



Dr. Elavathur Subrahmanyan Neelakantan graduated from Loyola College of Chennai with distinction in Statistics. As a qualified Chartered Accountant, he is an Information Systems Auditor. While his interest in Astrology was activated by going through books of Dr. B. V. Raman, his formal learning of the subject was from Prof. K. V. Seshadrinatha Sastri, a renowned scholar of Astrology and Ayurveda. Awarded with a Doctorate by the Deemed Sri Chandrasekarendra University, Kancheepuram for his thesis on Medical Astrology, Dr. Neelakantan has been a regular contributor to The Astrological Magazine. His multi-faceted talent also includes proficiency in Vedic chants.

Astrology

Mind and Mental Afflictions

DR E S NEELAKANTAN

ACCORDING TO AMRITABINDU UPANISHAD, mind is the way to both bondage and salvation. (*Manava Manushyanam Karanam bandha Mokshayoho*). How can the same instrument do two conflicting roles?

Self Realisation

When we are born, we are given the gift of our physical body and mind with all its emotions. But do we start using it right away? Our knowledge of the soul at the time of birth is zero and we continue to live in ignorance until death puts an end to our ignorance. I do not know how the theory of reincarnation is helpful. Every soul is supposed to go up the evolutionary ladder in every succeeding birth but in today's world it would be a great achievement if we don't descend and go back to the level of apes once more. Materialism and commercialism is taking a heavy toll of our spiritual values.

Even though Lord Rama is said to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, he still was taught the esoteric principles by two great Brahma Rishis namely Vasishtha and Viswamitra. But in today's world there are no Rishis to guide us and the layman is not in a position to comprehend the value of ancient teachings.

Mind is like fire or a knife. Both fire and knife can be put to use for our benefit. If we do not know how to use them properly, we can get badly hurt. Similarly if we know how to use the mind, it becomes an ally but if improperly used can torment us. Correct use of the mind has to be learnt from a proper Guru and further perfected by discussion with seekers of wisdom and understanding literature on the subject. Mastery over the mind comes through experience.

Learning to use the mind solves psychological/mental problems and directs us to the higher goal of self-realisation. If we look at our life on earth, it is basically an experience of limitation. Our longevity is fixed, our time is fixed, our space is fixed, the resources at our disposal are fixed, our boundaries are fixed, and on and on and on. We do not have unlimited right over anything.

But look at time or space. They are unlimited. When we mention the word "eternity", we understand it to mean unlimited span of time, right? Actually the real meaning of the word eternity is "No time" or a situation or place where time is non-existent. We say "I had blissful sleep yesterday night". This means while you were asleep you were not aware of anything – including time. That means you were close to eternity. The soul can actually be described as the framework in which all mental functions take place. The inner self is that entity which perceives itself as "I am". The moment it becomes "I am this" or "I am that", we get the false self or the outer self, which is also termed as ego. Having understood inner self and outer self, what we finally need to know is "the mind". The mind is also a fictitious entity, just a collection of thoughts. If all the thoughts were to disappear, then the mind as a whole disappears.

Distinct Layers

Mind has got three distinct layers namely:

1. The core thoughts and feelings
2. The rational part which is used for decisions and judgments
3. The external portion of the mind which deals with the world.

What is the goal of life? *Realisation of the self*. What is realisation of self? *The realisation of oneself as the cosmic or supreme self*.

This is what the Vedic seers termed as "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman). It is a profound Advaitic statement. This concept can be understood theoretically by everyone. But very few have mutually come to realize that state. For some people, a few glimpses can happen sometime or the other. During such periods, a period of great calm, lightness of body and happiness is experienced and once they come out, it continues for some more time until they fall back into their old life patterns. But these brief glimpses are enough to indicate the possibility of a merger with the higher self which is the passport for eternal happiness.

