

Question: Does the Bible say anything about astrology and horoscopes? I thought astrology was a legitimate science.

The science of astronomy, which is the study of stars, planets, comets, galaxies and their movements, did have its beginnings in astrology; but those who now engage in the legitimate scientific study of astronomy consider astrology to be a false-science. The science of astronomy involves the observation and recording of the movement of celestial objects. These observations have been useful in making calendars and for navigation of the seas and of space. Astrology, however, takes the study of celestial bodies a step further into the belief that the movement of these bodies controls and influences events and personalities on earth.

The history of astrology can be traced back to the Chaldeans and Babylonians 2,000 years before Christ and to the belief that the heavenly bodies were actually gods. With this belief, ancient pagan religions recorded the regular movements of stars and planets in an attempt to calculate how events on earth were controlled by these so-called gods. Unusual phenomena like comets and eclipses were interpreted as omens of wars and calamities. These religions attempted to determine future events like the fate of kings, armies and empires by “reading the heavens.” With the rise of modern scientific studies, astrology has been recognized as pseudoscience and superstition by the scientific community and by believers in the one God who created the stars and planets. No scientific evidence has been found to support its claims.

In contrast to a belief in astrology and horoscopes, Christians believe in the personal God who created and controls the universe. Astrology replaces the worship of God, our creator, with the worship of created things like the sun, moon and stars. In describing the sinful world on which God’s wrath is poured out, the apostle Paul said: “They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). The sun, moon and stars are not gods who control what happens on earth. Only the Lord God who created our universe determines what happens in our lives. We need to consult him and only him!

In addition, God told his people Israel: “And when you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars-- all the heavenly array-- do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the LORD your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven” (Deuteronomy 4:19; cf. Exodus 20:4-5). Grouping astrology along with things like magic and sorcery, the prophet Isaiah ridiculed Israel for consulting astrologers, saying: “All the counsel you have received has only worn you out! Let your astrologers come forward, those stargazers who make predictions month by month, let them save you from what is coming upon you. Surely they are like stubble; the fire will burn them up. They cannot even save themselves from the power of the flame. Here are no coals to warm anyone; here is no fire to sit by” (Isaiah 47:13-14; also read Jeremiah 10:2).

Yet, interest in and curiosity about astrology has continued. Many newspapers and magazines continue to publish the daily horoscope. From one’s birthdate, the astrological sign under which he or she was born can be determined. Using that sign, personalities are described and predictions are made about each day for those born under that sign. For many people, astrology is merely a matter of curiosity, but it is estimated that over 30% of Americans continue to believe in astrology and consult their horoscopes to plan daily activities. Genuine believers in God and Jesus Christ do not consult their horoscope and astrologers. Instead, they pray and read God’s word in the Bible for guidance in matters of life and eternity.

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