

PRAISE FOR  
America's Next Great Awakening

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“This is a really, really important book for anyone on board for restoring America to live its original spiritual vision. Master synthesizer Christopher Naughton brilliantly pulls together politics, history, philosophy, religion, science, and spirituality to create a rare integration of fact, vision, inspiration, and illumination. If there is hope for America—and there is—you will find it between these covers. I wish everyone who wants to get our country back on track would read this gem of wisdom and healing.”

—**Alan Cohen**, award-winning bestselling author of  
*A Deep Breath of Life*

“Christopher manages to coalesce the evangelical with the metaphysical in giving a complete picture of the American soul and its destiny.”

—**Sidney Kirkpatrick**, author of the best-selling  
*Edgar Cayce: An American Prophet*, *A Cast of Killers* and *Hitler's Holy Relics*

“In *America's Next Great Awakening*, Christopher Naughton proves the critical bridge-voice our nation needs to rediscover what actually unites it, which is the vitality of the individual search. As Christopher reckons, we as a nation are capable of navigating disparate beliefs and outlooks, as we have in the past, through reclaiming our core ideal: that every individual is a seeker, and only through honoring the search—and what we owe to it and each other—can we fulfill the meaning of *e pluribus unum*, from many one.”

—**Mitch Horowitz**, PEN Award-winning author of  
*Occult America* and *Uncertain Places*

A NEW AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
IN CONSCIOUSNESS

# America's Next Great Awakening

WHAT THE CONVERGENCE OF MYSTICISM,  
RELIGION, ATHEISM AND SCIENCE MEANS  
FOR OUR NATION. AND YOU.



Christopher W. Naughton



VIRGINIA BEACH  
CAPE CHARLES

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*For everything that rises must converge.*

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

## WHY THE SEVEN POINTED STAR?



The seven pointed star on the front cover and noted throughout the book is reminiscent of the Bennington Flag— one of the earliest known American flags with thirteen stars and thirteen stripes. It may have preceded the well-known circular field of thirteen stars on the Revolutionary War flag. More than likely, it was created for use in the War of 1812 and for the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, 1826. Unlike other American flags, the Bennington flag sports seven pointed stars as opposed to the usual five pointed stars.



While the pentagram, or five pointed star, symbolizes man, the seven pointed star (or, alternately, septagram or heptagram) has accumulated many levels of meaning over the centuries. It has been interpreted as a bridge of the realm between worlds.

One of the oldest recorded meanings given to this star is found within the mystical Jewish Kabbalistic tradition, where it represents the power of

love and the sphere of victory. It is also found within Christian tradition as a symbol of protection, the seven points representing the perfection of God and the seven days of creation. In Islam, the heptagram is used to represent the first seven verses in the Koran. Alchemists used the seven pointed star to represent the seven elements of the world. On the flag of the Cherokee people, the seven pointed star symbolizes peace.

To Freemasons the seven pointed star relates to the seven rungs of Jacobs Ladder, the evolved “seven-fold man” whose seven steps of learning gains him greater insight into the omniscience of the Great Architect of the Universe.

The seven pointed star is also a common sight within neo-paganism, where it is known as the “Faery” or “Elven” star. A group in San Francisco during the 1980s called “The Elf-Queen's Daughters” adopted this strongly feminist title, a group consisting of both men and women who believed themselves to be incarnated elven spirits in human form, sent to bring about an acceleration of consciousness on Earth.



PREFACE



## A New Great American Awakening?

*Our best chance of summoning what Abraham Lincoln called  
“the better angels of our nature” may lie in recovering the sense  
and spirit of the Founding era and its leaders.*

Jon Meacham

*In order to evolve, the United States must return  
to its core spiritual template.*

Caroline Myss

*The only true America is the coming spiritual Republic.*

Andrew Jackson Davis

At last count, in this young century alone, the words *soul* and *America* have concurrently cropped up in dozens of magazine articles, book titles, documentaries, films, and other media—mostly in the last few years.

Small wonder. Regardless of where one sits on the spectrum of belief, religion, or “none of the above,” a consistent sentiment persists: there is grave concern for the future of the United States.

Admittedly, using the term *awakening* or anything resembling *awake* is stepping into a minefield. In the last few years, conspiracy-based groups believe that America is facing existential crises that will trigger a “Great Awakening,” which in turn will bring down an evil deep state. On the other hand, those who demonstrate overt political correctness and hypersensitivity in matters of race, religion, and class equality have been contemptibly described as “woke.” While the convergence of mysticism, religion, atheism, and science addressed here is set apart from such

notions, something is bubbling up from within the American psyche that is seemingly felt by all.

