

ASTROLOGY— *What's It All About?*

Do the stars and planets have a mysterious influence on human destiny? Is astrology science or myth? Can astrology really predict man's character, his love life, business deals, farming, even surgical operations?

THIS is the dawning of the age of Aquarius," the popular song went. The song then continued:

*"When the moon is in the
Seventh House
And Jupiter aligns with Mars
Then peace will guide the planets
And love will steer the stars."*

Is this for real? Has this begun to happen?

Astrologers claim that the ever so slight movement of the vernal equinox westward has now brought the sun into the zodiac's sign of Aquarius, where it will be for the next 2,000 years. Aquarius is supposedly "an airy sign that will influence the world toward aspiration and faith" (*Time*, March 21, 1969).

According to leading American astrologist Carroll Righter, "In 1904, we entered the Age of Aquarius, which will be an age of joy, science, and accomplishment, focusing on the life of Christ." Has this really been going on these past 65 years?

Regardless of the veracity of astrologers' claims, no one can deny that the world today is experiencing a boom in astrology.

In the United States, according to latest estimates, astrology has about ten million devotees. These are individuals whose lives are deeply influenced by the "predictions" and advice of horoscopes. Besides, another forty million "dabblers" read the astrological columns in daily newspapers or buy copies of the latest astrology magazines. They do it out of curiosity, for amusement, or just to "try it out."

And it's pretty much the same the world over.

Astrology has large followings in England, France and South Africa. Germany has 18 million astrology buffs. This is close to one third of the population! In India, *half* the nation stayed awake one night in 1962, expecting the world to come to an end as was claimed by astrologers.

Even Communist countries are affected. Leading American astrologists report receiving letters from behind the Iron Curtain wanting to know the outcome of the Arab-Israeli trouble and the occupation of Czechoslovakia.

It's Big Business

The astrological boom is on! An estimated 10,000 astrologers ply their trade on a full-time basis in the United States. Another 175,000 practitioners operate part time.

Astrology in the United States is **BIG BUSINESS**. American astrologers gross more than \$250 million a year! Addicts of this philosophy include not merely the uneducated and ignorant. More often, it is educated housewives, businessmen, political leaders and executives who seek astrological advice.

In the United States, at least 100 movie stars consult their favorite astrologers before taking a new role. Even stock market speculators are now looking to the stargazers for prognostications.

An Astrological Renaissance

According to one practitioner, the world is currently undergoing an astrological **RENAISSANCE!** One publishing company's sale of horoscope

pocket books have soared from one million in 1962 to *eight* million in 1968, and sales are still rising. Out of 1750 newspapers published daily in the U. S., only a mere 500 are today without some sort of daily astrological column.

Astrology has become one of the new fascinations of modern youth. As a sign of the times, when the University of South Carolina offered witchcraft as a non-credit voluntary course, an astounding 247 people signed up. "How-to" astrology and witchcraft courses are being taught, especially in the so-called "free universities," usually run by and for college dropouts.

How Astrology "Works"

The average housewife merely looks in the daily astrology columns in her newspaper or in the horoscope magazine she may buy. By checking the list under her "sign" (the one she was born under) she can find out what the syndicated astrological columnist has in store for her during that day. (Women outnumber men four to one as devotees to the astrology game.)

It's as simple as looking up the answer to yesterday's crossword puzzle.

A much smaller number are completely addicted to astrology. They have their personal horoscopes made up. Casting a personal horoscope can be an expensive business running into the hundreds of dollars. The exact minute of birth needs to be known for a completely "accurate" horoscope, say the "experts."

A staggering number of planetary influences are "taken into account." This gives the casting of a horoscope a

scientific and ritualistic flavor — all part of the psychology.

As any astrologer will admit, there is no general agreement as to how these influences are to be taken into account. Two astrologers looking at the same horoscope may come up with completely different predictions about an individual's future.

If misfortunes happen, they may be blamed on two factors. One, since the exact minute of birth was not known — and who knows that? — then you see, one cannot expect the horoscope to be completely accurate.

But more important, if misfortunes come, one is simply not living "in harmony" with the stars and planets. "The stars impel," say professional astrologers, "they do not compel."

Psychology and Astrology

Astrologers tell people what they want to hear.

Here is how a simple astrological forecast might work. You were born at a certain time of the year. At the moment of birth a map supposedly was formed of you in the heavens. The secret of success is to discover this pattern. And how simple it all is!

