jewish theologians of that time gave two reasons for birth defects: *prenatal sin* (before birth, *but not* before conception) and *parental sin*." {43} In other words, first century Jewish rabbis did not believe that birth defects resulted from bad karma in a previous incarnation! Rather, they thought such defects arose either from the sins of the parents being visited upon their children, or from the sin of the child while still in the mother's womb. {44} Although Jesus denies that either of these causes was responsible for this man's blindness, we must still bear in mind that His *disciples* were asking this question from within a first century Jewish context. We must also remember that elsewhere the New Testament explicitly affirms, "[I]t is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." {45} Thus, far from affirming the Wiccan doctrine of reincarnation, the New Testament clearly denies it.

Is Wicca Another Way to God?

Scott Cunningham claimed, "All religions have one ideal at their core: to unite their followers with Deity. Wicca is no different."[{46}](#) He also wrote, "Perhaps it's not too strong to say that the highest form of human vanity is to assume that your religion is the only way to Deity."[{47}](#) But is it really true that there are many ways to God, or is there only one?

Although it's quite common in today's pluralistic society to assume that all the enduring religious traditions of mankind are equally valid ways to God or Ultimate Reality, there are tremendous philosophical difficulties with this belief. Since we are here concerned with both Wicca and Christianity, let's briefly compare some of the fundamental tenets of these two religions and see what we come up with.

Wiccans appear to believe in the essential divinity of human nature. Raven Grimassi writes, "[E]verything bears the 'divine spark' of its creator."[{48}](#) He also claims, "Souls are like brain cells in the mind of the Divine Creator, individual entities and yet part of the whole."[{49}](#) Thus, there doesn't seem to be any clear distinction in Wicca between humanity and Deity. This explains why the Witch Starhawk could confidently declare, "there is nothing to be saved *from* . . . no God outside the world to be feared and obeyed."[{50}](#)

Christianity, however, maintains a firm distinction between God and man. Man is created in God's image, but he is neither God nor a part of God. Furthermore, although man bears God's image, his nature has been corrupted by sin, which separates him from God. Man's need, therefore, is to be saved from his sins and reconciled to God. This explains the significance of Christ for Christianity. As Peter put it, "Christ . . . died for sins once for all . . . that He might bring us to God."[{51}](#) Christians believe that God dealt fully and finally with man's sin through the death and resurrection of His Son.[{52}](#) Thus, contrary to Wicca, Christianity teaches that

there *is* something to be saved from and that there *is* a God outside the world to be both feared and obeyed.

Because of their differences, the law of non-contradiction makes it impossible for both of these religions to be true. It's therefore interesting to note Charlotte Allen's observation: "In all probability, not a single element of the Wiccan story is true. The evidence is overwhelming that Wicca is . . . a 1950s concoction . . . of an English civil servant and amateur anthropologist" named Gerald Gardner.[{53}](#) But surely such questionable historical origins cast doubt on the truth of Wiccan religious beliefs as well. Christianity, however, is firmly rooted in the historical reality of Jesus of Nazareth, whose claim to be the *only* way to God was clearly vindicated when God "furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."[{54}](#)

Notes

1. Charlotte Allen, "The Scholars and the Goddess" *The Atlantic Monthly* (January 2001): 18.
2. Fritz Ridenour, *So What's the Difference?* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 2001), 209.
3. Raven Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries: Ancient Origins and Teachings* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 2000), 33.
4. Scott Cunningham, *The Truth About Witchcraft Today* (St. Paul, Minnesota: Llewellyn Publications, 1999), 76.
5. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 33.
6. *Ibid.*, 25.
7. Cunningham, *The Truth About Witchcraft Today*, 73.
8. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 26.

9. Ibid., 88-89.

10. Ridenour, *So What's the Difference?*, 210. This is not to imply, of course, that Wicca itself is ancient. The antiquity of Wicca has been seriously challenged by modern scholarship.

11. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 25; Cunningham, *The Truth About Witchcraft Today*, 72.

12. For instance, see Judges 2:11-17; 2 Kings 23:4-14; Jeremiah 44:15-23; Ezekiel 8:14-15. For documentation concerning the consort of Ashtoreth being Baal and/or Tammuz see J.D. Douglas and Merrill C. Tenney, eds. *The New International Dictionary of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1987), s.v. "Ashtoreth," 100-01; "Tammuz," 986. For documentation that Ishtar, the queen of heaven, was associated with Tammuz see Trent C. Butler, gen. ed. *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), s.v. "Ishtar," 721; "Tammuz," 1321.

13. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 99.

14. Ibid., 100.

15. Ibid., 101.

16. Ibid.

17. Edward J. Young, *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978), 103.

18. Compare Daniel 4:17 with 4:24.

19. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 102.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid., 103.

22. Ibid., 106.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid. This is not to imply that Wiccans explicitly worship Satan or demons (understood in the Christian sense). They are very careful to say they do not, and we should take them at their word. At the same time, is it legitimate to ask if one can be deceived by the devil without actually worshipping the devil? For while Wiccans may not worship the devil, the Bible seems to indicate that they have nonetheless been deceived by him. Wicca, for example, rejects the biblical doctrines of God, man, Christ, sin, salvation, etc. As a religion, therefore, Wicca helps prevent men and women from coming to a saving knowledge of God through faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible, however, declares that this is also one of the activities of Satan! It reveals that the devil "has blinded the minds of the unbelieving" to keep them from saving faith in Christ (see 2 Cor. 4:3-4). It is for this reason that Christians, while acknowledging that Wiccans do not worship the devil, nonetheless view the religion of Wicca as a means of Satanic deception since it keeps its followers from saving faith in Christ.

25. See Deuteronomy 18:9-13.

26. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 140.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 150.

29. Ibid., 140-41.

30. Ibid., 140.

31. Ibid., 159.

32. Cunningham, *The Truth About Witchcraft Today*, 125.

33. See Exodus 7:11-12, 22; 8:6-7.

34. See Deuteronomy 18:9-13.
35. See Acts 16:16-18.
36. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 106.
37. Ibid., 100.
38. Ibid., 101-03.
39. Ibid., 30.
40. Ibid., 32.
41. Ibid., 113.
42. Ibid.
43. Norman L. Geisler and Ron Rhodes, *When Cultists Ask: A Popular Handbook on Cultic Misinterpretations* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1997), 175.
44. Ibid.
45. Hebrews 9:27.
46. Cunningham, *The Truth About Witchcraft Today*, 77.
47. Ibid., 66.
48. Grimassi, *The Wiccan Mysteries*, 26.
49. Ibid., 27.
50. Starhawk (Miriam Simos), *The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 9, cited in Ridenour, *So What's the Difference*, 213.
51. 1 Peter 3:18.
52. See Romans 4:25.

53. Allen, "The Scholars and the Goddess," 19.

54. See John 14:6 and Acts 17:31.

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"I Am a Wiccan—Are You Saying I'm Going to Hell?"

I am a 16. I was searching through the web when I found your web site on the Occult, naturally I was interested so I read through it. I found all of the information to me quiet intriguing. I am a practioner of Wicca. I am a wiccan. I have been for the past year. I am not a worshiper of satan nor do I inflict bodily harm upon myself through rituals. I do not believe in one all mighty god, rather I believe in many gods and goddesses. I am a believer of faith, I worship all things, the dead, trees, inanimate or not. I do not use rituals to gain, or hinder others. I simply use them to help or support things I love, like a protection spell while a loved one is on a trip and away from the family. I also ask the Lord and Lady to look over a loved one as they make there last journy. I do not believe in Heaven or Hell. I believe in personal "heavens" and personal "hells."

Your site has given me the impression that your view is that if you are not a pure christian you are going to "hell." You must worship a certain way and do certain things to be "saved?" Am I right in saying this? I was just wondering on your personal views on Wiccanism. I am curious about your opinions. Please feel free to e-nail me back. I would greatly appreciate it.

Blessed be,

Hello _____,

Thank you for taking the time to write us.

Yes, you read our views correctly. What we believe is definitely not politically correct. We believe that there is one God, that He has interacted with our world (which He created), and that He communicated true truth to us. Part of that truth is that there is only one way to be reconciled to Him, and that is by trusting in His Son Jesus to save us from our sin problem and to equip us for life as He intended it in this world, and for heaven when we die.

We do realize that it is far more appealing to believe that there are many ways to God or god, however one defines him/her/it, all equally valid. However, just as you can't live in the real world under that type of "all preferences are equally valid, all truths are equally true" misbeliefs, we believe that spiritual reality doesn't abide by those lies either. For instance, many people say they believe that physical reality is mere illusion, but you don't find them meditating on railroad tracks. And many people say they create their own truth, but they all seem to agree that "red means stop," or they don't live too long!

