

JEWISH ASTROLOGY

It is well attested that each nation and each city is linked to a star that advises it as to its fate; Israel, however, has a great fortune in that God alone is its advisor, for Israel is God's portion

---R. Avraham Ibn Ezra commentary on Deut. 4:19 - 11th Century Spain

A king conquered a new province, the elite of which decided that they needed to forge connections with the new rulers. Some decided to become acquainted with the dukes, others with the knights and yet others with the ministers. The wisest amongst them declared, "I will forge a connection with the king himself." He reasoned, "All the ministers, knights and dukes change, however the king will always remain

---Midrash Rabbah, Eichah 3--

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years;

And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so

And God made two great lights; the large light to rule the day, and the small light to rule the night; and he made the stars. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

Genesis 1:14-19

You shall not practice divination or soothsaying. (Lev. 19:26)

It was stated. R. Hanina said: The planetary influence gives wisdom, the planetary influence gives wealth, and Israel stands under planetary

influence. R. Johanan maintained: *Israel is immune from planetary influence*. Now, R. Johanan is consistent with his view, for R. Johanan said: How do we know that Israel is immune from planetary influence? Because it is said, Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the nations, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the nations are dismayed at them: they are dismayed but not Israel. Rab too holds that Israel is immune from planetary influence. For Rab Judah said in Rab's name: How do we know that Israel is immune from planetary influence? Because it is said, and he brought him forth from abroad. Abraham pleaded before the Holy One, blessed be He, Sovereign of the Universe! one born in mine house is mine heir. Not so, He replied, but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels. Sovereign of the Universe! cried he, I have looked at my constellation and find that I am not fated to beget child. *He said, Go forth from [i.e., cease] thy planet [gazing], for Israel is free from planetary influence.* (Bavli -Shabbat 156A)

From Samuel too [we learn that] Israel is immune from planetary influence. For Samuel and Ablat were sitting, while certain people were going to a lake. Said Ablat to Samuel: That man is going but will not return, [for] a snake will bite him and he will die. If he is an Israelite, replied Samuel, he will go and return. While they were sitting he went and returned. [Thereupon] Ablat arose and threw off his [the man's] knapsack, [and] found a snake therein cut up and lying in two pieces. Said Samuel to him, What did you do? Every day we pooled our bread and ate it; but today one of us had no bread, and he was ashamed. Said I to them, "I will go and collect [the bread]". When I came to him, I pretended to take [bread] from him, so that he should not be ashamed. You have done a good deed, said he to him. Then Samuel went out and lectured: But charity delivereth from death; and [this does not mean] from an unnatural death, but from death itself.

From R. Akiba too [we learn that] Israel is free from planetary influence. For R. Akiba had a daughter. Now, astrologers told him, On the day she enters the bridal chamber a snake will bite her and she will die. He was very worried about this. On that day [of her marriage] she took a

brooch [and] stuck it into the wall and by chance it penetrated [sank] into the eye of a serpent. The following morning, when she took it out, the snake came trailing after it. What did you do? her father asked her. A poor man came to our door in the evening. she replied, and everybody was busy at the banquet, and there was none to attend to him. So I took the portion which was given to me and gave it to him. You have done a good deed, said he to her. Thereupon R. Akiba went out and lectured: But charity delivereth from death: and not [merely] from an unnatural death, but from death itself.

---Bavli, Shabbat 156B

“What is thy calculation?” (Avraham to God regarding Israel not being controlled by planets) Because Zedek [Jupiter] stands in the West? I will turn it back and place it in the East. And thus it is written, Who hath raised up Zedek from the east? He hath summoned it for his sake (Bavli – Shabbat 156B)

From the time that the Torah was given to Israel, the Israelites were withdrawn from the rule of the stars and constellations; however, if one does not follow the ways of the Torah, he returns to be under the domain of these natural influences. (Zohar, Vol 3, 216)

The edicts of the stars constitute the basis of the hidden miracles mentioned in the Torah. However, the Jew, through the power of his choice and through his waling in the way of the Torah, may rise above the astrological influences (RaMBaN, as quoted by Glazerson, “Above the Zodiac”)

