

THE WORD

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

Do you believe in astrology as a science? If so, how far is it to be considered as relating to human life and interests?

If astrology is, then astrology is a science. As the word indicates, astrology is the science of the stars. We believe that astrology is one of the greatest of sciences, but we also believe that the large majority of those who talk about astrology, who cast horoscopes or predict future events, know little more than the barest outline of some of the physical aspects of astrology. We believe a great deal in astrology and very little in the known astrologers. An astrologer is one who knows the laws which govern the bodies in space, in their inner and outer working, the influences which come from and act on these bodies in their relation to each other, and the laws which govern and control these influences in their relation to each other and their action on man.

An astrologer is one who knows all this, but an astrologer is not one who talks what he knows. He knows that he cannot remain an astrologer and recount happenings in the past or foreshadow and predict coming events, and, for the service, receive money. An astrologer, in the real sense of the word, must have outgrown the things of the world and risen above the world in order to become a knower of the stars and all that is meant by "stars." For we believe the stars are not really known, even by the followers of so exact a science as astronomy. Astronomy deals with the motions, magnitudes, distances and physical constitution of celestial bodies. Astrology is the occult or secret science of astronomy. We believe that those little points of brilliance in what we call the sky mean far more for us than that which any astronomer or astrologer, writing under that title, has ever told.

The stars relate to human life and interests in so far as we can appreciate and understand them. They will always hold the interest of the human mind.

Why does the moment of birth into the physical world influence the destiny of the ego for that incarnation?

The "moment" of birth is important to the future of the ego

because at that time it is in a most critical condition, and all impressions received will have lasting effects. What is then done cannot well be undone. The influences prevailing at the moment of birth must have a peculiar effect on the future life because owing to the preponderance of the influence it will affect the sensitive astral body. Before it comes into the world, the body depends for its sustenance on the physical life of its parent. It lives in the world by proxy only. It lives in a world within the physical world. It has not yet breathed its own breath, which is the beginning of its independent sentient life. At the moment of birth the body is separated from its parent and no longer breathes by proxy, but it draws its own breath from its own parent ego. The body is no longer molded or shielded from the outward world and influences by the body of its mother; it lives in the world in its own body, without any other physical protection or covering. All the influences therefore which prevail at that time impress themselves indelibly on the newly-born astral body, which is then like a clean film or plate, ready to receive all impressions and influences, which are carried into life, even as the physical body may carry a scar or brand inflicted in early life. For this reason the moment of birth is important and will influence the after life in the world.

How does the moment of birth determine one's destiny in the world?

That the moment of birth into the world may determine one's destiny we believe, but that it always decides destiny we do not believe. Destiny is determined at birth only when one is willing to live exactly in accordance to the impetus received at the moment of birth. At the moment of birth the astral body of the infant is like a keenly sensitized photographic plate. Immediately it is exposed to the physical world the prevailing influences are impressed upon it. The first breathing of the infant records the influences and impressions on the keenly sensitized body, and these impressions are fastened on the astral body of the newly-born infant in much the same manner as impressions are received and retained on a photographic plate. Living according to one's destiny is therefore to follow out the suggestions indicated and live according to the impressions received at the moment of birth. These impressions are developed with the development of the body and the use of the mind. These impressions stand in the background and throw their pictures on the mind and the mind has its destiny given to it by these

pictures. It, the mind, may act according to the impulses and suggestions coming from the impressions or it may map out a path quite different from the impressions received. This all depends on the mind or ego, as to whether it is strong enough and wills to do a work in the world other than that which is suggested by the natal influences.

How do the influences at birth, or one's destiny, cooperate with the karma of the ego?

Karma is the result of what one has thought and done; what one has thought and done is his destiny, but the action and the destiny only applies to a certain period. The period here suggested is a lifetime. The destiny, therefore, for the period, is one's karma for the period; this period is the life of the body which is born into the world. One's thoughts and actions in one life cause and bring about the conditions for the next succeeding life; the influences prevailing at the birth are the indications of what one has done in the past and what he may expect in the present. The moment of birth, therefore, must coincide and cooperate with the karma of that life, because it is karma, or the result of actions.

Are the planetary influences employed to administer human karma, or fate. If so, where does free will come in?

Yes, planetary influences and all other influences are employed in carrying out and in determining fate. But a man's fate is what he himself has provided. What is his present fate may not be acceptable to him; nevertheless he has provided and must accept it. It might be said that a man would not provide a thing he did not like and, therefore, that he would not provide the fate which he did not wish. Such an objection is short-sighted. That which a man selects and provides either for himself or others must depend on his ability to select and his means to provide. An ignorant young man with much means, or an older man with little means, would each select and provide differently, according to his knowledge and means. What one selects and puts away as a boy for himself may not be at all appreciated in later years, because the boy has advanced with age in knowledge and in his appreciation of things, and the childish toy or trinket receives scant consideration as the result. One who has used little judgment in making a contract, is nevertheless bound to his contract, however many his regrets may be on learning the nature of the contract. He may protest, but protest will not relieve him from the obligation.

Either in the present or in the past life one has contracted for what he calls his fate. This is his own karma, or the contract which he has made. It is just. One's free will depends on not what he would whimsically wish to do, or long to obtain, but what he decides that he shall do. An honest man does not spend his energy in planning how to break a contract or relieve himself of his responsibilities. An honest man busies himself with how to fill his contract and meet his responsibilities. At the same time, if the contract or responsibilities are seen by him as undesirable he will not make another such contract, nor will he obligate himself to like responsibilities. Such contract and responsibilities are the fate or the karma, which one has made for himself.

His free will comes in when he decides how he will deal with his fate or karma. Will he try to escape it, or will he face and work through it? Herein lies his free will. As he acts by choice, so will he determine his future fate and be bound to that as he is bound to the present.

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