Let me try to reframe a common misunderstanding of hell. When Jesus was on earth, He claimed to be God. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." One of the implications of that statement is that life is found in a relationship with Him. Apart from Jesus, there is no life, only death, which means separation from the source of life. Heaven isn't so much a place as it the fullness of *relationship* with a real Person—God. So being "saved" is not about jumping through religious hoops; it is about being rescued from an eternity of destruction and death where people are separated from life,

which is only found in Jesus.

You said you don't believe in one almighty God, but various gods and goddesses. Are they real? What evidence do you have that they exist? If you are trusting in imaginary friends, wouldn't you want to know that? On the other hand, Jesus was a real, historical Person who made astounding claims that are ridiculous if they are not true, and the only way to be reconciled to God if they are. (He also said He was the only way to the Father. Again, that is an arrogant and presumptuous thing to say—unless it's true.)

So hell is not a place where an angry, vengeful God laughs as he sends people who wouldn't jump through his hoops. Hell exists because God made us to be in a love relationship with Him, and He will not, cannot, force us to love Him. It has to be freely chosen. Since life is only found in God, hell is the place for people who would not accept His offer of love and friendship. And since there is no life apart from God, hell is a place of everlasting death and destruction because there is no life where there is no relationship with God.

You asked about our view of Wicca: it is not the same as Satanism, but it is another false religion based on lies and misbeliefs that are designed to draw people away from the true God. We believe that Wicca ultimately comes from the mind of the literal, evil being called Satan who hates God and hates people and lies to them so that they will suffer like he does. And while you may well be a gentle, kind and wonderful person, the kind of person that all of us at Probe would love to have as our next-door neighbor, we believe that without a personal relationship with the one true God through His Son Jesus Christ, you cannot experience life as He intended for you to live in this life, your sins will separate you from a holy God forever, and you cannot go to heaven when you die.

I do pray that because God loves you as much as He does, He will do whatever it takes to show Himself to you in a way that

is sufficiently intimate to your heart that you will KNOW that it is Him pursuing you with a strong but gentle divine love.

And I pray you will experience His blessing on your life.

Most sincerely,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

The Goddess and the Church – A New Age Deity

The goddess, or Great Mother, has existed since the beginning of time...it is out of the primordial depths of her womb that the Universe and all life is born. *Morwyn, Secrets Of A Witch's Coven*

Reverence for the goddess is becoming more prevalent in our day. The goddess is embraced by witchcraft, feminism, the occult, and the liberal church. The New Age that is about to dawn upon us will be, according to the occult world, a feminine age. Likewise, those who hold this view believe that this current, masculine age has been an age of destruction and broken relationships among humanity. The New Age with its feminine energies will bring balance to the destructive aspects of the Piscean Age.

Rosemary Radford Ruether in her book, *Womanguides: Readings Toward A Feminist Theology*, states "It is to the women that we look for salvation in the healing and restorative waters of Aquarius. It is to such a New Age that we look now with hope as the present age of masculism succeeds in destroying

itself." According to Starhawk, a feminist and practicing witch, "the symbolism of the Goddess is not a parallel structure to the symbolism of God the Father. The Goddess does not rule the world; She is the world."(1)

In order for this feminine age to come into full fruition a shift in consciousness must take place in the world. This shift in thinking and perception of reality will bring forth the goddess.(2)

As interest in the occult continues to rise and gain popularity in our culture, the goddess becomes more popular as a deity. The modern woman is at a crossroads in her spiritual quest. It is imperative that she realize her inherent deity, her god nature, for she is to be the salvation of humanity.

According to those who hold a belief in the Great Goddess, Europe was once ruled by a matriarchal egalitarian religion. Their belief dictates that Old Europe was a culture that worshiped a matrifocal (mother-focused), sedentary, peaceful, art-loving, goddess between 5,000 and 25,000 years before the rise of the first male-oriented religion. They maintain that this egalitarian culture was overrun and destroyed by a semi-nomadic, horse-riding, Indo-European group of invaders who were patrifocal (father-focused), mobile, warlike, and indifferent to art.(3) The ease with which the peaceful goddess worshipers were subdued confirmed to the war-like Indo-European invaders their feelings of natural superiority. The matriarchal religion of these early settlers was eventually assimilated into the more dominant patriarchal religion of the invaders. As these invaders imposed their patriarchal culture on the conquered peoples, rapes(4) and myths about male warriors killing serpents appeared for the first time in their history. The serpent was a symbol of the goddess worshipers. As the assimilation of cultures continued, the Great Mother Goddess became fragmented into many lesser goddesses.

