

# ASTROLOGY, HOROSCOPES,<sup>1</sup> THE ZODIAC & THEIR DANGERS



# Info at a Glance: Astrology

Dr. John Weldon

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

**Description:** Astrology is based on the assumption that the stars and planets mysteriously influence people's lives. It teaches that this influence begins at birth and continues throughout a person's life. The *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defines astrology as "the art of judging the occult influence of the stars upon human affairs."

**Founder:** Unknown

**How does it claim to work?:** Because the heavens allegedly influence or determine our future, astrology claims to be able to "read" how the heavenly bodies affect people's lives, and so offer helpful counsel about the present and the future.

**Scientific evaluation:** Discredited

**Examples of occult potential:** Spiritism, in particular. However, a large number of occult practices are associated with astrology including cabalism, numerology, magic, and witchcraft.

**Major problem:** As an ancient pagan system of divination, astrology easily traps people in occult practices and philosophy.

**Biblical/Christian evaluation:** Astrology is prohibited by name (Isaiah 47:13) and function (divination, idolatry—Deuteronomy 4:19; 18:9-12; Jeremiah 19:13; Acts 7:42).

**Potential dangers:** The consequences of false predictions in all areas of life (finance, relationships, health, and so on), spiritistic influence, spirit-possession, or even death.

# Astrology

By Dr. John Ankerberg, Dr. John Weldon  
(from *Encyclopedia of Cults and New Religions*, Harvest House, 1999)

## INTRODUCTION AND INFLUENCE

Approximately a billion people worldwide have some degree of faith in astrology. Science writer, engineer, and astrology critic Lawrence Jerome has written, "The twentieth century has seen a tremendous upswing in the fortunes of astrologers. Easily one quarter of the nearly four billion people living on the earth believe in and follow astrology to some extent."<sup>1</sup>

In America, polls variously estimate the acceptance of astrology at between 20 million to 40 million people. A Gallup poll cited by the *National and International Religion Report* for July 4, 1988, estimated that ten percent of evangelical Christians believe in astrology. Clearly, astrology is not just a passing fad. In the United States alone, it grosses billions of dollars each year.

Not even many religions can claim to have the influence that astrology has. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* observes that astrology has "a sometimes extensive... influence in many civilizations both ancient and modern."<sup>2</sup> Professor Franz Cumont, a leading authority on ancient astrology and curator of the Royal Museum of Antiquities at Brussels,<sup>3</sup> has stated that "up to modern times [astrology] has exercised over Asia and Europe a wider dominion than any religion has ever achieved... [and it has] exercised an endless influence on the creeds and ideas of the most diverse peoples...."<sup>4</sup>

In the United States, back in 1955, there was a revival of interest in astrology. At that time well-known occultist and philosopher Manly P. Hall bragged, "Astrology today has probably a greater number of advocates than ever before in its long and illustrious history.... Astrology and all its branches is sweeping over America in a wave of enthusiasm."<sup>5</sup> In our own day, astrologers West and Toonder have concluded that astrology currently "enjoys a popularity unmatched since the decline of Rome."<sup>6</sup> Astronomers Culver and Ianna refer to this modern interest as "the greatest resurgence in astrology" since the Renaissance.<sup>7</sup>

Bernard Gittelsohn, former public relations consultant representing the West German government, the European Common Market, and the U.S. Department of Commerce, is now a New Age human behavior researcher. Gittelsohn has calculated that the circulation of newspapers and magazines carrying astrological columns in the United States, Europe, Japan, and South America is over 700 million.<sup>8</sup> Concerning France and Germany he states: "In both... it is common for companies to have an astrologer and graphologist on staff, to be consulted in matters of hiring, firing, and promotions. I learned this first hand...."<sup>9</sup> A Cable News Network (CNN) report cited astrologers who made the incredible claim that "at least 300 of the Fortune 500 [companies] use astrologers in one way or another."<sup>10</sup>

Even our days of the week are reminders of the influence of astrology:

- Monday = moon day
- Tuesday = Mars' day (day of Tiw—the Norse Tyr—the Martian god of war)
- Wednesday = Mercury's day (Woden's day, the Norse Odin, god of the runes)
- Thursday = Jupiter's day (Thor's day, the Nordic Jupiter, god of Thunder)
- Friday = Venus' day (Frigg's day, wife of Odin, goddess of marriage)
- Saturday = Saturn's day
- Sunday = sun day

An examination of the books in print on astrology reveals that this occult art of divination has been applied to literally hundreds of subjects, including pets, babies and children, gambling, cooking, medicine, criminology, dating and marriage, biochemistry, meditation, sex, politics, economics, psychology, feminism, and the Bible.<sup>11</sup> No wonder astrologers confidently assert “there is no area of human experience to which astrology cannot be applied.”<sup>12</sup> Many occult practices (e.g., numerology and tarot cards) have logical connections to astrology; many world religions and religious cults have their own brands of astrology (e.g., Hinduism and theosophy). Astrologers have also attempted to integrate many of the sciences (e.g., medicine and psychology) with their practice.<sup>13</sup>

In the field of education, astrology is offered for credit on some high school and college campuses.<sup>14</sup> In 1972, the spiritist, Rosicrucian, and astrologer, Mae Wilson-Ludlam, taught the first accredited high school astrology course.<sup>15</sup> But now astrology’s influence extends to classes taught at Emory University in Atlanta,<sup>16</sup> Stanford University,<sup>17</sup> the University of California Extension,<sup>18</sup> and to the granting of Ph.D.s in astrology from some universities, such as the University of Pittsburgh.<sup>19</sup>

In 1988, astrology made headlines when it was exposed as influencing the highest level of U.S. national government, the White House. According to Chief of Staff Donald Regan in *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington*, “Virtually every major move and decision the Reagans made” was based upon the astrological advice of Joan Quigley, Mrs. Reagan’s astrologer.”<sup>20</sup> The effect this had on people was mixed. But as noted astronomers Culver and Ianna in their text *Astrology: True or False—a Scientific Evaluation* observed: “Astrologers... have hailed the acceptance of astrology at the highest levels of government in one of the most powerful nations on earth as a confirmation of its legitimacy.”<sup>21</sup>

What is clear from all of this is that around the world astrology is widely influential today. It has had, and continues to have, a powerful impact in the lives and thinking of hundreds of millions of people.

## BASIC TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Despite its popularity, astrology is confusing to the average person because of its complexity and many unfamiliar words.

The *zodiac* is an imaginary “belt” of sky comprising the 12 astrological signs that the ancients illustrated by mythological figures, both human and animal. In other words, the mythological “signs” of the zodiac are overlaid upon the actual clusters, or constellations, of stars. And importantly, the “signs” exist irrespective of the actual positions of the constellations to which they are said to refer.

The *signs* are the 12 “signs of the zodiac,” also known as “sun signs.” Everyone is said to be born under one of these 12 signs (Pisces the fish, Leo the lion, Gemini the twins, Taurus the bull, and so on). Astrologers often group the signs according to psychological aspects or types.

The *houses* are the 12 divisions of the zodiac that are said to correspond symbolically to every area of life. The houses are also imaginary, and the planets are said to travel through the houses, influencing each area of life as they do.

The *horoscope* is a “map” of the heavens for the time of birth, or for any time thereafter. On the horoscope, or chart, an astrologer plots the positions of the planets, signs, and houses, and then from this “map,” after interpreting numerous complex rules, many of which vary greatly from one astrologer to another, the astrologer gives a “reading.”

Technically, a *delineation* is the name given to an astrological “reading.” This is an

interpretation resulting from the combination of two or more astrological principles. *Analysis* or *synthesis* is the “complete” interpretation of the whole chart.

There is also the concept of *rulership*. Astrologers believe that each planet “rules” a sign of the Zodiac. For example, Mercury rules, or influences, Gemini and Virgo; Venus is said to rule Taurus and Libra; Saturn Capricorn; Neptune Pisces; and so on. In addition, the signs and their ruling planets are related to certain houses.

Another important term is *aspect*, which refers to the angles between the planets as plotted on a horoscope chart. Certain angles are interpreted as “good” and other angles are “bad,” while still others are “neutral” and acquire their “goodness” or “badness” from other astrological indicators. For example, two planets angled at 90 degrees to each other (called a “square”) is considered a bad influence. However, two planets angled at 120 degrees to each other (called a “trine”) is considered a good influence.

In addition to “good” or “bad” angles, astrological delineations must also take into consideration whether or not the planets are “good” or “bad.” Saturn and Mars, for example, are considered “bad”; Venus and Jupiter, “good.” But what is the basis for these angles and planets being defined as “good” or “bad”? The astrologers don’t know; they simply accept these definitions as they have been handed down. Some astrologers say that these definitions result from thousands of years of observing human experience. Others no longer use the “good” or “bad” designations. They have substituted milder descriptions, such as “externalization” and “internalization,” “active” and “passive,” “hard” and “soft” “difficult” and “easy.” Still, there is no one final, authoritative tradition that has come down through history that all astrologers follow. This is why there are many conflicting astrological theories.<sup>22</sup>

*Transits* are another essential concept. By determining when a planet crosses, or transits, a specific point on the horoscope chart, the astrologer feels he can advise a client as to “favorable” or “unfavorable” conditions. Just as there are good and bad planets and angles, there are good and bad times for undertaking activities. This was why Hitler planned his war strategy by the stars and why other world leaders throughout history have leaned on advice of the stars.

It is evident from all of this that astrological interpretations are not only complicated but highly subjective. How does the astrologer know that Venus or a trine is good, that Mars or a square is bad? How does he know that the first house represents personality, the second house money, the third house communication, the eighth house death, the tenth house occupation? On what factual basis do astrologers make their assertions?

Some astrologers claim their definitions are derived from numerology, from the meanings allegedly inherent in numbers, which are then related to astrological theory. But if so, where is a factual basis for the numerological meanings? Why don’t all astrologers agree on this? There is also disagreement concerning how to divide the 12 houses. A given house for one astrologer may be a different house for another; therefore, entirely different influences would be suggested.<sup>23</sup>

Astrological interpretations also rest on other questionable foundations. An astrologer can choose from up to 30 different zodiacs,<sup>24</sup> 28 different signs,<sup>25</sup> and ten different house systems.<sup>26</sup>

Even after wading through all this, the astrologer’s headache has still not ended. He must choose whether to use the concepts of *nodes*, *triplicities*, and *quadruplicities*. The moon’s nodes relate to the intersection of the moon’s orbit with the apparent path of the sun among the stars (the ecliptic). These supposed “intersections” are said to exert certain influences. And there are also the influences from the nodes of the planets, the points at

which the orbits of the planets intersect the ecliptic. *Triplicities* refer to how the four astrological elements of fire, earth, air, and water each relate to three signs. For example, Libra, Gemini, and Aquarius are “air” signs. *Quadruplicities* refer to how the three astrological characteristics called “cardinal,” “fixed,” and “mutable” each relate to four signs. For example, Leo, Scorpio, Aquarius, and Taurus are “fixed” signs. And, as you may suspect by now, the concepts of nodes, triplicities, and quadruplicities, like all other astrological principles, have many diverse meanings and interpretations.

If all this is not enough mental gymnastics, the astrologer can also consider *dignities* and *debilities*; that is, how the influence of a planet is increased (dignity) or decreased (debility) by its placement on the chart. There are dozens of such conditions.<sup>27</sup> He also determines whether the signs are positive (active) or negative (passive). And each astrologer must pay special attention to a client’s moon sign, and to the rising, or ascending, sign.<sup>28</sup>

And after all this, the astrologer still must choose which method of prediction he will use. There are three common methods: 1) the previously mentioned transits, 2) primary directions, and 3) secondary progressions.<sup>29</sup> And, “No phase of astrology is subject to such differences of opinion” as the means of prediction.<sup>30</sup>

Even with all of this, consider that Noel Tyl wrote a 12-volume series, *The Principles and Practices of Astrology*, which is considered introductory material! No wonder there is no one final astrological tradition that all astrologers follow. It is understandable why there are so many conflicting astrological theories. Yet, millions of people still commit their lives to following these unproven assumptions.

