

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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THE DOCTRINE OF ASTROLOGY

As Germany began conquering its neighboring countries in Europe during World War II, it appeared that the German forces under the leadership of Adolph Hitler were unstoppable. But then Hitler made a colossal mistake in June 1941 when he decided to attack the nation of the Soviet Union. His armies' inability to capture Leningrad or Moscow quickly led to the downfall of Germany. Yet, what caused Hitler to make such a terrible tactical blunder? Amazingly he listened to the advice of an all-knowing astrologer!

What do we mean by "astrologer"? An astrologer is someone who claims to foretell the future by studying the supposed influence

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Birmingham, AL 35215-4106

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of the relative positions of the moon, sun, and stars on human affairs (Webster's Dictionary). You know who I am talking about, don't you? People like Jeane Dixon and others who print a daily horoscope for the local newspaper. Depending upon which sign of the Zodiac you are born under, the horoscope gives you some 'special' advice or bits of wisdom for that particular day! There are even television ads nowadays where folks are encouraged to call "reliable psychics" to find out their entire future!

Unfortunately the "doctrine of astrology" affects many unsuspecting victims, including members of the Lord's church. Followers of astrology do not see any danger in believing its prophecy. To them it is just a harmless game. But is it? Is there any truth or advantage to the system of "horoscopes"?

According to the astrologers, man's future can be calculated by examining the positions of the heavenly bodies (planets, stars, and/or moon) at the exact time of his birth. Supposedly the forces acting upon these celestial bodies also have a pronounced influence on the human life. But man's destiny is not controlled as such!

Man is a creature of free-will and it is man himself who controls his own "destiny" or "future" THROUGH the choices he makes. Was it not Noah's choice to build the ark according to God's pattern and thus, saved his family? Was it not Abraham's own decision to offer up his only son Isaac and thereby became the Father of the Faithful? Did not Moses choose *"rather to suffer the affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"* (Heb. 11:25)? Was it not Joshua's own decision to serve the Lord in spite of what everyone else would do? And was it not the disciples' own choice to follow

Jesus and Paul's choice to fight the good fight, finish the course and keep the faith?

The danger about the doctrine of astrology is that it wants to take away the accountability that comes with human behavior. It will tell you that today is suitable for making big gains in financial matters, therefore it is okay for a person to gamble his life away! However, we must take responsibility for our own actions and not blame our sins on "bad luck" or on the "stars up above". *"For every man shall bear his own burden"* (Gal. 6:5). *"Every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour"* (1 Cor. 3:8). We will be justified or condemned by our own words (Matt. 12:37) and not by the planetary movements of that particular day!

We must also remember that, contrary to the doctrine of astrology, we as Christians live under the authority and the will of God the Father and NOT under the influence of distant stars. As Jesus prayed in Gethsemane, *"nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done"* (Lk. 22:42), so must we live!

Another of the astrologer's claims is that people born under the same Zodiac sign will have similar personalities, similar character traits, similar abilities, similar lucky days and similar lucky places. Never mind that they cannot prove this scripturally or scientifically, but it just makes plain sense to them. So is this really possible? Well, as an example, let us look at people like Bing Crosby, Sigmund Freud, Queen Elizabeth II, Adolph Hitler, Willie Mays, William Shakespeare and Harry Truman who were all born under the astrological sign of Taurus. Would you say all of these people had the same characteristics? Or maybe even two of them? So why do people become gullible and fall for this false doctrine?

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication intended to encourage all men everywhere to become laborers into God's harvest (Lk. 10:2). This paper is mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, and all correspondence to:

Ray McManus
 301 Varden Hill Rd.
 Birmingham, AL 35214-1947
 Phone: (205) 791-1399

Whereas astrology states that the "stars above" can help us make the best of each day and the next, the Bible states, *"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"* (Prov. 27:1). Whereas the daily horoscope guides people to their full potential and helps them prepare accordingly with secular wisdom, the Christian finds his potential and preparation elsewhere: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Phil. 4:13).

