

Church: Contemporary Issues

Should Christians Have Any Involvement With the Zodiac or Astrology?

By Dr. Paul M. Elliott

A reader asks, "I once heard a preacher say the Zodiac teaches the Gospel, but I know there are problems with astrology. Should Christians have any involvement with the Zodiac or astrology?"

The Bible debunks the notion of a Zodiac "gospel" and delivers clear warnings against any involvement with astrology. But Scripture also tells of God's ordained purposes for the stars and constellations.

The Zodiac-Gospel Theory

A long-standing theory holds that the Zodiac teaches the Gospel. The constellation Leo, for example, is said to depict Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. Virgo is said to depict the Virgin Birth of Christ. Irish Unitarian minister Bill Darlinson, author of the book, *Gospel and the Zodiac: The Secret Truth About Jesus*,¹ claims that Jesus' journeys and relationships with the twelve apostles as recorded in the Gospel of Mark are the retelling of the ancient myth known as the "Solar God-man." As one reviewer put it, Darlinson's version of the Gospel-Zodiac theory is not surprising from a minister in an "anything goes" church.

However, some of the strongest promotion of a so-called Zodiac Gospel has come from Evangelicals. The late Dr. D. James Kennedy wrote a book called *The Real*

*Meaning of the Zodiac.*² Promotional literature for the electronic version of the book, under the banner, "What Does Your Future Hold?", stated:

Listen to Dr. D. James Kennedy's book on audio tape, *The Real Meaning of the Zodiac*. Discover what he calls Biblical astrology or the "Gospel in the stars." What does the Bible tell us about the Zodiac and astrology? Startling discoveries related by eminent theologian Dr. D. James Kennedy prove that God created the Zodiac! God intended the stars to foretell the future of the world! Discover what Dr. Kennedy calls Biblical astrology, or the "Gospel in the stars."

Despite the claims of Darlinson, Kennedy, and others, the Bible does not indicate any "hidden meaning" of the Zodiac. In fact, the Bible warns against adding anything to Scripture (Deuteronomy 4:2 & 12:32, Proverbs 30:6, Revelation 22:18-19). The Apostle Paul warned the Colossians and others against Gnosticism and its so-called "higher knowledge." A "Gospel in the stars" most certainly falls into the category of extra-Biblical teaching.

What is Astrology and Why Is It Dangerous?

The dictionary defines astrology as "a pseudoscience claiming divination by the positions of the sun, moon, planets, and stars." Astrology is the alleged interpretation of a presumed influence of celestial bodies upon human destiny, both collective and individual. The Bible makes it clear that this is a false teaching, and that those who practice it are subject to God's condemnation. King Nebuchadnezzar found that the wisdom of the Jewish believer Daniel and his associates was "ten times better" than that of his Babylonian court astrologers (Daniel 1:20). Those men were unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the great image, but Daniel was able to do so, because he recognized that God, not the stars, was the source of the dream and its interpretation (Daniel 2:27).

After the warning against adding anything to God's Word in Deuteronomy 4:2, the Lord adds this: "And take heed, lest you lift your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, you feel driven to worship them and serve them, which the Lord your God has given to all the peoples under the whole heaven as a heritage (4:19)." The word translated "serve" in that verse means "to be subject to."

God expressly forbids astrology, which is a form of interpreting omens, and places it in the same category as witchcraft and child sacrifice (Deuteronomy 18:10-14). He does not want us to place ourselves in spiritual and moral subjection to the stars and planets, but to Scripture alone. Anyone who claims to be a Christian but also studies his horoscope is denying the authority of God's Word, and following a false and spiritually deadly authority — that of Satan himself.

Israel's Great Sin

Ancient Israel's great sin was idolatry, and that sin involved reliance upon astrology and worship of the stars (see, for example, 2 Kings 17:16 and 21:3-5; 2 Chronicles 33:3-5; Jeremiah 8:2 and 19:13; Zephaniah 1:5). Stephen, in his great sermon to the leaders of Israel before they stoned him to death, summarized the final apostasy of Israel thus:

Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: "Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, images which you made to worship; and I will carry you away beyond Babylon" (Acts 7:42-43).

God specifically identified astrologers as among those who will experience the fire of His judgment:

You are wearied in the multitude of your counsels; let now the astrologers, the stargazers, and the monthly prognosticators stand up and save you from what shall come upon you. Behold, they shall be as stubble, the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame; it shall not be a coal to be warmed by, nor a fire to sit before! (Isaiah 47:13-14)

Virtually every pagan religion, both ancient and modern (including Buddhism and Hinduism today) involves some form of astrology using the Zodiac. Although the Roman Catholic church officially opposes astrology, many Catholics have bought into the ideas of pseudo-scientific writers such as Courtney Roberts, who claims that the alleged appearances of Mary have astrological connections and significance.³

A Biblical View of the Stars and Planets

The Bible speaks of the sun, moon, and stars over three hundred times. The most often-repeated theme is the fact that they were created by God (Genesis 1:14-18, Psalm 8:3 and 19:1) and are subject to His control (Colossians 1:17). God has named and numbered the stars (Psalm 147:4). Believers are encouraged to study these works of God's hands, but with His creatorship and sustaining power as the foundation for such study (Psalm 111:2-6, Psalm 143:5-6). The One who has named and counted all the stars is also the One who knows each of us individually, lifts up the humble, and casts down the wicked (Psalm 147:5-6).

