

## **Questions about Astrology & The Bible**

One of the biggest businesses in America is astrology. There are over 175,000 part-time astrologers and 10,000 full-time. And over 2,000 newspapers carry daily horoscopes. The popularity of astrology is everywhere, with astrological signs on T-shirts, coffee cups and jewelry. Now we have those Television commercials of 1-800 and 1-900 numbers with quick astrological counsel. Something this popular naturally leads to questions. With common sense, and with faith in God's Word, there are some answers:

### **1. Why should the current revival of interest in the occult and astrology cause us concern?**

The respectability and credibility so many people are giving to the occult and to astrology should alarm us for at least two reasons: (1) Because of what the Bible says about sorcery (Gal. 5:20 and Rev. 21:8), and (2) It is a troubling fact of history, that outbreaks of occultism frequently accompany the collapse of a civilization; one example is, the Roman Empire. [From the Seattle Daily Times, Sept. 8, 1975 - "History has shown that astrology thrives best in times of religious decline and of social unrest."

### **2. What is astrology?**

It operates on the premise that the destinies of nations and individuals are determined by the relative positions of the stars and planets. This information and the guidance one seeks is allegedly available through the charts drawn up by professional astrologers. [Astronomy is not the same as astrology. Astronomy is the objective, scientific study of the stars and planets, with a view toward understanding their motion and relation; NOT with a view toward their alleged influence on human conduct!

### **3. Is astrology upheld by scientists?**

No! In 1975, a statement endorsed by 186 prominent scientists challenged "the pretentious claims of astrological charlatans." The Associated Press report of this went on to say: "There is simply no scientific basis for astrology, which deals with the presumed influences of stars, planets and other heavenly bodies on human affairs..," (Wichita Eagle, Sept. 3, 1975).

### **4. But isn't it true that astrologers have made some amazing predictions that turned out to be true?**

No! In May of 1974, the Reader's Digest reported on a survey of the predictions made by the three most popular British astrologers in one year. Of these three popular astrologers, the "TOP ACHIEVER" was right only 12 times out of 30. The third "seer" had only 4 correct guesses out of 30 tries. Further, some of their "visions" are only educated predictions, based on currently available data. Thus, they do not have an impressive track record.

### **5. Where did astrology come from?**

According to the Bible, it came from the eastern, idolatrous nations. God warned His people about this influence (see Deut. 4:19; 17:2, 3, 5; 18:9-12; Isa. 2:6; 47:13, 14).

### **6. Are the concepts and messages of astrology cohesive and united?**

Astrology is a strange, divided, "mixed bag" of conflicting messages. Check what your astrological message is for today as it reads in four or five different charts; see if you can discern a unified message.

### **7. What has God said about all this?**

"And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your

God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage ... For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God ... To you it was shown, that you might know that the Lord Himself is God; there is none other besides Him," (Deut. 4:19, 24, 35). "You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; let now the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you from these things that shall come upon you. Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame; it shall not be a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before," (Isa. 47:13,14).

#### **8. Are there New Testament passages that relate to this interest in the occult and sorcery?**

Galatians 5:20 affirms that "sorcery" is a work of the flesh. The King James has the word "witchcraft," which is from the Greek, PHARMAKEIA. The word means charms, remedies, or guidance sought in drugs, incantations, star gazing and sorcery. Vines says, of PHARMAKEIA: "...primarily signified the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then, poisoning; then, sorcery ... In sorcery, the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers ..." "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," (Rev. 21:8). The Ephesians had been involved in things in the category of sorcery, but when they obeyed the gospel they burned their incantation books (Acts 19:18-20).

#### **9. Is astrology a type of revelation from God?**

No! "God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us BY HIS SON...", (Heb. 1:1,2; see, Eph. 3:1-5; Jude 3).

#### **10. Who must we turn to for the guidance we need?**

THE LORD, who is "wonderful in counsel and excellent in guidance," (Isa. 28:29). To those involved in astrology, my admonition would be: "Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail," (Jer. 7:8).

*- by Warren E. Berkley*

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### ***Changing the "Norms"***

A while back we pulled into an "old-fashioned" gas station in a small town. An attendant was waiting at the pump to serve us. He took our order, and while the gas was being pumped, he busied himself cleaning our windshield. The kids were shocked and kept saying, "He's actually cleaning our windows!" What used to be the "norm" is now so rare that it seems shocking!

The same sort of thing happens in religion. Over a period of time gradual and minor changes can lead folks far away from where they used to be. It finally gets to the point that what used to be the "norm" now seems odd, even shocking. Things that never would have been tolerated year's ago were allowed to "creep in," and now they have become totally accepted.

A good example of this gradual shift of "norms" can be seen in the matter of instrumental music. Few people realize that there was a great fight over this issue years ago - even among the denominations where it is now common. For instance, William Posey in his history entitled *The Baptist Church in the Lower Mississippi Valley* writes: "For years the Baptists fought the introduction of instrumental music into the churches ... Installation of the organ brought serious difficulties in many churches." But, if you talk to a Baptist today, he would think it very odd to even suggest a religious service without instrumental music. You see, the "norms" have changed!

It can happen to us, too - and it is. Simply observe how brethren talk and dress, where they go and what they do. Try to call them back to what used to be the "norm," and they will treat you as if you are crazy! It is apparent that many are allowing gradual changes to take them farther and farther away from the absolutes that God has stated in His Word.

We need to "ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein" (Jer. 6:1 6) - and stop drifting from God's "norms." Think!

- *by Greg Gwin*