

Astrology: A Door to Religiousness

It is necessary that some matters be understood. First, it is necessary to know that, from a scientific point of view, the whole solar family is born out of the sun. The moon, Mars, Jupiter, and the rest of the planets, including this Earth, are all organic parts of the sun. Slowly, life on Earth came into being – from plants to man. Man is an organic part of the Earth; the Earth is an organic part of the sun. It is like a mother who has a daughter, who in turn also has a daughter, and in all three of them the same blood flows. Their bodies are made up of similar cells. The scientists use a word "empathy" meaning shared sensitivity. Those things that are born from the same source have a sort of shared inner experience.

Out of the sun the Earth is born, and out of the Earth our bodies are born, and far away, the sun is our great grandparent. Whatsoever happens on the sun creates a vibration in every cell of our bodies. It must be that way because our cells are all born out of the sun. The sun appears to be a great distance away but it is not so far. In every element of our blood and in every particle of our bones live the atoms of the sun. We are part of the sun, so it is no wonder that our lives are influenced by the sun. There is a sort of empathy between the sun and ourselves. If we understand this empathy rightly, we can enter into one dimension of astrology.

Yesterday I talked to you about twins. Some experiments on empathy can be conducted when twins born of the same egg are placed in separate rooms. During the last fifty years many of these kinds of experiments have been conducted. Twins were put into separate rooms, a bell was rung, and the children were told to write or draw whatsoever they first thought of when the bell was rung. This was repeated twenty times, and it was observed with great wonder that ninety percent of the pictures drawn by the twins were similar. The flow of thoughts produced in one child on the ringing of the bell, and the word or picture brought about by that thought, would be the same as in the other twin.

This similarity of experience is described by scientists as empathy.

There is so much similarity between twins that they vibrate alike. Within the bodies of two such children there is an inner communication or dialogue which flows through some unknown channels.

Between the sun and the Earth also there are communication bridges like this, and every moment messages are being passed across these bridges. And similarly, communication bridges exist between the Earth and man. So there is a continuous communication between man, the Earth and the sun. But that communication is very mysterious; it is inner and subtle. Let us also try to understand something about this.

There is a research center in America known as the Tree Ring Research Center. If you cut down a tree, you will find a number of rings or circles visible across the cut surface. The beautiful decorative designs in the grain of wooden furniture are due to these circles. This research center has spent the last fifty years working on the formation of these rings.

Professor Douglas, the center's director, who has spent a major part of his life studying them, has discovered a number of facts. Ordinarily, all of us know that the age of a tree can be calculated from the number of these rings. Every year one new ring is grown; one new layer is made within the tree every year. If the tree is fifty years old, if it has seen fifty autumns, then fifty rings have formed inside the tree.

But it is surprising to know that these rings also indicate what sort of seasons there were in a particular year. If the seasons were hotter or wetter than usual, the ring formation is broader. If the seasons were cold and dry, the ring is not so wide. It is possible to know when there were strong rains, when there was drought, and when the seasons were very cold.

If Buddha had said that there was a good rainfall in a particular year, the bodhi tree under which he sat would confirm the truth of it. Buddha might have made a mistake, but the tree could not. The tree ring will be wider or thinner, indicating the type of season that particular year.

While conducting his research, Professor Douglas reached still another conclusion which was far beyond anything he could have anticipated. He observed that the rings are wider every eleventh year – and every eleventh year there is maximum nuclear activity on the sun; the sun becomes more active. It is as if the sun has a periodic rhythm, and its radioactivity is then at a maximum. During such a year a tree makes a wider ring – not in one forest or in one place or country, but all over the Earth all trees behave similarly in order to protect themselves from the intensified radioactivity. To protect itself from the excessive power that is released by the sun, the tree grows a thicker skin every eleventh year. Due to this phenomenon, scientists coined a new phrase: "global climate".

The seasons are different in different places: it will be raining in one place, cold in another, and hot somewhere else; and the idea of there being a global climate has never existed before. So in referring to the effects of this eleventh year, Professor Douglas coined the term "global climate". And while we may not notice it, trees do. There is a gradual decrease in the width of the tree rings that are formed after the eleventh year, and after five years there is again a gradual increase in the width up to the eleventh year.

If the trees are so sensitive that they can carefully record an event happening on the sun, then is it not possible that in the mind of man there might also be some layer...that man's body might have a subtle sensitivity to the sun's activity that creates ripples in his psyche? Until now scientists have not been able to clearly find any effects in man's body – yet it seems impossible that the body would not record such activity.

Astrology is an investigation into the possibility that whatever is happening anywhere in the universe also affects man.

But it is not as easy to investigate the body of man because it cannot be cut open like a tree. To cut open a human being is a very delicate and dangerous affair. And because man has a mind, it is not the body which registers events in this way but the mind. The tree has no such mind, and so its body has to register the events.

One more point is also worth noting. Just as there are radioactive storms on the sun every eleventh year, there is similarly another periodic rhythm of ninety years on the sun. This has only come to light recently, but it is a scientific fact, and it is as surprising as the periodic rhythm occurring each eleven years. Astrologers do not mention anything about this, but I am telling you to make it easier for you to understand astrology in a scientific manner. There is a cycle of ninety years which has been experienced, and its story is quite amazing.

Four thousand years ago, an Egyptian pharaoh told his scientists to keep a record of how often the water in the River Nile increases or decreases, and by how much. The River Nile is the only river in the world with a "biography" four thousand years old. A record has been kept of when the water level in the river increased or decreased by even one inch. This record runs from the time of the pharaohs, four thousand years ago, until today.

"Pharaoh" is the name given to an Egyptian emperor, and in the Egyptian language it means the sun. There was a belief in Egypt that a continuous dialogue exists between the sun and the River Nile. The pharaohs, who

were devotees of the sun, declared that a complete record of the Nile should be kept. They said: "We know nothing about the sun at present, but we will some day, and this record will be useful."

So for four thousand years everything about the River Nile has been recorded: the increase in the water level, when there were floods and when there were none... And one Egyptian scholar, Tasman, compiled its history. Some things that were not known in the times of the pharaohs are now known, and everything that has happened in the Nile has been compared with events on the sun. A ninety-year rhythm has been clearly indicated to relate to happenings on the sun. These events are quite similar to what we call birth and death.