When confronted with God's Word, astrology handbooks have offered the following explanation: "Although warnings as to the proper use of astrology appear in the Scriptures, no prohibition of the study of astrology can be found anywhere." Oh yeah? Then notice the following verses which, in fact, do condemn the practice of astrology. *"Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them"* (Jer. 10:2).

This next passage definitely settles the matter once and for all eternity. *"Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee*

from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame ." (Isa. 47:13-14).

Before the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, God warned them about getting involved with the ways of the heathen nations. Likewise, we as Christians must also avoid getting involved with the doctrine of astrology. *"When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord ."* (Deut. 18:9-12).

One of the most astounding predictions by the astrologers occurred 35 years ago! James Dobson described it this way: "In 1960 the world's astrologers announced that the worst combination of planetary influences in 25,000 years would occur that year. Seven of the nine planets were to appear in a line, which meant bad news for Mother Earth! Indian soothsayers were going crazy in sheer fright, and American sky gazers were predicting everything from the drowning of California to the cataclysmic end of the world. But the fateful day came and went, of course, with no more disasters than on any other day!"

Today we still have astrologers making wild predictions and people are still making mistakes by heeding their advice. Friends, hopefully we have learned that astrology is not a game for Christians; it is an abomination

because the Word of God specifically condemns this doctrine of astrology.

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. To which tribe did King Saul belong?
2. What did Christ tell the disciples to remember if the world hated them?
3. What troubled the Sadducees about the teaching of the apostles?
4. What did David do when the ruthless witnesses who witnessed against him became sick?
5. What book of the Bible records events covering the greatest amount of time?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. When Abram left Canaan and went to Egypt because of the famine, did Lot go with him? YES (Gen. 13:1)
2. In what form did God descend upon Mount Sinai? IN FIRE (Exo. 13:2)
3. What is it recorded that Onesiphorus did in Rome? LOOKED DILIGENTLY FOR PAUL. (2 Tim. 1:17)
4. Moses took some of the blood from the ram offered at Aaron's consecration and touched what three parts of Aaron's body? TIP OF RIGHT EAR, THUMB OF RIGHT HAND, AND BIG TOE OF RIGHT FOOT (Lev. 8:23)
5. Who was Timothy's grandmother? LOIS (2 Tim. 1:5)

LIKE LITTLE CHILDREN

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN" (Matt. 19:13-14). In this instance Jesus compares the kingdom of God to little children. He is saying that the kingdom will possess men and women who have the precious qualities of little children -- qualities like trusting faith, meekness, forgiveness, and sincere humility. In essence, the church is a lot like *"little children"*

Have you ever noticed how much attention we pay to the 'little children' of this world? Who can resist a quiet, smiling, well-behaving and playful child? But when the diapers need changing or the baby is squalling, then see how many folks like to stick around! Yes, anybody can love a baby at "certain times" when everything is going fine but when things get "tough", only the parents are there ALL the time, through the good and the bad! They are the ones who truly love the child because they put in the extra effort.

Similarly, anybody can go to church when the weather is just fine or a special meeting with an eloquent speaker is scheduled. Anybody can attend the church services when "there's nothing better to do." But only the Christian will be there ALL the time! Whether it is raining "cats and dogs" or the services conflict with a worldly activity, you can always count on the disciples of Christ to show up "at church." The reason is rather obvious: they love God more than anything else in this world! And they show it through their efforts. What do we show by our efforts?

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
March 3 - 5	Napolean Church Woodland, AL	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
March 6 - 10	Summerville Road Church Selma, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
March 10 - 12	Fayetteville Road Church Atlanta, GA	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
March 19 - 24	Fourth Ave. Church Algood, TN	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
March 24 - 26	Freefield Church State Line, MS	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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THE RECORD BOOK

If all the things you ever said,
Were written in a book;
And all your thoughts were on display,
So all could take a look;
I guess there's not a living soul,
Who wouldn't hang his head;
And feel ashamed before the Lord
And wish that he were dead.

There is a record book I'm told
With every deed and word;
It even keeps the records of
Our thoughts that can't be heard;
The good, the bad and every sin
For nothing has been missed;
It really makes me feel ashamed,
To think what's on my list.

-- Author Unknown --