The astrology books will tell you, "The pattern of the stars and planets guides your life. Plan your life in harmony with the stars and you are in harmony with yourself." The work is done for you. All you have to know is the date of your birth. Look it up under your horoscope and see what you are like, your talents, personality, love life, your future.

For example, here is a descriptive summary of characteristics as they appeared in a monthly magazine under the section about personality. (Each description was actually about a page long.)

ARIES (March 22 - April 20): You have an impressive personality. You are an individualist — unique, strong-willed, forceful.

TAURUS (April 21 - May 21): You are the salt of the earth. Dependable, determined, responsible, mature, you are the sort of person whom everyone admires.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21): You have an agile mind. You absorb all

that comes your way... your friends find you a wonderful companion.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23): Cancer bestows upon its natives the most loving, giving, sympathetic personality. Yours is really the open heart, and the open hand. The expression, "a friend in need is a friend indeed," describes you perfectly.

LEO (July 24 - Aug. 23): Generous, magnetic, dynamic, vital, you possess an unforgettable personality.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23): You have a highly developed intellect, a strong critical sense, and probably a considerable amount of artistic and literary taste and talent.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23): Your personality is so pleasant and amiable, your kind nature so appealing, that you can be described as a truly winning person. You can literally "charm the birds off the trees."

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22): Power and determination are the keynotes of your personality... dominant, forceful, even ruthless at times, you make your mark upon people, and upon life!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22): Your personality is characterized by imagination, practicality, and most of all, independence. You are a veritable ray of sunshine, cheerful, optimistic, good-humored.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20): You possess, in large measure, the important qualities: strength, dignity, honesty, reliability.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19): You are, in the true sense of the word, a humanitarian... you are concerned with mankind as a whole... you are dedicated to truth, to the progress of the world... you have great depth of character.

PISCES (Feb. 20 - Mar. 21): In a sense, you are the summation of all that has come before you. In your nature are blended the qualities of the other signs, matured, and brought into final evolution.

Sounds wonderful doesn't it?

For example, if you are "Aries" you supposedly have a wonderful personality! But Leo also has a terrific personality; so does Libra; so does Scorpio; so does Sagittarius. In fact, if the entire character analysis of all the signs were published, you would see that practically ALL of them had great personality traits. And if you are Pisces, then you have ALL the characteristics of ALL the preceding eleven signs.

Now that's convenient!

Astrologers know human nature. They understand that we see in ourselves whatever we want to see. Are we intellectual? Well, yes... there was this

book we once read. How about persuasive? Of course, did we ever wow them at that last club meeting. Are we reliable? Yes. Humanitarian? Of course. Dependable? Certainly.

Are Predictions Accurate?

But then what about worldwide predictions of astrologers? For example, statements predicting who will run for President; when an earthquake will come; will so-and-so die. Without going into detailed ramifications, we simply let an astrologer answer:

"It is true that there have been many inaccurate predictions made by astrologers... How then, in view of these facts, can astrology be justified? It can be justified in the same way as other theories which are practicable, but not infallible" (*Astrology for Everyday Living*, pp. 9, 10).

Many inaccurate predictions? Not infallible? Then there is no concrete foundation, is there?

Just to set the record straight, here are a few astrological faux pas.

British astrologers didn't fare too well in 1939. They all predicted there would be no war. According to astrologers, Walter Reuther was supposed to be a candidate for the presidency in 1964. One looked in vain for his name on the list of American presidential candidates.

The one keynote to astrological predictions is that they are UNPREDICTABLE!

What Is the "Zodiac"?

The whole structure of astrology revolves around the "zodiac" — an arbitrarily arranged belt in the heavens. It includes the paths of the moon and the principal planets. It has as its middle line the sun's path — called the ecliptic. The zodiac, according to astrologers, has twelve divisions (or signs), each 30 degrees long, marked off eastward from the vernal equinox. The names of these divisions were originally the names of the constellations — groups of fixed stars — within them.

But no longer so! About 2000 years ago the artificial signs of the zodiac and the constellations coincided. Today the signs have separated about 30 degrees

from their corresponding constellations. The sign of Aries, for instance, is now in the constellation of Pisces!

This means that the astrologers' horoscopes are OUT-OF-DATE!

But they seem either to be unaware of the fact — or they simply don't care. In casting their horoscopes, they imagine the sky is arranged as it was 2000 years ago!