Understand it this way: the sun is youthful for forty-five years and then begins to decline, to age, for forty-five years. For forty-five years the energy flow within the sun increases towards a peak of youth. After forty-five years there is a receding flow of energy, as within a human being. After ninety years the sun becomes very old. During the latter forty-five years, the Earth is struck with earthquakes. Earthquakes are related to this ninety-year cycle. At the end of the ninetieth year, the sun again starts to become youthful.

This is a very important cyclical occurrence.

There are such immense changes happening on the sun that it is also natural for the Earth to be shaken. When a body as huge as the Earth becomes shaken by earthquakes because of changes on the sun, how can the small body of man remain unaffected? This is the question astrologers have been asking. They say it is impossible for the body of man to remain unaffected. Children that are born during the forty-five years when the sun is growing, in its youthful phase, are wonderfully healthy. But children that are born during the forty-five years when the sun is growing old cannot be in sound health.

The condition of children born during the period when the sun is on the downward path is like that of a ship that has to travel east when the winds are blowing west – a great deal of physical effort is needed to move the oars. The sails do not work, so the helmsman has to work harder. It is like swimming against the current. The sun is the vital energy source for the whole solar family. So whenever the sun is on the decline, whosoever is youthful must swim against the current. He has to undergo a great strain.

And whenever the sun is on the incline, the entire solar family is filled with energy and is moving toward its peak. Whoever is born then is in a ship that is sailing in the direction of the wind. No effort is needed;

neither the oars nor the rudder have to be moved. The sails have only to be opened and the ship is moved by the winds. During this period the least number of diseases is prevalent on the earth. And when the sun is on the decline, we get the maximum number of diseases. So for forty-five years on Earth there is an increase in diseases, and for the next forty-five years there is a decrease, and so on.

The River Nile's historical record of four thousand years shows that there is an increased amount of water flowing in it during the forty-five years when the sun is in its youth. Whenever the sun is on the decline, the water level in the Nile drops and its current also becomes less strong and more sluggish.

Man is not an island, he is part of this whole unity.

Not even the best watches that man has made tell the time as accurately as the Earth does. It takes twenty-three hours and fifty-six minutes for the Earth to make one revolution around its axis. On the basis of this time period we have devised a day of twenty-four hours. And so far the Earth has never been known to take one second more or less to complete its revolution. But the reason is that we have not had any totally accurate means with which to study this phenomenon so we have only made rough estimates. But when the sun's cycle of ninety years is completed and it readjusts for a new cycle, the Earth's clock is shaken.

At the time when the sun experiences increased radioactivity, during its eleven-year cycle, then too the Earth's clock is disturbed. Whenever the Earth comes under the influence of such external forces its inner rhythm is disturbed. Any new cosmic influence like a star, a meteor, or a comet passing near the Earth also disturbs it. On a cosmic scale, things very far away in the sky are really very near, because everything is interconnected in an invisible way.

However, the ability of our language to express this phenomenon is very weak, because when we say that a star has come a little nearer to our sun, we think about this in the ordinary sense of one person coming nearer to another. Yet, these distances are very great; even a slight change in the distances between cosmic objects and the axis of the earth is disturbed – although we may not at all be aware of this. To disturb the Earth, a great force is required. For even a one inch shift on the Earth, powerful cosmic bodies are required to pass near its orbit.

When these great cosmic bodies pass near the Earth, they also pass near us. When the Earth is shaken, it is not possible that the trees growing on it are not shaken. It is not possible that the human being living and walking on it is not shaken. No, everything is shaken, but the shaking is

very minute, and man had no instruments to measure it with. Now however, we have such sensitive electronic instruments, that a vibration of a thousandth of a second's duration can also be measured. But the vibration of the human being still cannot be measured. We have so far not made any instruments to measure this with.

Man is a very subtle creature and it is necessary for him to be that way; otherwise it would be difficult for him to live on the Earth. If he was able to experience and be aware of the influence of all the surrounding forces that act upon him twenty-four hours a day, he would not be able to live. We are only able to live because we are not aware of everything that is happening around us.

There is another law also. This law is that we cannot be aware of influences either above or below a certain limit.

The range of our experience is limited. For example, suppose we measure the body's temperature as being between ninety-eight degrees at the lowest point and one hundred and ten degrees at the highest point, that shows that we are living within these twelve degrees.

If the temperature drops much below ninety-eight degrees we will die, and if it shoots up above one hundred and ten degrees we will also die. But do you think that the temperature range of the universe is limited to just twelve degrees? Man lives within the limited range of twelve degrees – outside of this range he will die. Man lives in a sort of balance. He has to fluctuate between ninety-eight and one hundred and ten degrees. Similarly, there are balances for everything.

I am speaking to you and you can hear me. If I speak in a very low tone, a point will come where you will not be able to hear me. This you can understand, but you will not be able to imagine that there is a higher point of audibility beyond which you cannot hear. It will be difficult to imagine that a louder noise can also be inaudible.

Scientists say that we have a certain range of hearing, and that we cannot hear anything below or above it. All around us great thundering noises are occurring, but we cannot hear them. If a star disintegrates or a new planet is born, tremendous, thundering noises are created around the Earth. If we were to hear them, then at that very moment we would become deaf. But we are protected because our ears cannot hear them. We cannot hear below certain decibels and we cannot hear above certain decibels; we can only hear within a certain range.

There are even limits to smelling. The senses of all human beings operate within a particular range. For example, a dog is able to smell much more

than you can. Its range of smell is wider; a dog can smell what we are not able to smell. What we are not able to hear, a horse can. A horse's sense of hearing and smell is much sharper. A horse can smell the approach of a lion from a distance of one and a half miles. It will suddenly stop, and we will not understand why. Its sense of smell is very powerful. But if you had such a strong sense of smell that you could experience all the smells pervading your surroundings, you would go mad. A human being is closed within a sort of capsule – he has boundaries.

