



ASTROLOGY AND JUDAISM

Do we believe in astrology? It turns out that this month's zodiac sign has an important message for the current climate.

It's a well-known fact that many people are interested in astrology. Many reputable newspapers used to feature a dedicated astrology column that highlighted the zodiac sign of the month and advised readers on what actions are recommended or discouraged. Before making major life decisions, many individuals consult with an astrologer to determine if it's the right time or course of action.

What does Judaism think about astrology?

Judaism believes that Jewish people should not make decisions based on astrological predictions because he or she can use prayer and charity to change the future—meaning to alter his or her fortunes for the better.

Despite this, Judaism does not hide from the existence of the celestial signs. On the contrary—since everything is under G-d's Divine Providence, when G-d generated the universe, He configured it to the Torah's model and to the needs of the Jewish People who were destined to accept the Torah.

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Certainly! Here's a continuation with paraphrased content:

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The 12 Zodiac Signs in Judaism

Similarly, God created the 12 zodiac signs, corresponding to the 12 months of the lunar calendar, which is the basis of the Jewish calendar. Unlike the conventional calendar, where zodiac signs span from the middle of one month to the middle of the next, in the Jewish calendar, each month is associated with a specific sign. God aligned the zodiac signs with events and occurrences in Jewish history that are destined to happen in each month.

For example, the sign for the month of Nisan is Aries, the sheep, symbolizing the Passover sacrifice. The Israelites slaughtered a lamb, which was an Egyptian deity, as a symbol of their complete rejection of Egyptian idolatry.

The sign for the month of Tishrei is Libra, the scales, reflecting Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, days of judgment and mercy. During this month, God sits on the throne of judgment, evaluating all humanity with kindness and mercy. As the Talmud says, "All vanities committed by Jews throughout the year which are put on G-d's scale, G-d forgives them by the celestial sign of the scales in the month of Tishrei."

The month of Sivan, represented by Gemini, the twins, symbolizes the two tablets of the covenant that the Israelites received at the time of the giving of the Torah, which occurred during the holiday of Shavuot on the sixth of Sivan. Additionally, Gemini represents Moses and Aaron, who were equally esteemed, through whom the Torah was given to Israel in the month of Sivan.

A Sign of Blessing and Success

Perhaps the most well-known example is the month of Adar, represented by Pisces, the fish, which is a sign of blessing. Fish are hidden from view and not subject to the evil eye, much like the Jewish people, who are protected from harm. Even Haman could not harm the Jewish people during this month. For this reason, the Talmud advises Jews to schedule court cases with non-Jews during Adar (Ta'anit 29b).

As the Midrash recounts, when Haman cast lots and the lot fell on the month of Adar, he rejoiced, thinking that just as fish devour each

other, he would devour the Jews. However, God responded, "Wicked one, sometimes fish are devoured, and sometimes they devour. This time, you will be devoured by the Jews" (from the Midrash on Esther).

Another interesting example is the month of Kislev, whose celestial sign is Sagittarius, the rainbow. Why the rainbow? Because history's first rainbow appeared in Kislev. The Torah (Genesis 9:12) says, "And G-d said: '... My rainbow I have placed in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant...' " Rashi explains that the "sign of the covenant" means that G-d showed Noach the rainbow and said to him, 'Here is the sign I mentioned.' " This encounter occurred to Noach in the month of Kislev since he had exited the Ark on the 28th of Cheshvan, the previous month, and had built an altar, and only in the month of Kislev did G-d bless him.

For Elul, we find the celestial sign of Virgo, the virgin, which reminds us of the acronym for Elul, "ani l'dodi v'dodi li," I am to my beloved and my beloved is to me, which sees the Jewish Nation as a virgin bride returning to G-d, her beloved husband, in this month.

The Jewish People Await the Lion

This brings us to our current month, Av, represented by Leo, the lion. The Temple was destroyed in Av, and it is said that the Temple was shaped like a lion. The Mishnah in Tractate Middot (4:7) describes it as "narrow at the back and wide at the front, like a lion, as it is written, 'Ah, Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped,' just as a lion is narrow at the back and wide at the front, so was the Temple."

Additionally, the Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni on Jeremiah 259) states: "A lion (Nebuchadnezzar) came under the constellation of the lion (in the month of Av) and destroyed Ariel (the Temple) so that a lion (God) will come and rebuild Ariel."

The Midrash further explains that not only is the Temple referred to as a lion, but so is Nebuchadnezzar, who destroyed it, and God, who will rebuild it. The fact that all are called by the same name teaches us that they all contribute to the same ultimate goal. Even though Nebuchadnezzar intended to harm and destroy the Temple, his actions inadvertently prepared the way for the building of the Third Temple, which will be eternal. Unknowingly, he became part of the process of redemption (see Likutei Sichot, vol. 29, p. 7 and onwards).

In these times, when we are all aware of the events unfolding in Israel, it is important to remember that everything comes from God. Ultimately, all that is happening is part of the redemption process and

the preparation for the arrival of the Lion, who will build Ariel, the eternal Third Temple, with the coming of our righteous Moshiach.