Open your eyes and see the lessons of the signs of the zodiac. They come to teach us that although the powers of the constellations are exceedingly great, and from the beginning of the creation their influence governs the mundane world, there is a power beyond them, the power of the Holy One, blessed by He, who chose the month of scales to enact the Day of Judgment, when he decides the fate of his entire creation (Rabbenu Bachya, Kad Hakemach 83 – 13th Century Spain)

Much of Jewish astrological knowledge comes from Sefer Yetzirah, a book of mysticism that is attributed to our Patriarch Avraham. It was in use by the 1st century, and by the 6th century there are numerous commentaries referring to it as source material. It is considered one of the three major texts of Jewish mysticism (along with Bahir and Zohar).

R. Eliezer the Modiite said that Abraham possessed a power of reading the stars for which he was much sought after by the potentates of East and West (Bavli, Bava Batra 16B)

In Sefer Yetzirah, the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet are split up:
 ---3 “Mother Letters” (aleph, mem, shin...corresponding to air, fire, water; and the head, belly, and chest);
 ---7 “Double Letters” (called BeGeD KaFaRTa...bet, gimel, daled, chaf, fey, resh, tav...each of which can have a dot or “dagesh” inside them to change pronunciation) corresponding to the seven “stars” of Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon; and also corresponding to 7 days of the week; to 7 gates of the soul; and to wisdom, wealth, sed, life, dominance, peace, and grace...and their opposites of folly, poverty, desolation, death, subjugation, war, and ugliness; and to up, down, east, west, north, south, and the “Holy Palace in the center that supports them all”
 ---And 12 “Elementals” (heh, vav, zayin, chet, tet, yud, lamed, nun, samekh, eyin, tzadi, and kuf) corresponding to speech, thought, motion, sight, hearing, action, cotion, smell, sleep, anger, taste, and laughter. Also corresponding to 12 constellations (Ram/Aries/T’leh, Bull/Taurus/Shor, Twins/Gemini/Teumim, Crab/Cancer/Sartan, Lion/Leo/Ari, Virgin/Virgo/Betulah, Scales/Libra/Maznayim, Scorpion/Scorpio/Akrav, Archer/Sagittarius/Keshet, Baby Goat/Capricorn/Gedi, Water Drawer/Aquarius/Deli, Fish/Pisces/Dagin), 12 months of the year (Nissan, Iyar, Sivan, Tamuz, Av, Elul, Tishrei, Cheshvan, Kislev, Tevet, Shevat, Adar) , 12 directors of the Soul (2 hands, 2 feet, 2 kidneys, gall bladder, intestines, liver, korkeban/gizzard/stomach, kivah/rennet/part of body that induces sleep, spleen).

The following is drawn from Chapter 5 of Sefer Yetzirah:

Heh – speech, Aries, Nissan, right foot
 Vav – thought, Taurus, Iyar, right kidney
 Zayin – motion, Gemini, Sivan, left foot
 Chet – sight, Cancer, Tamuz, right hand
 Tet – hearing, Leo, Av, left kidney
 Yud – action, Virgo, Elul, left hand
 Lamed – coition, Libra, Tishrei, gall bladder
 Nun – smell, Scorpio, Cheshvan, intestine
 Samekh – sleep, Sagittarius, Kislev, Kivah/part that induces sleep
 Eyin – anger, Capricorn, Tevet, liver
 Tzadi – taste, Aquarius, Shevat, Korkeban/stomach
 Kuf – laughter, Pisces, Adar, spleen

There is a lot of discussion about days of the week, hours of the day, constellations, etc. influencing people (again, remembering that a life based in Torah invalidates the influence of the stars). Here is a brief example from the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Shabbat, page 156A:

