

Vedic Astrology in Brief

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Vedic astrology is the astrology of India. Also called *Jyotish* (Sanskrit for "science of light"), Vedic astrology is considered "the eye of the *Vedas*," India's oldest and most sacred body of literature that includes the *Rig Veda*. *Veda* means wisdom. Vedic astrology is permeated with the wisdom of a great ancient civilization, and one whose wisdom emanates from an unbroken tradition – probably well over 8,000 years old. There are four major goals of the Hindu/Vedic culture: 1) *Dharma* (right purpose in living, including right work), 2) *Artha* (material prosperity), 3) *Kama* (the fulfillment of desires, including the desire for relationship), and 4) *Moksha* (the liberation of the soul). Of these the highest aim is *Moksha*, and though all other aims are seen to be important, in the end they are subsidiary to *Moksha*. This is closely related to the Hindu/Vedic view of karma and rebirth. It is considered that the soul becomes embodied on this earth plane in order to burn off karma accrued from past lifetimes. In this philosophy it is believed we have many, many lifetimes on this earth. How we live those lifetimes in thought, word, and deed will come back to us eventually – sometimes sooner, sometimes delayed. Focus on the evolution of our consciousness will help us with the liberation and awakening of the soul.

In this context, the Vedic astrological chart tells us what we have to deal with in this particular lifetime, and when our karmic themes will come due. Vedic astrology is similar to Western astrology in that it uses planets (but traditionally only 9 of them), 12 zodiacal signs, and 12 houses. But from there, the differences abound. Vedic astrology is lunar-oriented, whereas Western astrology is sun-oriented. Vedic astrology has only ever used the sidereal zodiac – where the planets actually are against a backdrop of the fixed stars. This zodiac is currently about 24 degrees behind the tropical zodiac commonly used by many Western astrologers. Whereas Western tropical astrology is typically psychologically oriented, Vedic astrology is karmically and predictively oriented. Not that plenty of psychology cannot be read from the Vedic

astrological chart, but the basic orientation is more on your *dharma*, your life path (including relationships and physical health) and your specific timing than on describing your personality in great detail. This, after all, is only the veneer you may be showing the world.

In addition to its strong predictive techniques, Vedic astrology has a vast system of remedies – among which is the whole field of Ayurvedic medicine. Your Ayurvedic *dosha*, or physical type, can be read from the Vedic astrological chart, and can be very helpful in orienting you towards specific diets and life styles that are more fitting for your *dosha*. And in general, the remedies help to alleviate difficult karmic patterns, minimize difficulties as they are bound to occur, and strengthen those qualities that give you greater ease and protection as you negotiate the many highways of a given lifetime.

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