When you switch on your radio you can listen to many stations. But do you think that the music begins only when the radio is switched on? The radio waves of music and speech are continuously flowing in the air, whether you switch on your radio or not. But you can only hear them when the radio is switched on. In this very room, the radio waves of all the broadcasting stations of the world are continuously flowing, but you can only hear them when you switch on your radio. Those radio waves are there even when your radio is not switched on, but you cannot hear them.

In this world many sounds are passing by all around us. There is a great tumult. We are not able to hear it, but we cannot escape being affected by it. We are influenced by all these noises – in every nerve, in every heartbeat, in every muscle. These noises are working in us unnoticed. The smells we are not able to recognize also affect us. If those smells bring with them some disease, you will catch the disease.

Your awareness or recognition of something is not necessary in order for it to exist.

Astrology says that there are energy fields around us which go on influencing us continuously. As soon as a child is born, it is subject to all the influences of the world. In the language of science, we can describe birth as a process of exposure.

It is just as though we expose a film in a camera. You press the exposure button of a camera, and within a split second the lens window opens and closes, and whatsoever was in front of the camera is immediately registered on the film. The film is exposed without affecting the previous exposure. The film has captured the image of the scene forever.

Similarly, when a child is conceived in the mother's womb, this is a first exposure for the child. On the day the child is born there is a second exposure. These two exposures are registered upon the sensitive mind of the child, as if on film. The world as it is at that moment is imprinted upon the child, and so there is an empathy in the child for the world as it is at that moment.

You will be surprised to know that ninety percent of children are born at night. Ordinarily, in accordance with mathematical probability, the percentage of births would be the same for night as for day. There might be a fluctuation of four to five percent here and there, but why should ninety percent be born during the night? Only ten percent of births, at the most, occur during the day. There must be a reason for it – there are many reasons for it. Let me explain...

When a child is born at night, the first exposure of the world upon its mind is not of light, but of darkness. I am telling you this only by way of illustration, because the matter is really much deeper. Only by way of illustration am I telling you that the first impression upon the mind of the child is that of darkness. The sun is absent, its energy is absent. All around, the world is sleeping – nothing is actually awake. This is the first impact on the child.

If we were to ask Buddha or Mahavir about the reason for this, they would say that most souls take birth at night because they are sleeping when they are born. These souls cannot choose the moment of their birth. There are hundreds of other reasons, but this is important; that most people are asleep. They are in darkness and inactivity.

Whosoever is born after sunrise will be born with energy.

After sunset, in the darkness of night, only sleeping beings can take birth. The birth that takes place at the time of the rising of the sun will be a birth under the influence of energy; the birth that takes place after sunset, under the cover of darkness, will be a birth under the influence of sleep. The exposure will be different for a film exposed at night than for one exposed during the day. It is necessary to understand this point about exposure more clearly, because astrology is very deeply related to it.

The scientists who are conducting research on this subject of birth exposure say that it is a happening of the utmost importance. That exposure will follow you throughout your life.

When a chick is born to a hen, it immediately starts running after the hen. We say that it is running after the mother, but scientists say that this has nothing to do with the mother, that it is only a question of exposure and imprinting. Scientists have now conducted hundreds of experiments... One experiment was on chicks about to be born. The chicks' beaks were emerging from the eggs, and just then the hen was removed from the scene and instead a balloon was placed in front of the chicks. When the chicks opened their eyes they saw the balloon. You will be surprised to know that the chicks loved the balloon as if it were their mother.

Wherever that balloon moved in the air, they would run after it. They did not care for the mother, wherever she might be, but they became surprisingly sensitive towards the balloon. When the chicks became tired, they would go and sit beside the balloon. They would try to love the balloon, they would try to peck at the balloon – not at the mother.

Konrad Lorenz, the scientist who has done a great deal of work in this connection, says that the first moment of exposure is the most important. The chick becomes intimately related to the mother because of that first exposure; it runs after the mother only because she was available to it first.

Now some more experiments are being conducted... Male children who are not brought up in the presence of the mother are not capable of loving any woman. There has been no proper exposure; the image of a woman has not been properly imprinted on such a child's mind. If homosexuality is increasing in the West, one fundamental reason is an insufficient exposure to one of the parents. Heterosexual love, love between opposite sexes, is becoming less and less in the West, and love between members of the same sex is increasing. Although this is an unnatural happening, it is bound to be there.

The sexual attraction between a man and a woman is also conditioned in another way.

To whom a child will be first exposed is a matter that should be considered. A woman will not be happy her whole life if, as a baby girl, she was first exposed to the mother. Her exposure should be to a man. The first impact on the mind of a girl should be of her father; only then she will be capable of loving a man fully. If men always surpass women, it is because boys and girls are both first exposed to and brought up by the mother.

The exposure of the boy is correct, but that of the girl is not. So, as long as a baby girl's first exposure is not to her father, it will not be possible for her to become equal to a man. Neither through politics, nor through employment, nor through economic independence can she become equal, because from a psychological perspective, the weakness in the personality of a girl remains. No civilization has so far been able to overcome this weakness.

If a small balloon can exert so much influence on a chicken, if it can enter so indelibly into its mind, astrology suggests that whatsoever surrounds us – the whole universe – also enters into our consciousness at that moment of exposure at birth when the mental film is exposed to the world. This determines your sympathies and antipathies for your entire

life. All the constellations that are encircling the Earth at that moment also, in a very deep way, imprint their influence on the newly born consciousness. The constellations are in certain positions: the basic significance of these constellations lies in the influence of their radioactivity falling upon the Earth at the moment of birth.

Now scientists believe that every celestial body has its own unique radioactivity. The planet Venus throws out rays which are tranquil, whereas the moon has quite a different type of radio wave. The radio waves that reach us from Jupiter are different from those that reach us from the sun. The reason for the difference is that each planet has a different combination of gaseous layers encircling it, and from each planet a different combination of rays comes towards the earth. And when the child is born, whatever constellations, stars, planets or distant super-suns are encircling the horizon, all enter deep within the mind of the child at the time of its exposure. The cosmic situation at that moment, with all its weaknesses, strengths and capabilities, influences the child for his whole life.

It is like knowing the exact effect of what would happen when an atom bomb explodes amidst a populated area like Hiroshima.