It was recorded in R. Joshua b. Levi's notebook: He who [is born] on the first day of the week [Sunday] shall be a man without one [thing] in him. What does without one [thing] in him mean? Shall we say, without one virtue? Surely R. Ashi said: I was born on the first day of the week! Hence it must surely mean, one vice. But Surely R. Ashi said: I and Dimi b. Kakuzta were born on the first day of the week: I am a king and he is the captain of thieves! Rather it means either completely virtuous or completely wicked. What is the reason? Because light and darkness were created on that day. He who is born on the second day of the week will be bad-tempered. What is the reason? Because the waters were divided thereon. He who is born on the third day of the week will be wealthy and unchaste. What is the reason? Because herbs were created thereon. He who is born on the fourth day of the week will be wise and of a retentive

memory. What is the reason? Because the luminaries were suspended [thereon] He who is born on the fifth day of the week will practise benevolence. What is the reason? Because the fishes and birds were created thereon. He who is born on the eve of the Sabbath will be a seeker. R. Nahman b. Isaac commented: A seeker after good deeds. He who is born on the Sabbath will die on the Sabbath, because the great day of the Sabbath was desecrated on his account. Raba son of R. Shila observed: And he shall be called a great and holy man.

R. Hanina said to then, [his disciples]: Go out and tell the son of Levi, Not the constellation of the day but that of the hour is the determining influence. He who is born under the constellation of the sun will be a distinguished man: he will eat and drink of his own and his secrets will lie uncovered; if a thief, he will have no success. He who is born under Venus will be wealthy and unchaste [immoral]. What is the reason? Because fire was created therein. He who is born under Mercury will be of a retentive memory and wise. What is the reason? Because it [Mercury] is the sun's scribe. He who is born under the Moon will be a man to suffer evil, building and demolishing, demolishing and building. eating and drinking that which is not his and his secrets will remain hidden: if a thief, he will be successful. He who is born under Saturn will be a man whose plans will be frustrated. Others say: All [nefarious] designs against him will be frustrated. He who is born under Zedek [Jupiter] will be a right-doing man [zadkan] R. Nahman b. Isaac observed: Right-doing in good deeds. He who is born under Mars will be a shedder of blood. R. Ashi observed: Either a surgeon, a thief, a slaughterer, or a circumciser. Rabbah said: I was born under Mars. Abaye retorted: You too inflict punishment and kill.

All of this is based on the structure of the Universe as understood by our Sages and mystics: that everything is based on the 22 letters of the Hebrew Alphabet (which were created before physical Creation). These letters make the building blocks of existence, and it is taught that both our Patriarch Avraham and the Maharal of Prague among others (in Talmud and other sources) were able to use these teachings to create

“Golems” ...beings that lived but had no soul and would serve their master (this is the basis of both the Golem of Prague statue and the Frankenstein story). The letters, constellations, elements, and all of Life are interconnected: they affect us but do not have to make us an effect...and most importantly:

None of this has power over Israel...people who choose to live according to the teachings of Torah, both written and oral.

In order to see what constellations, letters, attributes, etc are potential influences in your life, you need to know your Hebrew birthdate and day. You can find this out by going to www.Hebcal.com and using the date converter to identify your Hebrew birth date.



The Golem of Prague statue in Prague

GEMATRIA:

Hebrew Number Values

א	Aleph - 1	ל	Lamed - 30
ב	Beth - 2	מ	Mem - 40
ג	Gimel - 3	נ	Nun - 50
ד	Daleth - 4	ס	Samekh - 60
ה	Heh - 5	ע	Ayin - 70
ו	Vav - 6	פ	Peh - 80
ז	Zain - 7	צ	Tzaddi - 90
ח	Cheth - 8	ק	Qoph - 100
ט	Teth - 9	ר	Resh - 200
י	Yod - 10	ש	Shin - 300
כ	Kaph - 20	ת	Tau - 400

As an example of how a person's name corresponds to other aspects of astrology and life (see above to understand how each letter manifests and reflects different aspects):

David is spelled Dalet, Vav, Dalet, so it's numerical value is 14 (4+6+4), and can also be reduced to 5. The name also corresponds to Mars, Bull/Taurus, Tuesday, East, Month of Sivan

Moshe is Mem, Shin, Hey; so it's value is 345 (40+300+5); and it also reduces in value to 12 (3+4+5) or 3 (1+2). The name also corresponds to Fire, Belly, Water, Chest, Speech, Aries/Ram, Month of Nissan