

# CHAPTER 7: THE INFLUENCE OF THE STARS - PARAGRAPH 3

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Each and every one of us is subject to this system-- as a rule.

But the influence of the stars can be undone by a power greater than their own <sup>1</sup>. That's the import of the expression, "The People of Israel aren't dependent on the (influence of the) constellations" (Shabbat 156a) <sub>2</sub>.

And that's because G-d's decrees and His emanations overrule the influence of the stars <sub>3</sub>. As a consequence, events can be a result of higher forces than the constellations <sub>4</sub>.

Footnotes:

1 See 1:5.5 above about the place of human free will in all of this. Also see Rashi to Genesis 15:5 who addresses Abraham's status in the face of the influence of the stars.

2 See *Tosephot "Ein"* there.

3 The ancients would surely reason that since there was a huge sky over their heads that contains the weather system and has such a great influence over their lives, a vast array of stars and constellations in the heavens that controlled much of that reality on a deeper and greater level, it stands to reason that G-d who dwelt in the endless heavens was above all of that and in charge. They thus came to realize that G-d's say was final in the face of *everything* - including those stars

4 See *Zohar Chadash* 32c which discusses the place of our own actions and spiritual status in all this.