

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### *What a Natal Horoscope Doesn't Show*

**I**N “THE VALUE OF ASTROLOGY,” by H. W. Stevens, in the January-February 2003 Rays, it is stated that “astrology shows us what and where we are. It is a sure index to our character. It reveals our weaknesses and strengths...[I]t clearly indicates the degree of our moral and spiritual strength.”

I consider it extremely important to realize that astrology does not show us what and where we are. All astrology shows us is the forces we have to work with and the problems we will be confronted with in life. What we do with these forces and whether we solve these problems constructively depends on how we exercise our free will, which is not shown in the horoscope.

In *The Message of the Stars*, Chapter 2, Max Heindel notes that if an astrologer is to accurately read a horoscope, he must know the state of spiritual evolution of the individual. People of different degrees of spiritual evolution may respond differently to any given set of astrological forces.

A French astrologer once did an experiment in which he gathered the horoscopes of a number of imprisoned criminals and mixed them with the horoscopes of a number of other people and then asked some astrologers to tell which were the criminals and which were the other people. The astrologers were not able to do so. The reason astrologers were not able to do so is that for any set of astrological forces, some people may act as leaves blown in the wind and fall into the potential pitfalls indicated, and others may exercise their wisdom and their wills and use the forces constructively. With the exercise of wisdom and will power, the problems of life can be solved and the forces in squares and oppositions can be used as constructively as the forces in sextiles and trines.

I have known people with mostly sextiles and trines, and just one or two squares or oppositions, who were making a mess of their lives. I have known others who have a great many squares and oppositions who have gained control of their lives and are living constructively.

H. W. Stephens also notes that when the horoscope shows trouble, the soul “will know that through its actions in past lives it has accumulated this heavy karmic debt which must be paid off at some time or other.”

Suppose a child brought some homework home from school. If the parents see the homework, what conclusions will they draw? Will they assume that the child failed some test and was given this homework as remedial work? Will they assume that this homework is just part of the learning process that all the students in the class have been assigned? Or will they assume that the child is ahead of the rest of the class and has taken on some extra work? Obviously, just seeing the homework is not sufficient to tell the parents the reasons for the homework, and which assumption is correct.

The horoscope shows the “homework” problems that we are given to solve in this lifetime. We should not be making assumptions about whether these are old problems which we have previously failed to learn or whether they are new challenges which are helping us to develop spiritual strength. Only one who has directly investigated the past lives of an individual can make any statements about whether the problems he is confronting are old or new.

Also, people need to be careful making statements about karmic debt. In the postmortem retrospection, all debts of suffering are paid in full. (The only type of debts that remain are debts of service.) If, through no fault of his own in this life time, a person experiences suffering, possible causes are: 1) The person has some lesson to learn or some spiritual strength to develop from this experience or; 2) the person may be tormented by another person who is exercising his free will beyond any control of the agents of destiny. When this is the case, the tormenter will suffer for his indiscretion in purgatory, and the tormenter will also owe the sufferer a debt of service. Without spiritual vision we cannot tell which of these explanations is applicable or whether they are both applicable in any given case. □

—Elsa Glover