### Notes:

1. Lawrence E. Jerome, *Astrology Disproved*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1977, p. 1.
2. David Pingree, “Astrology,” *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. vol. 2 Macropaedia, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, p. 219.
3. Franz Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, New York: Dover, 1960, p. IX.
4. Ibid., pp. XI, XIII.
5. Manly P. Hall, *The Story of Astrology*, Los Angeles: Philosophical Research Society, 1975, p. 9.
6. John Anthony West and Jan Gerhard Toonder, *The Case for Astrology*, Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books, 1973, p. 1.
7. R. B. Culver and P. A. Ianna, *The Gemini Syndrome: A Scientific Evaluation of Astrology*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1984 Rev., p. IX.
8. Bernard Gittelson, *Intangible Evidence*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987, p. 338.
9. Ibid., pp. 63-64.
10. In Kurt Goedelman, “Seeking Guidance from the Stars of Heaven,” *Personal Freedom Outreach Newsletter*, July-September 1988, p. 5. The figure is probably exaggerated, though a significant number of major corporations do use astrology in some fashion.
11. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?* Eugene OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1989, pp. 19-20.
12. Derek and Julia Parker, *The Compleat [sic] Astrologer*, New York: Bantam, 1978, p. 60.
13. Robert Carl Jansky, *Astrology, Nutrition and Health*, Rockport, MA: Para Research, 1978; Omar V. Garrison, *Medical Astrology: How the Stars Influence Your Health*, New York: Warner Paperback Library, 1973; C. Norman Shealy, *Occult Medicine Can Save Your Life*, New York: Bantam, 1977; Peter Damian, *The Twelve Healers of the Zodiac*:

- The Astrology Handbook of the Bach Flower Remedies*, York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1986; Marcia Stark, *Astrology: Key to Holistic Health*, Birmingham, MI: Seek It Publications, 1987; Kathryn Davis Henry, *Medical Astrology: Physiognomy and Astrological Quotations*, privately published, 1978; Robert C. Jansky, *Modern Medical Astrology*, Van Nuys, CA: Astro-Analytics Publication, 1978, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev.; Henry F. Darling, *Essentials of Medical Astrology*, Tempe AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1981.
14. Carol Cocciardi ed., *The Psychic Yellow Pages*, Saratoga, CA: Out of the Sky, 1977, p. 130.
  15. American Federation of Astrologers, *50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary AFA 1988 Convention Program*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1988, p. 198.
  16. Ibid., p. 175.
  17. Carol Cocciardi, *The Psychic Yellow Pages*, p. 133.
  18. Ibid., p. 125.
  19. Letter from Dr. Atlas Laster, Jr., September 23, 1988, containing a copy of a letter by astrologer Harry Darling M.D., approving his Ph.D. dissertation on astrology submitted to the University of Pittsburgh ("On the Psychology of Astrology: The Use of Genethliacal Astrology in Psychological Counseling," 1976).
  20. Donald T. Regan, *For the Record: From Wall Street to Washington*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988, p. 3; "Good Heavens!" *Time* magazine, May 16, 1988; "The President's Astrologers," *People Weekly*, May 23, 1988, and *Moody Monthly*, July-August, 1988, p. 10; Brooks Alexander, "My Stars!: Astrology in the White House," *Spiritual Counterfeits Project*, Berkeley, CA, 1988; John Weldon, "Astrology: An Inside Look," Part 1, *News & Views*, August 1988.
  21. Roger B. Culver and Philip A. Ianna, *Astrology: True or False, a Scientific Evaluation*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books (1988 update of their *The Gemini Syndrome*), p. IX.
  22. Ankerberg, Weldon, *Astrology*, pp. 56-60.
  23. Culver, Ianna, *The Gemini Syndrome*, pp. 62-64.
  24. Cyril Fagan, *The Solunars Handbook*, Tucson, AZ: Clancy Publications, 1976, p. 25.
  25. Culver, Ianna, *The Gemini Syndrome*, p. 87.
  26. Richard Nolle, *Interpreting Astrology: New Techniques and Perspectives*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986, p. 64.
  27. Culver and Ianna, *The Gemini Syndrome*, p. 8.
  28. Nicholas deVore, *Encyclopedia of Astrology*, Totowa, NJ: Littlefield Adams & Co., 1976, pp. 17, 338.
  29. Ibid., p. 315.
  30. Ibid., p. 121.

# Astrology—Part Two

By Dr. John Ankerberg, Dr. John Weldon

## DIFFICULTIES IN CHART INTERPRETATION

Interpreting the horoscope chart is like interpreting Rorschach “inkblots.” Not only are there all manner of inkblots, but different interpretations for the same inkblot. In the same way there are any number of factors or variables by which to interpret a horoscope chart, and astrologers disagree on many principles of interpretation. The reason for this is that their interpretations spring from their astrological schooling, their personalities, goals, and purposes, as well as many other factors. Joanne Sanders, an astrologer and coordinator of the Washington, D.C., Astrology Forum, believes that astrologers’ “readings vary with the differences in their philosophical outlooks.”<sup>1</sup>

There are several basic reasons why such wide disagreement over interpretations exists. A horoscope comprises 30 to 40 major factors, and the astrologer must also interpret another 60 to 70 minor indicators. As a result, there are almost an infinite number of possible combinations, permutations, and meanings.

Doris Chase Doane, president of the American Federation of Astrologers, has admitted that the chief cause that up-and-coming astrologers fail their entrance examination is their inability to properly erect, or construct, a chart (to accurately list and plot all of the indicators). She confesses, “*This is the most common reason—the Pitfall—for students failing in this and higher examinations. They do not know how to erect a chart accurately.*”<sup>2</sup> She has further calculated the *least* possible number of different combinations resulting from the most basic or simple chart. Given 12 signs, 10 planets (8 plus the sun and moon), 12 houses, and 10 aspects, she arrives at the figure of 5.4 times  $10^{68}$  possible minimum combinations. This number is roughly equivalent to the estimated number of atoms in the known universe!<sup>3</sup>

Romanian astrologer Sir John Manolesco has also illustrated the complexity an astrologer faces. He has concluded that of the tens of thousands of astrologers in the Western world there are less than a hundred who can claim to have mastered the subject “There are at least 45 factors—planets, houses, aspects, strengths and weaknesses, ascendant, critical degrees, sun and moon polarities, constellations, etc.—which combine and influence one another in a thousand different ways. In this labyrinth of complexities, the average (still worse, the untrained) astrologer is as puzzled as his client.”<sup>4</sup>

Keep in mind that each astrologer must also obey the cardinal rule of chart interpretation: No indicator can be judged in isolation from any other factor. But it is virtually impossible for any astrologer to know all the indicators, to synthesize the chart “in context,” for he knows only a fraction of the total astrological “reality” before him. And how may any reading be truly accurate when one is faced with contradictory interpretations of the data?<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps an analogy will be helpful. Think of a huge, detailed map of the United States. The facts to be remembered on the map may include 50 states, 5000 counties, and at least 6000 chief cities and towns. Then there are highways, rivers, mountains, lakes, parks, and points of interest. In addition, the map’s key contains many symbols for interpreting the map properly (e.g., symbols for boundaries, distances, city sizes, types of road).

If this map were an astrologer’s chart, how would a person interpret it if he discovered that other maps contradicted this map? What if he discovered no agreement as to the



number of states, counties, cities, or their boundaries? What if each map defined the symbols differently? What could he conclude about using any of the maps? Wouldn't he conclude this to be a hopeless situation?

Many astrologers recognize the problems, and to get around them they turn to another source of information. "Before interpreting a chart, it is very good to do one thing: either silently, or aloud, ask for clear guidance from the powers that you choose to create... from your higher self, from the divine... ask, and you shall receive...."<sup>6</sup> The astrologer's only option, then, is either to guess or to trust in a supposed "higher" power, or psychic revelations, to sort things out. We will see below that this often means spiritistic guidance.

To further complicate matters of interpretation, astrologers have different kinds of charts to choose from, all with varying indicators and rules. One authority lists 14 different charts, such as the "solar return," "lunar return," "solar equilibrium," "ingress," and "johndro."<sup>7</sup> Theoretically, there are as many different charts as there are individual schools or systems of astrology, and since each system or school can develop its own chart, the number of different charts must number in the hundreds.<sup>8</sup> And then there are different types of astrology, such as horary, natal, mundane, electional, medical, and so on. This is why leading authorities advise the following: "As authorities vary in approach to, and rules for delineating the horary chart, you can best prepare yourself by studying one authority in depth."<sup>9</sup> And, "If it works for you, use it."<sup>10</sup>

Viewed worldwide, astrological contradictions are even more apparent. James Braha observes that in India "a seemingly infinite number of rules and astrological techniques have been developed by the Indians."<sup>11</sup> Over and over again he states that they contradict Western methods. In ancient Babylon, the practice of "draconic astrology" (still used today) presents entirely different beliefs, practices and sets of rules.<sup>12</sup> In China there are entirely different astrologies.<sup>13</sup> In Mexico, "Aztec astrology" is different from the above, and so it goes.<sup>14</sup> Within each of these schools, or systems, subsystems also contradict each other

Furthermore, every chart indicator, potentially, has not only an exoteric (outer) but also an esoteric (inner) reality, which supposedly unveils "the hidden meaning."<sup>15</sup> Astrologers believe that "each planet in a sign holds a multitude of implications. Besides each sign having an exoteric ruler, considered to be the pure outer expression of the sign's characteristics, a sign has an esoteric ruler."<sup>16</sup>

How did such a hopeless situation originate? Astrologer Richard Nolle describes the educational "evolution" of an astrologer, which we summarize as: a) begin by learning the "traditional" meanings as they are given (but these are contradictory and the student soon realizes this); therefore, b) assimilate the meanings into "our own frame of reference" to "develop our own particular and unique astrological perspective." In other words, there are no objective standards. Believe whatever you wish. Use the standard text interpretations (which vary), but then feel free to reject the standard interpretations and discover "the answer is within yourselves," and you will be able to "make your own discoveries."<sup>17</sup> This is why Nolle acknowledges there are as many different astrologies as there are astrologers,<sup>18</sup> and that chart interpretation does not utilize "objective laws" but "intuitive selections."<sup>19</sup>

Someone has satirically said that the process of becoming an astrologer is one of beginning with a state of initial confusion, leading to a state of greater confusion, which is finally rationalized by "intuitive insight." Clearly, the theories of astrology, the symbols, the indicators, and so on carry no ultimate definitive meaning. They are merely vehicles to stimulate the thinking of the astrologer. From that point on it is cosmic roulette as to astrological interpretation.

**Notes:**

1. Joanne Sanders, "Connecting Therapy to the Heavens," *The Common Boundary*, January-February 1987, p. 14.
2. Doris Chase Doane, *How to Prepare and Pass an Astrologers Certificate Exam*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1985, p. 38.
3. Doris Chase Doane, *Astrology: Thirty Years Research*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1985, p. 1.
4. Sir John Manolesco, *Scientific Astrology*, New York: Pinnacle Books, 1975, p. 130.
5. David and Gina Cochrane, *New Foundations for Astrology*, Alachua, FL: Astrological Counseling and Research, 1977, p. 3.
6. Marcus Allen, *Astrology for the New Age: An Intuitive Approach*, Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1979, p. 104.
7. Mae R. Wilson-Ludlam, *Interpret Your Rays Using Astrology*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986, p. 118.
8. Check the "Astrology" section in a bookstore for numerous examples.
9. Doane, *How to Prepare*, p. 49.
10. Joan McEvers, ed., *Spiritual, Metaphysical and New Trends in Modern Astrology*, St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988, p. 121.
11. Sabian Publishing Society, *Astrology Books by Marc Edmund Jones: A Commentary*, Stanwood, WA: Sabian Publishing Society, 1987, p. X.
12. Pamela A. F. Crane, *Draconic Astrology: An Introduction to the Use of Draconic Charts in Astrological Interpretation*, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, England: Aquarian Press, 1987, pp. 1-58, 95-123, 143-189.
13. Derek Walters, *Chinese Astrology*, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, England: The Aquarian Press, 1987; Sage Mantreswara, *Jataka Phaladeepika or Hindu Astrology's Light on the Fruits of Action*, Trans. K. N. Saraswathy, Madras, South India: Kadalangudi Publications, 1983; James T. Braha, *Ancient Hindu Astrology for the Modern Western Astrologer*, North Miami, FL: Hermetician Press, 1986.
14. K. C. Tunnicliffe, *Aztec Astrology*, Essex, Great Britain: L. N. Fowler & Co., Ltd., 1979, pp. 1-90.
15. Wilson-Ludlam, *Interpret Your Rays*, p. 34.
16. Ibid.
17. Richard Nolle, *Interpreting Astrology: New Techniques and Perspectives*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986, p. 1-2.
18. Richard Nolle, *Critical Astrology: Investigating the Cosmic Connection*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1980, p. 2.
19. Nolle, *Interpreting Astrology*, p. 84.

# Astrology—Part Three

## Alleged Biblical Evidence for Astrology

By Dr. John Ankerberg, Dr. John Weldon

We now turn to another area which astrologers claim supports their views: the Bible.

Joseph Goodavage, author of *Astrology: the Space Age Science* and *Write Your Own Horoscope*; says, “The Bible is full of the philosophy of astrology.”<sup>1</sup> Jeff Mayo, founder of the British “Mayo School of Astrology,” remarks, “The Bible is full of astrological references.”<sup>2</sup> This view is shared by many other astrologers as well.<sup>3</sup>

The following are views of the Bible commonly held by astrologers. We have supplied a brief comment after each.

1. The Bible is not the Word of God but the words of great men of history. (What is forgotten is that the Bible claims to be the divinely inspired Word of God; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; cf. *A Course in Miracles Volume 3, Manual for Teachers*, Huntington Station, NY: Foundation for Inner Peace, 1977.)
2. The Bible has been corrupted over the years; thus, many of its alleged astrological and reincarnation teachings have been deleted. (Where is the slightest bit of evidence that shows such material was once in the Bible?)
3. Parts of the Bible were written plainly “in code” and only astrologers understand that code. (Most scholars believe the Bible was written plainly in Hebrew and Greek, since the nation of Israel and the early Christians would have had a hard time deciphering a foreign “code.”)
4. Because the Bible was written by great men and because it has been so influential throughout history, some of these men must have been astrologers. Astrology itself is so important and influential, it is difficult to believe none of the biblical authors practiced this great art. (This is still an argument from thin air. Not only that, it completely ignores the fact that Moses, Isaiah, and other Old Testament prophets condemned astrology.)

Now let us take some examples from the Bible itself. In the material below, we will quote the Bible passage alleged to teach astrology; second, we will examine the astrologers’ claim about the passage; third, we will give the Christian response to that claim. (Note: all references in this section are from the NIV.)\*

**Genesis 1:14.** “God said, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years.’”

By teaching that the word “signs” here indicates heavenly bodies (planets), given by God as astrological signs, astrologers claim the Bible is affirming astrology. Some astrologers assert that the “signs” here refer to Aries, Taurus, Gemini, etc. However, the word “signs” here cannot refer to the astrological signs. In Genesis 1:14-15, the word “signs” is described and defined: “To separate the day from the night,... [and] to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” (See also Genesis 1:16.)

