

Design Your Destiny with Astrology and Kabbalah



COSMIC NAVIGATOR

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Preface: How I Became a Cosmic Navigator

It was for this purpose that the stars and their planets were created. Through their cycles, all phenomena rooted in the spiritual realm are transmitted and reflected to their physical counterparts.

—RABBI CHAYIM MOSHE LUZZATTO, *THE WAY OF GOD*

I was twenty-three when I returned from a journey to India and the Far East. It was time, I thought, to settle down and choose a career path. Reared in an ultra-academic family in Haifa, Israel, I felt pressure to further my education. But what should I study? I could not avoid answering the question, “Who am I?”

I remember the day I finally made my decision. I took a swim in the Mediterranean Sea and stopped by my parents’ house on my way home. I looked at the sign on the building where I had lived most of my life. It read “Freud Street 26.” I said to myself, “Could it be so obvious?” The next day, I enrolled in the psychology department at Haifa University. Years later, as I deepened my studies in Kabbalah and numerology, I discovered that twenty-six represents the numerological value of the unpronounceable name of God, associated with the archetypal energy called Wisdom. I realized then that the sign on my parents’ house had not only directed me to learn about Freud, but it had also launched me on a path to explore the wisdom of Kabbalah.

I completed my B.A. and planned to pursue my master’s and Ph.D. in clinical psychology. However, in Israel, there are more individuals who yearn to heal than people who require healing. Most years, the university accepts only one in every four hundred or so applicants. The crucial requirement is a recommendation from a senior professor. I thought I had that sewn up. I had excelled in my studies. My grades were first rate. And I believed that the head of my program believed in me as well. I had been one of eight students specially selected by that professor to participate in an exclusive psychoanalysis workshop. I was certain that my stellar performance in his class had insured his endorsement and a spot in graduate school.

I was wrong.

When I asked for the letter, the professor refused. He told me that my outlook on life and healing deviated markedly from those of mainstream psychologists. Since I had shared my interest in symbolism, synchronicity, and mysticism during the course of his workshop, he argued that my overactive imagination, in conjunction with my bizarre theories about life, death, and spirituality, would constitute “a threat to the system.”

“You have too much creativity to be a good clinical psychologist,” he told me in what I perceived to be a patronizing voice.

I was devastated. I was shocked and humiliated. Most of all, I was furious. Being an Aries, the warrior sign, blood rushed to my head. I saw him suddenly as my archenemy. My sudden feelings of anger signaled nothing less than a mental declaration of war. And if you had stopped me there and then, I would have told you that this denunciation was the worst thing that I had ever endured.

But then something else happened, as it always does. The universe is more creative than we are. My best friend called and asked me to join him on a surfing trip to Mexico. I was still mourning my recently deceased career, and my initial reaction was, “Are you out of your mind? Can’t you see how miserable I am?” But then I thought about it for a second. *Gahl*, my name in Hebrew, means “wave.” I figured that the only way to truly understand waves, and therefore myself, was to learn how to surf. In hindsight, I recognize that I simply followed the course that was inscribed for me when I was born. I did not know it then, but my astrological rising sign is Pisces—the fish. The rising sign is the symbol that shows us our path, our road to self-awareness. I was not summoned to the waters of Mexico by my friend, but by my astrological constitution and my name. My friend—and indeed my nemesis, the professor—were just the messengers.



Becoming a cosmic navigator means accepting the notion that everything that happens in life—good or bad, harmonious or challenging—is designed by the Creator to help us to grow and reach our authentic destiny. Your worst enemy might be your soul mate in disguise; an aversive situation might be your breakthrough. Accepting what life offers allows you to receive Light. This book was written as a wake-up call, summoning you to surf the waves of life, beckoning you to embark on the journey you were always meant to take.



I traveled west to follow the message of my name. And I found myself in Mexico, chasing Gahl, chasing waves, and learning the art of flowing with life. The mantra I picked up from my surfer friends was, “No fear.” It has served me just as well outside the waters as it did in the swelling sea.

After a month, my friend had to return to Israel via Guadalajara’s international airport. Since I had a few more months to burn before I could reapply to the university, I decided to accompany him to Guadalajara for a couple of days and from there make plans to visit South America.