Not only do astrologers use a false horoscope, 2000 years outdated, with the constellations placed in the wrong signs of the zodiac — but their predictions have, alas, usually failed miserably.

Even in interpreting the same astrological chart, different astrologers will give different readings.

Seemingly, the KEY to being a successful astrologer, today, is being a good psychologist — understanding the moods, motivations and attitudes of people — knowing human nature.

WHY the Astrological Boom

Why then, in light of all these facts, the preoccupation with astrology on the part of so many? Various answers are given. "Astrology's popularity — and that of witchcraft and spiritism — is waxing while the influence of organized religion apparently wanes. Collegians, often known to campus officials only by a number or an IBM card, claim something refreshingly personal in groups dedicated to such 'sacred' cults.

"Andrew M. Greeley, a Roman Catholic priest at the University of Chicago, found students returning to the sacred — or the 'bizarrely sacred' — because science and Christianity have failed to end war and injustice and to provide personhood and meaning. For some students the return is simply a means to demonstrate anti-organizational feelings; for others, it is a search for a better world" (*Christianity Today*, Nov. 26, 1969).

Lennox Raphael, a writer for the hippie weekly *East Village Other*, says that astrology is "a form of resistance to the technological juggernaut" (*Reader's Digest*, May, 1969).

Also, "those who see the United States on the verge of decay recall that corrupt and dying nations always turn to the supernatural in their last hours.

Astrologers were constantly consulted as barbarians hammered at the gates of Athens, Rome, and Constantinople."

Out of all these varying reasons, however, one thing soon becomes clear. Whether it is with organized religion, impersonality at college, war and injustice, today's technology, or the present status of the United States, people today are dissatisfied. They are looking for the answers. "What is life all about?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?" "What will happen when I die?" To quote *Christianity Today*, "it is a search for a better world."

But does astrology have the answers? Is the "age of Aquarius" better than the previous age? Does astrology offer a better world?

Astrology did not help Adolf Hitler. He had as many as five astrologers advising and counselling him. He sentenced one, Karl E. Kraft, to death in a concentration camp for giving "bad advice." Hitler's other stargazers were not able to foresee or predict the inglorious fall of the Third Reich!

Nor did inaccurate, vague, senseless astrology save the empires of Babylon, Greece and Rome, when they looked to the stars in their hour of doom. Nor will it help you!

Babylonian Origin

Notice, the role of astrology in history — and its superstitious beginning.

The worship of the stars is almost as old as man. Early astrologers identified the planets with their pagan gods. They believed the planets had powers similar in character to those powers attributed to the gods, whose names they bore.

Thus the planet Mars was named after the pagan "god of war," and was believed to influence wars and struggles upon the earth. Mercury, the speediest planet in circling the sun, was named after the pagan god "Mercury, the messenger of the gods," the so-called fleetest of the gods, who had wings on his heels.

Today, perhaps astrologers do not claim the planets are gods, but they still attribute the same identical mystical influences to them! There is little difference!

History reveals that Semiramis, the

profligate wife of Nimrod, revived the practice of astrology. Nimrod himself was an arch-apostate. The Bible reveals that Nimrod "began to be a mighty one in the earth" (Gen. 10:8). Moffatt translates this verse, "Ethiopia produced Nimrod, the first man on earth to be a DESPOT." The beginning of his kingdom — or EMPIRE — was "Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar" — that is, the ancient land of BABYLON!

The Origin of Astrology

After the sudden death of Nimrod, his wife Semiramis attempted to hold his kingdom together by religious superstition. She claimed Nimrod had been a god, instituted secret worship of him, and began the "Babylonian mysteries." Nimrod, she claimed, had gone to heaven and was represented by the constellation "Orion" — the "Hunter," for he had been a "mighty hunter before [or, in place of] the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD" (Gen. 10:9).

Semiramis, his one-time wife, therefore claimed to be the "Queen of Heaven." This was the Babylonian ORIGIN of superstition and astrology!

From the time of Nimrod, the astrological religion of Babylonia grew and spread. Hundreds of years later during the days of Nebuchadnezzar, the stars were still intricately involved in the religion of Babylonia! When King Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by a dream, he commanded to call "... the magicians, and the ASTROLOGERS, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to show the king his dreams" (Dan. 2:2).