---

\*The authors would like to thank Dr. Sherman Kanagy of Purdue University for some helpful comments in this section.

**Genesis 37:9-11.** “I [Joseph] had another dream, and this time the sun and moon and 11 stars were bowing down to me:”

Astrologers believe the reference to the sun, moon, and 11 stars proves that Joseph and his brothers believed in astrology. However, there is not the slightest indication that they have anything to do with astrology, or even with astronomy. The sun, moon, and 11 stars are used symbolically to refer to Joseph’s parents and his brothers. This is the clear statement of the text itself. (See also Genesis 49:3-27.)

**Numbers 24:17.** “A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.”

Astrologers claim that the star coming out of Jacob proves there was astrological belief in the days of Moses. But the reference has nothing to do with astrology. The word “star” is metaphorical for a person, the Messiah, who will be a descendant of Jacob. Additional proof of this interpretation is that the text refers not only to a star but to a scepter (a ruler), who will rise out of Israel. In other words, the same person who comes from the line of Jacob will also be a ruler.

**Judges 3:20.** “From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera.”

Astrologers claim this is a reference to the influence of the stars on Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army. But to do this, they must interpret a poetic or figurative passage literally. These words occur in the “Song of Deborah,” which is a poetic victory song describing Israel’s victory over her enemies. (See Judges 4:7; 5:20-21; Joshua 10:11-14.)

**Job 9:9-10; 38:31-33.** “He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south. He performs wonders that cannot be fathomed, miracles that cannot be numbered.”

“Can you bind the beautiful Pleiades? Can you loose the cords of Orion? Can you bring forth the constellations in their seasons or lead out the Bear with its cubs? Do you know the laws of the heavens? Can you set up God’s dominion over the earth?”

Astrologers claim that the mere mention of the constellations here is evidence that the Bible supports astrology. But this is nonsense. Job 9:9-10 refers to God as the Maker of various constellations. The ancient Israelites had limited astronomical knowledge, but they were nonetheless aware that it was God who had created the constellations and who was in charge of the universe.

**Isaiah 13:10; cf. Joel 2:31; Luke 21:25.** “The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light”

Astrologers believe that these references to the sun and moon being darkened, not giving their light (turning to blood), prove the Bible supports astrology. But all of these references refer to the day of the Lord, the second coming of Jesus Christ. These events have nothing to do with astrology. If astrologers claim them for today, it is obvious that the sun and the moon are not darkened and have not turned to blood. Also, Isaiah 13:7 points out that in that day of the Lord the stars and constellations will not show their light. Would any astrologer claim this occurs today?

**Jeremiah 10:2.** “Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them.”

Astrologers claim the reference to “signs in the sky” is an astrological reference. We agree that this passage is speaking about astrology; the problem for astrologers is that the passage rebukes trust in astrology. The Bible condemns “the ways of the nations,” which refers to their astrological practices. The text also says the nations were terrified by *literal* signs in the sky, not *symbolic* signs in astrological charts. The ancients were terrified by eclipses, since they thought the moon was being “eaten” by demons. Meteors and comets were also seen as portents of evil. In the Bible God tells His people not to be terrified by literal events in the sky, because they are merely things that He has made. He is in control over all things. The context of Jeremiah 10 is to exalt the true God over the idols and the superstitious fears (such as astrology) that control their lives.

**Daniel 4:26.** “Your kingdom will be restored to you when you [Nebuchadnezzar] acknowledge that Heaven rules.”

Astrologers claim that this passage reveals that “Heaven” (the stars and planets) “rules” (influences) over the affairs of men. But it teaches no such thing. Daniel was no astrologer (see the following). The word “heaven” here is used as a symbol for God. Thus, in Daniel 2:37-38, Daniel tells Nebuchadnezzar that it was the God of heaven, not the stars, who gave him dominion over the Babylonian empire.

**Matthew 2:1-11.** “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.’... After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.”

Astrologers claim that this means the Bible supports astrology. But a careful examination of this passage reveals:

- The star actually moved because it preceded the Magi.
- In some unknown manner the star was able to indicate the exact place Jesus and His parents were staying.
- The star apparently was lost from sight for a period of time, and then became visible again.
- The star seems to have been visible only to the Magi.

This was not a normal star but a miracle from God to guide and direct the Magi to Jesus. This was a temporary phenomenon and had no other purpose than stated. Certainly it had no astrological meaning. If the only purpose for the star was to lead the Magi to Christ, this would also explain why they alone appeared to have seen it.

Astrologers have claimed these Magi were astrologers, but their conclusion is not proven. That these men are mentioned favorably, and that God deals with them especially in relationship to His Son, indicates that they were probably not astrologers. The term “magi” primarily means “wise men,” and astrology was part of the practice and interest of some “wise men,” but certainly not of all. Nothing in this passage condones or approves the practice of astrology.

**The Book of Daniel.** Astrologers cite the book of Daniel as proof of God’s acceptance of astrology because God made Daniel the head of the astrologers and magicians in

Babylon (Daniel 2:48). If Daniel was the head of all the Babylonian wise men, it is assumed that he was proficient in astrology. After all, Babylon was widely known for its astrological practices.

There are several astrological misconceptions here. First, the biblical account of Daniel explicitly attributes all of Daniel's success to God alone, not to his alleged practice of astrology or devotion to the stars (Daniel 1:17; 2:27-28; 4:17-18). Second, Daniel was a godly man who, according to his own testimony, abhorred the idolatrous and evil practices of Babylon (Daniel 1:8; 4:27). Third, it is unthinkable that God would have permitted Daniel to engage in the very practices He condemned, and for which the nation itself was now under judgment. Fourth, that Daniel did not embrace astrology is seen in the fact that he exposed the failures of the Babylonian astrologers with the true knowledge given by God.

Far from endorsing astrology, Daniel rejected it and pointed men to the counsel of God. The entire book of Daniel reveals the uselessness of astrology and stands against it. In Daniel, astrologers have a 100 percent failure rate when compared with the words of the one true God (Daniel 2:27-28; 4:7; 5:7-9,12-13,15).

Here is a list of biblical passages that strongly condemn astrology. (Note: In several of the passages, the pagan gods Molech, Astarte (the Asherah pole), and Baal were associated with worship of the heavens as well as human sacrifice.) Leviticus 18:21; Leviticus 20:1-6; Deuteronomy 4:19; Deuteronomy 17:2-5; Deuteronomy 18:9-11; 2 Kings 17:16; 2 Kings 21:5-6; 2 Kings 23:4,11; 2 Kings 23:24; Isaiah 47:13-14; Jeremiah 7:18; Jeremiah 8:1,2; Jeremiah 19:13; Ezekiel 8:10-11,16; Amos 5:25-26; Zephaniah 1:4-6; Acts 7:42; 1 Corinthians 10:20; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 2:8,20.

Astrology is rejected in the Bible because it is futile and worthless, because it includes involvement with occult powers, and because, as we will see, it is a form of idolatry (worshiping the creation rather than the Creator). Thus, astrology is seen to have no power to save men from their sins; it opens people to demonic deception, and it robs God of the glory that is due Him alone.

The assessment of Drs. Bjornstad and Johnson are correct: "Absolutely NO scriptural passage supports astrology, although several indicate awareness of its existence and that of the accompanying astral worship. Moreover, not a single reference even indicates tolerance of this art."<sup>4</sup>

## **The Astrologers' Responses**

Many modern (especially "Christian") astrologers agree that God condemns *worshipping* the stars, as that would be idolatry, but they claim that they are not advocating worship of the stars; rather, they are simply taking advantage of the help and information God has made available through the stars. Let's examine this view.

In Exodus 20, the Ten Commandments are listed. Astrology violates the first two commandments: "You shall have no other gods before me," and, "You shall not bow down to them or worship them." Throughout history, astrologers have actually bowed down to the stars and worshiped them, and even today this occurs in various non-Western nations. But those astrologers who do not literally bow down before the stars nevertheless serve them, which violates the second commandment

By definition, worship includes the idea of religious devotion and reverence for an object, whether living (a god) or dead (an idol). Many astrologers are pantheists, people who believe the universe is living and that it is divine. The stars and planets are revered as part of the larger divine universe. The alleged power of the stars and planets over their

lives evokes feelings of religious awe and devotion. To serve means “to perform duties for, to give obedience and reverent honor to, to wait upon.” All astrologers serve the heavens in this manner. That is, the positions of the stars are dutifully recorded and the information derived from them is carefully analyzed and religiously obeyed. The heavens are honored for their power as the obedient astrologer trustingly waits upon their “advice.” And as the apostle Paul tells us, we become a slave to the thing we obey (Romans 6:16).

**Notes:**

1. Joseph F. Goodavage, *Astrology: The Space Age Science*, New York: Signet, 1967, p. XI.
2. Jeff Mayo, *Astrology*, London: Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1978, p. 7.
3. Sherman P. Kanagy II, and Kenneth D. Boa, *Astrology—Scientific, Philosophical and Religious Issues*, ms., 1986, p. 197; Nicholas deVore, *Encyclopedia of Astrology*, Totowa, NJ: Littlefield Adams & Co., 1976, p. VII.
4. James Bjornstad, Shildes Johnson, *Stars, Signs and Salvation in the Age of Aquarius*, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1976, p. 43.

# Astrology—Part Four

By Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon  
(excerpted from *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996)

## Astrology and the Occult

Astrology is related to the occult in four main ways. First, dictionaries often define astrology as an occult art because the practice employs occult divination. Second, astrology appears to work best when the astrologer himself is psychically or mediumistically sensitive, what most astrologers term “intuitive.” Third, prolonged use of astrology leads to the development of psychic abilities and the contact of spirit guides. This was admitted by the majority of astrologers we interviewed at the July 4-8, 1988, fiftieth anniversary Las Vegas convention of the American Federation of Astrologers, the oldest and most influential of U.S. astrological societies. Almost all those we interviewed admitted they had spirit guides.<sup>1</sup> Fourth, due to its history and nature, astrology often becomes the introductory course to a wider spectrum of occult practices. In spite of these connections, astrologers often claim that astrology has nothing to do with the occult.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, many occultists today use astrology, and many astrologers practice other occult arts.<sup>3</sup>

Historian, philosopher, and occult authority Dr. John Warwick Montgomery points out what everyone who has studied astrology knows: that astrology is “found virtually everywhere occultism is to be found.”<sup>4</sup> Examples are everywhere. Astrologer Daniel Logan admits he is involved with mediums and spirits.<sup>5</sup> Astrologer Marcus Allen is involved with a spirit guide and studies such esoteric disciplines as yoga, Zen, Tibetan Buddhism, and the Western magical traditions.<sup>6</sup> Astrologers have admitted that astrology is “the key to all the occult sciences,”<sup>7</sup> and that “almost all occultists use astrological timing in their work.”<sup>8</sup>

Without question, astrology is the most publicly acceptable occult practice. Perhaps no other activity today provides an introduction to occultism so easily. For astrologers to claim that their craft has no associations to the occult is either the result of ignorance or deliberate deception.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Astrologers claim that their practice really works, which convinces them of the truth of astrology. Indeed, this is the case for all forms of divination. They seem to work enough of the time to be credible, and thus both practitioners and clients may become convinced of their validity. But as we saw earlier, scientific testing absolutely undermines any legitimacy to the astrological craft. So how can astrology work, or seem to work?

Many times in life we discover that things which seem to be true really aren't. This is why astrology has to be carefully evaluated, to see if it functions according to its stated principles. Since it does not, we must look to other reasons for its success, or seeming success. The reasons are many, but they can be categorized under two broad headings: psychological factors and spiritistic power. In the former, astrology only appears to work; it really does not work. In the latter, astrology provides supernatural information to a client. Yet even astrology's “success” at this point has nothing to do with the truth of astrology, only with the power of spiritism that the astrologer has tapped into. We will begin our evaluation of these topics with a look at some of the psychological reasons why astrology seems to work.



### *Client Needs*

Astrology seems to work because clients want it to work. True believers in astrology do not wish their faith in astrology to be shaken because they may have emotional, financial, or other investments in astrology already in place. As a result, they look for ways to confirm astrology. Even common coincidences may become astrological “confirmations” for such persons. Chance events may become imbued with cosmic “meanings.” Thus clients often “read in” relevance and meaning to a chart when it is not there. People may accept general or vague statements as applying uniquely to them when they would apply equally to other people. In essence, those who wish to believe in astrology tend to consciously and unconsciously assist the astrologer to counsel them effectively. Astrologer Richard Nolle concedes that astrologers can take advantage of most clients’ faith in astrology: “Most people who come to an astrologer want the astrologer to succeed in reading their charts. They are therefore generally sympathetic and cooperative.”<sup>9</sup>

People who believe astrology may also fall into the trap of self-fulfilling prophecy. This takes place when seeds of hope or despair are planted in the person’s mind by the astrologer. As a result, the client eventually “arranges” or permits the events to be fulfilled. If the astrologer’s words are positive, as they usually are, this provides all the more incentive to fulfill the prophecy. Given a poor self-image, pessimism, or a fatalistic outlook on life, even the negative prophecies of the astrologer can become positive when they are self-fulfilling. But whether the astrologer’s words are positive or negative, in neither case is it the astrologer who has been successful. It is the client, who has self-fulfilled the astrological predictions.