In American history, from Great Awakenings to the Age of Enlightenment, religious, spiritual, and intellectual movements have shaped the nation's consciousness. The ideologies that sprang from those experiences have preceded and coexisted with national crises, sometimes serially fending one another off and at other times overlapping, if not intertwining, ultimately resulting in a better America. Our present time calls for something as dynamic, if not more so.

To some, history is completely linear. It doesn't repeat. But perhaps it rhymes. That latter notion is attributed to Mark Twain, even if he never uttered the words. Regardless, the idea is not unique. Native American Indian cultures did not see time as linear, instead believing nature unfolds in a circle. Others see the evolution of history as a series of elevating, concentric circles that expand and ascend—as if coming to the same place on the circle, but a step or two up an evolutionary helix. Still others believe that America experiences existential crises every eighty years or so—the American Revolution, the Civil War and World War II—and now eighty years later a new generation of Americans must demonstrate the wisdom and courage reminiscent of those specific preceding generations in order to move past current predicaments. If an authentic new Great American Awakening is in the offing, perhaps it will rhyme with historical precedent.

Evolutionary transformation is no longer a luxury, no longer optional. For the first time in the history of humanity, a transformation of consciousness is a necessity.<sup>1</sup> If this planet is to survive and evolve, then America—a microcosm of the world and one of diverse faiths, cultures, races, colors, national origins, ethnicities, and genders—a constitutionally limited, democratic republic extolling freedom for all must evoke these founding ideals as never before. *That is her destiny, should she be willing to accept it.* Especially now, with the existential threats of autocracy, climate crisis, and more.

To do so, the nation must tap into its spiritual core and experience a new revolution in consciousness. If not, the world could easily fall into a new dark age—culturally, politically, militarily, ecologically. We may see America's problems as political, monetary, racial, ecological, or religious in nature. But the core of America's crisis is essentially one in consciousness.

Is the nation poised for such a shift? Is raising the collective consciousness of the nation the *only* way out of this predicament?

## CONTEXT

America is experiencing a polarization and moral depression unlike anything we have endured in over a hundred years—far worse than the malaise of post-assassination/Watergate/Vietnam-era America, as memorialized in a Jimmy Carter speech. By most assessments, the country is the most divided it has been since the Civil War. Throughout the nation and the world, authoritarianism and autocracy creep forward. The damage and threat of climate change unfolds before our eyes. Seeming norms have been turned on their heads. The institutions of America are, by any political assessment, eroding.

No time is without its perils, its fear-inducing crises, but most Americans who have been alive since the mid- to late-twentieth century would likely agree that this is an age of unpredictability and instability that most of us figured we'd *never* experience in our lifetime. One historical commentator says it best: "Although each generation believes that it lives on some kind of precipice, I have never before seen Americans angrier, more divided, and less possessed of confidence in our common future."<sup>2</sup> Most cannot recall a time when the nation has been so challenged from within.

That may be so in our lifetimes—but it's hardly new to the American story. Consider:

- ★ George Washington, the commanding general, leading a fledging nation-to-be against the world's preeminent power, which still held sway with a significant number of loyal colonists in America; his was an act of monarchical defiance that would surely have led him and his compatriots to the gallows if they were not militarily successful;
- ★ Abraham Lincoln, who had to surreptitiously travel through unfriendly territories in the dead of night to assume the mantle of the presidency in a White House south of the Mason Dixon line—seven Southern states having already seceded, four more soon to join them, followed by almost 700,000 deaths and the bloodiest war in US history;
- ★ Franklin Delano Roosevelt, paralyzed but not defeated by polio, facing down a global depression and the rising specter of worldwide authoritarianism as evidenced by Nazi Germany, fascist Italy, Imperial Japan, and communist Russia, not to mention right-wing coup attempts against him at home;
- ★ Lyndon Johnson, inheriting the office from a young, vigorous president who'd been assassinated by a questionably known shooter, facing international (Vietnam) and national (race riots, anti-war demonstrations, etc.) crises, followed by successive assassinations of American progressive leadership.<sup>3</sup>

We Americans, in the toughest times, have always found our way. Something deep within the American soul, in the most fundamental beliefs about ourselves, has ultimately prevailed.

### WHAT COULD EMERGE?

The United States has evolved through a largely untold, subsumed religious and spiritual history.

By most historical accounts, there have been two overarching

Great Awakenings in America, seen largely as emotive religious events with widespread ramifications. Significant catalysts that changed American thinking and spirituality, they had the look and feel of passionate Christian evangelical movements. These awakenings generated inspired action that arguably helped create and later save a nation. Without the First Great Awakening, there may not have been an American Revolution; without the Second Great Awakening, many of the monumental social changes in race, suffrage, labor, and education brought about by the Civil War it helped trigger may never have come about—or at the very least, their manifestation would have been delayed.