On my fifth day in Guadalajara, a muscular young man approached me as I wandered the streets looking for something to do on my last day in the city. He offered to show me the “real Mexico.” My first instinct told me to politely refuse. I had all my money, my passport, and my expensive camera with me. Surely he was out to take it all, and perhaps he planned to take my organs for black-market transport while he was at it as well.

But a deeper voice inside me told me to surrender. No fear. Surf the waves. So I thrust my hand inside my pocket to protect my wallet and climbed on a bus with him.

We traveled for more than an hour to a rather impoverished—some would say sketchy—part of the city. We ended up working out at his gym and then meeting up with his tequila-drinking buddies, who sang boisterously about the Mexican revolution. On the way back, we heard live music blasting from a little house. We wandered inside and found two guys playing their instruments. I saw a wired-up microphone standing unused beside the musicians. I had always dreamed of being a rock singer. On an impulse, I grabbed the mike, and I sang and screamed until my throat ached from the strain. After hours of rocking improvisation, I went back to my hotel. It had been one of the most fantastic days of my life. And I still had my wallet.

The next morning, as I was packing to leave Mexico for good, the two musicians, accompanied by a team of three translators—each of them apparently understood a different third of the English language—showed up at my hotel and asked me to join their band. The previous day, they had set up the mic to hold auditions for a lead singer. And I had been the only one who’d showed up. I told them, thanks, but I was leaving that afternoon for Guatemala. They asked me, why?

“To learn Spanish,” I said.

The five men looked bemusedly at each other.

“Well, we can teach you Spanish,” one of them said.

Within three weeks, the band and I were performing in clubs all over Guadalajara. I also found myself adopted by a family that provided me with free lodging, meals, transportation, and love. I was humbled by the generosity and open heartedness of the people. It seemed everywhere I went, I bumped into another lucky synchronicity.

One day as I was taking a run in the park, I saw a group of people dressed all in white. They sat on the ground and chanted some words in a strange language. I inched closer, and I witnessed for the first time in this incarnation yogis practicing yoga. Without waiting for an invitation, I joined them. And from that day forward, I eagerly went to yoga class nearly every day.

After about a month, the yoga teacher asked me to join him on a visit to one of his students who had been laid up ill at home. While we sat with the ailing man, I offered to try out on him some Tibetan energetic healing that I had learned a few years back. It seemed to invigorate the man, and his grateful wife insisted on giving me a gift.

She ushered me into another room, and she asked me three questions that since that day I have never stopped asking anyone who comes to me for help. I call it the Trinity: What is your date of birth? Where were you born? And at what time? I gave her the information, and for the first time in my life I witnessed the casting of an astrological chart. She was new to interpreting charts. She constantly turned to her books and read from them. But her comments were stunningly accurate. By that point in my life I had gone to see five different psychologists, who, after innumerable sessions, could not understand me as well as this novice astrologer.

I closed my eyes and whispered to my higher self: “If I am supposed to study this art that feels so familiar, please show me the way.”

Less than two weeks later, the guitar player in my band dragged me to some mysterious meeting. I was suspicious. “What do they do? Why do they meet?” He dismissed my queries and said, “There are great looking girls in the group.” I stopped talking and followed. I walked into the meeting and sat in the back, close to the door to insure an easy escape. The teacher talked in Spanish, which, at that time, I did not understand, but every once in a while he slipped in a Hebrew word. And then to my amazement, thousands of miles away from Israel, surrounded by Mexicans, the teacher began to write Hebrew letters—my native alphabet—on the blackboard. I had

stumbled upon a group that studied Kabbalah and astrology. The guitarist somehow figured I would like it. He was another messenger.

I joined the esoteric school *Circulo Dorado* and studied with them for two years. I suppose that program in Guadalajara served as a substitute for my master's in psychology back in Haifa.

Did I plan to dive into Kabbalah, astrology, and yoga? No. Did I think it was my destiny? No. I just followed the direction of my name as well as the other signs and synchronicities I encountered along the way. Now, looking back, I consider my old professor who refused me access to the academy to be the most influential person in my life. He is perhaps the most important Kabbalist or mystic that I have ever met, even if he would reject both of these titles. He was not the enemy I thought he was that day years before, when I left his office without a letter of recommendation, without my hopes for any sort of worthwhile future. He was my savior, my guide, and my healer.

