

Dear Lutheran Watchman,

My sister and her husband seem to really be into astrology. They regularly read their horoscopes and even encourage their families and friends to read their own daily horoscopes. They also regularly post links to horoscope and fortune-telling websites on social media sites they frequent. Does the Bible say anything about astrology and following horoscopes?

Dear Friend,

Astrology, sometimes referred to in the Old Testament as “observing times, is the false science that claims to be able to interpret the influence of the planets and stars on people and to foretell what is going to happen (“horoscopes”). It was an ancient heathen practice, which led to worship of the sun, moon, planets and stars. It is indeed clearly addressed in Scripture.

The Prophet Isaiah, speaking of the fall of Babylon in Isaiah chapter 47, relates the Lord God’s mocking pronouncement of utter disaster upon Babylon: “For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it. Thus shall they be unto thee with whom thou hast laboured, even thy merchants, from thy youth: they shall wander every one to his quarter; none shall save thee. (v.10-15)

Here the Bible makes its position clear. We are not to place our trust in astrological beliefs or predictions (horoscopes). Scripture is the paramount witness that trusting in astrology (horoscopes) leads to terrible disaster. [Other Scripture passages for reference includes: Daniel 4; Jeremiah 27; and Daniel 5] What foolishness! And, not only is engaging in this practice serious folly, but it is in fact, sin. It is the sin of *Idolatry* - Disobedience of the First Commandment.

In addition, the Bible tells us in no uncertain terms that seeking out and trusting in signs and omens to direct our lives is sin. *“There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch. Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD...”* (Deuteronomy 18:10-12a)

As Christians we are to look to God and His Holy Word for direction in our lives, just as you are doing indirectly with your letter to the Lutheran Watchman,. For He loves us so dearly, He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus to die for us, that we might have everlasting life. Who else can have our very best interest at heart?

In Christ, the Lutheran Watchman.