But what do astrologers and their clients do when the astrological information does not come true, or worse, when it is clearly contradicted? Then they tend to remember the things that are supportive of astrology and ignore or rationalize away the rest. For the most part, those who desire to believe in astrology will not listen to criticism because of the emotional tie or investment which has developed between the person and the practice.

### *Theoretical Self-Justification*

Astrology seems to work because it satisfies the human need for friendship, personal security, or dependence on others. Given various psychological needs or insecurities, astrology can prey upon anyone’s need for certainty about the future or control over life. Astrology warns about the future and advises about problems that may be encountered. People also go to astrologers so that someone else (the astrologer) or something else (the stars) will make the important or painful decisions for them. Other people are lonely or insecure and desire the friendship of someone who seems to be privy to “cosmic” or “divine” wisdom. They feel important by being associated with someone of importance. Others are simply attracted to the astrologer more than to astrology itself.

### *Persuasive Power*

People want astrology to work because it fits their lifestyle. Astrology per se is without moral values; the impersonal heavens offer no advice on ethics or how to live one’s life morally. Thus, any person seeking to justify selfish or sinful behavior can find a logical reason for doing so in astrology. Astrologers themselves seem willing to tolerate, rationalize, or even encourage any behavior, sexuality, or morality the client deems personally important. Their desire is to please the client’s wishes, and it is amazing how often the “stars” agree. Whether people convince themselves that the stars have

either “compelled” or “inclined” their wrong actions, they feel they can dismiss their guilt, or were not fully responsible for their behavior.

### *Astrologer Skill*

Astrology seems to work because it is increasingly a New Age psychology. Astrologers who become good counselors, but who attribute their success to astrology, are wrongly accrediting astrology, not good counseling procedure, with their success. Many astrologers encourage other astrologers to take courses in counseling. One astrologer has confided: “Any astrology student planning to use astrology directly with people is advised to enroll in one or more counseling courses, to read books on the counseling process itself, and to gain experiential supervised practice with counseling skills.”<sup>10</sup>

Some astrologers argue that it makes sense first to understand a person’s background—heredity, upbringing, marital status, interests, occupation, and so on—rather than to begin with a chart. One reason for this, as we saw, is because the chart itself is so complex and subjective it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to interpret it accurately.<sup>11</sup> So, first gathering information on a client is certainly helpful. Of course, this is opening the doors more to psychological counseling than to astrological revelations. And to attribute one’s success in psychology to astrological theory is deceptive.

There are many other reasons people grant validity to astrology. When this occult practice is called a science, it is granted credibility by association with science. Astrology is also universally applicable; that is, it can offer advice for virtually any situation, and sooner or later the astrologer will hit on something in the chart that a person feels is personally relevant. And astrologers always have seemingly reasonable explanations for failures. Finally, astrology may seem to work because of the astrologer’s attentiveness or seductiveness. In other words, good astrologers are able to “read” a client through physical or verbal clues and can feed back this information to the client as “revelations” from the stars. Other astrologers are adept at psychological manipulation, so that an otherwise meaningless session can seem amazingly relevant.

But what about those times astrology really does work, when it predicts the future or reveals secret knowledge about the client and known only to him? If a form of intelligence beyond the astrologer really is at work here, what is it?<sup>12</sup> It’s certainly not the stars.

### **Notes**

1. Statements made by instructors in courses at the American Federation of Astrologers Convention, Las Vegas, NV July 4-8, 1988: cf. John Weldon, “Astrology: An Inside Look, Part 2, *News & Views*, October 1988.
2. *Los Angeles Times*, January 15, 1975; Charles E. O. Carter, *The Principles of Astrology*. Wheaton, IL: Quest/Theosophical Publishing House, 1977, p. 14; Bernard Gittelson, *Intangible Evidence*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987, p. 350.
3. Sepherial [sic], *A Manual of Occultism*, New York: Samuel Weiser, 1978, p. 3; Doreen Valiente, *An ABC of Witchcraft Past and Present*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973, pp. 21, 23; Dane Rudhyar, *The Practice of Astrology as a Technique in Human Understanding*, New York: Penguin Books, 1975, p. 21; Henry Weingarten, *The Study of Astrology: Book 1*, New York: ASI Publishers, 1977, p. 77.
4. John Warwick Montgomery, *Principalities and Powers*, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany, 1973, p. 96.
5. Daniel Logan, *The Reluctant Prophet*, 1980, pp. 63-66, 169-70.

6. Marcus Allen, *Astrology for the New Age: An Intuitive Approach*, Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1979, pp. 2-6.
7. Sepherial, *A Manual of Occultism*, p. 3.
8. Weingarten, *A Study of Astrology: Book 1*, p. 77.
9. Wim van Dam, *Astrology and Homosexuality*, York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1985, p. 83.
10. Tracy Marks, *The Art of Chart Interpretation*, Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1986, p. 143.
11. Ibid., p. 87; Robert E. Leichtman, Carl Japiske, *The Life of the Spirit, Vol. 2*, Columbus, OH: Ariel, 1987, pp. 20-21.
12. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?*, Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1989, pp. 185-200.

## Astrology - An Inside Look – Part 1

Dr. John Weldon

Popular interest in astrology has surged in recent years, due, in part, to revelations concerning the acceptance of astrology even at the White House. The influence of astrology has thus reached into the highest levels of national government; in fact, it has apparently been there for some time.<sup>1</sup>

Gallup Polls consistently reveal that tens of millions of Americans are believers in this ancient and potentially dangerous form of divination. The most recent poll in mid-July of this year indicated that the Church should also take note of its influence. It revealed that at least 10 percent of Evangelical (that is, Conservative) Christians believe in astrology.<sup>2</sup> This figure could translate into several **million** Evangelical believers in astrology! (For a look at the theological, spiritual, psychological and other consequences of astrology see *The Facts on Astrology* by John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon.)

With all the interest in astrology we felt it was time for an “inside” look. As a result, I attended the 50th Anniversary Convention of the American Federation of Astrologers (AFA) in Las Vegas, Nevada, July 4-8, 1988. The AFA—based in Tempe, Arizona—is the largest and most influential astrological association in the U.S., and one of the oldest. It claims to be “the nerve center of astrology in America today.” It has members in all 50 states and 38 countries, including all U.S. possessions. It is also one of the most “scientifically” oriented groups.

Modern astrology often claims to be a scientific enterprise having nothing to do with the realm of the occult. I deliberately selected the AFA Convention in order to give the best opportunity possible to verify these claims of modern astrology. Thus, if a scientific and non-occultic approach is not found here, it is unlikely it will be found elsewhere in the world of astrology.

The AFA brochure entitled “Aims and Objectives of the American Federation of Astrologers” includes the following: (1) “to clarify Astrology...as a science...for professional use” and “to give Astrology the prestige and standing to which it is entitled as a science”; (2) “to arrive at a **standard system of study and practice**” and “to unite all astrologers”; and (3) “to protect the public by encouraging ethical practices, by eliminating charlatans and also to promote the education of the public towards accepting astrology as a means to a ‘fuller and richer life.’”<sup>3</sup>

Our purpose in attending the Convention was to examine these claims. I

attended as many seminars as possible, examined the literature offered, conducted a “survey of astrologers’ beliefs” and talked with as many astrologers as time permitted.

I had three specific objectives in mind, each correspondingly related to the above three “aims and objectives” of the AFA.

### **Objective One: Is astrology a factual science?**

The first goal was to examine the claim of astrology to being a factual scientific enterprise in the sense of a biological or astronomical science. Thus, astrologers often claim to be engaging in a “scientific” practice, one that has replaced the older astrological behavior of divination of the future. They may, for example, claim that divination has been replaced with mere discernment of “psychological indications.” How legitimate is such a claim, and do astrologers themselves really believe astrology is a science and not divination?

### **Objective Two: Is astrology internally consistent?**

My second goal was to examine the internal consistency of astrology concerning its theories and practices. Is it really possible to have a “standard system of study and practice”—or is astrology as a whole so contradictory that it cannot possibly be true?

### **Objective Three: Is modern astrology non-occultic?**

The third goal was to examine the extent of occult influences (if any), at the Conference. We also wished to “test” the theory of some former astrologers that the real power behind astrology was not derived from a coherent system of truth, but rather from contact with the spirit world, whether or not the individual astrologer was aware of this.<sup>4</sup> In other words, I wished to determine the extent of spiritistic and other occultic influence within the largest, most influential and scientifically-oriented association in America.

The issue of spiritistic connections in astrology is crucial for a number of reasons. Since all of Part Two deals with documenting this connection, we will only briefly summarize some of our concerns here.

If astrology is a fundamentally spiritistic practice, then it can never **deserve** “the prestige and standing” of a science. Spiritism deals in the realm of religious phenomena, not science. Also, because spiritism is in fact contact with lying spirits which the Bible calls “demons,” God forbids spiritism as something “detestable” to Him (Deut. 18:9-12; c.f., 1 Cor. 10:20; 1 Tim. 4:1). Historically, spiritistic activity and the doctrines characteristically taught by these spirits or demons (such as reincarnation, pantheism, gnosticism, amorism, etc.) have been associated with spiritual deception and ruin, emotional damage, unethical practices and fraud, the denial of morality, demon possession and a host of other evils. If astrology is indeed a spiritistic practice, then it will never be able to logically maintain ethical and moral standards. Once deceiving spirits and “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1) are listened to, they will only bring eventual ruin to others,

both morally and spiritually. Nor can astrology ever become the stated means to “a fuller and richer life” for the reality of spiritistic deception means astrology will only lead a person away from the one true God. The end result of this, apart from repentance, is to lead a person to eternal judgment in hell (Rev. 20:10-15).

Thus, far from protecting the public from fraud and deception, etc., promoting astrology and its spiritistic influences would only **cause** the above evils to proliferate within society.

### **Gathering the information and compiling the results.**

At the Convention some 450 seminars and workshops were offered by almost 200 professional astrologers during a period of 4 days. (Thus, one could take up to 4 seminars out of the 115 offered each day.) To secure the objectives identified above I (1) attended 9 seminars (at random), (2) distributed 100 questionnaires, (3) conducted interviews and (4) briefly examined over 300 of the 500 different astrology texts placed on sale at the Conference.

My basic conclusions are as follows:

#### **1. Is Astrology a Factual Science?**

Astrologers are divided as to whether or not astrology can properly be termed a science. Clearly, many wished it to be a science. (But even the AFA itself dropped the word “scientific” from its title in 1945<sup>5</sup>.) If astrology is really a science, one can only wonder why this was done. It goes without saying, but our conclusion is that astrology cannot be a science based on fact or experimental replication. Rather, it is a religious belief system based on pseudo-science, a belief system which all genuine scientific testing continues to disprove. Those who think otherwise simply are misinformed.

In addition, the claim to have substituted mere astrological discernment of “psychological indications” of behavior for divination of the future is largely a semantic distinction. It is true that the influence of modern psychology in astrology is great (especially through Jungian and transpersonal psychology), and that astrology may properly be classified as a “New Age” psychology. But this has not diminished its occult nature or proclivity for divination, however modern astrologers may psychologically choose to redefine the term. Most astrologers we talked with believed that a legitimate part of astrology did involve predicting the future, including general trends and specific events.

#### **2. Is Astrology Internally Consistent?**

Even more than its scientific status, astrologers are divided on the issue of what astrology is and how it works.

Almost every astrologer we talked with admitted that if one merely examined the literature on astrology, he would only end up confused. This was because as a whole there were so many contradictory theories and practices within astrology. Indeed, the massive amount of literature displayed at the Conference was often written by leading astrologers. They themselves admitted this. For example, L.

Edward Jondro states in *A New Conception of Sign Rulership* that “the thoughtful student...[using] standard astrological texts... [encounters a] maze of ridiculous contradictions that confront him....”<sup>6</sup> Another leading astrologer observes, “There are as many views of aspects [aspects deal with the angular relationships between planets] and how they are used in the chart, as there are astrologers.”<sup>7</sup> And we must also agree with two astrologers who compiled a bibliographical history of modern astrology, *Astrological Pioneers of America*, to celebrate AFA’s 50th year. They acknowledged that “disproven theories, unsupported theories, or even mutually contradictory theories may flourish indefinitely.”<sup>8</sup>

Considering astrology as a whole, we find little more than contradictions. Thus, even though different systems of astrology must by definition give different interpretations (for the same client’s astrological chart), this does not seem to bother the astrologers.

Some astrologers say the “aspects” of astrology are vital, while others downplay or disregard them. Thus, some say the aspects are more important than the houses; others say the houses are more important than the aspects; some do not use the houses or aspects at all.

Some calculate only the influence of the nine traditional “planets,” while others calculate the influence of the asteroids, planetary moons and even black holes and other galaxies! Others even attempt to calculate the “influence” of invisible (spiritual) planets!

Some astrologers use different “house” systems (the topocentric, placidian, campanus, alcabitius, etc.).

Many astrologers say that traditional astrology is simply **incomplete** without integrating it to Jungian or other modern psychologies.

Still others say that integrating astrology with other occult arts such as Tarot cards, numerology, the I Ching, etc., is what gives the best reading.

Still others say that astrology works best only when it is combined with Hindu, Chinese, Draconic or some other form of ancient or modern astrology. (For example, there is Arabian astrology, Hindu astrology, Hermetic astrology, Pythagorean astrology, Rosicrucian astrology, Theosophical astrology, Sabian astrology, Uranian astrology, etc.)

In addition, many different Zodiacs can be found (for example, there is the Tropical Zodiac (which starts at a given point); the Sidereal Zodiac (beginning at yet another point); and the Draconic Zodiac (which begins at still another point). The issue is important because different starting points on the chart lead to entirely different interpretations. One astrologer even told us that it made no difference at all what one’s starting point was—an astrologer could start at any point on the chart at all!

