

DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 6: CHAPTER 9

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

1. We'd now need to explain something else essential to God's interactions with us that's beyond the reward-and-punishment paradigm and Mazal [1].

For while both of those are tailored to one's own makeup and ultimate needs, there are other, this-worldly and universal forces that follow a course of their own. They're rooted in the needs of the moment at hand, and they have to do with the aforementioned astrological influences.

2. We're taught that the stars and constellations act as particular and special conduits of G-d's interactions with the world, and that they function in that capacity in relation to each other and to everything here below. But it's important to know a couple of things about them for our purposes.

First, that each star and constellation influences a particular person, place, or thing, and that each of the latter is influenced by one star or constellation alone at any one point. Yet, each star and constellation also has its own specific moment, hour, day, or era to "shine" (if you'll pardon the pun) - a point at which it matters most especially in the grand scheme.

Understand, of course, that there's a significant difference between the two. For, when a particular star or constellation interacts with someone or something specific, that's so because there's an intrinsic and singular relationship between star and object, and because the heavenly body has a particular hold over it. When a particular star or constellation has a special task of its own, on the other hand, then it holds sway over everything in broad strokes.

As we'll see, all this goes to explain G-d's interactions with us in general.

[1] For this and the next chapter's Kabbalistic references see Klallim Rishonim 35, R' Friedlander's note 488, and R' Shriki's note 174.

Rabbi Yaakov Feldman has translated and commented upon "The Gates of Repentance", "The Path of the Just", and "The Duties of the Heart" (Jason Aronson Publishers). His works are available in bookstores and in various locations on the Web.