

The Science of the Stars

IN COMMENCING this brief elucidation of the Astro-logos of the Ancients, it is necessary, perhaps, to inform the reader that the system about to be elaborated is purely astro-masonic and constitutes that special branch of the primeval “Wisdom Religion” which made the ancient Occult Schools of Egypt and Chaldea so justly famous for their Esoteric learning.

Astrology is a combination of two sciences: astronomy and correspondences. These two are related to each other as hand and glove; the former deals with suns, moons, planets and stars, and strictly confines its researches to a knowledge of their size, distance and motion, while the latter deals with the spiritual and physical influences of the same bodies—first upon each other, then upon the earth, and lastly upon the organism of man. Astronomy is the external lifeless glove; correspondences is the living hand within.

It was from the mystical land of Chaldea that our Egyptian ancestors derived their knowledge of Astronomy and Astrology. This knowledge was, fortunately, transplanted into good soil and flourished for untold ages under the fostering care of her mighty priesthood and colossal sacerdotalism.

From the fertile valley of the Nile, long ages before Abraham and his herdsmen wandered over the desert of Arabia, this sublime science of the starry heavens, with its priestly devotees, was earned by tidal emigration over the Caucasus, across the arid steppes of Asia, through the wild mountain passes of Afghanistan and Tibet to the

This article forms the introduction to Thomas Burgoyne's two volume study, The Light of Egypt, or The Science of the Soul and the Stars, which appeared in 1889. The reader will recognize some of the terms and concepts as part of the perennial wisdom of esoteric teachings.

burning plains of Hindustan, and from thence was spread by India's dusky sons among the Mongol and Tartar races of the still remoter East.

Knowledge, we are told, travels westward, and, so far as Europe and America are concerned, this is true in the present cycle. But the time once was when this mental and intellectual current was reversed, and knowledge traveled eastward.

From the magical schools of the lost Atlantis, the sacred stream of learning flowed towards the rising sun into the regions of Central Africa, and from thence to the coast, up the Persian gulf to Chaldea, then from the banks of the sacred Euphrates and the plains of Shinar the stream flowed backward (as though weary and seeking rest) toward its native home in the Western seas, only to be detained upon its journey and to find a temporary resting place in the wondrous valley of the Nile; when, after changing its personal appearance somewhat and adopting the dress of its gifted patrons, it was again projected onward by the restless impulse of Egyptian enterprise, along the shores of the Mediterranean and Black seas to the Caucasus, and thence eastward, as before mentioned, to the dreamy skies of India.

When we come to think of the awful vastness and inconceivable beauty of the glittering worlds which stud, like jewels, the dark canopy of our midnight skies, undoubtedly, we must admit that the contemplation of the shining heavens, with its myriad galaxies of starry systems and stretch of fathomless eternities, forms a sublime study for the thinking astronomical mind. There, alone, can we see something of the boundless reaches of the universe. But to the occult student of Urania's blazing firmament, the shining constellations, with their cabalistic names and weird mythological histories,

the glittering suns of these far off astral systems, and the shining planets which belong to the same solar family as ourselves, possess a deeper interest. Everything around us, save this blazing firmament, is in a state of transition. Besides the fleeting changes, which the return of the seasons bring, the landscape around us is changing its aspect every year. In fact, all around us is change. There is nothing but one eternal change of form. But the gorgeous creations in the sky are still there, undimmed in brightness, unchanged in grandeur, performing, with unflagging pace and unvarying precision, their daily, their annual, and their mighty cyclic rounds. Upon the same heavens, just as we see them now, bespangled with the same planets and with the same familiar stars, gazed the first parents of our race, when they began and also when they ended their pilgrimage upon this mundane sphere of life. The same constellations—Arcturus, Orion, and the Pleiades—sang together with the morning stars when the fiery foundations of our earth were laid, and they rolled in the fabled darkness over Calvary when the gentle Nazarene was slain. These wonders in the sky, are truly the only objects which all nations have witnessed, and all people have admired. They are truly the only objects in the universe which have remained unpolluted by the finger of man. They presided at the horoscope of our birth; they will sing the funeral requiem when we die, and cast their pale radiance over the cold, silent tomb beneath which our physical bodies are ultimately destined to repose.

Before the aspiring student can become the astrologer, he must make himself familiar with the general principles of astronomy, and learn how to trace the external symbols of physical life, which are the phenomenal results, back into the stellar worlds of cause. The whole mystery of this system, therefore, may be designated in general terms as the science of cause and effect....

From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that the reader must not expect the revelation of some divine, mysterious secret that will instantly convey the power of reading the past, realizing the influences of the present, and foreseeing the momentous events within the womb of the future. On the contrary, he must expect nothing but a clear and