PART I

**THE PRINCIPLES OF
KABBALISTIC ASTROLOGY**

The Myth of God's Children (or How the Twelve Signs Got Their Groove On)

Astrology and Kabbalah can be fully understood when we shift our mind from its usual preoccupation with cause and effect, beginning and end, to the more authentic truth of cycles that continue round and round to eternity. The following myth of God's children demonstrates the cyclical and eternal essence of astrology. There is no beginning and no end to any true system of symbolism. We might pinpoint Aries as the first sign and therefore the beginning, but as the story suggests, you can just as accurately finger Pisces (the last sign) as the energy that birthed the zodiac. The *Sefer Yetzirah* asserts, "Their end is embedded in the beginning and their beginning in the end."

Go back in time, some five billion years. Imagine the earth as a great hall, a chamber of multiple treasures, both physical and spiritual. Outside of it is an astral lobby—a waiting room for angels, if you will. Separating the two is a door, but not just any door—it is a portal of raging fire, a vortex of swirling flames.

God invited his twelve angelic children . . . into the waiting room and said, "This is the earth, a glorious garden that I'd like you to protect and serve. As a token of my appreciation for your dedication to this task, each one of you, one after the other, may take from the chamber of gifts whatever you can carry. Then you must ascend to the skies and fortify yourself as a constellation that will help to guide all sentient beings who navigate in darkness."

The magnificent dozen looked at each other, anxious to plunge into the chamber and retrieve their loot. But they were all paralyzed by the fear of the unfamiliar, and afraid, too, of the portal of fire that stood between them and the treasure-laden chamber called earth. Well, to be precise, eleven of the twelve were afraid.

Before the debate over who should go first even began, Aries jumped through the vortex with a wild warrior's cry. The others rushed to the window to witness the result. They anxiously watched the agile, lean, and athletic body of their crazy brother hurtle into the unknown. He survived, thank the Lord. Somehow he landed on his feet, and the fire of the portal did not destroy him. After all, Aries is a fire sign; how could fire destroy fire? How could a flame burn itself? He was the first, the initiator, the pioneer, and he liberated all the others from the bondage of their fear. He cleared the path and secured the room.

Brother Aries, who sometimes is called the ram, tends to be the sacrificial lamb, continually undertaking unspeakably bold feats. From that day on, Aries ruled as the first. He was granted the privilege of being the initiator of the astrological year. (According to the Bible, Aries is the first month of the year.) He marks the beginning of spring, and with spring comes the emergence of life. In the chamber of treasures, Aries naturally decided to take the ability to be first at everything. And in order to do that, he could not carry too much stuff. If you want to be number one, you need to run fast; you cannot allow bulky possessions to weigh you down. Cleverly, brother Aries picked up a seed from the ground. What could he do with a seed? Well, within the seed lies the DNA, and the DNA can be cloned into anything new.

Do you think our Aries brother knew where he was going when he jumped through the vortex? No. Do you think he was brave? Maybe, but often the Aries seems far more stupid than brave. And that explains why the Aries often appears with so many scars on his face.

Back in the lobby, a great commotion ensued. Now that the trail had been blazed, who would be second to descend to earth? With an enormous grunt, Taurus bullied herself right through the gate, pushing and shoving everyone in her path. Sister Taurus is a very practical woman. She is the empress. The minute she landed in the room, she looked around and smiled. "Fool of an Aries, he left everything valuable untouched," she thought to herself. Since Taurus is a beast of burden, she could carry quite a lot on her back. She started loading it all up. She took the trunk overflowing

with money and jewelry, and since that day Taurus has ruled finance and precious stones. She adores beautiful things, especially if they are expensive. She collected every piece of art. She grabbed everything with material value, and that is why Taurus rules art, values, talents, and money. But the teaching of Taurus is not limited to material goods. Taurus also teaches that self-worth or how much you esteem your own valuable talents will determine how much money you make. The Taurus equation: self-worth equals bank-account worth.

