

**Christians**

*And*

**Astrology**



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Ideas Have Consequences. Let Us Spread The Christian WorldView!

# Christians And Astrology

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# Astrology And Christians

Dr. Saneesh Cherian & Dr. Johnson C. Philip

Astrology is the name given to a cluster of practices that claim to use the position of stars and the planets to predict the future of individuals and even nations. The name astronomy comes from the Latin term *astrologia* (astronomy), and that in turn comes from the Greek word *astron* (constellation or star) and *logia* (speech, knowledge). Another word for astrology is *starcraft*. These names have nothing today to with Astronomy which is the scientific study of stellar and cosmic objects.



A few things (which will be mentioned below) have attracted many Christians to Astrology. This in turn has led them to claim that there is no harm for Christians in consulting astrologers and astrological predictions. This in turn has lured many into dabbling in astrology, at least at its fringes, while it also has created many fence-sitters who do not find any harm if Christians take an interest in astrology, though they themselves would prefer to remain away from it all.

Picture: [Signs of Zodiac Are A Common Sight Worldwide](#)



Christians were totally opposed to astrology and all kinds of occult (secret, hidden) activities at the time of Reformation. For them it was not a question of whether it is science or occult-science, but rather a matter of obedience to the Scriptures. Both the Old as well as the New Testament repeatedly warn God's children not to indulge in these things. In Isaiah 13 God says, " 12 Stand now with your enchantments, and with the multitude of your sorceries, wherein you have labored from your youth; if so be you shall be able to profit, if so be you may prevail. 13 You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save you from these things that shall come on you. 14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. 15 Thus shall they be to you with whom you have labored, even your merchants, from your youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save you."

While He was giving Israelites about how He wants His children to conduct themselves in the Promised Land, God said, " 9 When you are come into the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. 10 There shall not be found among you any one that makes his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that uses divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. 11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. 12 For all that do these things are an abomination to the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD your God does drive them out from before you. 13 You shall be perfect with the LORD your God. 14 For these nations, which you shall possess, listened to observers of times, and to diviners: but as for you, the LORD your God has not suffered you so to do. (Deuteronomy 18:1-12). The scriptures quoted above, in addition to forbidding these practices, hint at the fact that practices related to finding one's future had a great attraction for people, and that was another reason why God's children were to take additional precaution not to fall into these things.

In spite of such strict orders from God, Christians indulge in astrology partly out of ignorance of the

Scripture. With Bible-reading and personal studies on an all-time low, and with most people preferring to graze rather than delve deeper in the Scriptures, a good number of them have no idea of what is the stand of the Bible about occult practices. Another reason is familiarity. Newspapers and magazines often carry What Your Stars Foretell type of columns regularly. Seeing them every day eventually makes people insensitive to their forbidden nature for Christians and they start taking interest in these columns. Once hooked, many become life-long customers, openly or secretly.

There is little negation of these things in the homes of such people. Some of them might even talk of astrology in positive light. What is more, many of them might even equate astrology with science. Such positive presentation of astrology would, obviously, encourage their family members to take a positive view of astrology.

Finally there are people who have no idea of Bible or science, or sometimes both. When they hear the familiar chant that "science has proved that the position of planets influences people" they immediately fall for it. They never pause to ask for proofs or demonstrations for such claims. Once convinced, they sing the same song causing many more to fall into the trap of believing that astrology must be based on science, even if the whole of it is not scientific. Thus the vicious cycle of bringing more Christians to the net of astrology.

Two things must be clear from the outset. Indulgence in astrology is totally forbidden for Christians, whether it is science or not. The occult is totally forbidden for God's children. Second, nobody has demonstrated that it is science.

## The History And Origin Of Astrology

The oldest reference to Astrology is found in Genesis 41:8 "And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh". Here the word translated magician is a reference to astrologers who used to chart the course of future with the help of stars. From this we can deduce that astrology and astrological practices are at least 4000 years old.