According to Merlin Stone, author of *When God Was a Woman*, the disenthronement of the Great Goddess, begun by the Indo-European invaders, was finally accomplished by the Hebrew, Christian, and Moslem religions that arose later.(5) The male deity took the prominent place. The female goddesses faded into the background, and women in society followed suit.(6)

The Goddess and Witchcraft

In the world of witchcraft the goddess is the giver of life. Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D., in her book, *Goddesses In Everywoman*, has this to say about the goddess:

The Great Goddess was worshiped as the feminine life force deeply connected to nature and fertility, responsible both for creating life and for destroying life.(7)

She also proclaims, "The Great Goddess was regarded as immortal, changeless, and omnipotent" prior to the coming of Christianity. For witchcraft, the goddess is the earth itself. Mother Earth or Gaia, as the goddess is known in occult circles, is an evolving being as is all of nature. In the New Age worldview, environmentalism and the ecological movement play an important part in restoring the goddess. In her best-selling book, *The Spiral Dance*, Starhawk says

The model of the Goddess, who is immanent in nature, fosters respect for the sacredness of all living things. Witchcraft can be seen as a religion of ecology. Its goal is harmony with nature, so that life may not just survive, but thrive.(8)

Witches think of Gaia, or Mother Earth, as a biosystem. They attribute consciousness to earth and believe it to be spiritual as well. In other words, Gaia is a living and evolving being that has a spiritual destiny. Those who practice witchcraft take responsibility for Mother Earth's evolutionary development.

The environmental movement of our day is greatly influenced by those who practice witchcraft or hold neopagan beliefs. Witchcraft is an attempt to reintroduce the sacred aspect of the earth that was, according to their belief, destroyed by the Christian world. The goddess is, therefore, a direct affront against the male-dominated religion of the Hebrew God.

Christianity taught that God was transcendent, apart from nature, and was a masculine deity. Witchcraft holds a pantheistic view of God. God is nature. Therefore, God is in all things and all things are a part of God. However, this God is in actuality a goddess and predates the male God. The goddess is the giver of all life and is found in all of creation.

The importance of the Goddess symbol for women cannot be overstressed. The image of the Goddess inspires women to see ourselves as divine, our bodies as sacred, the changing phases of our lives as holy, our aggression as healthy, and our anger as purifying. Through the Goddess, we can discover our strength, enlighten our minds, own our bodies, and celebrate our emotions.(9)

For Betty Sue Flowers, a University of Texas English professor, the women's spirituality movement is the answer to the male-oriented religion of Christianity. She was a keynote speaker for the International Conference on Women's Spirituality in Austin, Texas, and addressed the conference on the return of the goddess. According to Flowers,

The goddess is a metaphor that reminds us of the female side of spirituality. Metaphors are important. You can't know God directly. You can only know images of God, and each image or metaphor is a door. Some doors are open and others are closed. A door that is only male is only half open.(10)

The Goddess and Feminism

For many in the feminist world, the goddess is an expression of worship. A growing number within the feminist movement have bought into witchcraft as the central focus of their allegiance. Those who have become a part of the women's spirituality movement reject what they call the patriarchal Judeo-Christian tradition, deploring sexist language, predominantly masculine imagery and largely male leadership.(11)

In a Wall Street Journal article, Sonia L. Nazario stated, "Women first wanted to apply feminism to political and economic realms, then to their families. Now, they want it in their spiritual lives."(12)

To fully understand the implications of the women's spirituality movement one only needs to read the current literature on the subject. The editors of the book *Radical Feminism* state that "Political institutions such as religion, because they are based on philosophies of hierarchical orders and reinforce male oppression of females, must be destroyed."

Radical feminists believe that the traditional church must be dismantled. For example, in her book *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions*, Naomi Goldenburg announced,

The feminist movement in Western culture is engaged in the slow execution of Christ and Yahweh...It is likely that as we watch Christ and Yahweh tumble to the ground, we will completely outgrow the need for an external God.(13)

Many feminists are obviously moving away from an understanding of deity as an external "male" God who stands apart from Creation to a conception of deity as a goddess that is realized within one's inner self and is one with nature.