After Taurus departed the chamber of treasures, Brother Gemini appeared out of thin air. What was he doing here? How did he manage to outflank the more ferocious and powerful signs and sneak in before them? Well, the answer, like always, lies embedded in the question. Gemini is the trickster, the magician. He schmoozed his way from the rear with his glib tongue. You see it today wherever you encounter a prestigious “in” nightclub. You’ll see a doorman, a rope, and a line of beautiful women and men clamoring to get inside. Then, from out of a small but fast car, emerges Brother Gemini. He slaps a “press” sign on his chest and cuts right through the line. Why? Was he more famous than the people in the line? More beautiful or wealthy? No. Gemini is the messenger, and as such he gets everything for free: free movies, free gift bags, free everything. Just write up the product in a magazine, and it’s all yours.

Gemini collected everything necessary for communication, intelligence, and business. He grabbed the phones, the faxes, the computers, the mail system, cables, cars, and all means of transportation, books, billboards, radio, TV, advertising, and all sources of information. His logic was simple. He watched Taurus leave the room with all that art and merchandise. Obviously she was going to need someone to sell it for her, and he planned to be the one to do that. He would take his commission, his finder’s fee, 10 percent here or 15 percent there, and without having to warehouse or carry all that junk, he would wind up making more money than she. Gemini seized the concept of language, commerce, trade, the stock market, and numbers. For the first time, the beauty of the zodiac took shape: first we had Aries the man, then Taurus the woman, and now Gemini the messenger connecting the two. The Tarot card representing Gemini is called the Lovers. He is the connector, and here he connects the first masculine sign with the first feminine sign.

Gemini also scooped up the concept of lies and theft. I know it sounds harsh. But hey, I did not make Mercury—Gemini’s ruler—the god of liars and thieves.

Anyone who writes, including me, is a liar and a thief. Writers translate their thoughts into words, and seldom are their thoughts complete and unbiased. Lao-Tzu, the founder of Taoism, once said that the truth cannot be spoken, and whoever even opens his mouth to speak of the truth has already lied. Traders, merchants, and businesspeople do the same. They sell you a banana for one dollar when it cost them only ten cents. Where did the extra ninety cents come from? Brother Gemini coined the term *profit*, which is actually a clever way to disguise a little theft. Gemini had no choice, because language, his prime booty from the chamber of treasures, is innately a kind of lie. But it's a necessary falsehood. After all, I am using that cosmic lie right now to convey this information about lies to you.

Suddenly, water flooded the chamber, and her highness the Queen of the Ocean, Sister Cancer, surged inside. Many astrologers and mystics call her Mother Cancer. She represents water, and she dripped her way through the cracks of the lobby in the astral world. She dripped and poured in so effectively that her waters covered 71 percent of the earth. She bathed the chamber and took what intrinsically belonged to her: birth, motherhood, compassion, and nourishment—all the qualities and concepts that esoteric lore assigns to the element of water. Mother Cancer also claimed the chamber itself—the actual real estate—and Cancer became the sign of home and family. The home represents the shell of the family, your family the shell of your personality, and your personality the shell of your soul. Cancer is symbolized by the crab, which carries its home—the place of sustenance, protection, and tender-loving care—wherever it goes.

Cancer represents the ultimate mother, but this archetype is not restricted to women with active wombs, nor is it limited to women in general. Anyone who adopts a child, who gives birth to a business, an idea, even a poem, is a mother too. For example, when you create a business, you invest unconditional love, energy, and dedication alongside your money. You see nothing in return for months, maybe years, and yet you stay up all night working, nourishing the enterprise as if it were an infant. Cancer gave birth to the concept of giving birth. And from that day on, the motherly energies of Cancer have supported us in our times of doubt and tribulation, watering us with feeling and compassion. Cancer also carried off the concept of the subconscious. She took reign over lost memories hidden by the waves of time. And, in her infinite compassion, she also took old age, so that in the best of all worlds, human beings would enjoy care and nurturing in infancy and years later in their dotage too.

Just as the sun appeared after the great flood in the time of Noah, the chamber of treasures next was infused with golden light. The sound of trumpets echoed in the hall and with a roar, finally, at last, the lion arrived. What an entrance! But with all due respect to Leo—or the king, as he prefers to be called—the question remains unasked (for fear of reprisal): why did he wait so long? By now, the chamber had been emptied of most tangible treasures. Why did he delay when he commanded enough authority and strength to demand to be first?