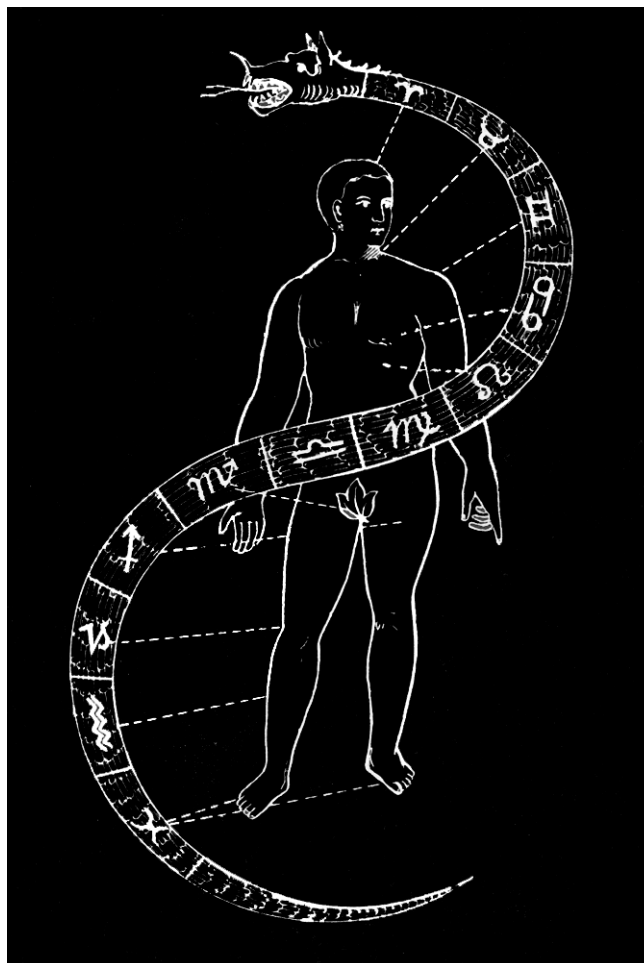


Diagram shows the sun's serpentine path (with respect to the earth's equator) and zodiacal-anatomical correspondences.

concise statement of Nature's immutable laws, which require both study and application to master. He will, however, find in this series of lessons a complete exposition of the occult principles of Nature, insofar as they mold and guide the physical destiny of embodied humanity. But, the principles involved and the ultimates evolved as the natural outcome of cause and effect, can only be mastered and understood by devoting time, unprejudiced thought, and deep study; first, in learning the theory, and then in reducing that theory to practice.

Astrology does not imply fatality. On the contrary, probably two thirds of man's so-called misfortunes are the result of his benighted ignorance. Man, when ignorant of the laws of Nature which control his existence and destiny, is somewhat like a lifeless log floating with the stream. It may be that the various currents of the river will carry him safely to the river's mouth, and launch him uninjured

upon the great Ocean of Eternity. But it is far more likely that the winding course of the river of life will land him into a mud bank of trouble where he may stick fast for the remainder of his days; or, liberated by some stronger current, may again take his chances, either of future safety or of floating into some whirlpool of destruction. But when man understands the laws of his being, he is then safe on board a strong boat. He sees the whirlpools and mud banks of life ahead, and skillfully, by the use of his steering apparatus (the will), avoids collision.

But it often happens that with all his knowledge and skill he cannot successfully battle against the mighty currents that oppose his way, simply because there are, in these days, too many lifeless logs of human lumber that are constantly throwing themselves with the swell of the current athwart his path. But it must be at once apparent to the student how infinitely superior the one is to the other, and how enormous the chances of success are upon the side of the one who has attained unto wisdom; who by study, knows himself and the laws of Nature.

The heavenly bodies urge, predispose, and influence to a great extent, but they do not compel. When we are ignorant of their power, we decide our actions to the best of our worldly knowledge, and we think we have free will in the matter; but, if we could only see the influences at work moulding our actions, we should see that we were obeying the stellar powers with slave-like servility; not always wisely, indeed, but blindly and too well. Under such a state of bondage the planetary influence would, indeed, be fatality.

Knowledge alone is the great liberator from human suffering, and social inharmony. Our delivery from pain, our freedom from bondage, in other words, our free will, increases exactly in proportion to the extent of our knowledge, if used properly. It is the wise man who rules his stars, and the fool who blindly obeys them. Consequently, this Chaldean science of the stars, in order to be practically utilized, must be thoroughly realized; but when realized, it will repay the student a hundred-fold for the time and labor bestowed in learning the way. It will give him a tangible foundation, whereon he may safely stand amid the wild and conflicting opinions of unbalanced mystics. In it, he will find

the key of the sacred sanctuary wherewith he may eventually unlock the doors of the temple and penetrate the mystic veil of Isis—there, to behold the lovely form of the Goddess and to read the glowing verities of Nature inscribed upon the imperishable scrolls of time, and, if he have the will to seek further and deeper, the truths of eternity itself.

Astrology, in its purity, though forming a system of divination, is totally unconnected with either fortune-telling or sensitive, irresponsible mediumship. It is a divine science of correspondences, in the study and application of which the intellect and intuition become blended in a natural, harmonious manner. They commence to vibrate in unison. When this union becomes complete, the ignorant man becomes the prophetic sage.

Therefore, we would earnestly request the student...to thoroughly master each principle and detail laid down; commit them to memory so as to be able, instantly, to recall and repeat them when necessary. Study well the occult principles of the science before attempting to master the external mathematical formula; and never lose sight of the fact that no one principle is of itself absolute, but, to become potent, requires the active cooperation of the other forces. If these oppose with their influence, instead of assisting, then it at once becomes a question of power against power; if they equal each other, the influence of both becomes nil, and the effects, instead of evolving into the realm of external life, become crystallized within the realm of force, and die within the womb of Nature. And lastly, remember that this ancient system of the hoary sages, who first discovered the starry truths of the Chaldean lore, constitutes the basic principle from which all doctrines, occult theories, and sacerdotal systems have radiated. Every religion under the sun has an astrological foundation, and every science the human mind is capable of elaborating, springs from, returns to, and ultimately becomes lost within the starry realms of Urania.

In conclusion, therefore, we hope that our efforts to instruct the student in these sublime mysteries will assist him to store up a supply of precious food which will enable him to receive mental pleasure and spiritual profit, thus proving a blessing to the body as well as the soul. □