In addition, all astrologers agreed that when you pick up any dozen texts on astrology you get a dozen different answers. This became painfully obvious at the Conference book tables. The more we read the literature, the more confused matters became.



Judging from the lectures it was also painfully obvious that what “worked” for one astrologer would not work for another. Some teachers had successful results while others openly admitted they had done their research based squarely on astrological theory and found a zero percent correlation. (But all of them had an “explanation” for their failures.)

Perhaps the greatest harmony encountered was in the area of general religious belief, but even here there were serious differences.

Almost all the astrologers accepted at least some form of New Age occultism—they believed in reincarnation; they accepted psychic development (many **were** psychic), and because they were pantheists, most felt they were God. Almost all rejected any form of absolute morality. But some also rejected reincarnation and some rejected the idea they were God. Some attempted to be wholly scientific. One Catholic astrologer did charts for a number of priests. Most admitted that whatever astrologers **said** concerning the issue of fate versus free will, that in actual practice most astrologers were fatalistic, or largely so.

There was one, and only one area of agreement. All astrologers said the truly important issue was simply that astrology worked, not **how** it worked. This was the single most cited reason for a person being an astrologer.

Our own conclusion was that even if it worked, as a whole, astrology was in a state of such total disarray that it could never be true. As a coherent system of belief, it did not exist. In other words, astrology did not need to be true in order to work, and therefore the fact that it could work must be accounted for by recourse to a non-astrological theory. Often this could be attributed to normal psychological factors such as the client’s will to believe or an astrologer’s psychologically-correct “reading” of a client prior to doing his chart. But psychological factors could not explain what can only be termed genuine supernatural self-disclosures that may occur in astrology. This is where spiritism enters the picture.

## Conclusions

From our time at the Conference and our own study of astrology, three facts are clear:

**Fact One:** Any given form of astrology will not necessarily work for any given astrologer; yet, **all** forms of astrology, no matter how contradictory, can produce “amazing results” for some astrologers. This suggests the power of astrology is not from astrology itself. Yet, powerful supernatural information is sometimes provided by astrologers. This leads us to our second fact.

**Fact Two:** Because supernatural information is given, a supernatural source is demanded. The real source of power in astrology originates from the spirit world, whether or not the astrologer accepts this or is even aware of it. Indeed most are not. In the world of the occult it is often acknowledged that spirits have the ability to work inconspicuously through a person so that their presence is not felt.

**Fact Three:** This means that the horoscope itself is merely a convenient tool for spiritistic powers to work through. Thus, the horoscope may become an



occultic device through which and **behind** which the spirits can **focus** their activity. It does not operate by indicating alleged celestial influences. It operates in the same manner as dozens of similar devices which have no power on their own but become powerful when the spirit world chooses to use them. Such devices typically have clear spiritistic connections, as any in-depth reading of the relevant literature reveals. In all instances, the devices themselves contain no power, whether they are simple rocks, dice or gems (amulets, runes, crystals), cards or sticks (Tarot, the I Ching), playing boards or human hands (Ouija board or palmistry), so-called “scientific” devices (the radionic “black box”), or an elaborate chart (an astrological horoscope). The inanimate device merely becomes a tool of the spirit world to work through. When the spirits choose to use such devices, they can be quite effective and give startling results. However, when the spirits do not choose to use them, they will not work. The operators are then left without power, so they must either engage in fraud, or in astrology, guess or use whatever normal psychological powers of discernment or interpretation they can muster.

In Part Two we will document this spiritistic influence within astrology. But for the Christian the point should already be clear: Astrology is an occult “art” and God has warned (in the Bible) against the practice of astrology as that which “is evil in the sight of the Lord” (Deut. 17:2-3; 18:9-12).

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Gittleston is a psychic investigator and former public relations consultant for several governments. He states that several astrologers “claim that Ronald Reagan has long been [astrologer Carroll] Righter’s client. Sidney Omarr told me, ‘I would say one of the world’s worst kept secrets is Ronald Reagan’s interest in astrology’” (Bernard Gittleston, *Insubstantial Evidence*, p.348). At least one knowledgeable source at the AFA Conference confirmed this and said that Reagan had been interested in astrology and/or had an astrologer since his acting days. Allegedly, his previous astrologer was Ralph Kraum, a recognized authority on older horoscope methods. When Kraum died, Righter took over. *Time Magazine*, May 16, 1988, p.41, listed prominent astrologer Joan Quigley as admitting she was the astrologer who, based on the President’s horoscope, helped Mrs. Reagan to formulate and regulate the President’s schedule. She claims the President did accept her advice through Mrs. Reagan. The President himself has denied that astrology influences his decisions, yet has also admitted to an interest in astrology and a fascination with horoscopes (Joyce Wadler, “The Presidents Astrologers” in *People Weekly*, May 23, 1988, pp. 107-108; *Moody Monthly*, July/August, 1988, p. 10). In *For the Record* former White House chief of staff Donald Regan has claimed that astrology exerted a great influence at the White House. We did contact the White House, who referred us to the executive office, who referred us to the press office. We were unable to receive any official position on the matter.

<sup>2</sup> Cited in *National and International Religion Report* for July 4, 1988, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> “Aims and Objectives of the American Federation of Astrologers,” 1988 publicity brochure Nos. 2, 6; 1, 5; and 3ac, respectively.

<sup>4</sup> e.g., Charles Strohmmer, *What your Horoscope Doesn’t Tell You* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), pp. 39-60; and e.g., former astrologer and channeler Karen Winterbaum, personal conversation.

<sup>5</sup> James H. Holden, and Robert A. Hughes, *Astrological Pioneers of America* (Tempe, AZ: AFA, 1988), p. 48.

<sup>6</sup> L. Edward Jondro, *A New Conception of Sign Rulership* (Tempe, AZ: AFA, nd.), p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Joan McEvers, *Spiritual, Metaphysical and New Trends in Modern Astrology* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1988), p. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Holden and Hughes, op. cit., page 10 of Preface.

## Astrology - An Inside Look - Part 2

by John Weldon

In Part One I explained that I had attended the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the largest, most influential and one of the most scientific of U. S. astrology organizations, The American Federation of Astrologers Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada. At that Conference over 1,000 astrologers attended some 450 seminars and workshops offered by 200 professional astrologers. I attended seminars, distributed 100 surveys, conducted interviews and talked with numerous astrologers.

I asked three basic questions, two of which were presented in Part One. First, the claims of astrology to being a scientific discipline were examined and the conclusion reached that astrology had little to do with science per se. Secondly, we found astrology failed the tests for internal consistency. Aside from the fact that it sometimes “works,” the astrologers evidenced a wide range of methodology and theory, much of which was contradictory.

Now, in Part Two, we ask the third and final question and examine the spiritistic associations in astrology.

### **Is there evidence for spiritistic influence in astrology?**

This Conference revealed a very important fact: What many astrologers will **not** reveal to the public they **will** reveal to other astrologers.

For example: We encountered a number of astrologers who were also mediums but who preferred to keep this information secret. I talked with the sister of one astrologer who told us her sister’s mediumism was known only to the immediate family. Even her clients did not know that much of the astrological information they were getting originated, in fact, from the spirit world.

### **Evidence of Spiritism**

At the Conference I became aware of a great deal of spiritism. Most of the 300 different astrology books examined dealt with spiritistic and occultic themes. Of the nine seminars I attended, in eight of them the professional astrology instructors admitted to having spirit guides or to being spiritists (that is, one who accepts the teachings of the spirits). The ninth astrologer was more scientifically oriented and would not necessarily accept spiritistic information as being from a genuine spirit world. Most of the nine classified themselves as psychic.

As for the astrologers I talked with, most of them were into other forms of the occult such as palmistry, numerology, psychic healing, crystal power, Tarot cards, and occult societies (Rosicrucians, Theosophy, the Church of Light, etc.). Most astrologers also accepted the idea that psychic abilities were necessary to “properly” interpret the horoscope.

In addition, many of these astrologers had degrees in psychology and had redefined their occultism along psychological and parapsychological lines, thereby masking its true nature. (Jung’s theories were especially useful for this reinterpretation, but even here we talked with one Jungian astrologer [with two Ph.D.’s] who admitted that the Jungian “archetype” was really a spirit guide that some people merely chose to interpret as a psychological power.)

A brief sampling of the other interests of just a few of the 200 astrologers teaching at the Conference include the following spiritistic connections:

- Rev. Rene Anderson—astrologer, medium, psychic healer, Tarotologist, and channeler.
- Arlene de Angelus—astrologer, medium and psychic healer.
- Elizabeth Gauerke—astrologer and shaman
- Brett Bravo—astrologer, psychic and crystal healer.
- Christopher Gibson—astrologer and “minister and hermetician” of the spiritistic Church of Light.
- Glenn Malec—astrologer with a “Ph.D. in occult science” who has written *Basic Astrology*, a Correspondence Course for a School of Witchcraft.
- Mae R. Wilson-Ludlam—astrologer and member of the spiritistic National Federation of Spiritual Healers and the Rosicrucian Order, an occult society accepting spiritistic contacts.

Collectively, in addition to their private practices the above astrologers have appeared on many radio and TV programs (David Suskind, Sally Jessie Rafael, etc.), in national news media (“Time,” “People,” “Esquire,” etc.), and taught astrology and other subjects at high schools and colleges.<sup>1</sup>

### **American Federation of Astrologers History**

Although the American Federation of Astrologers (AFA) prefers to be seen as a scientific, progressive and research-oriented society, its own history is nonetheless replete with spiritistic ties.

For example, many of its leaders were, or are, spiritists who are involved with spiritistic organizations. Consider the Brotherhood of Light/Church of Light which was founded in 1932. “The Brotherhood of Light” refers to the “heavenly” organization of spirit beings who direct or advise the earthly organization known as “The Church of Light.” The AFA has had a close association with this group since the 1940’s and has even publicly acknowledged that “The Church of Light is an affiliate of the AFA.”<sup>2</sup>

The Church of Light was founded by the spirit world specifically to promote

astrology and other forms of the occult, hence the link between itself and the AFA is not surprising. It offers a series of 21 courses on many aspects of astrology and the occult such as: “Laws of Occultism, Spiritual Alchemy, Ancient Masonry, Esoteric Psychology, Sacred Tarot, Spiritual Astrology, Horary Astrology, Delineating [Interpreting] the Horoscope, Progressing the Horoscope, Divination and Character Reading... Mundane Astrology, Occultism Applied... Stellar Healing... The Next Life, etc.”<sup>3</sup>

Many AFA members have taken these lessons, including AFA president, Doris Chase Doane, who acknowledged in her seminar that she has been psychic from childhood. She noted that as she lectured, “There is inspiration coming into me.” Doane is an ordained minister with The Church of Light, having served it in leadership positions for over 40 years, including teaching classes from 1944 to 1968.<sup>4</sup> At the time of the 1988 Convention, she had been president of the AFA for almost 10 years and personally told us after her seminar titled “The Art of Transmutation” that the spirits who work through The Church of Light are “very important to the work of astrology.” During her seminar, the two books Doane recommended as being key to the study of astrology were C. C. Zain’s *Occultism Applied* and his *Spiritual Alchemy*, both spiritistically-inspired texts.

In addition, the AFA’s own publications document their close ties to many forms of the occult. Their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention program contained over 100 pages of advertisements by astrologers and has many references to the occult.

Their publication *Astrological Pioneers of America* (AFA, 1988) also indicates that many AFA leaders are into various forms of the occult. To cite a few illustrations:

- (1) Ernest A. Grant is termed “the single most important figure in the 50-year history of the [AFA].” He was one of the three incorporators of the AFA in 1938 and served as its first president. Besides being an astrologer, he was also a Rosicrucian and a Mason (p. 63).
- (2) Howard Duff was president of the AFA from 1952 to 1953 and from 1959 to 1962. He studied with the Rosicrucian Fellowship and the spiritistic Church of Light (p. 48).
- (3) Edward Strater, president in 1957, was a Theosophist.
- (4) Maxine Taylor was at that time the third vice president of the AFA. I attended her seminar entitled “Can I Rise Above My Chart?” I asked her what her views were on spirit guides and “channeling” (spirit possession). She said, “I have many experiences in the spirit world—and I think channeling is very important.... Channeling is wonderful if you have a [spirit] guide that you can trust and [who] is spiritual.” She is also co-founder of the Atlanta Institute of Metaphysics. (Like many astrologers she admitted that astrology texts were often so contradictory “you don’t know which to believe.”)

## Seminar Content

In addition, consider the following illustrations of “state of the art” astrology encountered in the AFA seminars.

Briefly summarized below are three of the nine seminars which I attended at the AFA Convention.

1. Astrologer Rev. Irene Diamond’s seminar was the first I attended. She is also a “prosperity” teacher, a Catholic, a reflexologist, and uses Tarot cards. She is the author of four books on astrology, and has a daily 3-hour radio show. She gives lectures on astrology around the country.