Before the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, it was only known that hundreds of thousands of people would die. But it was not known that this would also affect future generations and everything else too. For those who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki it was just a matter of one moment. But the trees that remained behind, the animals, the birds, the fish and the human beings that remained behind, were all permanently affected in an unknown manner. The total effect of this will be known only after about ten generations pass, because deep radioactive forces are still at work.

Any woman surviving had her ovaries affected by radioactivity. Now these ovaries are incapable of reproducing normal children, such as they would have done before they were affected by the radioactivity. A child born of these ovaries could be lame or blind, it could have four or even eight eyes; it could be anything – one cannot say. Its brain may be diseased, or it may be a genius such as has never been born before. We are not certain what it will be like; we know only one thing for certain, and that is that it will not be like an ordinary, normal human being.

If the power of an atomic bomb, which is comparatively not a very great power, can cause such great harm to life on Earth, then you can begin to imagine the power of the sun. It is as if millions of atom bombs are bursting on it simultaneously. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki an atom bomb

killed one hundred and twenty thousand human beings. In comparison, can you imagine how much radioactivity exists on the sun?

The sun has been heating the Earth for four billion years, and scientists say that there is no possibility of its beginning to grow cool for millions of years. Each day it gives out tremendous heat to the Earth, and that too from a distance of almost one hundred million miles. Whatever happened in Hiroshima only effected a radius of up to ten miles, whereas the sun has been giving us heat from a distance of one hundred million miles, and for so long; it is still not exhausted. But compared with other suns in the universe our sun is just a tiny star. The stars that we see in the sky are much bigger than our sun, and each one of them has its own individual radiation which is flowing towards us.

One great scientist, Michael Gacquin, has been carrying out research on the forces in the universe.

He tells us that we are not able to understand even one percent of the things that are caused by the forces coming within our experience. Since we have begun to send space satellites beyond the Earth, so much information has been transmitted to us for which we have no words to describe, nor is science yet able to decipher the transmitted information. We never imagined that so much energy and so many forces might be operating all around us.

In this context, let us understand one more thing. Astrology is not a new science that is still developing. The position is quite the reverse. If you have seen the Taj Mahal, you may have noticed some incomplete walls beyond the opposite bank of the River Yamuna. The current story is that Shah Jehan not only made the Taj Mahal for his wife Mumtaz, but that he was also constructing a tomb for himself, from the same marble stone as the Taj Mahal, on the opposite bank of the River Yamuna. However, according to the story, that tomb could not be completed. But now this has been researched by historians who tell us that the walls which look incomplete are not the walls of a tomb that was being constructed, but the ruins of a big palace that existed long ago.

For the last three hundred years we have been told that these walls were the incomplete walls of a tomb that Shah Jehan had begun to construct. But the walls of a tomb being newly built and the ruins of some old palace would look similar, so it is very difficult to decide what exactly these walls are. Historical research now indicates that not only were they once a complete palace, but that the Taj Mahal itself was not constructed by Shah Jehan. It was an old palace constructed by Hindus, which Shah Jehan converted into a tomb. But it often happens that we cannot believe anything that contradicts what we have always heard.

No tomb like the Taj Mahal has been constructed anywhere else in the world. A tomb is never constructed like this. All around the Taj Mahal there are places for soldiers to stand, and for installing rifles and guns. Tombs do not need to be protected by rifles and guns. It was an old palace that was converted. On the opposite bank of the Yamuna there was also an old palace which collapsed and its ruins remain as a witness.

Astrology is also like the ruins of a great building that once existed.

It was a complete science which has been lost. It is neither new nor is it in the process of construction. From the walls that have remained it is not possible to judge how big that building once might have been. Many times truths are realized only to become lost again.

About two hundred years before Christ, Aristarchus, a Greek scientist, discovered that the sun is the center of our universe and not the earth. This principle of Aristarchus became known as the heliocentric principle – that the sun is at the center. But later, in about 100 AD, Ptolemy again changed this discovery and said that the earth was the center. After that, it took over one thousand years until Kepler and Copernicus reestablished that the sun is the center of our universe. The truth discovered by Aristarchus remained hidden for a very long time, until Copernicus opened the old book of Aristarchus and declared it again...and people were shocked.

In the West it is said that America was discovered by Columbus. When Oscar Wilde went to America he made a joke about it that has become well known. He said that America had been discovered much earlier by someone else. This is true; America was discovered many times, and was lost again and again when relations with it were cut off. Someone asked Oscar Wilde: "If Columbus did not discover it the first time, if it had already been discovered, why did it become lost every time?"

Oscar Wilde jokingly replied: "He did discover America. It was discovered many times, but every time it was hushed up. Every time it was necessary to keep it quiet, because such a troublesome thing is best forgotten and put away."

In the Mahabharata epic there are references to America – one of Arjuna's wives was from Mexico. There are ancient Hindu temples in Mexico with idols of Ganesh carved on them.

It happens many times that the truth comes within our grasp and then is lost again. Astrology was one such great truth: it was once known about,

but subsequently lost. There are difficulties in the way of knowing it again; that is why I am talking to you from many different points of view.

My intention in talking on astrology could be misunderstood. It is not as if I intend to talk on the same subjects that are discussed by an ordinary astrologer. To such an astrologer you can pay a coin and be told your fortune. Perhaps you think that I am going to talk about him or be in support of him.

In the name of astrology, ninety-nine percent of astrologers only bluff.

Only one percent will not dogmatically assert that an event will definitely happen. They know that astrology is a vast subject – so vast that someone can only enter into it hesitatingly.

When I am talking about astrology, I want you to have a picture of the whole science from many angles, so that you can enter it without any fear or hesitation. When I talk about astrology, I am not talking about the ordinary astrologer – such small matters. But the average man's curiosity regarding astrology is just to know whether his daughter will get married or not.

Astrology can be divided into three parts. The first part is the core, the essence; it is essential, and cannot be changed. It is the part which is most difficult to understand. The second part is the middle layer, in which one can make whatever changes one wants. It is the semi-essential portion, in which you can make changes if you know how, but without knowing how, no changes are possible at all. The third part is the outermost layer which is nonessential, but about which we are all very curious.