Since Leviticus and Deuteronomy contain instructions against dabbling in astrology, it is also obvious that it was a well established practice by the time the Israelites came out of Egypt. So well established and widespread that there was a danger for the Israelites to fall into this practice if they did not segregate themselves from the pagans around them. Archeology and history also confirm that Astrology is a very ancient practice and that it strongly attracted Israelites whenever they became lax in their faith and practices. A derivate of this is seen when Saul, the first king of the Jews, visited the Witch of Endore to get a message from God.

Picture: [Maharshi Bhrigu, The Indian Sage Who Codified Indian Astrology Around 1000 BC In His Book Bhrigu Samhita](#)



Astrology's earliest recorded origin is in the third millennium BC in India and Babylon. Probably it had its actual origin much earlier in Middle East in the cult of Nirmord which has been traced as the starting-point of many pagan practices. Starting from there, astrology spread



throughout the world because a desire to know about one's future is inherent to mankind.

Since a study of planets and stars was necessary for astrology, initially it worked closely with astronomy. What is more, initially the astrologers were good at calculating the positions of stars and planets and therefore they were good astronomers at the same time. However, as empirical astronomy grew and observations began to multiply, astronomy got clearly distinguished and separated from astrology.

[Picture: Diana The Representation Of Moon In Roman Mythology And Astrology](#)

Over the centuries, astrology has developed into multiple schools of thought with often conflicting claims and methodologies. The only common factor left among them today is the claim that the position of stars and planets influence the course of human life. As to whether such effect can be predicted in a precise manner or general manner, there is much difference of opinion

**Schools Of Thought:** Contrary to what many people think, Astrology is not a single or unified school of thinking. On the contrary, present-day astrology is a cluster of schools of thought, with many irreconcilable differences. Almost all similar schools of thought have common origin, whereas dissimilar schools of thought have different origins. This means that ultimately what a school teaches does not depend upon any hard facts of science, but rather upon the beliefs and presuppositions of people and cultures that developed a given school of thought.

The main schools of thought today are the Hindu, the Western and the Chinese schools of astrology. Of these the Hindu school is the oldest. While all of them try to predict the future of people, they depend upon totally different foundations that are often in conflict with each other.

The Hindu astrology uses constellations of the zodiac and their positions for its predictive activity. On the other hand the Western astrology uses what is known as the tropical or seasonal zodiac. As a result the zodiacs used in the Western astrology do not coincide with that of the Hindu system. This is mainly because of certain errors in reckoning or calculation in the Western system that does not take the precession of the earth (equinox) into account. Without needing to grasp the technical terms, any reader can easily realize that the Hindu and the Western systems of astrology are contrary to each other.

The Chinese astrology also uses the twelve signs of the zodiac, but in a totally different manner. This gives them a 60-year cycle of zodiacal signs. This system is popular in Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, Japan and other country in its variant forms.

## Other Systems Of Predicting Future

Man's desire to know about future (apart from God) is so deeply ingrained in him that astrology has sprouted numerous mutually conflicting schools of thought. Since there is no empirical basis for any one of them, each one of them claims to be the true (or the best) system and labels all the other systems as false.

Picture: Zodiac As Depicted In A 6<sup>th</sup> Century Synagogue in Israel. Despite The Scripture Forbidding It, Many Jews Were Fascinated By Astrology



Not content with trying to know about one's future with the help of celestial bodies, numerous other systems have also come up, of which palmistry is the most widespread. Palmistry (or chiromancy, cheiromancy from Greek cheir or hand) uses the lines on one's palms to predict future (and even to guess the past).

People have been noticing that each person has a unique set of lines, but also that almost all these lines fall into certain classifiable categories. Based upon this the Hindus were the first to develop a system of classification where each major line was linked to things like life, education, marriage, health, and general welfare. From here the systems were developed in great detail. The presence or absence of lines, the influence of one line on another, etc. gave them a vast range of combinations of lines using which they try to predict future.

However, each system of palmistry defines most of these things differently, and there is no substantial agreement among them. Each system claims to be the most accurate one, and the conflict goes on. There is as yet no empirically verified claim to palmistry, and the "interpretation" offered by each school of thought is so fuzzy that one can practically fit any interpretation or prediction to any palm.

