

האלה והוא שגם כל עניני מקרי הגשמים ומשיגייהם אחרי שהוכנו למעלה ימשכו על ידיהם למטה באותה הצורה שצריכים לקרות להם. ד"מ החיים העושר החכמה הזרע וכיוצא כל אלה הענינים מוכנים למעלה בשרשים ונעתקים למטה בענפים כצורה הראויה ע"י הכוכבים וזה במחלקות ידועות ובקיבוצים מיוחדים שהוחקו להם וסיבובים ידועים. ונתפלגו ביניהם כל המקרים הקורים את הגשמים למיניהם ונקשרו הגשמים כלם תחת שליטתם כפי סדריהן להתחדש בהם כפי מה שיושפע מן המערכה לפי הקישור שיתקשר בה כל איש ואיש: והנה נשתעבדו לזה הסדר כל בני אדם גם כן להתחדש בהם כפי מה שימשך להם מן המערכה. אמנם כבר אפשר שתבוטל תולדת הכוכבים מכח חזק מעליון מהם ועל יסוד זה אמרו ([שבת קנו](#)). (אין מזל לישראל כי כח גזירתו ית' והשפעתו גובר על הכח המוטבע בהשפעת המערכה ותהיה התולדה לפי ההשפעה העליונה ולא לפי השפעת המערכה: והנה נשתעבדו לזה הסדר כל בני אדם גם כן להתחדש בהם כפי מה שימשך להם מן המערכה. אמנם כבר אפשר שתבוטל תולדת הכוכבים מכח חזק מעליון מהם ועל יסוד זה:

And that is that even all the events of physical things and what happens to them are prepared above and, only then, drawn down by the stars in the form in which they are meant to occur. By way of example - matters of life, wealth, wisdom, children and the like are all prepared above in the roots and made manifest below in the branches, in their appropriate form, through the stars. Each of these happen though specific divisions, particular groupings and various orbits assigned to them. Everything which occurs to physical things in [all of] their types is divided among them. All physical things were placed under their control, according to their order, for things to arise for them - in line with that which [the stars] have been influenced by the [divine] orchestration to create a connection with each and every individual. And note that all people are also subjugated to this order, for things to arise for them according to what follows from the orchestration. However, it is actually possible for the effect of the stars to be nullified by a strong power above them. And based on this principle, they said ([Shabbat 156a](#)), "There is no constellation (*mazal*) for Israel." For the power of His decree, may He be blessed, and His influence overcome the power invested in the influence of the orchestration, such that the outcome will be according to the superior influence and not according to the influence of the orchestration.

A discussion on Astrology based on Derech Hashem 2:2-3

Some Textual Questions to ask Chanichim:

- Does this idea of “unique connections” mean that our lives are narrated by the stars?
- Do you think physical things applies to animals as well as humans?
- Is mazal the same as star signs? Or is it something separate?

Some General Questions to ask Chanichim:

- Do you think its possible to study and understand astrology?
- How does the Jewish idea of astrology fit in with modern astrology?
- How does this idea fit in with the idea that we have free will as humans?
- What does astrology mean for twins, who are born at the same time? For example, Ya'akov and Esav?

Some Personal Questions to ask Chanichim:

- How do you feel knowing that your life could be determined by the stars?
- Does it feel more reassuring knowing that Hashem can influence them and change them?
- What is your star sign? Do you know what the Hebrew equivilant is?

Other sources and quotes to bring into discussion:

Devarim 4:19:

וּפְנֵי-תֵשֶׁא עֵינֶיךָ הַשְּׁמַיִם וְרָאִיתָ אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת-הַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶת-הַכּוֹכָבִים כֹּל צָבָא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנִדְחַת וְנִדְחַת וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם וְעַבַדְתָּם
And when you look up to the sky and behold the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole heavenly host, you must not be lured into bowing down to them or serving them.

Shabbat 156a:

אימתר רבי חנינא אומר מזל מחכים מזל מעשיר ויש מזל לישראל רבי יוחנן אמר אין מזל לישראל

It was stated that Rabbi Hanina says: A constellation makes one wise and a constellation makes one wealthy, and there is a constellation for the Jewish people that influences them. Rabbi Yohanan said: There is no constellation for the Jewish people that influences them. The Jewish people are not subject to the influence of astrology.

Kuzari 4:27

(כז) אמר החבר: הטיבות מלך פוזר! זהו האמת והאמונה באמת ועזיבת מה שאין צורך אליו. אך שמה היה זה העיון מאברהם אבינו כשנתבררה לו האלהות והאחדות קדם שיִדבר עמו במחזה, ואחר שדבר עמו הניח כל הקשותיו ושב לבקש רצון האלהים מעמו אחר שלמדו, ואיך הוא הרצון ובאיזה דבר ישג ובאיזה מקום. וכבר דרשו רבותינו: ב, ויזא אותו החוצה, 'צא מאצטגנינות שלך' ר"ל: צא מחקמת הפוכבים ומקל חקמה טבעית מספקת

The Rabbi: Just so, O King of the Khazars, by God! This is the truth, the real faith, and everything else may be abandoned. Perhaps this was Abraham's point of view when divine power and unity dawned upon him prior to the revelation accorded to him. As soon as this took place, he gave up all his speculations and only strove to gain favour of God, having ascertained what this was and how and where it could be obtained. The Sages explain the words: 'And he brought him forth abroad' (Genesis 15), thus: Give up thy horoscopy! This means: Forsake astrology as well as any other doubtful study of nature.

A Related Story:

Shemot Perek 17

After Bnei Yisrael left Egypt and crossed the Red Sea, Amalek comes and fights them at a place called Rephidim. Moshe places Yehoshua, who is his apprentice, in charge of the battle, whilst he stands on the top of a hill with Aaron and Hur, holding the staff of Hashem in his hand.

Throughout the battle, whenever Moshe's hands were held up, Bnei Yisrael would win, but the minute that they were lowered, Amalek would win. Aaron and Hur supported Moshe's hands during the battle, until the sun set, and this allowed Bnei Yisrael led by Yehoshua to win.

Rashi commentary on this battle of Amalek highlights the words “Until the going down of the sun”. Rashi explains that Amalek used astrology to calculate the hour in which they would win, based off the sun. Because of this, Hashem performed a miracle and held back the sun, to confuse the hours, allow the battle to go on for longer, and confuse the hours, preventing the astrological prediction.

Some Interactive Resources:

Activity: Get the chanachim to take a semi-credible astrology test online and see what happens.

Activity: Use a constellation app to do some stargazing.

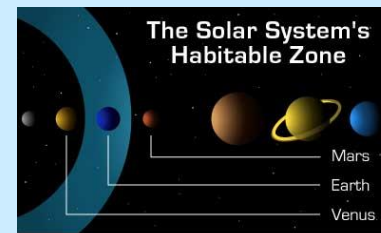
Roleplay: Enact some situations where you would say mazal tov each other and think about what the word means in the various contexts.

Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i93Z7zljQ7I>

Short Film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7aKzHzfNLS> – A couple on a first date clash over astrology

Poem: From “sifting the stars”: *Let Us be more than random patterns of light, scattered diamonds that necklace the night*

Picture:



What is the astronomical or astrological significance of this “Goldilocks zone”?