

ASTROLOGY AND GURBANI

The number of people consulting astrologers is increasing at very high rate throughout the world. This practice has become more prominent than before among the Canadians of Indian origin, especially the Sikhs. Almost all the ethnic TV programs are broadcasting horoscopes and special sessions for future predictions regularly. Some of the astrologers are so busy that they shuttle between Toronto and Vancouver very often to satisfy their clients. It has been noticed that some parents in India consult the astrologers to find out the best time and day when the planets will be in most favorable positions for a successful future of the unborn child. Then doctor is requested to force the birth at that particular time.

GURBANI: The irony is that most of their clients in Canada are Sikhs whose scripture (*Gurbani* recorded in the *Aad Guru Granth Sahib*) [1] does not support any belief in astrology and future prediction by the astrologers:

ਆਂਟ ਸੋਤੀ ਨਾਕੁ ਪਕੜਹਿ ਸੁਝਦੇ ਤਿਨਿ ਲੋਅ ॥

ਮਗਰ ਪਾਛੈ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਸੁਝੈ ਏਹੁ ਪਦਮ ਅਲੋਅ ॥ ੨॥

AGGS, M 1, P 662

"One holds the nose with his two fingers and thumb and claims to see three worlds. But it is very astonishing that he does not know what is behind his back."

ਗਣਿ ਗਣਿ ਜੋਤਕੁ ਕਾਂਡੀ ਕੀਨੀ ॥ ਫੜੈ ਸਣਾਵੈ ਤਤੁ ਨ ਚੀਨੀ ॥

ਸਭਸੈਂ ਉਪਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਹੋਰ ਕਬਨੀ ਬਦਉ ਨ ਸਗਲੀ ਛਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

AGGS, M 1, P 904.

"Astrologer counts and recounts and prepare the horoscope. Then he reads it to his clients. But he does not recognize the reality. The highest of all is the philosophy of the Guru. All others deliberations are ashes (means nothing)."

ਮਨ ਕੀ ਪਤ੍ਰੀ ਵਾਚਣੀ ਸੁਖੀ ਹੂ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਾਹੁ ॥

ਸੋ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣੁ ਭਲਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿ ਬੁਝੈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

AGGS, M 3, P 1093.

"(Instead of reading the horoscopes of others) read the horoscope of your mind to find the highest joy of the joys. The one, who understand the Divine thought (philosophy), is called the noble Brahman."

SCIENCE: There is also no scientific proof that positions of planets have any effect on the future of human beings. Nevertheless, the stars of most of the astrologers are in very good positions as they are minting lots of money by deceiving the innocent Sikhs and others. Dr Joe Schwarcz, Professor of Chemistry recently

reported that it is so because by and large many people are not well versed in scientific principles or critical thinking. His observations on astrology reported in his article, "Sense and Nonsense" are reproduced here for information of those who are trapped into the fallacy of astrology [2]:

"Astrology has been practiced since the time of the ancient Egyptians. This, however, does not make it valid. Is there any reason to believe that astrology works? Any physics student can calculate that the gravitational effect of the heavenly bodies on human bodies is insignificant. In fact, as far as a baby is concerned, the gravitational effect of the obstetrician at the moment of birth is far greater than the effect of the stars. Is our destiny then shaped by the body weight of the doctor who brings us into the world?"

There is, however, no need to use physics to refute astrology. Its validity can be readily tested. Just ask a number of people to write autobiographical sketches. Give these to astrologers together with the birth dates of the subjects. Ask the astrologers to match the character sketches with the birth dates. They can't. It is also interesting to note that when birth dates of scientists or politicians or actors or psychics are compiled, they are remarkably random. Shouldn't unemotional, skeptical, profit-oriented scientists have different birth signs than sensitive, altruistic, generous psychics? But I guess I'm being too cynical. It must be because I'm a Leo and everyone knows that Leos are much too sensible to believe in such nonsense."

Although astrology may be more than 3000 years old, nevertheless, according to *Gurbani* and science there is no effect of the position of the planets, moon, and sun either at the time of birth or at any time of life on any person's future. It is a sheer folly to depend on astrology for any purpose of life.

REFERENCES

1. AGGS = Aad Guru Granth Sahib. 1983 (reprint). Publishers: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Amritsar. (M = Mahla, i.e., succession number of the Sikh Gurus to the House of Guru Nanak, P = Page of the AGGS).
2. Schwarcz, Joe. 1998. Sense and Nonsense. The Gazette, Montreal, Sunday, October 25, 1998, page C4.

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