The same is the situation with all other systems that offer to predict man's future. None of them agrees among themselves, none of them have empirical evidence, and all of them are fuzzy enough to fit any situation into their prediction.

## Does The Bible Endorse Astrology

Many, both Christians as well as non Christians, have tried to argue that the prevention of astrology is not absolute in the Bible. They claim that while Israelites from time to time were forbidden from indulging in astrology, that it was only to deepen their commitment to, and dependence upon, God of Israel. These people have scouted through the whole Bible and have advanced many quotations which



in first look seem to endorse astrology. Since the average Christian is no longer in the habit of cross-checking such quotations, and since very few Christians today ask whether a given claim is right, a good number of them fall prey to this false propaganda.

The scripture is very clear that God's children should not consult astrologers, fortune-tellers, oracles, and such people who practice the occult science. The prevention in the Scripture is absolute, not temporary. Thus it would be good to examine the key passages which people quote from the Bible to claim that the Bible endorses astrology.

**1. Passages Where Celestial Phenomena are mentioned:** Since the Bible records almost 4000 years of human history, it is natural for the Bible to contain references to sun, moon, stars and celestial phenomena. Some of these references are:

"Canst thou lead forth the constellations in their season? Or canst thou guide the Bear with her train?" (Job 38:32)

"The HEAVENS declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day after day utters his speech and night after night shows his knowledge. There is no tongue or language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the Earth and their words to the ends of the world. In them (the heavens) he has set a tabernacle for the sun." (Psalm 19:1-4)

"And there shall be SIGNS in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the Earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the Earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." (Luke 21:25-27)

All the above are references to astronomical phenomenon and they have nothing to do with astrology which is said to be related to the "fate" or the influence of stars and planets upon people. These passages do not mention anything related to fate.

**2. Passages That Talk Of A Miraculous Event:** Astrology depends upon the positions of planets and stars. However, these are preexisting planets and stars and not things that suddenly appear in the skies such as the following

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, Wise-men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we saw his star in the east, and are come to worship him." (Matthew 2:1, 2)

It is obvious from this and related passages in Luke that this celestial object was totally different from the planets and stars that people see every day. What is more, it was able to lead them to the house where Jesus Christ was. No normal star or planet can do that because they seem to go into whatever direction one goes, and thus they cannot lead anyone into any direction. Thus this was obviously a miraculous event where a bright celestial object was seen, and that is not at all part of any astrology anywhere in the world because astrology uses only pre-existing celestial objects.

**3. Passages Where Accidental And Superficial Similarity Is Interpreted As Astrological Relation:** Here an explanation given by an astrology proponent before he quotes passages from the Bible. He says,

"Astrology refers to every 2160 years as a new "AGE" which is a different sign of the zodiac that comes into position to influence the Earth. The Bible describes events that will occur according to the signs of the astrological ages." He then goes on to quote the following passages from the bible  
And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the AGE. (Matt. 28:20)

Anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this AGE or in the AGE to come. (Matt. 12:32)

The harvest is the end of the AGE, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the AGE. (Matt. 13:39-40)

What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the AGE? (Matt. 24:3)

The word age is used by the Bible, and also in normal conversation, in numerous ways. Claiming a hidden astrological meaning is a fallacy of logic that can be illustrated by the following triad:



- a. The judge looked into a number of cases today
- b. A box is a type of a case
- c. Thus the judge looked into a number of boxes today

Everyone knows the fallacy of such reasoning based upon accidental similarity of a word which means totally different things in different contexts. Thus the biblical references quoted above have no connection at all with astrology.

Fallacies Of Logic And Interpretation Have Been Always Used By People To Read Into The Bible Their Own Pet Theories And Biases. The Basic Aim Is To Trap The Unaware.

4. Passages Where Normal Meaning Is Forced To Give It An Astrological Meaning: the following passage from the Scripture is often quoted by lovers of astrology

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace." (Eccl. 3:1-8)

What they fail to note is that this passage is not talking about times fixed by fate. Rather, it is talking about times and seasons to do things. It is also talking about appropriateness of certain actions at certain occasions. These have no more connection with fate than a railway time-table that also talks about times when train come and leave.