The Bible also teaches that God arranged the stars into recognizable groups or constellations, and it names some of them:

He made the Bear [Ursa Major], Orion, and the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south [thought to refer to the constellations as viewed in the southern sky] (Job 9:9).

By His Spirit He adorned the heavens; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent [a reference to the constellation Draco] (Job 26:13).

Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades, or loose the belt of Orion? Can you bring out Mazzaroth [literally, "the constellations"] in its season? Or can you guide the Great Bear [Orion] with its cubs? (Job 38:31-32)

He made the Pleiades and Orion; He turns the shadow of death into morning and makes the day dark as night; He calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth; the Lord is His name (Amos 5:8).

Genesis 1:14-15 tells us that God created the heavenly bodies "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" and also as sources of light. The Hebrew word translated "signs" speaks of a marker used for measurement, as well as a token or a proof. In other words, God created the heavenly bodies to enable man to mark time and to make other precise measurements. Throughout history men have used the stars to chart their course, over land and sea and through the air, and in our time also in space travel.

God used the stars to illustrate and confirm His promise to give Abraham a vast number of descendants (Genesis 15:5). Later, God reaffirmed this promise when He said that New Covenant believer-priests would be as the host of heaven that cannot be numbered, and the sand of the sea that cannot be measured (Jeremiah 33:22).

God used a star to announce the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to guide the wise men to Him (Matthew 2:2, 9).

The Bible also tells us that catastrophic astronomical events will accompany His final judgment upon the earth (Isaiah 13:9-10 and 24:21-23; Ezekiel 32:7; Joel 3:15; Matthew 26:29; Revelation 6:12-17).

In all of God's uses of the stars in Scripture, one thing is clear: If there is a significance to astronomical events or arrangements, it is a matter for God's clear revelation that such a thing is so, and not the interpretation of some individual or group claiming special, extra-Biblical knowledge.

The proper place of the stars in the life of the believer is, first of all, to remind us of God's very existence, His creating and sustaining power, His wisdom, His infiniteness, and His covenant-keeping faithfulness. We should use the stars for the purposes that God Himself said He created them, and for no other purposes.

God's has given His Word, not the stars, as our light for daily guidance:

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (Psalm 119:105).

For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; reproofs of instruction are the way of life (Proverbs 6:23).

And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:19-21).

If anyone lacks wisdom, ask of God, who gives to all men liberally — not the stars (James 1:5).

References:

1. Bill Darlinson, *Gospel and the Zodiac: The Secret Truth About Jesus* (Overlook Press, 2008).
2. D. James Kennedy and Nancy Britt, *The Real Meaning of the Zodiac* (Coral Ridge Media, 1989).
3. Courtney Roberts, *Visions of the Virgin Mary: An Astrological Analysis of Divine Intercession* (Llewellyn, 2004).

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Summary: Christians and others should be aware of Bible verses with God's warnings about astrology, the occult, mediums, divination and sorcery. These are not compatible with Christianity. Many bible verses say to turn to Jesus for answers and to renounce astrology and the occult. Summary: The Bible warns us about mediums, astrology, the occult, divination and sorcery. Get Help Now: Anger Anxiety Christianity Counseling Culture Depression Marriage Money Parenting Personal Growth Relationships Self-Image Small Groups Temptation. Click here to see what's new on our website. Turn Away from Astrol... The Bible and astrology: Should a Christian trust horoscopes & signs of the Zodiac? What do Scriptures say about divination of the future by the Occult? In my youth, people almost never took the Occult, witchcraft, or astrology seriously. People considered them a joke or at most an oddity. Today all aspects of the occult are increasingly taken seriously. The Bible debunks the idea of a Zodiac "gospel" and delivers clear warnings against involvement with astrology. A reader asks, "I once heard a preacher say the Zodiac teaches the Gospel, but I know there are problems with astrology. Should Christians have any involvement with the Zodiac or astrology?" The Bible debunks the notion of a Zodiac "gospel" and delivers clear warnings against any involvement with astrology. But Scripture also tells of God's ordained purposes for the stars and constellations. The Zodiac-Gospel Theory. A long-standing theory holds that the Zodiac teaches the Gospel. The constellation Leo, for example, is said to depict Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Christians And Astrology is an Ebook made available freely as a ministry of the Brethren Research Group. Since the book is in Creative Commons Copyright, you are welcome and encouraged to distributed this Ebook in electronic or print format. 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 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.