Some extreme feminists in the goddess movement “pray for the time when science will make men unnecessary for procreation.”(14) The radical feminist see the goddess movement as a spiritual outlet for their long-held beliefs. According to Mark Muesse, an assistant professor of religious studies at Rhodes College,

some feminist Christians push for changes ranging from the ordination of women and the generic, non-sexual terms for God and humanity to overhauling the very theology.(15)

Perhaps the most descriptive word for the feminist movement is “transformation.” Catherine Keller, Associate Professor of Theology at Xavier University, in her essay “Feminism and the New Paradigm,” proclaims that the world-wide feminist movement is bringing about the end of patriarchy, the eclipse of the politics of separation, and the beginning of a new era modeled on the dynamic, holistic paradigm. Radical feminism envisions that era, and the long process leading toward it, as a comprehensive transformation.

Another aspect of this transformation is the blending of the sexes. The feminist movement seeks a common mold for all of humanity. Jungian Psychotherapist John Weir Perry believes that we must find our individuality by discovering androgyny. He states,

To reach a new consensus, we have to avoid falling back into stereotypes, and that requires truly developing our individuality. It is an ongoing work of self-realization and self-actualization. For men it means growing into their native maleness and balancing it with their femaleness. For women, it's the same growing into their full womanhood, and that includes their masculine side.(16)

This process sounds more like androgyny (or sameness) than individuality and it reflects a paradigm-shift involving

nothing less than the reordering of man's understanding of God. A shift from thinking of God as male to seeing and experiencing God as a goddess: the Mother of Life.

The Goddess and the Occult

In the world of the occult, popularly known as the New Age, the goddess is believed to be resident within the individual and simply needs to be awakened. In other words, the individual is inherently divine. Starhawk, a witch who works with the Catholic priest Matthew Fox at his Institute of Creation Spirituality, says that an individual can awaken the goddess by invoking, or inviting, her presence. Starhawk tells us,

To invoke the Goddess is to awaken the Goddess within, to become ...that aspect we invoke. An invocation channels power through a visualized image of Divinity...We are already one with the Goddess—she has been with us from the beginning, so fulfillment becomes...a matter of self-awareness. For women, the Goddess is the symbol of the inmost self. She awakens the mind and spirit and emotions.(17)

Jean Shinoda Bolen, a Jungian analyst and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, when asked the question, What ails our society?, put it this way: "We suffer from the absence of one half of our spiritual potential—the Goddess."(18) Individuals who follow New Age teaching believe that the male-dominated religion of this present age has been an injustice to humanity and the ecosystem. Therefore, there must be a balancing of energies. The male energies must diminish and the feminine energies must increase in order for the goddess to empower the individual.

The New Age of occultism promises to be an age of peace, harmony, and tranquility. Whereas the present dark age of brokenness and separation continues to bring war, conflict,

and disharmony, so it is the goddess with her feminine aspects of unity, love, and peace that will offer a solution for mankind and circumvent his destruction. For many in our society this appears to be the answer to man's dilemma. However, an occult solution that denies Christ's atonement for sin cannot fully meet a holy God's requirement for wholeness.

For the pagan, the goddess represents life and all it has to offer. "The Goddess religion is a conscious attempt to reshape culture." (19) This reshaping is nothing less than viewing man and his understanding of reality from a female-centered perspective which focuses on the Divine as being female. Therefore, considerable emphasis is placed initially on feminine attributes, but ultimately the focus is on eroticism and sexuality.

Women are clearly the catalyst for the formation of the new spirituality. It is women above all who are in the process of reversing Genesis...by validating and freeing their sexuality. (20)

A major part of this transformative process is the empowerment of women. The rise of the goddess is a direct assault on the patriarchal foundation of Christianity. This new feminist spirituality affirms bisexuality, lesbianism, homosexuality, and androgyny (through the expression of transvestitism).

As this revival of the goddess continues, a growing lack of distinction between male and female will become the norm. Jungian Psychotherapist John Weir Perry maintains,

Both current psychology and ancient history point to an emerging transformation in our sense of both society and self, a transformation that includes redefining the notion of what it means to be men and women. (21)

The Bible clearly indicates that men and women were created as

distinctive beings, male and female. This rising occult influence in our society seeks to undermine the Biblical absolute that gives our culture stability. Once again the Bible rings true as it states,

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables (2 Tim. 4:3).

The Goddess and the Liberal Church

The message of the goddess has gained a hearing in the church as well. The philosophy of the goddess is currently being taught in the classrooms of some of our seminaries. In a growing number of seminaries the student population is becoming increasingly female, and many of these women have a feminist outlook on life. Mary Daly, who considers herself to be a Christian feminist, says this about traditional Christianity: "To put it bluntly, I propose that Christianity itself should be castrated." (22) The primary focus of the "Christian" feminist is to bring an end to what they perceive as male-dominated religion by "castrating" the male influence from religion. Daly continued by saying,

I am suggesting that the idea of salvation uniquely by a male savior perpetuates the problem of patriarchal oppression. (23)

Reverend Susan Cady, co-author of *Sophia: The Future of Feminist Spirituality* and pastor of Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, is one example of the direction that Daly and others are taking the church. The authors of *Sophia* state that, "Sophia is a female, goddess-like figure appearing clearly in the Scriptures of the Hebrew tradition."