We live in an age when both Christians as well as non Christians look for biblical justification for their unbiblical outlook and actions. Forcing their false interpretation upon the Bible is one of the standard techniques they use, and the same is true of the passages quoted above. The relation of these passages



with astrology is not only forced, it is also totally ridiculous and can be understood by the average Bible student without need for any knowledge of the science of Bible interpretation (Biblical Hermeneutics).

It is true that the Bible contains numerous references to astrology. However these are not endorsements, nor are they forced interpretations. Rather, these are all direct passages about astrology where no forced interpretation is needed to relate them to astrology. However, all of them only forbid and condemn involvement in astrology, and none of them endorses it.

## Is Astrology A Science

The word "science" has a specific meaning when people today claim that something is science or that something is scientifically proved. Modern science is an endeavor developed carefully and logically in the last five to six hundred years. It a modern discipline, and is something totally different from technology.

Technology deals with "how" to use materials to develop things and products that give a desired result. For example, the Egyptians developed the technology for mummification several thousands of years ago. Indians developed complex architecture several thousand years ago. Thus technology is thousands of years ago.

Science deals with "why" of matter and energy. Thus it studies matter and energy at a level far deeper than what one studies in technology. For example, the ancient man knew how to make good quality iron, but it is modern science that explains why doing it certain way produces good quality iron.

[As To What Science Is And What It Is Not Has Been Clearly Defined Over Five Centuries Or More Of Development. Astrology Does Not Fall Into That Definition](#)



Science depends upon a comprehensive set of information-gathering, analysis, and protocols of deduction and revision to arrive at conclusions. It usually starts with experiments and then proceeds to analyze the results. Correlations are found, proposals are made for the correlation, and further experiments are performed to see if the correlation holds. There are journals devoted to protocols of experimentation and deduction, and in this way each day science is becoming an increasingly accurate endeavor.

While many astrologers claim that "science has demonstrated that the position of planets and stars affect human life", it continues to be a claim only. The statement is totally false. There have been demand from Christians as well as skeptics/rationalists that astrology be subjected to empirical experiment and data gathering as is done in scientific experiments, say in the development of modern medicine. However, the demand still remains only a demand, and there has been no empirical testing of any value so far.

In other words, the claim that science has demonstrated that the position of planets and stars influence the course of one's life remains a totally unestablished and false claim. There is no proof that the position of terrestrial bodies influence your life. There is also no proof that such things influence of your character, achievement, health, or wealth.

Worse, a good amount of claims made by astrologers is totally false. For example, the calendar that Western astrologers use to determine your birth signs and zodiacs is totally different from the current position of the zodiac. They use a totally wrong and outdated calendar. Obviously, if their system cannot correct the most basic data on the calendar they use, you can imagine how good the rest of it will be. It is more like going for a trip around the world in your bus with one stipulation that it shall not have wheels.

Astrology is not science, and it has no scientific basis.

## Christians And Astrology

Right from the first time that the Bible mentions astrology, it is clear that God does not want His children to indulge in astrology or in anything that tries to predict future independent of God. Part of the reason is that man needs to depend upon God, His word, and His promises for future and upon nothing else. Part of the reason is that any attempt at knowing future independent of God will eventually lead man to the realm of satanic forces.

Since man knows that man using his finite knowledge he cannot predict future, there is every possibility that he would seek help from supernatural sources. This gives a great opportunity to demonic forces to invade their lives. Since Satan and his hosts have been here from the beginning of human history, they have an accurate knowledge of man's past. They can use such knowledge, via their mediums, to captivate mankind with accurate information about the past. Once people are fascinated by this kind of information, they become susceptible to suggestions.