The first is the essence, in which no changes can be made. When it is known, the only way is to cooperate with it. Religions have devised astrology in order to know and decipher this essential destiny. The semi-essential part of astrology is such that if we know about it, we can change our lives – otherwise not.

If we do not know, then whatsoever is going to happen will happen. If there is knowledge, there are alternatives to choose between. There is a possibility of transformation if the right choice is made. The third, nonessential part is just the periphery, the outer surface. There is nothing essential in it; everything is circumstantial.

But we go to consult astrologers only for the nonessential things.

Someone goes and asks an astrologer when he will get employment – there is no relationship between your employment and the moon and stars. Someone asks whether he will marry or not – a society without marriage is possible. Someone asks whether he will remain poor or become rich – a socialist or communist society where there will be no rich and no poor people is possible. So these are nonessential questions...

An eighty-year-old man was walking along when his foot slipped on a banana peel that had been thrown onto the road. Now, is it possible to inquire of an astrologer, to know from the moon and stars on which road and on which banana peel the foot will slip? Such queries are foolish. But you are curious to know in advance whether your foot will step on a banana peel and slip if you go out on the road today. This is nonessential. This has nothing to do with your being or your soul. These events happen on the periphery, and astrology has nothing to do with them. But because astrologers were busy talking only about these kinds of things, the great establishment of astrology collapsed. This was the only reason.

No intelligent person is going to be prepared to believe that when he was born it was written in his destiny, that on a particular day, on Marine Drive, his foot would step on some banana peel, and he would fall. Neither the fall nor the banana peel have any relationship to the stars. Astrology has lost respectability because it became connected with these kinds of things.

At one time or another we have all wanted to know such things from astrologers, yet these things are nonessential. But there are certain semi-essential matters such as the birth or death of a person: if you can know everything about these, you can take precautionary measures. If you do not know anything, you cannot do anything.

If our knowledge about the diagnosis of diseases was improved we would be able to increase the life span of human beings – we have already been doing it. If our research to make deadlier atom bombs succeeds we will be able to kill hundreds of thousands of people at a time – we have done it.

This semi-essential world presents a possibility that we may be able to do certain things if we know in advance what is going to happen.

If we do not know, nothing can be done. By our knowing in advance, alternatives can be sorted out and selected.

Beyond this exists the world of the essential – and that you cannot do anything about. However, our curiosity is to know only about

nonessential things. Seldom does someone reach out to know the semi-essential. And our curiosity or desire never extends to knowing that which is essential and unavoidable, that which cannot be changed even if known.

Mahavir was passing through a village with his disciple, Goshalak – who later became his opponent – when they came across a small plant, and Goshalak said to Mahavir: "Listen, here is a plant. What do you think? – will it grow to produce a flower, or will it die before it can flower? What is its future?"

Mahavir immediately closed his eyes and sat in front of the plant.

Goshalak cunningly said: "Do not avoid the issue. What will happen by closing your eyes?"

He did not know why Mahavir had become silent and closed his eyes – that he was looking for the essential. It was necessary to go deep down into the being, into the soul of that plant. Without doing so, it would not be possible to say what was going to happen.

After a while Mahavir opened his eyes and said: "This plant will survive to flower."

Goshalak immediately pulled the plant up by its roots, threw it away and laughed mockingly. There was no better way to refute Mahavir's statement.

Mahavir had nothing more to say now, because Goshalak had uprooted the plant and thrown it away as a challenge. He was laughing, Mahavir was smiling, and they continued their journey.

Then it began to rain heavily. There was a storm, and for seven days continuously torrential rains fell, so they were not able to go out for seven whole days.

When the rains had subsided and they were returning, on the way they reached the same spot where seven days previously Mahavir had closed his eyes to know the inner being of the plant. They saw that the plant was again standing with its roots in the ground. Due to the heavy rains and winds, the earth had become wet and loose, and the roots of the plant had dug in.

Mahavir again closed his eyes and stood beside the plant. Goshalak became very embarrassed – he had uprooted and thrown away the plant. When Mahavir opened his eyes, Goshalak said: "I am surprised and

confused. I uprooted this plant and threw it away, and it is growing again."

Mahavir replied: "It will survive to flower. I closed my eyes to see the inner potentiality and the condition of the seed: whether it was capable of taking root again even though it was uprooted, whether it was suicidal or not, whether it had a strong instinct or desire for death. If its instinct was suicidal it would have used your help to die. I wanted to see whether it was yearning to live; if it was determined to live, it would live. I knew that you were going to uproot it and throw it away."

Goshalak asked: "What are you saying?"

Mahavir said: "When I was looking into the inner being of the plant with my eyes closed, I also saw you standing by, determined to uproot it. I knew that you would uproot the plant. That is why it was necessary for me to know the inner capacity of the plant to live, how much self-confidence and willpower it had. If it was waiting to die and looking for an excuse, you would have been excuse enough for it to die; otherwise, the uprooted plant would take root again."

Goshalak lacked the courage to uproot the plant again. He was afraid. Previously Goshalak had gone laughing to the village; this time, Mahavir walked ahead smiling.

Goshalak then asked: "Why are you smiling?"

Mahavir said: "I was watching and just thinking about your capability – whether you could uproot the plant a second time or not."

Goshalak said: "You could see whether I would do it or not?"

Mahavir replied: "It was nonessential. You might have uprooted it, you might not have uprooted it. But it was essential and unavoidable that the plant still wanted to live. Its whole being, its whole vitality wanted to live. That was essential. What was nonessential was your throwing it away or not, and that was dependent on you. But you have proven weaker and less determined than the plant. You have been defeated."

One of the reasons why Goshalak was displeased with Mahavir was this incident with the plant.

The astrology I am talking about concerns the essential, the fundamental.

At best your curiosity goes as far as the semi-essential. You want to know how long you will live, or whether or not you will die suddenly, but

you are not curious to know what you will do if you live – how you will live. You want to know how you will die when the time comes, or what you will be doing at that time. Your curiosity extends to events, not to the soul. That I am living is just an event, but what I am doing while living, or what I am, is my soul. When I die it will be an event but at the moment of death, how I will be, what I will do, is my soul. We shall all die; the event of death is common to all but the manner of dying, the moment of death, will be different for everyone. Someone may even die smiling.

