

# 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*.