The answer was simple. At a regal feast, when the king sits at the head of the table and the food is served, who eats first? Nope, not the king. If he's a smart king, he will demand that someone else taste the food before him, just in case. The king allowed Aries, who is a fire sign, to taste from the fiery spirits that were offered on the table. Then Taurus, the earth sign, was asked to taste the food. Leo then required Gemini, an air sign, to breathe in the air (one can never be too cautious when dealing with poisonous gasses, not to mention chemical warfare), and finally he directed Cancer, the water sign, to sample the beverages. Only when the king saw that they all survived did he then start to eat.

The party had begun. Leo is the sign of happiness and fun. With little left in the chamber, Leo usurped the concept of creativity for himself. He roared in contagious laughter and enthusiasm: "If there are no gifts left in the chamber, well, let's create them, let's pretend!" So Brother Leo started playing around like a child. "Let's pretend I am a king and that I have a scepter and a crown and a cape, and you will be my subject, and when you talk to me you will say, 'Your Highness,' OK?" And indeed, from that day forward, Leo ruled children, playfulness, and entertainment. Leos love to occupy the center of attention, and since they are so entertaining, we all just play along and let them have their fun. This explains why movie stars and royal families fill the tabloids. Everyone wants to know what is happening with the prince and his lover or if one certain celebrity will divorce another. Leo took drama from the chamber along with control over stages, movie sets, and all creative endeavors.

Leo also snatched perhaps the most dramatic concept of all: love. And for that bit of ingenuity we all ought to doff our hats. Leo grabbed not only the love one feels toward a romantic partner, but also what the Sufis call love to "the Beloved," or love toward God. Leo chose to rule over romance and spirituality. Since love is childlike, innocent, and suffused with happiness, these qualities—think of the innocent mirthful

monk—embody the spirit of true spirituality, the spirit bound up in the dramatic and playful crown of Leo.

After the glamorous fanfare of Leo, holy Sister Virgo arrived in the chamber, engendering a certain anticlimax in the cycle of the zodiac. Unable to out-party the Leo, Virgo looked around and found her purpose. She grabbed a broom and humbly began to clean the chamber, picking up the beer bottles, the plastic plates, cigarette butts, and everything else left over from the farewell party to the king. Without any resentment or hard feelings, she did what she does best: cleaned up the mess. Holding a burning bundle of sage (Virgo is the lady of herbs), she purified the chamber while chanting an old secret spell to ward off negativity. She became the Queen of the Angels, the nanny of the zodiac, the Mary Poppins of order, work, and service. After all, someone actually has to do the king's bidding. Virgo offered herself as the one to follow Leo's will, like a faithful babysitter who reads for the tenth time the same bedtime story to a stubborn little boy. Virgo emerged from the chamber of treasures with the concepts of service, work, diet, purification, and order. She became the energy accountant of the astrological wheel. One of the more famous members of her clan is the greatest queen Europe has ever known—England's Queen Elizabeth I, "the Virgin Queen." While Leo rules partying and getting high, Virgo cleanses the body. She represents the hangover and the rehabilitation center. Without Virgo, life just might destroy itself with excess.

With the chamber of treasures now spotless, shining, and purified, Sir Libra, the most handsome knightly brother appeared. The chamber was empty, vacant of treasures, but Libra did not mind, for he is the sign of design and symmetry. And it is easier to design a space when you have a space to design. In Zen, they tell us that design can be viewed as the relationship between object and space. In Zen art, as well as in Japanese gardens, space is part of the design. Libra, being an air sign, relates easily to space and its significance. In Western art, if you want to paint a tree, you usually place that tree smack in the middle of the composition, but in the East, the tree would be positioned on the side, leaving the other side empty. This way, the painting is not only about the tree, but also about the tree's relationship to space. Libra, therefore, became the sign that rules relationships and partnerships.

Relationships also give birth to another concept that Libra took from the chamber: justice. Justice represents the relationship between action and reaction—crime

and punishment, for example, or, as the old laws of Hammurabi state, “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.” These ancient tablets (circa 1850 B.C.E.) created the lucrative Libran profession we call lawyers. Let’s face it—Libra, an air sign, knows how to make money out of thin air.