By this time the astrologers were able to predict eclipses. Their study of the heavens had become, in many ways, an exact science. But their speculative conclusions were utter nonsense. They thought they could foretell the future by their observations of the stars. Five planets were considered especially fateful regarding the destinies of men. The names of the five most important Chaldean gods were applied to those five planets.

By Roman times — long after the Roman Empire had superseded the

Chaldean — astrology made its influence felt in Rome. Astrologers built up a strong practice there, and the Babylonian names for the stars were altered to suit Roman tastes. Thus the planet Marduk became Jupiter, Nabu became Mercury, Ishtar (the Babylonian name for Semiramis) was changed to Venus (the “Queen of Heaven”).

A brief and concise description of the ancient Babylonian astrology and its origin is given in Langer’s *Encyclopedia of World History*. We read: “The most characteristic and influential features of Babylonian religion, aside from its mythology, were the elaborate systems of magical practices [incantations] and the interpretation of omens [divination], particularly the movements and position of the heavenly bodies [astrology], the actions of animals, and the characteristics of the liver of sacrificial victims” (page 26).

All these different practices were commonplace in ancient Babylonia. The Babylonians were noted for their magic, interpreting omens, sorcery, and astrology.

And the practice of astrology — the observance of the stars, believing they guide and influence human life — is still widely observed and highly regarded TODAY!

But what difference does it make?

What God Says!

To human beings, it might not make any difference whatsoever. Some might think astrology is merely a “play toy.” Nothing to worry about — nothing to be concerned about.

If there is no true God, then perhaps it doesn’t. But there *is* a God in heaven — and you can prove He exists. You can also prove the Bible is His inspired revelation to man. (Send for our two FREE booklets, *Does God Exist?* and *The Proof of the Bible*, for the truth on these questions.)

God does not intend for man to toy with such superstitious, pagan nonsense. Notice, now, what the WORD of God has to say about the practice and observance of astrology and kindred cults!

God says, through the prophet Jeremiah: “Thus saith the LORD, *Learn* NOT

the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the SIGNS OF HEAVEN; for the heathen are dismayed at them” (Jer. 10:2).

Astrologers regard — and become fearful of — the signs of the heavens. But God says we are NOT to follow their ways! But of the false gods, the gods of astrology, God says, “But they are altogether brutish and foolish: the stock is a doctrine of vanities” (v. 8). Foolishness and vanity — that is what God calls the worship of the stars!

Think for a moment! How utterly absurd it is to believe that chunks of rock, hardly visible millions of miles away, can exercise influence on human beings! How foolish to believe that gaseous orbs, which are barely perceptible in the night sky, can alter human life, affect the destinies of nations, and determine whether a man should become a singer or a carpenter!

What does Almighty God say about this absurd deception? “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves,” God tells His people, “. . . lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the *sun*, and the *moon*, and the *STARS*, *even all the host of heaven*, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them . . .” (Deut. 4:15, 19). God forbade such absurd, hideous idolatry!

Notice further! God commanded His people, “If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, EITHER THE SUN, OR MOON, OR ANY OF THE HOST OF HEAVEN, which I have *not* commanded; And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, *it be true*, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman . . . and shalt stone them with stones, till they die” (Deut. 17:2-5).

How seriously God regards these things! They are no mere trifle with Him!

God further commanded His people

Israel, in ancient times, “When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt NOT LEARN to do after the abominations of *those nations*. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times [astrologer], or an enchanter, or a witch, Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee. Thou shalt be perfect with the LORD thy God. For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto *observers of times* [astrologers], and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do” (Deut. 18:9-14).

Almighty God, the TRUE Creator God of the entire UNIVERSE — the God who created and made the heavenly bodies, the stars and planets — unequivocally CONDEMNS the false worship of ASTROLOGY!

God condemns all the occult, mysterious rites of the ancient Babylonians and other heathen. God condemns divination, augury, sorcery, witchcraft, fortune-telling, palm reading, consulting with mediums, and the other *pagan* practices which came out of Babylon — including the prediction of great political or physical changes from the aspects of the planets, eclipses, or motions of the clouds. God promises that any peoples that shall look to the stargazers rather than to God, *shall fall!* (Isa. 47:12-14.)

Astrology is in fact a diabolical deception. It purports to tell you why you were born — what your purpose is in life — and how to achieve success in life. But it can do NONE of these things.

If you really want to know the answers to these questions, then write for our FREE booklet called *The Seven Laws of Success*. This booklet explains what your purpose in life is, how to make a success of it, and the principles which really determine success. □