At the time of his death, someone asked Mulla Nasruddin: "What do you think, Mulla? – When people are born, from where do they come?"

Mulla replied: "I've seen every child weeping at the time of birth, and at the time of death also everyone seems to be weeping. So I surmise that people are neither coming from nor going to a good place. As they come they are weeping, and as they go they are also weeping!"

But people like Nasruddin die laughing. Death is an event, but that which is laughing at the time of death is the soul. So when you go to an astrologer, ask him how you will die, weeping or laughing? This is worth asking – but it is connected to essential astrology. No one on this Earth has asked an astrologer whether he will die weeping or smiling. You are asking when you will die – as if dying is of value in itself. You are asking how long you will live – as if just living is sufficient.

Why will I live? For what shall I live? What shall I do while living? What shall I become if I live? Such questions are not asked by anyone. That is why the structure of astrology has collapsed. Anything which is constructed on nonessential foundations will certainly collapse. The astrology I am talking about, and what you understand to be astrology, are different. Why will I live

The astrology about which I am talking is qualitatively different and of much more depth.

Its dimensions are different. What I am saying is that something which is essential between your life and that of the universe is connected, is in a rhythmic harmony. The whole world is participating in it – you are not alone.

When Buddha became enlightened he placed his hands together in salutation, and bowed his head until it touched the ground. The story goes on to say that the gods came from heaven to pay their respects to Buddha because he had found the ultimate truth, but upon seeing him with his head touching the ground, they were surprised. They asked Buddha to whom he was bowing. They said that they had come from heaven to offer greetings to him because he was enlightened, and that

they did not know that there could be something to which even Buddha had to offer salutations, as enlightenment is the ultimate attainment.

Buddha then opened his eyes and said: "I am not alone in whatsoever has happened to me; the world has also participated. So I bowed down to the earth in thanksgiving to the whole world."

This is a matter connected with essential astrology. That is why Buddha told his disciples that whenever they attained to inner bliss, they should immediately give thanks to the whole world because they would not be alone in that experience. If the sun had not risen or if the moon had not risen, or if the chain of events had differed just slightly, the experience they had would have been missed. It is true, it was they who had the experience, but everything was instrumental in it – the whole of existence contributed to it. The name of this interconnected cosmic relationship is astrology.

Buddha would never say: "I have become enlightened." He would only say: "The world has experienced this through me – this event of enlightenment, this supreme light is known to the world through me. I am only an excuse, a pretext. I am only a crossing where all the roads of the world have met."

Have you ever thought that although a crossroads looks significant, it is in itself nothing? If the four roads that meet are removed, the significance of the crossroads will also disappear. We are each a crossroads where the forces of the world touch and meet at a point. At that point an individual is formed, a person is born.

The meaning and essence of astrology is that we are not separate, we are one with the universe.

Not only are we one with the universe, we are also participants in every situation and event.

So Buddha said that he was offering salutations to all the Buddhas who had come before him, and to those who would come after him. Then someone said to him that it was understandable that he should offer salutations to those born before him, because knowingly or unknowingly Buddha might be in their debt – their knowledge might have helped him – but why would he salute those who were not yet born? What could he have gained from them?

Buddha replied that he had received help not only from those Buddhas who were born before him, but also from those who would be born after him – because where he stood at that moment, the past and the future

were meeting and becoming one. Those who had passed were meeting those who were coming, right where he was. The sunrise and the sunset were meeting at that one point. So Buddha was also offering salutations to those who were still to be born; he was indebted to them too because if they were not being projected into the future, Buddha also could not have happened.

This is a little difficult to understand. It is connected with essential astrology. I would not exist if anything from my past is dropped or lost; I am a link in a long chain. It is understandable that if my father had not been born I could not have been born, because my father is an essential link in the chain reaching up to me. Even if my grandfather had not been there I could not have been born, because the link is essential. But it is difficult to understand that if there were no link attached to me leading into the future, that then too I could not have been born.

What do I have to do with that future link? – I have already been born. But Buddha says that if whatsoever is going to happen in the future were not already there, then too I could not have been born because I am a link between the past and the future. If there were even a slight change in the past or the future, I could not be the same as I am now.

Yesterday has made me and tomorrow has also made me: this is astrology.

Not only yesterday, but also tomorrow; not only what has already arrived, but also what is coming; not only the sun that has risen today, but also the sun that will rise tomorrow – all are participants.

The future moments also determine the present moment. This present moment could not be if there were no future moments. The present moment can only occur with the support of future moments. Our hands are resting on the shoulders of the future; our feet are standing on the shoulders of our past. It is very obvious that if that which is below me – on which I am standing and which I can see – slips away, I will fall. But if the shoulders of the future – on which my outstretched hands are resting – slip away, I will also fall.

Once a person finds himself connected with this inner unity of the past and the future he is able to understand astrology. Then astrology becomes religion, then astrology becomes spirituality. Otherwise, by becoming related to the nonessential, astrology becomes merely a subject for pseudo fortune-tellers on the roadside, and then it is of no value. Even the highest science is just dust in the hands of those who are ignorant. Its value is determined by the use to which we are able to put the knowledge.

Hence I am trying to push you from many doors to one objective, so that you may understand that everything is joined together, interconnected. This universe is like a family, like one organic body. When I am breathing my whole body is affected; likewise, when the sun breathes the Earth is affected. The Earth is even affected by what remote suns do. Even the smallest cell vibrates in unity with those giant suns. If you can understand this, we will be able to enter into essential astrology, and then we will be spared the uselessness of the nonessential.

We have associated the most trivial matters with astrology. These matters have no value, and difficulties have arisen because we have connected them with astrology. For example, we have connected astrology with questions about a person being born into a poor family or a rich family. Until you can understand that such things are nonessential, you will continue to connect them with astrology.

Astrology can become a tool in your hands only if you distinguish the essential from the nonessential.

I will tell you a very interesting story so that you may understand.

Mohammed had a disciple named Ali. This Ali once asked Mohammed's opinion about whether a man is independent and free to do what he wants, or whether he is bound by his destiny in everything he does. Ali asked: "Can one do as one wants to or not?"

