

[Karma, Free Will And Jyotisha, Part 1](#)

Category : [March 1996](#)

Published by Anonymous on Mar. 02, 1996

Jyotisha

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The questions of karma, destiny and free will have baffled scholars and philosophers from time immemorial. These are among the most misunderstood and misinterpreted subjects in the philosophy of life. However, the ancient sages were very clear in their understanding and tried to elucidate it to us through their teachings. Vedic astrology plays an important role in explaining the interrelatedness of karma, destiny and free will. This is a very complicated and difficult area to deal with. However, I will try to shed some light as I understand it.

The quest for knowledge, truth and happiness is as old as life itself. All the choices we make are aimed at attaining happiness and avoiding unhappiness. Astrology seeks to guide one in this natural urge toward greater fulfillment by revealing one's past karma and the resultant samskaras (impressions on the subconscious mind), which determine the way one perceives the world. Karma is the activity of doing and being, and it is action born of desire which holds the self in bondage. The sages have understood that the problem of life is how to

live with the acceptance of one's limitations, yet at the same time maximize the opportunities for growth.

The concept of karma is manifold. The cardinal "doctrine of karma" is the law of cause and effect in accordance with the maxim, "As you sow, so shall you reap." "A karma" is an experience created by our actions, our actions being rooted in our thoughts. Karma is also what we have created by our past actions.

Therefore, the future is based on the past. There is no favoritism in the determination of the law of karma, for everyone is treated equally, and equal opportunity for growth is given to everyone as well. We have to experience our karma of the past. The astrologer simply reads the planetary influences which indicate the results of the previous karmas. Therefore, in the absolute sense, there is nothing like fate controlling our lives. It is only the law of karma, which impels human beings to act and live as they do. Having this knowledge helps regulate one's actions, thus making the individual wiser and more mature.

This brings us to the questions: what is free will, and how does it operate? Our ability to exercise will, without the interference or influence of any factor outside ourselves, gives the impression that we have the freedom to act as we desire. The truth is, our free will is subject to the influence of our samskaras, mental impressions caused by our past karmas.

The real situation regarding karma and free will, as explained

by astrology, is that we human beings are partly free and partly determined. The circumstances of the major events of our life, such as birth, death or initiation into spiritual life, may be due to the uncanny operation of destiny. In other words, one's physical nature, heredity and the social position of one's family or position in the cosmos are determined by our past karmas.

More on karma next month.

April Highlights

In the month of April, two eclipses can be observed: a lunar eclipse on the 4th and a solar on the 17th. Eclipses are forerunners of malefic influences in specific areas of different nation's charts, depending on the point of eclipse falling on a sensitive point in any particular country's chart. The nature of malefic influence depends on the country and sign it falls in.

In the case of the USA, the 10th house in the birth chart of the nation becomes afflicted by the solar eclipse point, indicating that the legislature may have to deal with some serious issues relating to the country. President Clinton will continue to face many hurdles in the government, and the health-care plan may go through further revision. Malefic planets, Sun, Ketu and Mars, placed in the 4th house of the USA birth chart may indicate that agricultural products will be affected, due to climatic conditions in the coming months, causing higher prices. The stock market may begin to improve in the second part of April. The March and April new moon positions are indicative of the shipping industry facing unexpected situations like accidents in 1996. During the middle of April, there may be a positive compromise between warring factions in legislature which brings an optimistic mood to the

government. Financial activities, specifically regulating financial matters, will be the important activity in the end of the month of March and the beginning of April. Some important diplomatic decision which may attract dissension from other countries is indicated in March/April. Educational reformation ideas may gain ground in April.

In India, the rising sign for the new moon in April is the last degree of Aquarius, with Gemini navamsha. The government will experience a sigh of relief in most areas of the country, except perhaps a border incident which might create tension.

In Tokyo, the April planets are favorably placed for bringing compromise amongst opposing political groups.

Generally it is important in the year 1996 to take more interest in health, as new problems in the health of people may appear.

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