Then there was silence, the quiet before the storm or, better still, before the hurricane. Sister Scorpio appeared, veiled by a mist that filled the entire hall. The second that she landed in the chamber of treasures, it was changed. With little to choose from, Scorpio stashed away the concept of transformation, including the ultimate transformation, death. While Cancer, another water sign, brought us life and birth, Scorpio, the second water sign, introduced death. Water can quench, but it also can drown.

Scorpio also grabbed other forms of transformation, including sexuality. Sex, of course, often leads to conception, which enables souls to reincarnate back into life. In other words, the death of death is life. With sexuality came intimacy and secrets (behind closed doors). How do you know if someone is a Scorpio? You just ask, what’s your sign? If she doesn’t want to answer, then she is surely a secretive Scorpio, closely guarding her identity, just like an undercover spy. And with secrets came a whole chain reaction of associations, including healing, crime, research, paranoia, private investigations, inheritance (after death), other people’s money, and joint financial affairs.

After the mists of Scorpio dispersed, a gorgeous creature arrived in the chamber. The centaur—half-horse, half-man; half-god, half-human—stood in the center of the room, radiating Light and force. Why did Sagittarius wait so long to descend to earth? With his power, speed, and athleticism, he easily could have fought his way through earlier and grabbed what was rightfully his. But Sagittarius is a natural-born traveler, always fascinated with foreign traditions and foreign planets. He also probably suffered a spasm of attention deficit disorder (ADD), which compelled him to gallop off to some other galaxy and some other task before he remembered the chamber and decided to return. When he finally arrived, relaxed, and peered around the chamber to choose a treasure, he found one invisible concept that no other sign had bothered to notice. It was the most valuable gift in the hall. What was it?

Love? No, Leo took that.

Money? Taurus had it all.

What about Life? Already Cancer’s.

Sagittarius claimed truth. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. (Lies already belonged to Sagittarius's opposite sign, Gemini.)

It took nine signs before anyone bothered to claim reign over truth. Isn't that something? Truth is a short but weighty word that includes many other concepts, such as wisdom, philosophy (the love of wisdom), teaching, religion, and higher education—all of which fell under the sway of Sagittarius. Sagittarius recognized that his love of travel and experiencing different cultures was the only way to truly know truth.

With so much adventure and unknown in his future, Sagittarius also needed to fortify himself with a few other trinkets from the chamber of treasures. And so he scooped up luck and optimism. Let's face it—when surrounded by Scorpio on one side and Capricorn on the other, you need to be optimistic. And, if we view the astrological ring as property, then you might say that Sagittarius is located in the worst real estate of the zodiac. Sagittarius marks the time in the year when the days get shorter and shorter and the nights are the longest. The message is clear: if Sagittarius rules over the darkest time of the year and also rules truth, then we find our truth in the darkest, most difficult moments of our life. Out of the Dark comes Light. Truth represents the light at the end of the tunnel.

Capricorn finally entered next. A cautious sister, she walked slowly and deliberately, and it took her a while to traverse the portal to the chamber of treasures. At this point, the building was completely empty. But Capricorn was persistent, diligent, and ingenious. She took the walls, foundations, and the structure of the chamber. Capricorn knew she could use the material to build something else.

Then she looked down and realized that no one had claimed what lurked underneath. The underworld (in the Tarot, Capricorn is represented by the Devil) lay undisturbed. Using a shovel, she started digging a hole in the ground. Slowly, grain by grain, the little hole became a crater. Because the digging lasted for centuries, she unwittingly exercised a great deal of patience, discipline, and endurance, and so she adopted these qualities too.

What did she unearth? All the riches of the earth. Gold, minerals, uranium, petroleum, diamonds—you name it—she extracted it all. It was a heavy load, and all that serious weight explains why Capricorn moves so slowly. But she has time. She is a late bloomer, and she knows that the older she grows, the better life will be. Capricorn accepted and incorporated the concept of time—the time that measures

our achievements (or failures), the time that makes us old, the time that provides structure to our lives.

Then Aquarius appeared, landing from out of nowhere in a supersonic spacecraft, emerging like the rugged renegade character Han Solo from *Star Wars*. After Capricorn departed, there was nothing left of the once magnificent vault—no floor, no walls, no ceiling, nothing. But Aquarius was smart. It was the sign of the genius, and Brother Aquarius had a genius moment. He took the future. Capricorn took the past, the millions of years that had transformed coal into diamonds and dinosaur remains into petroleum, and Aquarius countered by grabbing the future.