What is more, if man using his finite knowledge can predict many general things, such as the weather for the coming days, Satan's host can predict general things in future with greater accuracy. Once a person is in the net of people who operate with the help of satanic forces, these predictions will take them fully into their net. From their starts deeper flirtations and involvement with satanic forces. This is one major reason why God totally forbade any indulgence in astrology, fortune-telling, and all such activities. We read:

Deuteronomy 18:9 When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, you must not learn the abhorrent practices of those nations. **10** There must never be found among you anyone who sacrifices his son or daughter in the fire, anyone who practices divination, an omen reader, a soothsayer, a sorcerer, **11** one who casts spells, one who conjures up spirits, a practitioner of the occult, or a necromancer. **12** Whoever does these things is abhorrent to the LORD and because of these detestable things the LORD your God is about to drive them out from before you. **13** You must be blameless before the LORD your God. **14** Those nations that you are about to dispossess listen to omen readers and diviners, but the LORD your God has not given you permission to do such things. **15** The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you – from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him. **16** This accords

with what happened at Horeb in the day of the assembly. You asked the LORD your God: "Please do not make us hear the voice of the LORD our God any more or see this great fire any more lest we die." **17** The LORD then said to me, "What they have said is good. **18** I will raise up a prophet like you for them from among their fellow Israelites. I will put my words in his mouth and he will speak to them whatever I command. **19** I will personally hold responsible anyone who then pays no attention to the words that prophet speaks in my name. **20** "But if any prophet presumes to speak anything in my name that I have not authorized him to speak, or speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet must die. **21** Now if you say to yourselves, 'How can we tell that a message is not from the LORD?' **22** whenever a prophet speaks in my name and the prediction is not fulfilled, then I have not spoken it; the prophet has presumed to speak it, so you need not fear him."

Thus as soon as God gave his moral commandments, astrology and all related fields of predicting future was forbidden for God's children. What is more, at the end of this command God gives the guideline for people to understand how those who predict future are not from God. At the end of this statement God reminds His people that all those who predict are fallible unless God is with them. Thus God's children should never fear astrologers and their likes.



In Jeremiah 10:2 we read "The LORD says, Do not start following pagan religious practices. Do not be in awe of signs that occur in the sky even though the nations hold them in awe" This is again a warning, as well as assurance, that God's children should not worry and fear terrestrial objects and signs. Other related statements in the Bible can be found at: Ezek. 21:21; 12:24; 13:6-9,23; 21:29; 22:28; Isaiah 44:24,25; Acts 16:16-19; Jer. 27:9,10; 14:14; Mic. 3:6-11; Zech. 10:2

Again in Deuteronomy 4:15 onwards we read:

**15** Be very careful, then, because you saw no form at the time the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the middle of the fire. **16** I say this so you will not corrupt yourselves by making an image in the form of any kind of figure. This includes the likeness of a human male or female, **17** any kind of land animal, any bird that flies in the sky, **18** anything that crawls on the ground, or any fish in the deep waters of the earth. **19** When you look up to the sky and see the sun, moon, and stars – the whole heavenly creation – you must not be seduced to worship and serve them, for the LORD your God has assigned them to all the people of the world. **20** You, however, the LORD has selected and brought from Egypt, that iron-smelting furnace, to be his special people as you are today. **21** But the LORD became angry with me because of you and vowed that I would never cross the Jordan nor enter the good land that he is about to give you. **22** So I must die here in this land; I will not cross the Jordan. But you are going over and will possess that good land. **23** Be on guard so that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God that he has made with you, and that you do not make an image of any kind, just as he has forbidden you. **24** For the LORD your God is a consuming fire; he is a jealous God

In verse 19 we can see that God reminds that reverence of stellar objects is a definite possibility, particularly when man starts to think as per his human imaginations and fancies. However, this is a sin as serious as idolatry and indulgence is totally forbidden.

In summary, Astrology is an occult-related practice to discover the future of man. It is a practice ultimately based in pagan philosophies. There is absolutely no scientific basis for astrology. What is more, any serious indulgence in it eventually leads one to occult forces and the satanic host is able to get an entry into the lives of people through such indulgence.

The Bible summarily forbade God's children from indulgence in astrology, fortune-telling, divination, and all such practices where man tries to discover information about his future independent of God. Since God Himself forbade indulgence in such practices, it is only appropriate that God's children keep away from Astrology.

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