Functions

The functions of the mind are dictated by three major qualities namely Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. Sattwa represents an active and agile mind unpolluted by base thoughts. Rajas represents a distracted or disturbed frame of mind represented by greed, jealousy, anger, selfishness, lust and aggressive tendencies. Tamas represents ignorance, sleep, laziness, addictions, aimless thoughts and daydreaming.

The Ramayana of Valmiki is not just a story. If we read it carefully, one can unearth several philosophical doctrines. For example, the three demon brothers were Ravana, Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna. Of these Ravana is prone to lust, representing Rajo guna. Vibhishana was an ally of Lord Rama, thereby representing Sattwa guna. Kumbhakarna was addicted to sleep, which has the quality of Tamas. So to highlight the qualities of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, Valmiki had introduced three major characters in this epic, each denoting a particular trait.

Detoxification

To render the mind pure, we need to resort to mental detoxification. Meditation, silence, chanting of mantras and satsang are basically methods to detoxify the mind from the impressions left behind by our day-to-day interactions with society.

Role of Astrology

We come to the more important segment of this article namely, "Astrology in relation to the mind". How do we know the mental state of a person? Looking into the planetary positions of Moon, Mercury and the influences on the 5th house, we can try to analyse one's mental make up.

Moon represents the mind of Kala Purusha (Time Personified). Let us consider the two aspects of a man's thinking – pessimism and optimism. Pessimism is closely linked to the waning phase of Moon while optimism links to the waxing phase of Moon. Similarly Jupiter denotes optimism and Saturn denotes pessimism. If Moon and Jupiter conjoin we get *Gaja Kesari* yoga. A person born in this yoga is energetic, intelligent and wealthy. If Jupiter occupies the 6th or 8th from Moon (without occupying Lagna Kendra), we get *Sakata* yoga. A person born in *Sakata* yoga becomes impoverished even if he were to be born in a royal family. When Venus is associated with Moon, the person will be clever in making bargains. When Moon is in conjunction with Saturn, the person will be indigent. Moon in conjunction with Mars gives rise to the *Sari Mangala Yoga*, a powerful combination for

prosperity. A person will be pious, devoted to sciences and will have diverse merits, when Moon is in conjunction with Mercury.

Lunar Days

The Thithis occupy a significant portion in predictive astrology. One can make out the mental state of a person by ascertaining the thithi at the time of birth. This gives a clue to the character of a person.

PRATIPADA	Very industrious, virtuous.
DWITIYA	Abundance of wealth, famous
TRITIYA	Virtuous, timid, clear voice
CHATURTHI	Credulous, conversant with sacred texts
PANCHAMI	Lustful, restless
SHASTI	Wise, temperamental
SAPTAMI	Powerful, phlegmatic, lording over people.
ASHTAMI	Fond of wife and children, phlegmatic
NAVAMI	Charming, lustful
DASAMI	Virtuous, clear voice, prosperous
EKADASI	Will revere Gods and Brahmins
DWADASI	Liberal, learned, wealthy
TRAYODASI	Covetous, libidinous, wealthy
CHATURDASI	Fiery temper, lustful
AMAVASYA	Credulous, worships Gods and Manes
POURNIMA	Wealthy, cheerful

Having understood the role of Thithis in influencing a person's mind, let us understand the mental make-up of a person while he is born under the various constellations (nakshatra):

ASHWINI	Intelligent, modest, sagacious
BHARANI	Lustful, cruel, ungrateful
KRITTIKA	Energetic, lord-like, has valuable learning
ROHINI	Knows others' weaknesses, lustful
MRIGASIRA	Soft-hearted, wandering nature
ARIDRA	Fickle, addicted to base deeds
PUNARVASU	Dull witted, learned, lustful
PUSHYA	Loves Gods and Brahmins, intelligent, has royal favour, has large circle of relations