Remnants of these two historical markers inhabit some space in America's next Great Awakening.

But something moving more deeply from within America's core is emerging. It stems from ancient Egypt, via the democracies of Greece and the republics of Rome, up through esoteric traditions in Europe, then setting foot on these shores and inspiring the most enlightened of our founders. It is also infused with the arcane roots of ancient Judaic, African American, and Native American Indian influences. Together these influences have sparked a uniquely American form of consciousness whose very being is transcendental in nature. It has run silently, sometimes almost imperceptibly, beneath the loud emotional outbursts of religious, largely Christianized America. It lacks the revivalist fervor of a Jonathan Edwards, the institutional biblical authority of a Dwight L. Moody, the presidential conferral of approval of a Billy Graham, the moral certitude of a Jerry Falwell, James Dobson, or Pat Robertson.

But its imprint on the American soul is undeniable.

An authentic, alternative consciousness that helped mold the American Enlightenment is rising again, in new form. If America is to realize its sacred purpose—unity in diversity—an inner awakening that spans belief systems and religions (including atheism), transcends

ideologies, and honors scientific realities must emerge. Will democracy survive? Or will world leadership pass to China, Russia, or other autocracies?

America inaugurated its own way of fighting wars, its own unique form of government, its own sport in baseball, its own musical expressions in jazz and rock 'n roll. Should it be so surprising that the nation found a unique spiritual voice, tied in part to both traditional, ardent religious expression as well as mystical and esoteric philosophies—and that it did so by creating a diverse, incorporeal ecosystem, allowing beliefs to exist side by side in toleration of, if not always in harmony with, one another? America was and is a multifaceted spiritual landscape that would have overjoyed the founders because no one religious perspective has taken hold and dictated to all others.

Since colonial times, America has been a free-flowing interchange for new spiritual ideas. In the 1600s, many came to escape religious persecution in their home countries. English Quaker William Penn established Philadelphia as a town where all religious faiths could live together. By 1682, Mennonite, Amish, and Lutheran church offshoots coexisted in the city. Soon thereafter, Catholics, Jews, and others settled and thrived in the region. Mystically oriented communities found refuge in the nearby countryside, suggesting America was an experiment that worked, establishing fresh attitudes for future generations.

The ideas and concepts of Freemasonry also found root in fertile American soil. Emerging out of the Reformation, it was not a religion but rather a freethinking intellectual and holistic salon, a radical spiritual brotherhood filled with liberal ideas about how people of different religious faiths could work well together within a nation. Today America is still a great laboratory of religious experiment, of spiritual exploration, of conscious awakening.

This awakening—should it come to fruition—will be far more powerful than the outward, pray-in-the-open, emotive Great Awakenings

of the past. It will incorporate the very best that those awakenings had to offer; but this new Great Awakening will be more than the veneration of a singular perspective espousing one predominant religious belief. It will be, in a sense, a convergence of distinct counterpoints that have long resided in the American soul.

Einstein suggested, “The problem cannot be solved by the same consciousness that created it.” Revival of a fundamental theology will not resolve the nation’s historic divisions. This awakening comes from our intuitive depths—perhaps, dare I say, from an optimal future. Timeless, it can stir the souls of individuals, the nation, and a global collective consciousness in an era of desperate need.

Is the answer to current crises—maybe the only answer—a spiritual awakening? A prominent American historian suggests that may be the best way out of our current political dilemma.<sup>4</sup> The convergence of atheism, religion, mysticism, and science is opening up new highways of awareness that have the potential to dwarf any of America’s Great Awakenings of the past.

To reap the blessings of liberty, the times call for a revolution in consciousness, largely emulating those who embodied an enlightened awareness and transcendental vision—with all of their warts—and whose dedication saw us through the American Revolution, the Civil War, the World Wars and more recent watershed events. Not perfect people, not by a long shot, these men and women—both engineers and by-products of their eras—tracked closely to intellectual, ecumenical, and spiritual enlightenment, not conventional thinking or religiosity. Their stories reveal the seeds of hope.

In the end, both in American myth and history, two qualities have ultimately shone through: the resourcefulness and inner goodness at the core of this country. Americans have *always* found a way, even in the most trying crises. Is this yet another chapter that ultimately defines our

nation and helps transform the world?

Now is the moment to call on the essence of our historical great awakenings, along with the esoteric, enlightened wisdom found in the American soul. It's in our DNA. The time is now. And we have the keys.