

OUR DESTINY?

We live in a difficult era where human race is confronted by issues it has never faced before, when fear is widespread and when uncertainty looms in every corner of the globe. Under the circumstances, we observe the increasing tendency of people to refer to astrologers for predictions of what is in store for them tomorrow and thereafter.

This is happening not only in backward areas but also in the so called civilized countries of the globe. Millions believers consult horoscopes daily to obtain information on their future *life* trends which they believe are under influence of the movement of stars and planets.

Of late, scientists have been debating this subject deeply and they have cautioned the public against acceptance of the prediction of astrologers. According to them, there is no scientific basis for many of these predictions. They say that ancient people believed in Astrology because of their world view and superstition. The teachings of that time were replete with magic, superstition and irrationalism. It is a mistake, the scientists say, to hold that the place of planets and stars at the time of birth of children inexorably influence their future, their developments, and relations between them and their fellow human beings.

On deep and independent meditation on this subject, one would feel that it does sound rather strange to suppose that our business adventures, our health, our life and death are predetermined by the position of the stars and planets on the day of our births. What is overlooked, I believe, is the fundamental fact that both, man and the heavenly bodies are under the indisputable authority of the creator, Allah. Man's destiny, therefore, is controlled by Him and not the planets.



It is one of those human weaknesses of enslaved mentality which tend to bow down to a body created like himself rather than recognize and have faith in the full and supreme ~~power~~ <sup>authority</sup> of the creator, Allah.

The question arises as to why are so many people including the educated and intelligent willing to place their faith on what the astrologers have to say?

The answer is, that day by day tremendous spiritual ~~vacuum~~ vacuum is occurring in the lives of many who previously truly believed in God. Worldly pleasures and occupations have so much overtaken their minds that they hardly can pause to think and recognise the true aim of life and the supreme powers of the life-giver. As such, they become desperate for a substitute who can offer some measure of meaning and purpose to life. Human beings must have something in which to believe, and in the absence of a meaningful faith in God, reliance is placed on superstitious non-sense.

Astrology does not demand its followers to go to church or mosque nor perform any rituals nor adhere to any moral commandments. It is but so easy to believe in and follow its priests. All one has to do is to buy newspapers or books and follow up what is published about the horoscopes. Or at times, approach an advertised astrologer, pay a fee of few shillings and seek his fortune and future telling.

Hazrat Ali a.s. was once about to leave Koofa to go and face the rebellion of Kharijites at Nahrawan when one of his companions by the name, Aleef told him not to undertake the journey just then because according to the findings of astrology, it was an unauspicious moment, and this journey would not end into victory. Hazrat replied in these words:

"Do you think that you are competent enough to tell of a



time when a journey, if attempted, will end into failure of the mission, and you are qualified enough to frighten anybody to believe that if an expedition is undertaken at a particular moment, it would result into loss and disaster. Whoever testifies and accepts your assertions falsifies the teachings of the Quran, and is indifferent towards the mercy and kindness of God in allowing to secure objects that he wishes to have and in averting misfortunes and calamities. Besides this, your declaration makes one point clear that those who believe in your assertions should praise you instead of God, because you can always direct them to act at such opportune moments when they will always gain and never lose or suffer".

Saying this to Aleef, Hazrat Ali a.s. turned towards those who had gathered there and said:

"O people! abstain from learning and believing in astrology, except those facts (of Astronomy) which will guide you on land and sea, because astrology will lead you towards magic, witchcraft and oracularity. An astrologer is like a magician, and such a magician is an infidel, and all infidels are destined to Hell. You people start on your journey in the name of God".

(Nahjul Balagha - Khutba 82)

Contrary to the astrological advice, Hazrat Ali a.s. proceeded on <sup>the</sup> same moment to Nahrawan and returned victorious from that war.

The fact is that an astrologer poses as a diviner who thinks he can forecast his benefit or harm through the art of foretelling. Thus instead of praying to Almighty for warding off calamities and misfortunes, or offering thanks to Allah for bounties He has bestowed, he becomes indifferent and self-confident. Should he by chance prove successful in some of his forecasts, he expects to be praised and be depended upon by more and more people. This leads to atheism and is against the spirit of the teachings of the Holy



Quran in which the Almighty Allah says, "Say: No one in the Heavens and the Earth knows the unseen but Allah; and they do not know when they shall be raised". (Sura Naml - Verse 65)

It is narrated in Mashkatul Meshackh that Hasheena says:

"I approached Hazrat Jaffer Sadiq a.s. and said to him that there lived a man on our island who reveals to us that stolen goods are with such and such a man; similarly he informs us about other unknown matters! The Imam replied; "The Holy Prophet s.a.w. has said that one who goes to ask about anything from magician, soothsayer or a liar and believes in what he says certainly becomes an infidel (unbeliever) and denier of all the heavenly scriptures revealed by Allah".

Thus to approach fortune-tellers, palmists, astrologers and such others who claim to have powers to peep into future and to know of hidden matters is to display lack of true faith in the will of Allah. It is against the teachings of Islam and leads to infidelity.

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