Like millions of others today, a spiritistic near-death experience (at age 42) introduced her to spirit guides who in this case personally guided her into the study of astrology. She says it was through this near-death experience that she was “born again.” The spirits have since guided her life, including her literary endeavors. In fact, she became a medium and the spirits wrote four books on astrology through her, (either by spirit-dictation or automatic writing.) This includes *A New Look at 12 Houses*, *Astrology Coloring Book*, and *Astrology and the Holy Bible*. She defines astrology as “the progressive, active system of Divination.”<sup>5</sup>

She gave a lecture entitled “Let’s Talk About God.” In her lecture, she told the class that everyone was psychic and that the spirits had directed her to dedicate her life to the task of preaching the truth of who God is: that God is everyone. Thus, when she told the class to say, “I am God,” the entire class responded enthusiastically with “I am God.” I abstained, and she noticed this. She looked at me and said, “Pisces, I didn’t hear you say it. Please say, ‘I am God.’” I replied, “I don’t believe I am God,” but this did not seem to bother her. (Since the astrological “key words” for a Pisces are “I believe” and yet I **didn’t** “believe,” I was told I must have “some Gemini” in me preventing me from believing that I was God). It was clear that I was “living in darkness,” a spiritual “Cro-magnon” of sorts. Several in the class extended their sympathies to me.

2. Our second instructor was Randall Leonard, who lectured on “The Crystal and Astrology” to about 75 people in an over-crowded room. Besides his astrology, he was involved with yoga, palmistry, psychic healing, numerology, runes, astral travel, spirit guides, and the psychic power of crystals. He was also a New Age musician who used music to open people up psychically. The class began with a visualization exercise in psychically manipulating “crystal energy.” (Afterwards about a third of the class claimed to have had a psychic experience). He said the crystals could be used for everything from financial prosperity to accelerating spiritual development by developing psychically, for raising Kundalini power, and contacting the spirit world. (Raising the Kundalini is a form of Hatha-yoga that characteristically induces symptoms of demonization.) He believed that there was some kind of “life force in the crystal.” He said that when he teaches, it is not him teaching; that the information just “flows out of him.”

In a discussion after class he admitted that crystals themselves had little or no power but were merely tools or vehicles to develop psychically or to establish



contact with the spirit world. Once a person was psychically developed, the crystals were no longer necessary.

3. Having taken two seminars that were **not** advertised as having anything occultic in them (on “God” and “crystals”), I next took a course on “Esoteric Astrology” to see if the content varied. This one—taught by Capel McCutcheon—turned out to be a blend of astrology, psychology and occultism by a professional psychotherapist and astrologer.

Class began with a “centering” exercise. In the lecture a distinction was made between “exoteric” (or outer, allegedly non-occultic) and “esoteric” (or inner) astrology. Although I understood this distinction, it was not discernible at all at the Conference. (As far as I can tell, so-called “esoteric” astrology freely admits its occult nature while so-called “exoteric” astrology merely attempts to be scientific.) Exoteric astrology may not deal with the same form of occultism found in esoteric astrology, but it is occultism nonetheless. Even the instructor admitted there was common ground between the two forms and that they “are and say the same thing from a different viewpoint.”

Esoteric astrology was defined as the occult side of astrology: “Astrology is one of the occult arts... Using the hidden powers latent within man... the occultist attempts to codify [secret laws] and that’s what we are doing as astrologers... Astrology is a yoga, a way of life.” He noted that astrology per se provides a significant correlation to occultic philosophy in general. He said that we are all God and that the planets are connected to gods or spirit beings. Although he had never sought out spirit beings themselves, they had contacted him.

Both the amoral nature of astrology and the endless subjectivity of its concepts were illustrated by the following two comments by instructor McCutcheon: (1) “Enlightenment doesn’t care **how** you get there,” e.g., whether by good or evil means, and (2) his comment that “Venus and Taurus and full moon in Aquarius can mean whatever I damn well want them to mean.” (If the Conference made anything clear, it was that astrologers interpret the same “indicators” in widely different fashion.)

And so went all of the seminars at this “scientifically” oriented AFA congress. Eight of nine instructors in astrology admitted to some form of contact with the spirit world and most admitted they were psychic. All but two admitted psychic ability was important to chart interpretation.

New Age “science”? Yes; True Science? Hardly.

## Survey Results

Finally, here are some of the results of interviews in the 100 questionnaires distributed at random, mostly to professional astrologers. Unfortunately, many survey forms were not returned, however additional conversations and interviews during the Convention confirmed the same rough percentages as indicated in the summaries below.

Besides many conflicting answers as to astrological theory (most could not define the exact nature of an astrological influence), we found a high percentage of agreement in the following areas.

- 80 % used one or more **techniques in addition to** astrology (such as numerology, Tarot, I Ching, runes, etc.)
- 80 % felt that astrology may eventually lead to the development of psychic abilities (this was personally true for them).
- 60 % believed proper chart interpretation required psychic or “intuitive” ability.
- 80 % believed the theory of reincarnation was a key element of most modern astrology.
- 60 % listed their personal religious belief as Eastern; 30 percent as Judeo-Christian.
- 90 % believed astrology dealt with predicting the future (i.e.: it involved some kind of divination).
- 80 % believed that ultimate reality was amoral.
- 90 % were pantheists who believed the universe was “living and spiritual” and that God was best defined as “everything that exists.” As to God’s basic, fundamental nature, He was illogically defined as **both** impersonal and personal.
- 90 % believed that **why** or **how** astrology works was unimportant; **that** it works was important.
- 90 % felt that two contradictory systems of astrology could still both be true.

## Conclusions

What may we conclude from our “inside look” at astrology? Returning to the examination of our three stated objectives we find the following:

1. Astrological claims to being a true science are false.

2. Astrology as a whole may attempt to present a picture of consistency to the world but in reality this only masks a mass of conflicting theories and practices. The only thing astrologers seem to agree on is that “astrology works”; therefore it must be good (Of course, terrorists’ bombs also work).

3. As has always been true, even today when portrayed as a science, astrology nevertheless continues to be a major social force for promoting the occult. The spiritistic connection seen at this major congress should serve as a warning to the wise.

In conclusion, the words of Isaiah and Paul are relevant. Paul referred to those who were “always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth,” indeed, who “oppose the truth” (2 Tim. 3:7,8). This was a common perception at the Conference. Isaiah spoke of those who listened to the astrologers. He said that all their counsel would only wear them out; that it was as worthless as stubble and that they could save neither others nor themselves from divine

judgment. He concluded that, “Each of them goes on in his error” (Is. 47:13-15).

When astrologers cease worshipping and serving the creation (Rom. 1:25; Deut. 17:2,3) and instead turn to the One who made it, only then will they find lasting peace with God even as Paul referred to the formerly pagan citizens of Thessalonica: “How you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who delivers us from the coming wrath” (1 Thess. 1:9).

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> AFA 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention Program (AFA, 1988) under “Faculty Biographies,” pp. 174-199.

<sup>2</sup> Holden and Hughes, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> AFA Convention Program, op. cit., p.102; and information from the Church of Light, Los Angeles, CA.

<sup>4</sup> Holden and Hughes, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

<sup>5</sup> Irene Diamond, *Astrology and the Holy Bible* (privately published, 1983), inside front cover.



# Astrology and Spiritism

By Dr. John Ankerberg, Dr. John Weldon

Former astrologer Charles Strohmer remarks that “for most adherents of astrology, it is enough that it ‘works.’ There is a fascination with the power, without a suspicion as to the nature of that power.”<sup>1</sup>

We will now show that astrology works through spiritistic power. The importance of this issue is obvious. If spirits are the real power behind legitimate astrological disclosures, then the acceptance of astrology in society is opening the doors for millions of people to be influenced by the spirit world. According to the Word of God, this means people are contacting the world of demons, lying spirits whose primary goal is spiritual deception and destruction.<sup>2</sup>

What evidence supports the claim that astrology and spiritism are closely linked? In addition to evidence we have already supplied, we offer the following four points which were greatly expanded upon in our book *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?*.<sup>3</sup>

## Pagan Religion

Historically, astrology is tied to pagan gods and the spirit world. Astrology has always been connected to spirits through its acceptance of and contact with supernatural spirit beings who were held to be “gods”.<sup>4</sup> In every civilization, the acceptance of polytheism and the contacting and worship of the “gods” has been a fundamentally spiritistic phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:20).

## Spiritistic Endorsement

The spirit world actively promotes astrology. That the spirits are interested in promoting astrology can be seen by the following three facts. First, many spirits have channeled books on astrology through their human mediums. Edgar Cayce’s occult “readings” were saturated with astrology.<sup>6</sup> Channeled astrological literature includes Alice Bailey’s *Esoteric Astrology*;<sup>7</sup> Cynthia Bohannon’s *The North and South Nodes*;<sup>8</sup> Roman Catholic Irene Diamond’s works, e.g., *A New Look at the Twelve Houses*, and *Astrology in the Holy Bible*; Ted George and Barbara Parkers’ *Sinister Ladies of Mystery: The Dark Asteroids of Earth*, and many others.<sup>9</sup> (A related fact is that a large number of professional astrologers actively promote spiritism; we gave several examples in our book on astrology.<sup>10</sup>

Second, many spiritistic societies actively promote astrology, e.g., The White Eagle Lodge, Rosicrucian Fellowship, Theosophical Society, Sabian Assembly, The Church of Light.<sup>11</sup> Virtually none forbid it. Third, some people who first come in contact with the spirit world testify that they were told by the spirits to pursue the study of astrology (e.g., astrologer Irene Diamond<sup>12</sup>).

## Astrologers’ Confessions

Former astrologers also concede their power was spiritistic. We think it is significant that many former astrologers have now concluded that the power behind astrology did not come from the stars, but from the power of demons.

Karen Winterburn was a professional astrologer for 12 years, schooled in humanistic astrology. In 1988, she took part in the debate with two professional astrologers on “The

John Ankerberg Show.” But even as an astrologer she admitted, “I was convinced it [the astrological information] wasn’t coming from me....”<sup>13</sup> In a prepared statement for our book (signed October 11, 1988) she stated:

**The twelve years I spent in the occult involved a logical progression from humanistic astrology to spirit channeling to occult involvement. Astrology as a divination tool was the perfect entrance. It appeared to be secular, technical, and humanistic, a “neutral” tool. In addition, its occult presuppositions were not immediately apparent. When it began to “work” for me, I became hooked. I became driven to find out the “hows” and the “whys.”**

**This led me right into channeling, a sanitized term for spirit mediumship. In 12 years of serious astrological study and professional practice, I never met a really successful astrologer—even the most “scientific” one—who did not admit among their professional peers *that spiritism was the power behind the craft*. “Spirit guide,” “higher self,” “ancient god,” “cosmic archetype,” whatever name is used—the definition points to the same reality: a discarnate, personal intelligence claiming to be a god-in-progress. Such intelligences have access to information and power that many people covet and they have a desire to be trusted and to influence human beings.**

**Once the astrologer becomes dependent upon one or more of them, these spirit intelligences (the biblical demons) lead the astrologer into forms of spiritual commitment and worship. This is the worst kind of bondage. Seasoned astrologers who have experienced fairly consistent and dramatic successes in character reading and prognostication invariably become involved in some form of worship of these demons.**

**I have seen this occur in myriad forms—from the full-blown revival of ancient religions (Egyptian and Chaldean) to the ritualization of Jungian psychotherapy. The bottom line reality is always the worship of the spirits (demons) the astrologer has come to rely on.**<sup>14</sup>

Another former professional astrologer (seven years) is Charles Strohmer. In his critique of astrology, *What Your Horoscope Doesn’t Tell You*, he also discusses the fundamentally spiritistic nature and power of astrology. “As we look honestly at astrology, we begin to see that adherents of this system—without knowing it—are banging on the door through which communication is established with knowledgeable but yet deceptive spirit beings.... In much the same way that the palm of the hand or the crystal [ball] is ‘contact material’ for the fortune-teller—the horoscopic *chart* is used by the astrologer.... It is the mediumistic point of interaction.... Without contact with spirit beings, there would be no astrological self-disclosures.”<sup>15</sup>

Dr. Atlas Laster received his Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh for his work on astrology. He was an active astrologer for 15 years. He observed that as an astrologer, “I did not feel that astrology was an occult art.”<sup>16</sup> Yet after he renounced astrology, he came to realize “there are certain rituals and knowledge associated with astrology which may attract spirits of divination.”<sup>17</sup>

## **Spirit Interpretation**

Chart interpretation is often accomplished through spiritistic inspiration. The spirit world can often be the source of astrologers’ interpretations of their charts. Some openly admit that they are assisted in their chart interpretations by spirit guides. By this they mean that their spirit guides speak to them directly in their minds and help them interpret a chart. But usually the influence is indirect and less obvious. For example, astrologers may report

feeling somehow “directed” to certain chart symbols or factors, or that something in a chart will suddenly “jump out” at them.<sup>18</sup> In New Age practice, distinguishing spiritistic assistance from normal human intuition is not always easy. That these two sources can be blurred presents a dilemma for the astrologer. How is it possible for them to know that their “intuition” is truly human, and not from the spiritistic source?

In *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?* we presented four interrelated lines of evidence showing that the spirit world can indeed be active in helping astrologers to interpret their charts.<sup>19</sup>

1. Like a kind of mandala, the chart can become a means to altered states of consciousness, the allegedly “higher” consciousness that is so often promoted by the occult for spirit contact
2. The chart can become a “living” power (a focusing agent) for spirits to work through. Like a living being, the chart “speaks” to the astrologer through images in the mind, being directed to certain aspects of the chart, and other psychic impressions.
3. Psychic or spiritistic inspiration is often necessary for “proper” chart interpretation (in our book this was documented with five sub-points) and is admitted by many astrologers, e.g., American Federation of Astrologers president Doris Chase Doane agrees that “it is almost impossible” to accurately read a chart without psychic guidance and, as noted, many astrologers of past and present have declared their belief that astrology works by the power of spirits.<sup>20</sup>
4. Because all forms of divination sooner or later contact spirits, it is logical to assume divination by means of astrology charts is also spiritistic.

