

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (12/1/18)¹

Q: I would like to have your opinion on astrology.

A: Astrology is a belief, just the same as any medical theory. If you were to ask any doctor if he is using the textbooks that were given to him when he was in college, he would probably throw one of them at you. They have been discarded over and over and over again, and the things that were taught to a doctor twenty years ago probably wouldn't even be seen in a book today.

They recognized that that was a theory at that time. Now we have a different theory, so we keep on. However, even though they were not laws, but theories, they worked in an average amount of cases. They worked in proportion to the faith that was placed in them, just as today there are people receiving a great benefit, a great help, from a glass of water. There is a form of medical practice which takes all the cases any other materia medica doctor would take, and yet they treat it only with plain water. Oh yes, they take one drop of medicine and dilute it in about eight quarts of water. Well, you know how much medicine is left, and then they give you a teaspoon full of it. But they have the same percentage of cures that any other form of materia medica has, and there is no reason why not, because all of this is the faith that you can have either in the doctor or the bottle of medicine or whatever it is that is prescribed.

So we have with astrology. If you want the truth of being, you will find it in the first chapter of Genesis: *"God made all that was made,"* and among the things that He made, you'll find that He made the skies and the stars, the planets, the sun, the moon, and the earth, and the waters, the ocean, the birds, everything that's on the earth. And then He made man in his own image and likeness and gave him dominion over all this creation.

Now, when then, did the picture become reversed and the stars take dominion, or the planets take dominion over man? Who is it that created that idea? There is not recorded anywhere in spiritual literature that God gave dominion to anything, even herbs, over man. He gave them to him for food, he gave them to him for sustenance, but not for dominion over him.

Astrology can be made to work in your experience in the same way that a drop of medicine attenuated eighty thousand times can be made effective—according to the belief that is put in. If you can just believe hard enough that tomorrow is your good luck day, you probably will find a dime or a dollar or a ten. It's a matter of your belief. Actually, the truth of being is just the same about astrology as it is about your creating your own destiny. You can create your own destiny, and you can even create it by studying astrology. That would be a form of creating your destiny. But that doesn't make it true, and actually you would only be successful in proportion to your own belief, and then only up to a certain point, and then you would find that it wouldn't work.

You know, it is like all of the pyramid prophecies. You probably know that everything that has happened in the last three thousand years has been prophesied in the pyramids. But if you will

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notice carefully, the translations are only made after the event has taken place. You can find books that can tell you exactly when World War II came to an end, and when World War I came to an end, and when they started. But none of those books were printed before the event took place, always afterward. "We knew it was going to happen, because it said so." Nobody had the courage to print that book first. Nobody today has the courage to come out and say on such and such a day, an atomic bomb is going to fall, or it's never going to fall. But afterward? Oh, "It was in the pyramids; it was in the stars; it was in the planets."

Never forget this: There is a form of human mind-reading. Just as the divine Mind is one, so this belief of mind, human mind, is one. So it is possible for people of some type to be able to tell you things about yourself that haven't happened, and some things about yourself that have happened. Why? Because these patterns all exist in our mind. It's only a question of whether we have enough of that so-called gift to be able to apprehend it. Now that has nothing to do with anything having a power. That only has something to do with mind and being able to read thoughts that are unformed so far as outer expression is concerned.

We, in our work, must recognize that the basis of all spiritual truth is that God is the only power. If you are going to divide the power of God with anything else—astrology or even the calendar, time, years, birthdays—and permit them to have an effect upon you, you bring yourself under the law. You can do that, or you can separate yourself from the law and begin to live by grace. To live under the law means to accept whatever the world calls law. For instance, if the world says that sitting in a draft will give you a cold and you accept it, consciously or unconsciously, sitting in a draft will certainly produce a cold. It has millions of times, not because it's a law, not because it's truth, but because consciously or unconsciously, you have accepted that theory as law.

In the same way, the mere fact of being born would indicate your consent to dying. In other words, when you are born, you accept the fact that you are one minute old, one hour, one day, one year, and your acceptance of that makes it inevitable that you will accept sixty, seventy, eighty years of age.

I have illustrated that point in an experience of mine the first year that I was in the practice. My father and I were born on the same date. We had our birthdays on the same date, and my sister called up to remind me of them, and to tell me that they were going to have a birthday party for us on that date. Well, I was a very young practitioner and new in [Christian] Science, and I knew you must not have birthdays. Well, I very righteously said to her, "Oh, no, I wouldn't be there. I don't have birthdays."

"Oh, well," she said, "all right; if you want to be so scientific and not have a birthday. But your father still likes birthdays, so you can be invited to his birthday."

Well, I didn't know that I even wanted to compromise with error to that extent, so I said I would think it over and I would let her know. And I did think it over, and as I was thinking it over, it popped right into my head, "Well, what are you afraid of? You're afraid of the fact that she named the very birthday that you think it is. If only she had said it was your hundredth birthday, you would have taken it as a joke, and you would have gone. But she just happened to name the number of years that you think is your birthday, and you're scared of it." Aha! I don't have to deny birth dates. I don't have to deny birthdays. All I have to know is, "What difference how many go around? What difference how many times the calendar ... I'm the same fellow. I'm always the same. Let those dates go around." And ever since then, I have been letting them go around and even enjoying the birthdays, especially those that brought gifts.

You know, I don't think that we have a right to get so highly metaphysical that we don't enjoy giving somebody a gift of love or receiving a remembrance or a gift of love. If it's right [to do that], I haven't gotten to that degree. I still am terribly human in that regard, and I love to remember and be remembered. If that's wrong, well go ahead, but I don't mind birthdays, I'll tell you that. I have grown above that to where you can tell me how many you think it is, but I know how many I feel, and that's all I'm interested in.

Now, if you can accept the going around of the calendar as doing something to your body or your faculties, then you are accepting that as a law. If, however, you come to see that that calendar on the wall has nothing to do with your consciousness, and nothing to do with your being—it doesn't even know you exist; it isn't aimed at you at all—you can, in some measure, free yourself of the belief of the concern over what we call age.

Now, in the same way, astrology has absolutely no more power than a glass of water or a teaspoon full of water, but you can give it all the power that you want. You can become afraid of it just the same as you can be afraid of walking under a ladder, or you can be afraid of Friday the 13th, or afraid of a black cat. But all of this is going on in your mind, you know, and it is you who is accepting the belief that something out here has power.