

# Mantras and Mandalas

(from *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996)

## INFO AT A GLANCE

**Description.** Mantras are sacred sounds and mandalas are sacred pictures (usually four-sided) employed for specific spiritual purposes such as occult forms of meditation, enlightenment, and contact or union with various gods and deities.

**Founder.** Use of mantras and mandalas is most frequently associated with traditional Hinduism and Buddhism. Many mantras and some mandalas are held to have originated as a supernatural revelation from the gods or spirits with which they are associated.

**How do they claim to work?** Mantras and mandalas function as a means of “focusing” the mind, e.g., in meditation and visualization, and thus to assist the seeker along a given spiritual path.

**Scientific evaluation.** Not applicable.

**Examples of occult potential.** Mantras and mandalas are often part of a larger program of occult instruction and may help in developing psychic powers, occult enlightenment, or contact with spirits.

**Major Problem.** Traditionally, mantras and mandalas have clear connections to the spirit world and present other hazards, such as the development of altered states of consciousness. Unfortunately, the false perception of most Westerners who use these methods is that they are relatively innocent or harmless forms of spiritual practice.

**Biblical/Christian evaluation.** As pagan implements or forms of idolatrous worship, use of mantras and mandalas is biblically prohibited.

**Potential dangers.** The hazards of occult practice in general.