The above information reveals *why* astrology can sometimes work. However, astrologers and their clients must also ask the question, “At what cost”?

### Notes:

1. Charles Strohmer, *What Your Horoscope Doesn't Tell You*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1988, p. 42.
2. This is extensively documented in *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*.
3. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?* Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1989, pp. 201-55.
4. Franz Cumont, *Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans*, New York: Dover, 1960; K. C. Tunncliffe, *Aztec Astrology*, Essex, Great Britain: L. N. Fowler & Co., Ltd., 1979; Firmicus Maternus, *Ancient Astrology Theory and Practice* [original title: *Matheseos Libri VIII*, 334 A. D.], trans. Jean Rhys Bram, Parkridge, NJ: Noyes Press, 1975; Roy A. Gallant, *Astrology Sense or Nonsense?* Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974.
5. For documentation see *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*.
6. Margaret H. Gammon, *Astrology and the Edgar Cayce Readings*, Virginia Beach, VA: ARE Press, 1987.
7. Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, New York: Lucis Publishing, 1975.
8. Cynthia Bohannon, *The North and South Nodes: The Guideposts of the Spirit: A Comprehensive Interpretation of the Nodal Placements*, Jacksonville, FL: Arthur Publications, 1987.
9. Ankerberg and Weldon, *Astrology*, pp. 210-12.
10. Ibid., pp. 219-20.
11. Ibid., pp. 212-19; Sri Chinmoy Astrology: *The Supernatural and Beyond*, Jamaica, NY:

- Agni Press, 1973; Elman Bacher, *Studies in Astrology*, (9 vols.), Oceanside, CA: The Rosicrucian Fellowship, 1968; Marc Edmund Jones, *The Sabian Manual: A Ritual for Living*, Boulder, CO: Sabian/ Shambhala Publications, rev., 1976.
12. Mae R. Wilson-Ludlam, *Interpret Your Rays Using Astrology*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986.
  13. Former astrologer Karen Winterburn, personal phone conversation, August 1988.
  14. Personal correspondence, emphasis added.
  15. Strohmer, *Horoscope*, pp. 51,54.
  16. Letter from Dr. Atlas Laster, Jr., September 23, 1988, containing a copy of a letter by astrology Harry Darling M.D., approving his Ph.D. dissertation on astrology submitted to the University of Pittsburgh ("On the Psychology of Astrology: The Use of Genethliacal Astrology in Psychological Counseling," 1976), p. 4.
  17. Ibid.
  18. Strohmer, *Horoscope*, p. 53; Tracy Marks, *The Art of Chart Interpretation*, Sebastopol, CAL CRCS Publications, 1986, pp. 86-87.
  19. Ankerberg, Weldon, *Astrology*, pp. 225-55.
  20. Ibid., pp. 211-20; other documentation found in *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*.

# THE DANGERS OF ASTROLOGY—Part One

By Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon  
(from *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996)

There are dangers from astrology besides those associated with spiritism and other occult practices.<sup>1</sup> Science writer Lawrence E. Jerome states, “How much physical and psychological damage such false astrological practices and advice cause cannot even be estimated.”<sup>2</sup> Bart Bok, a former president of the prestigious American Astronomical Society, has observed that, “The study and ready availability of astrological predictions can exert an insidious influence on a person’s personal judgment.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, if a billion people trust in the false advice of astrology in some degree, one can hardly hazard a guess at the overall personal cost around the world. Even some astrologers confess that practitioners are liable to the characteristic hazards of the trade. These kinds of hazards do not make for a trusting relationship between astrologer and client but further complicate an already potentially dangerous situation.

Leading astrologer Tracy Marks discusses the following potential problems between the astrologer and his client. A little imagination here will reveal how each one can produce harm to the client:

- the astrologer may experience himself as superior to the client.
- the astrologer may encourage the dependency of his clients.
- the astrologer may give clients what they appear to want rather than what they really need.
- astrologers may pass their own values and ideas under the cloak of astrological authority.
- the astrologers’ “own sense of powerlessness” may lead them to “disempower [their] clients, imparting deterministic [fatalistic attitudes].”
- the astrologers’ own fears concerning certain planets and signs may influence their interpretation and “result in [their] imparting pronouncements which could become destructively self-fulfilling prophecies.”
- astrologers may speak in astrological jargon the client cannot understand and use mystical language authoritatively to create “the illusion that [they] are imparting high truths, when indeed [they] may be saying little of significance.”
- astrologers may “speak in vague, ungrounded generalities.”<sup>4</sup>

Marks observes that even “most professional astrologers are guilty on occasion of at least several of the above inadequacies....”<sup>5</sup> In addition, she admits that astrologers may react more to the chart than to the client; may become egotistical; may devalue the client; and can draw hasty conclusions.<sup>6</sup>

Astrological predictions or advice can cause people to do things they would otherwise never have done, and sometimes this has led to tragedy. Given the right circumstances, a particular chart interpretation and its potentially powerful influence upon a person could even lead to criminal acts. In order to help fulfill or forestall what a person believes is the cosmic influence or destiny upon himself or another. For example, a chart reveals that a company will fail, so the president embezzles funds for his own security; or that a child may be born mentally retarded, so there is an abortion.

German theologian and occult expert Dr. Kurt Koch observes that, “Astrology has been responsible for a number of suicides and murders.”<sup>7</sup> He cites examples in his books concerning the effects of the suggestive nature of astrology. For example, a woman murdered

her own son because an astrologer predicted he would lead a life of mental illness. The shattered mother went to jail, but the astrologer went free.<sup>8</sup> Dr. Sherman Kanagy, a physics professor at Purdue University observes, “In ancient times women whose babies were born under the sign of Scorpio would often kill their babies by drowning because of the evil significance.”<sup>9</sup>

Remember that astrologers are: 1) unlicensed and unregulated, 2) require little or no education, 3) can become a “professional” astrologer overnight, 4) are occultists who characteristically reject absolute moral values, and 5) often use their powers over others in a manipulative and authoritarian manner. If the practices of such people force them into demonic collaboration, what kind of answers are clients getting from astrological counseling? In considering the clients of astrologers, we will see additional reasons for concern.

### **The Clients of Astrologers**

What kind of person seeks out an astrologer? We can determine from the statements of astrologers themselves that some and perhaps many clients are those for whom astrology will be most destructive.

***Clients lack values.*** For example, astrological counselor Stephen Arroyo observes, “Many people who request astrological assistance are suffering from a lack of values....”<sup>10</sup>

***Clients are easily duped or deceived.*** Astrologer Jane Evans observes, “I have known too many people to whom self-deception was second nature.”<sup>11</sup>

***Clients are looking for the astrologer to make their decisions for them.*** This is a problem that is almost universally admitted among astrologers. Some attempt to help such clients become more independent, but others willingly become their “gurus,” and enjoy the fact that their client will make no decision without first consulting their “wisdom....”<sup>12</sup>

It is the ability of astrologers to justify a person’s selfish tendencies that caused Dr. John Warwick Montgomery to give the following warning: “The very elasticity of astrological interpretation is its most dangerous characteristic where people desperately desire a shortcut to self knowledge and solutions to their problems, and where the answers are ambiguous, they inevitably choose according to self-interest. Thus the floodgates are opened to the reinforcement of evil tendencies.... It should not be regarded as strange that astrology has so frequently been used to guide evil farther along the path it has already taken.”<sup>13</sup>

Because astrologers reject any absolute standard of morality, they prefer a “situation ethics” approach where moral decisions are determined largely by the whim and preference of the astrologer or client. Astrologer Alan Oken observes, “No Path is the Truth Path, for in the Absolute there is not Truthfulness or Falsehood, no right and no wrong, no yes and no no.”<sup>14</sup> Even the Alexandrian astronomer and “father” of astrology, Ptolemy (2nd C.A.D.) confessed, “Many of its practitioners are in it for gain rather than truth or wisdom, and pretend to know more than the facts permit.”<sup>15</sup> Another astrologer testifies, “The preoccupation with self is really in the interest of evolution.... In modern astrology we seek confirmation of our personal importance.”<sup>16</sup>

### **Evil Uses**

Astrologers admit astrology can be used for either “good” or evil purposes. Leading astrologer Sydney Omarr states, “Astrology is there, to be used for the good—or the evil

(Hitler!).”<sup>17</sup> Just as there is both black and white witchcraft, one astrology text observes, “There is white and black astrology....”<sup>18</sup> Leading astrologer Nicholas deVore confesses that “astrology has often been used to unworthy ends.”<sup>19</sup>

Adolph Hitler, the ancient Aztecs and their human sacrifices, the modern serial killer known as the Zodiac killer, modern witches and Satanists, have used astrology for evil purposes. All realized that astrology’s power may be used malevolently. For whatever reasons, these people decided to choose evil. This is the point. The astrologer is free to choose. Perhaps the most cunning deception here is when, like Hitler, the astrologer uses his craft for evil while *thinking* he is using it for the good.

## Morality and Sex

In the astrologer’s view, morality is often determined by one’s subjective or “higher” state of consciousness, not by what one believes or does. Obedience to God would be (perhaps) moral for one person and immoral for another. As one guru who endorses astrology states, “I would like to say to you: obedience [to God] is the greatest sin,” and “I teach you disobedience.... The devil did a tremendous service to humanity.”<sup>20</sup> But most astrologers are not very concerned with morality in the first place. In fact, many of them believe that moral judgments themselves are the real evil.<sup>21</sup> Their job, as astrologers, is simply to validate the client’s own views, whatever they are.<sup>22</sup>

One reason astrology is popular is because it permits us to explain our own failures and evils, or whatever we do not like in ourselves, as the fault of the stars. Here is an attractive escape from personal responsibility.<sup>23</sup> Astrologers may say that “Saturn did it,” or that “the stars weren’t auspicious.” Virtually anything can be rationalized, any sin or evil, because “What happens to us is what needs to happen to us.”<sup>24</sup>

But if there is any place in which astrology promotes sin, it is the area of sexual behavior.<sup>25</sup> In an era of AIDS and dozens of other sexually transmitted diseases, this is of no small concern.<sup>26</sup> Astrologer Jeff Green provides an illustration. Here is the case of a woman who was deeply troubled by her sexual immorality. What did she discover through astrological counseling? She realized that she was free to enjoy sexual affairs without guilt by making them “spiritual,” even a divine activity. On what basis? Simply because Pluto was in the eighth house in Leo, the south node was in the seventh house in opposition to Mars, and Pisces was in the second house.<sup>27</sup>

Astrologers also observe chart indicators for bisexuality, homosexuality, lesbianism, sexual sadism, and transexualism.<sup>28</sup> Since such activities are “indicated,” perhaps the one who desires to pursue them will have them justified in his own mind. And the one who does not desire them may live in worry or fear over the possibility, perhaps until he gives in to his astrological “destiny.” We can only wonder what an impressionable teenager would think if he went to an astrologer and discovered such “indicators” in his chart. What if he or she were confused about sexuality, especially in an age of gross experimentation and so-called sexual enlightenment?

Consider the advice to a client by Maxine Bell, a famous astrologer to Hollywood’s homosexual community: “He didn’t come to me for help, he came to me to find out when his next affair was due. He was just finishing up one [affair] and after two nights of being alone he was desperate, so he wondered what his prospects were for a new affair. I gave him the rundown on when the next affair would be likely. Whenever transiting Mars goes over the fifth house that starts things going.”<sup>29</sup>

Many astrologers believe that homosexuality is as much a part of a person’s “destiny

pattern” as their birth or death. Maxine Bell states, “If they were homosexuals as they closed their last life and had no desire to quit or reform, then they come back as a homosexual and they have their own karma they bring with them.”<sup>30</sup> “I have no wish to change, only to help,” says Edith Randall, a celebrated Hollywood astrologer. Her 60,000 astrological readings over the years include “a sizable slice of the homosexual community.”<sup>31</sup>

## Notes:

1. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *The Coming Darkness: Confronting Occult Deception*, Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1993.
2. Lawrence E. Jerome, *Astrology Disproved*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books 1977, p. 212.
3. *Los Angeles Times*, September 14, 1975, p. 1.
4. Tracy Marks, *The Art of Chart Interpretation*, Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1986, pp. 151-53.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 155-61.
7. Kurt Koch, *Satan's Devices*, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 1978, p. 20.
8. Kurt Koch, *Between Christ and Satan*, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 1962, pp. 11-12.
9. Sherman P. Kanagy II, and Kenneth D. Boa, *Astrology—Scientific, Philosophical and Religious Issues*, ms., 1986, p. 108.
10. Stephen Arroyo, *Astrology, Karma and Transformation: The Inner Dimensions of the Birth Chart*, Davis, CA: CRCS Publications, 1978, p. 246.
11. Jane A. Evans, *Twelve Doors to the Soul: Astrology of the Inner Self*, Wheaton, IL: Quest/Theosophical Publishing House, 1983, p. 200.
12. Robert A. Morey, *Horoscopes and the Christian*, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1981, p. 47; Liz Green and Howard Sasportas, *The Development of the Personality (Seminars in Psychological Astrology, Volume 1)*, York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1988, p. XI.
13. John Warwick Montgomery, *Principalities and Powers: The World of the Occult*, Minneapolis, MN: Bethany Fellowship, 1973, p. 118.
14. Alan Oken, *Astrology: Evolution and Revolution—a Path to Higher Consciousness Through Astrology*, New York: Bantam, 1976, p. 85.
15. Kanagy and Boa, *Astrology*, p. 85.
16. Mae R. Wilson-Ludlam, *Interpret Your Rays Using Astrology*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986, pp. 5-6.
17. Sydney Omarr, *My World of Astrology*, Hollywood, CA: Wilshire Book Company, 1968, p. 23.
18. Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology*, New York: Lucis Publishing, 1975, p. 638.
19. Nicholas deVore, *Encyclopedia of Astrology*, Totowa, NJ: Littlefield Adams & Co., 1976, p. VIII.
20. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, *The Rajneesh Bible*, vol. 1, Rajneeshpuram, OR: Rajneesh Foundation International, 1985, pp. 368, 372, 276.
21. Joan McEvers, ed., *Spiritual, Metaphysical and New Trends in Modern Astrology*, St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988, pp. 53, 70.
22. Jeff Green, *Pluto: The Evolutionary Journey of the Soul*, Vol. 1, St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988, p. 3; Tracy Marks, *The Art of Chart Interpretation*, p. 145.
23. Robert Eisler, *The Royal Art of Astrology*, London: Herbert Joseph, Ltd., 1946, p. 127; Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971, pp. 329-30.
24. Dane Rudhyar, *The Practice of Astrology: Book 1*, New York: ASI Publishers, 1977, p. 99.
25. Jane A. Evans, *Twelve Doors to the Soul*, p. 170.
26. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *The Myth of Safe Sex*, Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1994.
27. Jeff Green, *Pluto*, pp. 146-47.
28. Alan Oken, *Astrology*, 64-75; Wim van Dam, *Astrology and Homosexuality*, York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1985.
29. Jess Stearn, *A Time for Astrology*, New York: Signet, 1972, pp. 213-14.
30. Ibid., p. 210.
31. Ibid., p. 215.