ASLESHA	Silly, ungrateful, has hasty temper
MAKHA	Lustful, virtuous, indulgent to wife, proud
POORVA PHALGUNI	Restless, evil-natured, liberal, lustful
UTTARA PHALGUNI	Honourable, lustful, grateful, intelligent
HASTA	Loving, virtuous
CHITRA	Good-natured, lustful
SWATI	Tries to please Gods and Brahmins, not intelligent
VISAKHA	Proud, luxurious, irritable
ANURADHA	Polite in speech, easy going, honourable
JYESHTA	Lustful, short tempered
MOOLA	Dishonest, ungrateful
POORVASHADA	Honourable, calm
UTTARASHADA	Honourable, tranquil
SRAVANA	Has respect for Gods and Brahmins, pious
DHANISHTA	Credulous, joyful, wealthy
SATABHISHA	Will be an astrologer, tranquil, moderate in diet, courageous
POORVA BHADRA PADA	Bold, mischievous, coward
UTTARA BHADRA PADA	Gentle, liberal
REVATI	Clever in giving advice, enjoys continuous prosperity

The position of the Moon in the twelve zodiacal signs will also influence the mental make-up of a person

ARIES	Moderate in diet, lustful
TAURUS	Liberal, good behaviour
GEMINI	Fond of jest, merriment
CANCER	Loving, eloquent speaker
LEO	Will always be happy
VIRGO	Craving for sensual enjoyment
LIBRA	Will revere Gods and Brahmins, affectionate towards relatives
SCORPIO	Avaricious, wanderer
SAGITTARIUS	Will be outstanding in their family, artistic
CAPRICORN	Lustful, taste for music
AQUARIUS	Immoral, inimical to learned
PISCES	Learned

The Yogas are 27 in number. These are actually soli-lunar combinations. The reader is advised to consult a textbook on Astrology for understanding the full implications of these yogas and their impact on mind. I will discuss a few of them, which I feel is relevant to this article.

PRITI	Lustful
ATIGANDHA	Lots of obstacles in life, revengeful
DHRITI	Enjoys wealth, goods and spouses of other people, indulges in other people's hospitality
VYAGHATA	Cruel
VAJRA	Unpredictable behaviour
VYATIPATA	Fickle, unreliable
BRAHMA	Trustworthy, ambitious
VAIDHRITI	Scheming nature

Mathibhramana Yoga

This yoga is very significant as it is this which leads a person to insanity. The following yogas makes a person insane:

- Jupiter in Lagna, Mars in 5, 7 or 9
- Saturn with waning moon in 12
- Moon and Mercury in a Kendra aspected (or conjoined) by (or with) any other planet.

These yogas are very easy to apply but a critical student of Astrology should not pronounce judgment without taking into consideration other neutralizing factors present in a chart.

I would advise the student and professional alike to follow the masterly advice of Dr. B.V. Raman, while on this topic:

"I am convinced that unless the Moon and Mercury are involved in heavy afflictions, insanity or lunacy cannot be present. To assume that insanity always results by nervous debility, which in its turn is due to mental disturbances, is to ignore the fundamentals of commonsense, reasoning and ordinary logic. The mind is no doubt the root cause but the root cause itself is conditioned by certain acts done in the previous life so that a human being, however normal he may appear to be for all practical purposes would lose the mental equilibrium when the moment for the fructification of Karmic results expressed as sidereal influences arrives (vide 300 Important Combinations, Page 294)

Happiness and Tranquility of Mind

The Dharma Sastras are the texts written by our Rishis ages ago which contain clear-cut directions on how to lead life. All the problems we face today arise out of the fact that we are deviating sharply from the instructions handed over to us by people who had far more clarity of vision and intelligence, than we have. Once I asked an eminent physician as to how mental peace can promote physical health. He said, "All diseases have some

correlation with stress. Due to stress, the functioning of glands and other vital organs are impaired and their secretions will not be proper. This is how diseases arise. *If you take care of your mind, the body will function like a fully automated machine in an efficient way and you will not fall sick*". This message, though over simplified, conveys in a nutshell the importance of a balanced mind in maintaining good physical and mental health. ■