

***In Search of Destiny: Biography, History and Culture As Told Through Vedic Astrology*, by Edith Hathaway, Vintage Vedic Press, San Diego, CA, [www.edithhathaway.com](http://www.edithhathaway.com), 2012. Paper. 544 pages, \$29.95.**

In the hands of an excellent astrologer teacher and writer, Vedic astrology, or Jyotisa (the actual sanskrit term for the study of astronomy, astrology, and mathematics), which is utilized in India and is based on the sidereal zodiac, can become completely accessible to the western astrologer, especially those who are used to the tropical zodiac.

A perfect example of this is accomplished by Edith Hathaway, a Western and Vedic astrologer, who, in her groundbreaking new *book In Search of Destiny*, masterfully uses Vedic astrology as she explains historical cycles and analyzes 31 notable charts.

In the first chapter, "Historical Context and Collective Destiny," the author defines the Jupiter-Saturn conjunctions, which occur every 20 years, spanning 1405-2398 from the perspective of the sidereal zodiac and, as a result, the sidereal elements in which they occur. Viewing it this way, for instance, the period from December 31, 1980-May 28, 2000 is identified by the Jupiter-Saturn conjunction falling in sidereal Virgo, an earth sign, rather than in tropical Libra, an air sign. Additionally she places great significance on the *nakshatra*, or lunar mansion, in which the conjunction occurs, since the 27 *nakshatras* were used by the Indians to divide the stars into 27 groups of 13° 20' before they incorporated the 12 signs of the zodiac.

There is an introduction to Vedic astrology and philosophy in Chapter Two. Then on to the next seven chapters, in which Hathaway thoroughly analyzes 31 notable charts. Each chapter is organized by *lagna*, or Ascendant, mostly because Vedic astrology is based on a whole-sign house system. This means that no matter where your planets are located, everyone who has a Leo Ascendant will have the Sun as the chart ruler, Mercury as the ruler of the 2nd house, which consists of the entire sign of Virgo, Venus as 3rd house ruler, with the entire house containing Libra, etc.

The chapters, therefore, are classified from Aries to Libra, and each contains a few charts of notables with that ascendant. Each chapter contains a biographical summary, an in-depth character analysis, and a detailed description of the dashas, or planetary periods, and why they signified certain events. Oddly enough there are very few Vedic astrology books that actually show Jyotisa in action through actual case studies. This book thankfully fills that gap.

The celebrity list is comprised of notables in all fields, including Robert F. Kennedy, Martha Graham, Julia Child, Albert Einstein, Barbara Walters, and many more. Although some of these charts are familiar to Western astrologers, they have never been given as thorough an analysis as Hathaway gives them using Vedic astrology.

This book is brilliant in the way it conveys historical cycles and biography through Vedic astrology, and will serve as an excellent learning tool for astrology students at all levels, teachers, and practitioners. It is very clear that Hathaway has done not only a masterful job of interpreting the birth chart and the planetary periods, but has also done an amazing

amount of research. It is for this reason that the book only includes charts that have Aries through Libra as the ascendant distributed throughout seven chapters, so that the author could release this one, while getting to work on the next volume with charts that have Scorpio through Pisces as their ascendants.

I only hope it comes sooner rather than later, but whenever it appears, the book will be well worth the wait, and another welcome addition to everyone's library, regardless of which zodiac you prefer.

*reviewed by Ronnie Gale Dreyer*

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