# The Dangers of Astrology—Part Two

By Dr. John Ankerberg and Dr. John Weldon  
(from *Encyclopedia of New Age Beliefs*, Harvest House, 1996)

## Fear and Bondage

One astrologer emphasizes that “an astrological chart is not something to be feared.”<sup>1</sup> But thousands of clients of astrologers will disagree. For many people, astrology produces a fear of the future. Although the goal of astrology is allegedly to give the client “power” over the future, in practice it doesn’t work this way. This is because astrology teaches people to acknowledge the impersonal whim of the power that stars and planets exert over them. The stars and planets are not persons; they cannot be reasoned with, nor can their influence easily be escaped. Compared to the power and influence of the planets, men are like insects. What can one person do in the face of the power of the universe?

Astrologers acknowledge that astrology can bring ruin to people by the fears it produces.<sup>2</sup> Astrologers complain that other astrologers who predict personal disaster, illness, or death are being insensitive or callous. But they are powerless to do anything about it because the astrologers who make such predictions are, after all, only engaging in astrology.

Astrologer-psychiatrist Bernard Rosenblum points out that, “The bad reputation astrology must contend with is partly due to those astrologers who make definite predictions about people’s death, divorce, or illness, and other statements that suggest the client must suffer the rest of his life with a difficult psychological problem in order to correct a karmic imbalance. Such astrologers are exhibiting arrogance and insensitivity in the extreme.”<sup>3</sup> Other astrologers respond by saying that, after all, these astrologers “see” such events in the chart, so is it not their “moral” duty to warn the client? How is this being “insensitive” to the client?

Jungian analyst and astrologer Alice O. Howell complains, “I am appalled sometimes at the damage that can be done by astrologers who have no understanding of psychology and who are free with ‘predictions’ and sow seeds of doubt and fear in their clients.”<sup>4</sup> Other astrologers respond with, “why be appalled at astrology?” The very purpose of the chart is to make predictions. If such predictions sow seeds of doubt and fear, that is not the fault of astrology, but the client’s own failure to trust the wisdom of the stars. Astrology is a divine art; we only give the client God’s will. And why should astrologers be expected to become Ph.D.’s in psychology? So what if some astrologers admit that it is too easy for astrology students to set themselves up as experts and “make devastating prognostications which can seriously undermine the hope and confidence” of the client?<sup>5</sup> It is an astrologer’s *duty* to read the chart, and again, a *divine* responsibility. If it is God who is “speaking” through the chart,<sup>6</sup> the astrologer must speak God’s truth regardless of the consequences.<sup>7</sup> As one astrologer stated, “I feel I do not have the right to block information.... That would be like saying, ‘Hey, God, you’re wrong! You shouldn’t be telling me this now.’”<sup>8</sup>

If a severely afflicted Mercury or moon denote the client may or will experience insanity, who can blame the astrologer for expressing this to the client?<sup>9</sup> Perhaps lifelong psychotherapy will prevent it! And what if the birth chart with “Mars afflicted and Saturn and Neptune prominent [but] afflicted” denotes a child will have leukemia?<sup>10</sup> Clearly the stars have revealed it! If the parents are concerned and worried, at least they have been forewarned.

Dane Rudhyar discusses a common occurrence:

The person came disturbed, confused and sensing difficulties ahead; he leaves the astrologer's office with a crystallized expectation of tragedy. "Saturn" is about to hurt him; his wife may die, or his kidney *may* need an operation. Saturn. What is there one can do about Saturn, or to Saturn? Nothing apparently. Fear has taken shape and name. The anticipation of disaster torments the mind.... It will not help the situation to say the "influence" of Saturn is of the nature of electromagnetic waves; or that it can be expressed in a statistical average. It may be much worse to know one's husband has seventy-five percent chances of dying or becoming insane, than to know he *will* die or become insane. Uncertainty breeds devastating fear far more than the confrontation with the inevitable. And let us not say "forewarned, forearmed!" It does *not* apply where Mars, Saturn, squares, oppositions are present as objective, evil entities which are actually and concretely doing something to men. It does not apply where there is fear. <sup>11</sup>

### A Special Case: Death

To predict crippling illness, disease, and insanity is bad enough, but when astrologers see death in a chart and predict it, as they often do, <sup>12</sup> one wonders how they can justify the possible consequences in people's lives. The questions of "When will I die?" or "When will my spouse die?" seem to be among the most common questions asked of astrologers. <sup>13</sup>

And if, as even astrologers admit, up to 90 percent of astrologers are simple frauds, <sup>14</sup> this is no safeguard against their using our greatest fears against us for their personal profit "As often as not these star-mongers will resort to the criminal expedient of frightening [a] credulous client by threatening him or her or [the] next relatives with death or serious disease in a certain year of life, suggesting at the same time that a more thoroughgoing and, of course, more expensive analysis of the position of the planets, etc., on that day and at the particular hour and minutes might enable them to rectify or 'correct' his terrifying prophecy." <sup>15</sup>

Nor should we think that predictions of death can never be self-fulfilling. There are cases of people apparently "willing" themselves to death. These people lose virtually all interest in life and expect to die, and some do. Whether they believe in black magic (a "death hex"), or that the stars have fated it, they do die. <sup>16</sup> In their defense, many astrologers claim that it is no longer "proper" for astrologers to predict death. <sup>17</sup> But the damage that has already been done over the years and continues to be done cannot be so easily discarded.

### Self-Fulfilling Prophecies

When clients accept an astrologer's invitation to have their chart read, there are at least three things working against them: 1) numerous astrological factors can result in harmful or "malefic" combinations. The odds are that sooner or later the chart itself will inform clients of something they don't want to hear; 2) the odds are that the astrologer has a spirit guide directing chart interpretation, and spirit guides are not known for their love of humanity; 5) the problem of self-fulfilling prophecies. Prominent astrologer Dane Rudhyar observes the problems associated with specific predictions, or "definite forecasts," based on progressions and transits:

**...the individual has no recourse against the impact of such revelations. He is almost totally unprotected against their possible negative effect. Even if he reasons himself out of being consciously affected by the forecast, his *subconscious memory* does not let go. This is worse obviously if the event or trend prophesied is unfortunate and if fear of its results is aroused—which is the case in nine cases out**

***of ten!—but it can even have psychologically disintegrating effects when the thing expected is very fortunate for it may lead to a self-satisfied expectancy blurring the edges of the individual's efforts.*** <sup>18</sup>

Rudhyar reveals, "I have received many letters from people telling me how fearful or psychologically confused they have become after consulting even a well-known astrologer and being given a biased character analysis and/or predictions of illness, catastrophe, or even death." <sup>19</sup> Just a single astrological prediction can have tragic results because of the power and authority the clients grant to the astrologer. The magazine *Astrology Now* interviewed a woman named Lore Wallace who went to a famous astrologer at age 17 only to encounter predictions of a difficult birth and the death of a child. Although this never occurred, she said that the predictions "damaged me probably for the rest of my life." <sup>20</sup>

As a final example of the dangers of astrology, consider the two following true incidents from astrological marriage counseling. <sup>21</sup> A young man consults an astrologer who informs him that he will marry young, but that his first wife will not be the one "destined" for him. Only his second wife will bring him "true happiness." The man deliberately marries young in order to get his first wife, that is to fulfill the prophecy, so that he will not miss finding his second wife who alone will make him happy. His first wife is very good and devoted and bears him three children. After the third child is born, the husband abandons his wife and family and obtains a divorce. He marries a second wife whom he believes is the one the stars have destined to make him truly happy. Yet within a few months, she joins a cult and makes his life utterly miserable. Soon he divorces her as well. <sup>22</sup>

Here is just a single prediction and subsequent tragedy. If we multiply this by the millions of astrological predictions given each year, it gives us a look at the true potential of astrology.

Far too many tragedies are "arranged" by astrological predictions. Clients become amazed by accurate self-disclosures; these self-disclosures generate *trust*; trust leads to deception; deception produces unwise or immoral decisions and actions; bad actions bring ruin or destruction. <sup>23</sup>

A second illustration reveals not only how easily astrology becomes a vehicle for tragedy but also the spiritual deception hidden beneath the

surface. A certain woman was engaged to be married and felt that the advice of an astrologer might be useful. After drawing the horoscope, the astrologer predicted the following: "Your engagement will break up. This man will not marry you. You will not marry at all, but remain single." The woman was devastated. She was so in love with her fiancé that she could not bear the thought of losing him. She became depressed and paralyzed with fear. She continually worried that the engagement would break up and that she would never marry. She finally resolved to put an end to her life, but on the day she intended to kill herself, a friend of her fiancé was able to stop her. Upon the advice of that friend, she went for pastoral counseling, revealed her plight, repented of her sins and gave her life to Jesus Christ. Soon after that day, her fiancé also gave his life to Christ. Today they are contentedly married and have several children. But had it not been for Christ, the disaster which was set afoot by the astrologer could have happened. <sup>24</sup>

## Notes:

1. Joan McEvers, ed., *Spiritual, Metaphysical and New Trends in Modern Astrology*, St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 1988, p. 3.
2. Nicholas deVore, *Encyclopedia of Astrology*, Totowa, NJ: Littlefield Adams & Co.,

- 1976, p. 310.
3. Bernard Rosenblum, *The Astrologer's Guide to Counseling*, Reno, NV: CRCS Publications, 1983, p. 121.
  4. Alice O. Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, Wheaton, IL: Quest/Theosophical Publishing House, 1987, p. 7.
  5. Joan Hodgson, *Reincarnation Through the Zodiac*, Reno, NV: CRCS Publications, 1978, p. 7.
  6. Carol Cocciardi, ed., *The Psychic Yellow Pages*, Saratoga, CA: Out of the Sky, 1977, p. 111.
  7. Ibid., p. 128; Sylvia De Long, *The Art of Horary Astrology and Practice*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1988, p. 1.
  8. Ibid., p. 128.
  9. Doris Chase Doan, *Astrology: Thirty Years Research*, Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1985, p. 154.
  10. Ibid., p. 155.
  11. Dane Rudhyar, *The Practice of Astrology as a Technique in Human Understanding*, New York: Penguin Books, 1975, p. 24.
  12. John Ankerberg, John Weldon, *Astrology: Do the Heavens Rule Our Destiny?*, Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1989, pp. 275-79.
  13. Sir John Manolesco, *Scientific Astrology*, New York: Pinnacle Books, 1975, p. 127.
  14. Owen S. Rachleff, *Sky Diamonds: The New Astrology*, New York: Popular Library, 1973, p. 265.
  15. Robert Eisler, *The Royal Art of Astrology*, London: Herbert Joseph, Ltd., 1946, p. 111.
  16. Ram Dass interview, *New Age Journal*, no., 9, p. 27; see also the interview in *The Movement*, 1976; cf. Lawrence E. Jerome, *Astrology Disproved*, Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1977, pp. 32, 212, 104.
  17. de Vore, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 224-25.
  18. Rudhyar, *Practice of Astrology*, pp. 95-96, emphasis added.
  19. Geoffrey Dean, "Does Astrology Need to Be True? Part 1: A Look at the Real Thing," *The Skeptical Inquirer*, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 174; cf. Dane Rudhyar, *From Humanistic to Transpersonal Astrology*, Palo Alto, CA: The Seed Center, 1975, p. 12; Manolesco, *Scientific Astrology*, p. 27.
  20. Dean, "Does Astrology Need to Be True?" p. 184.
  21. cf. Teri King, *Marriage, Divorce and Astrology*, New York: Harper & Row, 1988, pp. 223-27.
  22. Marc Edmund Jones, *The Sabian Manual: A Ritual for Living*, Bolder, CO: Sabian/Shambhala Publications, rev., 1976, pp. 17-18.
  23. Charles Strohmmer, *What Your Horoscope Doesn't Tell You*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1988, p. 47.
  24. Kurt Koch, *Satan's Devices*, Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1978, pp. 20-21.