

Your Horoscope: Is It Satanic?

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Each day, thousands scan their daily newspapers for their horoscopes. Is this merely a harmless pastime – or involvement in something more serious?

If one morning you accused your fellow employee, as he thumbed through the day's newspaper to find his horoscope, of practicing "divination," you may have drawn a blank stare – or a questioning frown.

But "divination" is the name given to mystic or occult practices by which people have, for thousands of years, sought security through secret information from the gods, God, or nature. Some examples of divination in use today involve crystal-ball gazing, examining tea leaves or Tarot cards, astrology, bio-rhythms, Ouija boards and seances. Astrology is a complicated form of divination based on the theory that our lives are governed or influenced by the stars and planets.

Naturally, no one denies that our lives are influenced by the sun – without which there would be no life – and to a lesser extent by the moon, which produces tides. But the particular claims of astrology are open to serious scientific and Biblical objections. Let us look first at its scientific problems.

Historically, astrology arose among the pagan Babylonians, who believed that the stars and planets were gods. It later spread into Judeo-Christian circles. There it was characterized by the belief (not taught in the Bible) that these heavenly bodies were angels. Modern scientific investigations indicate that neither stars nor planets share the characteristics of personality which gods or angels were thought to have. Planets now are known to be worlds like our earth.

When astrology first became popular, it was thought that the earth was the center of the universe, with the stars and planets moving overhead for our sole benefit. In such a case, astrology seems reasonable to many. Today it is known that the earth revolves around the sun, an average star among billions in the Milky Way Galaxy, which is only one of billions of galaxies in the universe.

Classical ancient astrology and most modern astrology are based upon only seven "planets": the sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. The discovery of three more planets since 1781 – Uranus, Neptune and Pluto – seems to have gone unnoticed by most modern astrologers. If astrology really has anything to do with the planets and stars, why do most modern astrologers ignore these discoveries? And why are their results as good (or bad) as those of the few modern astrologers who do use the newly discovered planets?

If you look in most books or newspaper columns on astrology to learn what sign of the Zodiac you were born under, you will find the information about two thousand years out of date! For instance, I was born on April 2, and according to classical astrology, would

therefore be an Aries. Yet the sun is not in Aries on my birthday because, in the 2,000-odd years since the Greek form of astrology used today was developed, a change in the earth's orbit (known as the precession of the equinoxes) has caused the sun to enter each constellation about a month late. If you thought you were an Aries, you really are a Pisces; or if a Taurus, you really are an Aries, and so forth. Yet one of the major claims of astrology is that our personality reflects our sun-sign. But which sun-sign? It is the old sun-sign, why real sun-sign (the one the sun was actually in on the day of your birth), why do most astrologers ignore this precession of the equinoxes?

Astrology has never dealt satisfactorily with the twin problem. Why are people born under the very same star and planet configurations often so different in personality? Why do they have such different experiences, successes and failures?

In fact, the Zodiac itself is arbitrary. Anyone who has looked at the night sky for himself knows that it takes great imagination to see the various animals and people which are supposed to be represented by the star patterns. The boundaries between constellations are arbitrary as well. The year of 12 months apparently has been to construct an arbitrary division of the Zodiac into 12 constellations of equal extent.

For those who accept the Bible as the message of God, the Creator of mankind, the problems of astrology are even more serious. Although it is possible that the wise men who came to the baby Jesus were astrologers (Matthew 2:1-12), this does not necessarily indicate God's approval of astrology. In the parable of the prodigal son, the fellow's own sin and his employers refusal to help him when in need were used to bring him back to his father, yet neither of these things was good in itself (Luke 15:11-32).

In fact, the Bible calls all forms of divination "abominable" (Deuteronomy 18:9-13). Apparently this is because they represent our attempts to find security without facing up to God's demands upon our lives. In place of divination, God sent the Biblical prophets (Deuteronomy 18:14-22), whose words are written in the bible. All we need to know about the future is to be found in its pages.

Astrology does not provide security, according to the Bible. Speaking to the Babylonians, the inventors of astrology, God says, "Let now the astrologers ... save you from what will come upon you ... They cannot deliver themselves ..." (Isaiah 47:13-14).

To Bible believers, God says, "... do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens, although the nations are terrified by them; for the customs of the peoples are delusion" (Jeremiah 10:2-3).

First published in *Christian Life* (October 1979): 43.