Wisdom Feast, the authors' latest book, clearly identifies

Jesus with Sophia. Sophiology presents Sophia as a separate goddess and Jesus as her prophet. The book takes liberty with Jesus by replacing the masculine deity with the feminine deity Sophia. Another example of how goddess "thealogy" (note feminist spelling for theology) is making its way into the liberal church is through seminars held on seminary campuses.

One such seminar was held at the Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University. "Wisdomweaving: Woman Embodied in Faiths" was held at the school in February of 1990. If one looks at the schedule of the seminar, it is obvious that the emphasis was not on orthodoxy. Linda Finnell, a follower of Wicca and one of the speakers, spoke on the subject of "Returning to the Goddess Through Dianic Witchcraft." Two of the keynote speakers were of a New Age persuasion. In fact, one, Sr. Jose Hobday, works with Matthew Fox and Starhawk at the Institute for Creation Spirituality.

A growing number of churches in the United States and around the world are embracing the New Age lie. Many churches have introduced *A Course in Miracles*, Yoga, Silva Mind Control, Unity teachings, and metaphysics into their teaching material. Some churches have taken a further step into the New Age by hiring onto their staffs individuals who hold to a metaphysical worldview.

Along with the deception that is subtly gaining influence in the liberal church, there are a growing number of churches affiliated with the New Age. These churches, without apology, teach the Luciferian gospel. They are the seed-bed of the occult.

It is amazing that while the liberal church will not accept or believe in Satan, they are willing to embrace Lucifer as an angel of light. It is interesting to note that the New Age Church represents itself as the Church of Light.

Whether the individual seeks the goddess through witchcraft,

the feminist movement, the New Age, or the liberal church, he or she is beginning a quest to understand and discover the "higher self." The higher self, often referred to as the "god self," is believed to be pure truth, deep wisdom. In actuality, this so-called "truth" or "wisdom" embodies the oldest lie in the Book, the lie of self-deification: "Ye shall become as Gods." As Christians we must learn to discern every spirit lest we too become deceived.

Notes

1. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance* (New York, N.Y.: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1989), 23.
2. Elinor W. Gadon, *The Once & Future Goddess* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1989), xiv.
3. Ibid., xii-xiii. See also Lynnie Levy, *Of A Like Mind* (Madison, Wis.: OALM, 1991), vol. VIII, no. 3, pp. 2-3.
4. See also Zsuzsanna Emese Budapest, *The Holy Book of Women's Mysteries* (Oakland, Calif.: Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1, 1986), 12.
5. See also Gadon, *The Once & Future Goddess*, xiii.
6. Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Goddesses in Everywoman* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 21.
7. Ibid., 20.
8. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 25.
9. Ibid., 24.
10. Carlos Vidal Greth, "The Spirit of Women," *The Austin- American Statesman*, 5 March 1991, Sec D.
11. Ibid.
12. Sonia L. Nazario, "Is Goddess Worship Finally Going to Put Men in Their Place?," *The Wall Street Journal*, 7 June 1990, sec. A.

13. Naomi Goldenberg, *Changing of the Gods: Feminism and the End of Traditional Religions* (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1979), 4, 25.
14. Nazario, "Goddess Worship."
15. Deirdre Donahue, "Dawn of The Goddesses," *USA Today*, 26 September 1990, sec. D.
16. John Weir Perry, "Myth, Ritual, and the Decline of Patriarchy," *Magical Blend* 33 (January 1992): 103.
17. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 99.
18. Jean Shinoda Bolen, "The Women's Movement in Transition: The Goddess & the Grail," *Magical Blend* 33 (January 1992), 8.
19. Starhawk, *The Spiral Dance*, 11.
20. Donna Steichen, "The Goddess Goes to Washington," *Fidelity Magazine* (December 1986), 42.
21. Perry, "Decline of Patriarchy," *Magical Blend*, 62.
22. Alice Hageman, *Theology After the Demise of God the Father: A Call for the Castration of Sexist Religion* (New York: Association Press, 1974), 132.
23. *Ibid.*, 138.

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