

Naturalism or Supernaturalism?

By Dave Hunt (from *Occult Invasion*, Harvest House, 1998)

If we are to understand occultism and recognize the difference between the power of Satan and the power of God (which look the same to uninformed observers), then we must make the very important distinction between naturalism and supernaturalism. In naturalism, all events follow scientifically explicable laws of cause and effect. There are no miracles—only natural occurrences. As we shall see, even many who call themselves evangelicals hold to this pagan belief. It is an ancient heresy that was taught among Christians as far back as St. Augustine, one of the fathers of the Roman Catholic Church. He said: “God does not act contrary to nature, but only [contrary] to the order of nature known to us.”⁸

On the contrary, the God of the Bible exists outside of nature. He created the universe out of nothing and He is totally independent of time, space, and matter. Although God may use natural events as He sees fit, His intervention in human affairs often involves overriding the laws with which He has bound the universe. Were that not the case, no miracle could occur, for a miracle by very definition must violate the physical laws which govern the universe. The very fact that the laws of science have been violated is proof of God’s intervention. No one else, including Satan, can do so.

One often hears the statement that “science has proven that miracles are impossible.” On the contrary, such “proof” is impossible. A miracle *must be beyond the ability of science to explain*, and thus beyond the ability of science either to prove or to disprove. Inasmuch as science can only deal with *natural* phenomena it can make no pronouncements about *supernatural* events. When Einstein was asked what impact his theory of relativity would have on religion he replied, “None. Relativity is a purely scientific theory and has nothing to do with religion.”⁹

Naturalism holds out no ultimate hope of escape from the inexorable deterioration and death of all things. There could be no hope of eternal life for mankind without a God who exists outside of the universe and who can reach into it to bring resurrection life out of the universal death which is an integral part of nature. Indeed, the Force behind naturalism is on its way to extinction.

Doom or Destiny?

The second law of thermodynamics, the law of entropy, declares that this universe is running down like a clock. Inevitably the stars will one day be burned out and the whole universe cooled down far below zero. All human schemes and dreams will have been washed like sand castles into a cosmic ocean of nothingness. *Naturalism* as a religious hope will have proven to be a dismal disappointment.

The God of supernaturalism, however, who is not part of this dying universe, is able to reach in from outside—not with the recycling of reincarnation but with the new life of resurrection. Indeed, the Bible says that He will let go of the atom which He now holds together and create a completely new universe:

“The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with the fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.... Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:10,13).

A Question of Morality

Every kind of nature religion (whether called Satanism, Wicca, Hinduism, or whatever) is by very definition amoral. “Good” and “evil” do not apply to atoms or galaxies or natural forces such as gravity or electricity or psychic power. Morals imply responsibility to an ultimate *authority*—something which is entirely lacking in nature. No one can say that atomic power has authority, much less that it is a power “higher” than electricity

Biblical supernaturalism contends that moral authority derives only from an intelligent personal Creator who exists outside of the universe He has made. Evolution deifies nature. Wolfgang Smith, physics and mathematics professor at Oregon State University, says “evolution has swept the world, not on the strength of its scientific merits, but precisely in its capacity as a Gnostic myth.”¹⁰

Yet evolution reigns in the world of academia, giving scientific credence to naturalism. It says that nature is all there is; there is no transcendent God, no supernatural. But this mysterious force which is allegedly behind evolution is presumed to provide unlimited power to nature and to the human psyche. Human potential is alleged to be infinite; man is potentially a god. All of this in the name of science!

Shamans, Scientists, and Consciousness

The first “scientists” were shamans (witch doctors, magicians, sorcerers, astrologers, etc.). They believed that matter itself was alive, indwelt by spirit beings who controlled it, and that by appeasing these entities through ritual and offerings they could gain favor with the spirits, manipulate the natural world, and harness the forces of nature. The pagan societies suffered every kind of disaster and humiliation at the hands of their gods, yet continued to supplicate them for help. Even more astonishing is the fact that modern man has revived a belief in Gaia (Mother Earth) as a living organism of which we are all a part. This pagan superstition, promoted by Vice President Al Gore, is at the heart of much of today’s ecological movement.

In every culture throughout history shamanism has been based upon the belief that the spirit world could be manipulated by thoughts firmly held in the mind, by words repeatedly spoken, and by pictures formed in the imagination. The modern application of these ancient shamanic beliefs is found in the Power of Positive Thinking, Positive Speaking, and visualization. All three of these occult techniques are practiced today in the arenas of education, psychology, business, and within the church.

Modern science was birthed when it was discovered that the physical world of nature is controlled not by elves and gnomes and spirits but by definite *laws*. The ever-more-sophisticated implementation of these laws has produced today’s civilization. The discovery of these laws caused materialistic science to imagine proudly that it was capable of uncovering all the secrets of the universe.

Reluctantly, science was forced to admit that consciousness lay outside its province. Thoughts were not physical, nor were the minds which conceived them. Ethics and morality, a sense of truth and justice, and an appreciation of natural beauty poetry, and music lay outside the natural world of rocks, trees, and even animals and could not be explained in materialistic terms. As humanistic psychology metamorphosed into transpersonal psychology and parapsychology gained acceptance, it became evident that psychic powers existed which defied the explanations of the physical sciences. Materialism was dead.

A New “Scientific” Paganism

Yet mankind had become so accustomed to the dominance of science that (contrary to Einstein’s advice) it continued to look to science for authoritative direction in the new realm of the nonphysical or spiritual. Thus science took on spiritual trappings and became the new paganism. At its altars the world continues to worship human achievement and potential in anticipation of the day when its high priests will have conquered not only space and the atom but will have unlocked every hidden secret of the occult as well. At last mankind will have achieved virtual immortality as master of the universe. This ancient lie of the serpent to Eve, kept alive in pagan religions and the occult, having now donned the mask of modern science is ripening to reap God’s wrath upon this world.

The prestige of science backing the new paganism has virtually guaranteed its acceptance by the educated world. Mixing science and religion turns God into an impersonal energy source to be tapped by scientifically applying universal laws. Not only the physical world, but now the spiritual as well, can be controlled “scientifically.” Such is the deadly delusion that seduces modern man.

The old occultism, like karma and reincarnation, was based upon a presumed “law of cause and effect.” When the witch doctor slits a rooster’s throat, sprinkles the blood in a certain pattern, and mumbles a secret incantation, the spirits *must* respond with their magic as part of the bargain. So it is with the new paganism and its new rituals. The only difference is that the formulas are scientific and the priests and priestesses have donned the new robes of laboratory researchers.

(to be continued)

Notes:

8. Cited in Heaney, *Sacred*, p. 61.
9. Eddington, cited in *Quantum Questions: Mystical Writings of the World’s Great Physicists*, ed. Ken Wilber (New Science Library, 1984), p. 5.
10. Wolfgang Smith, *Teilhardism and the New Religion: A Thorough Analysis of the Teachings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin* (TAN Books, 1988), p. 242.