Man has been asking this question for a long, long time...

"If a man is not able to do as he desires," Ali said, "then it is useless and foolish to preach to him not to steal, not to tell lies, not to be dishonest. Or is it destiny that one man should always be there to preach to others not to steal or not to do this or that? – while knowing full well that it is also destiny for a dishonest man to remain dishonest, for a thief to remain a thief, for a murderer to remain a murderer. All this appears to be absurd. If everything is predestined, all education is useless, then all prophets, all saints, all teachers are useless."

People have asked both Mahavir and Buddha such questions. If what is going to happen is predestined, why should Mahavir or Buddha have taken so much trouble to explain what is right and what is wrong? So Ali asked Mohammed what he thought about this controversial matter. If Mahavir or Buddha had been asked such a question, they would have given a very complicated and deep reply, but Mohammed gave a reply which Ali could understand. Many of Mohammed's replies were direct and straightforward.

Ordinarily, answers given by people who are uneducated or less educated, by people who are simple villagers, are direct and frank. People like Kabir, Nanak, Mohammed and Jesus were simple in that way. Answers by people like Buddha, Mahavir and Krishna were complex – Buddha and Mahavir were the cream of a rich and highly developed civilization. The words of Jesus were direct, like a blow on the head. Kabir has actually sung: "Kabir is standing in the open market with a hammer in his hand to hit you!"

If anyone came near him he would, so to speak, break open his head to remove all the rubbish that was lying inside.

Mohammed did not give any metaphysical reply. He asked Ali to lift one leg and stand on it. Ali had just asked a question about whether a man is free to do what he wants – why should he stand on one leg? Mohammed said: "First lift one leg."

Poor Ali lifted his left leg and stood there on one leg.

Mohammed then asked him: "Now lift the right leg also."

Ali was puzzled and asked how it was possible. Then Mohammed said: "If you had wanted to you could have lifted the right leg first but now you cannot. A man is always free to lift the first leg – it can be whichever he wants – but no sooner has the first one been lifted than the other becomes bound to the Earth."

With regard to the nonessential part of life, we are always free to lift the first leg. But once that is done it becomes a bondage for the essential part. We take steps that are non essential, become entangled, and then we are not able to do the essential. So Mohammed said to Ali that he had all the freedom to lift the right or the left leg first. But once he had exercised that freedom and lifted his left leg, he was incapable of lifting the other leg. So freedom is there within certain limits, but beyond those limits there is no freedom.

This is an old conflict for the human mind.

If man is a slave to his destiny – as astrologers generally seem to assert – if everything is predestined and inevitable, then all the religions are of no use. If a man is free to do everything, as all so-called rationalists say, and if nothing is predetermined or inevitable, then life will become just a chaos and an anarchy; then it is also possible that a man may steal and still attain to liberation, that he may murder people and still realize the

divine. When nothing is related, when one step is not related to the other, then there are no laws and nothing is binding anywhere.

I remember a story about Mulla Nasruddin: Mulla was passing by a mosque when suddenly, someone fell down from the minaret of the mosque where he had climbed to say his prayers. The man fell right onto Mulla's shoulders, and Mulla's spine was broken. So Mulla was taken to a hospital for treatment.

Some of his disciples came to see him, and because Mulla used to interpret all events they asked him: "How do you interpret this event? What does it mean?"

Mulla replied: "It is very clear that there is no relationship between an act and its fruit. One person falls and someone else's spine breaks. And so from now on never enter into any controversy about the doctrine of karma. It has been proved that one person may fall and that the spine of another can break. The person who fell was healthy and hearty: he fell on me and I got in a mess. I had not climbed the minaret to say my prayers; I was just returning home. I was not in any way concerned with the prayers, but still I got involved. So from now on...no more talk about the doctrine of karma! Anything can happen. There is no law – it is all anarchy."

Mulla was very unhappy, naturally, because his spine had been unnecessarily broken.

There are two hypotheses. On the one hand there is the astrologer who is sitting on the side of the road being asked about the nonessential... Whether he is the astrologer of a poor man or of Morarji Desai, the finance minister, it does not make any difference – all astrologers who deal with the non-essential, with questions like whether or not one will win the elections, are ordinary. How are the elections connected with the moon and the stars? The ordinary astrologer who replies: "Everything is predetermined and no changes, not even as much as one inch can be made" – is making a false statement.

On the other hand there is the rationalist. He says that nothing is inevitably connected: whatsoever happens is coincidental, circumstantial and a matter of chance. There is no law, everything is anarchic. He is also making a false statement.

There is a law: A rationalist is never found to be as full of joy and bliss as a Buddha.

The rationalist denies God, the soul and religion with the help of logic, but he can never attain to the joy of Mahavir. Certainly Mahavir must have done something that earned him his joy, Buddha must have done something that liberated him, and Krishna must also have done something which made it possible for him to give out such distinctly unique and magical notes through his flute.

The real thing is the third, which is the quintessence of everything, which belongs to the innermost and which is absolutely predetermined. The more one moves toward one's center, the nearer one comes to the essential, predetermined part. As we move towards the periphery we move towards coincidence. The more we talk about external happenings, the more there is coincidence. When we talk about inner phenomena, things begin to appear scientific, as if based on a definite law; they become more and more decisive.

Between these two conditions – the essential and the peripheral – there is ample room to effect changes by exercising one's freedom of choice. Here, someone with awareness will make the correct choice; whereas a person who is in the darkness of ignorance will drift into his destiny, putting up with whatever comes his way.

So there are three areas of life. In the area which is the essential core, everything is predetermined. Knowing this is knowing the essence of astrology. In the area which is peripheral everything is uncertain. To know this is to know the everyday, unpredictable world. There is another area which is in the middle. By knowing this, a person can save himself from trying to do the impossible, and he can do what is possible. If a person lives in the peripheral and middle areas in such a way that he begins to move towards the center, he will become religious. But if he lives in such a way that he is never able to move towards the center, his life will remain irreligious.

