Hindu Astrology, The Eye of Knowledge
Category : December 1992
Published by Anonymous on Dec. 01, 1992

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Understanding the various branches of ancient wisdom is necessary so that the world may steer clear of the dangers of materialism and spiritual degradation. For over 50 years, I have consistently spoken against the dogmatic scienticism of our age, because of which holistic understanding of the universe was ignored, and the growth of human knowledge was hindered. India's heritage sees religion, philosophy, art and science as harmoniously integrated around human life and emanating from a common fountainhead. Nearly 5,000 years ago, the Hindus had attained proficiency in a variety of branches of knowledge - both secular and spiritual. Astronomers could assess the age and expanse of the universe in figures that remarkably agree with those of today. They were not only savants of laws of movements of celestial bodies, but also could formulate moral and spiritual laws corresponding to these physical laws. Astronomy was seen as but the means to the development of astrology, built upon the concept that human life is inseparably and intimately allied to the multifarious movements of the cosmos.

Parasar's Suryasiddhanta, the literary pole star of Hindu astronomy regarded by scholars as at least 5,000 years old, declares jyotisha to be the most important limb of the Veda. Constituting the eye of knowledge - divine, pure, supreme, secret and exalted knowledge. The Vedic seers believed that the universe, or brahmanda, is the result of evolution, of the creative power inherent in the primordial Being, and therefore that it is intelligent and non-mechanical in character. The physical aspect of the universe, or macrocosm, has its counterpart in the physical aspect of the individual pindanda, or microcosm. Therefore, change occurring in the universe must have its repercussion on the individual.

Astrology and karma are interrelated, and astrology is said to help a man through the various vicissitudes of life. Astrological predictions are tendencies of nature in the way towards fulfillment or manifestation, and we can either strengthen or

weaken their momentum in the desired direction by recourse to suitable remedial measures prescribed in ancient astrological books.

In the ordinary man, freewill is not very strong. His actions in life will, therefore, correspond to a very large extent, to the forecast given by his horoscope. But in those of great spiritual development, there will be some variation, even though the general pattern will remain. Since sages give importance to human volition, and since certain afflictions in the horoscope can be offset by human effort and other palliatives, absolute determinism is ruled out in astrology. There are many points where a psychological or emotional cause can be interrupted before it manifests in material consequences. That is the difference between fatalism and free will.

The sages laid down qualifications for the astrologer which, judged by modern standards, are rigorous. He should have no mean motive, be pure in thought, word and deed. Should have proper initiation from a qualified guru. and be actuated by a sense of service. He should possess creative or inferential ability. The real secrets of astrology should be taught only to those few deserving and trusted disciples capable of using the science only for the good of mankind.

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