For example: a person is preparing to steal. Stealing is not predetermined; it cannot be claimed that stealing is inevitable or unavoidable – there is complete freedom whether to steal or not. But once the theft has been committed, it is as if one foot has been lifted and the other foot remains on the earth: after doing it, you cannot undo the act. And the total effect of the act of stealing will spread over the personality of the person who did it. But as long as stealing does not happen, the other alternative is present and available.

The mind swings between yes and no. If he says yes to stealing he will be thrown towards the periphery; if he says no to stealing he will move towards the center. Thus, in the middle, there is a choice. If he makes the wrong choice he is thrown towards the periphery; if he makes the right

choice he moves towards the center, towards that part of astrology which is essential in life.

I have told you certain things about essential astrology. I have told you that we are the outstretched hands of the sun, that the Earth is born of the sun and we are born of the Earth, that we are not separate, but all united. We are branches and leaves that have spread out from the sun. Whatsoever happens at the core of the sun will vibrate and spread throughout and within one's being, through every cell and nerve. If we can understand this properly, we will realize that we are one family on this planet. Then there is no need to live encased within ego and pride.

The heaviest blow of astrology is upon the ego.

If astrology is right, the ego is wrong. Let us understand it this way: if astrology is wrong, then nothing remains to be right but the ego. If astrology is right then the world is right, and only I as an island am wrong. I am only an infinitesimal and trifling part of the world – I am so minute that I cannot even be included in the count. If astrology is right, then I am not there. There is a huge flow of forces in which I am only a small ripple.

Sometimes as we ride a big wave, we are under the illusion that we too are something special, and we forget about the big wave. This big wave is also riding upon the ocean of which we are completely unaware. If the ocean disappears below it, the wave will disappear and we will also disappear. Without any reason we become unhappy about the possibility of our disappearance, only because we have contrived to be happy through our belief in our own separate existence. If we had realized that there is only a big wave and the vast ocean, and that we are not – that it is the wish of the ocean that we arise on it, that it is the wish of the ocean that we die...

If an attitude arises in which we realize that we are only a fraction of the great design of existence, then there will be no unhappiness.

And with such an attitude, the so-called happiness which we want to enjoy will also not be there.

The feeling of happiness over such thoughts as: "I have won or I have attained" will no longer be there. Nor will there be a feeling of unhappiness over such thoughts as: "I am dying, I am finished, I have drowned, I have been destroyed or defeated."

And when neither happiness nor unhappiness remains, we enter into the world of reality – the essential – where there is bliss. Astrology then becomes the door to bliss.

If we look at astrology as a melting of our pride or as a disintegration of the ego, then astrology becomes religion. But we go to the ordinary astrologer, and in order to protect our egos we ask: "Will I run into a loss? Will I win the lottery? Will I succeed in the new business I am undertaking?"

These questions are asked in order to save our egos, but the fact is that astrology is entirely in opposition to the ego. The significance of astrology is this: you are not, but the universe is; you are not, but the cosmos is. Very powerful forces are operating, and you are absolutely insignificant.

You can only see astrology in this light, if you think and feel that you are an integral part of this big world. That is why I have told you how the whole solar family is connected with the sun. If you can realize this, you will also realize that our sun is connected with many larger suns in the universe.

Scientists say that there are four billion suns, and all are born from some bigger sun. We have no knowledge of where that supreme sun may be. We do not know how this Earth is rotating round its axis and also revolving around the sun, nor do we know where that center is around which our sun with its family is revolving. A great universal merry-go-round is in swing.

In Hindu temples there is an aisle called parikrama encircling the image of the deity. This aisle is symbolic of the fact that everything is rotating by itself and also revolving around something else. Then these two together revolve around a third thing, and these three in turn revolve around a fourth thing, and so on, ad infinitum.

The ultimate center of infinity is referred to by those who know as brahman, the absolute reality. This ultimate center is neither rotating nor revolving around anything else. Whatsoever is rotating itself will definitely revolve around something else, but that which neither rotates nor revolves is the ultimate. It is also known as the supreme silence or void. This is the axis, the pivot around which the whole universe expands and contracts.

Hindus thought that just as a bud becomes a flower and the flower withers, similarly the universe also expands and then disintegrates; that just as there is day and night, the universe also has its day and night.

As I told you earlier, there are cycles of eleven years and cycles of ninety years. Similarly, Hindus thought that there are cycles of billions and trillions of years. During such a cycle a universe is born, passes through youth and grows old; earths are born, moons and stars spread across the universe, populations grow, and millions of living creatures are born.

This is not only happening on the Earth; now scientists say that there must be a minimum of fifty thousand planets on which there is life. There may be more, but this is the minimum. In such an infinite universe it is impossible that only one earth should have life. There are fifty thousand planets or earths on which there is life – it is an infinite expanse. And then, everything contracts again.

This earth was not here from the beginning, nor will it last until the end.

Just as I was born and I will cease to exist, this earth and the sun will also cease to exist; a time will come when these moons, stars and planets will also cease to exist. The circle of their being and not being continues. We are just infinitesimal, rotating and revolving somewhere on this cosmic wheel. And if we still think that we are separate, then we are like Mulla Nasruddin who was traveling in an airplane for the first time....

Mulla Nasruddin entered the airplane, and as it took off he started walking along the aisle in the plane. He wanted to reach his destination very fast and was in a great hurry: naturally, if you want to reach somewhere quickly you will get there quicker if you walk faster!

His co-passengers stopped him and asked him what he was doing.

Mulla Nasruddin replied that he was in a hurry.

He was traveling in a plane for the first time and he was using the same logic which worked on the ground. There, he always arrived more quickly when he walked faster. He did not realize that walking in the plane was useless – the airplane itself was flying, and he would only exhaust himself by walking. He would not arrive any earlier, and it is possible, that by the time he arrived he would be so exhausted that he would not be able to stand up. He should rest, he should close his eyes and rest. But neither Mulla nor any other pundits would agree to such advice.

I call someone religious who is at rest within this cosmic circular movement of the universe. Someone who knows that the universal forces are at work and that there is no hurry, that his hurry is of no use, is religious. If we can simply be one with the universal harmony, that is enough – and it is blissful.

I have told you some things about astrology, if you understand these things, then astrology can become a door to spiritual attainment.

Osho, *Hidden Mysteries*