Does all this sound strange? Well, Aquarius is, after all, the sign that took dominion over things weird, strange, and unique. After all, he is the mad professor whose mind works at the threshold between genius and craziness, who can always invent a new gadget because he is not afraid to think outside the box.

How does one take the future? Brother Aquarius invented the concept of copyrights and patents. Aquarius solemnly declared that any invention from this day forth would be registered under his name. It's called the trademark. By now you've seen his signature TM everywhere, but at that time, it was a novel idea to assume ownership over an idea, an invention. Every future computer, the G6s, G7s, the flying car, and so forth will be registered under Aquarius Corp. Ltd. You predict that in the future nanotechnology will create miniature supercomputers? Aquarius would reply simply, "Thank you very much, it's ours." If advances in technology permit humanity to occupy new planets, all these planets will be subject to the trademark of Aquarius. All future chambers of treasures would necessitate a visit by Aquarius before anyone else.

Thank God that Aquarius is also the most altruistic and democratic sign, which means that he generally will share ownership and use of all the new inventions. Aquarius's futuristic and sweet attitude also allowed him to adopt the concepts of humanitarian work, fraternity, cooperation, altruism, and friends. Brother Aquarius expressed no hard feelings toward the rest of the signs for leaving him nothing, because he could always make something out of nothing.

Last and never least arrived Sister Pisces, sometimes known as the mermaid. She showed up last because she loved to imagine, and she had a million imaginary friends who kept her tied up in their imaginary affairs. They took her to other dimensions and transported her to visit the land of elves and pixies. Finally, when the silence of the

empty chamber of treasures snapped her out of her delicious daydream, she glided into the empty place where the room once stood. She smiled and breathed in. She sat down in the center of nothingness. She did not feel as if she had been cheated out of her inheritance or her treasures. She herself was the treasure. She understood that the chamber was an illusion, and that all the treasures her siblings had grabbed were illusory as well. “Form is emptiness” she chanted silently, “Emptiness is form.” Sister Pisces did what only she could. She extracted from the empty space the ability to dream, sleep, and meditate. One does not need any *thing* for that; one can do it everywhere and at any time.

She sat cross-legged and meditated. She used her powers of imagination to reconstruct around her a magical chamber of treasures filled with artwork, computers, and seeds. A chamber of treasures stuffed with love and safety, truth, and life and death. A chamber situated upon a rich deposit of natural resources, filled with gadgets and futuristic inventions.

Then she imagined that out of a vortex of fire appeared her beloved brother Aries, who with such serious urgency had snatched a seed from the chamber. Then she imagined her beautiful sister Taurus gracefully amassing the jewelry that she imagined to be locked in a safe hidden deep in the wall. Pisces envisioned the rest of her siblings appearing one by one, all believing that the chamber and its treasures were really there. She even imagined herself entering the chamber, and then she imagined herself imagining the chamber and all her siblings entering one by one.

When she grew tired of imagining, she simply went to sleep and continued the construction of the chamber of treasures in her vivid dreams. Pisces loves to sleep because in her dreams she encounters so much. Like Alice who dreamt of her Wonderland, Pisces dreams up the zodiac, the planets, the treasures, and the rest of us. Next time you feel aggravated because some Pisces overslept, don't be so quick to judge or patronize him for being lazy. He might be dreaming you into existence. If this sounds far-fetched, let me remind you about another sleepyhead called Lord Vishnu, the magnificent god who, according to the Hindu tradition, sleeps on a lotus that floats upon a sea. (Pisces is the sign of sleep and the sea. The sea is the Indian version of a waterbed!) He is not an idle or lazy god, for in his sleep, the Hindus say, he dreams of us. Our joys and love are his blissful dreams; our challenges and suffering are his nightmares.

The Historic Fusion of Astrology and Kabbalah

ASTROLOGY AS THE COSMIC CLOCK

Astrology was born not as a form of entertainment or as a scheme for fortune telling, but as a vital tool for survival. With the advent of agriculture, humans adapted their planting and harvesting routines to the dictates of the seasons. The measuring of time—the fluctuations in darkness and daylight, the arrivals of the winter and summer solstices, the great rivers' tides and flooding—became essential to a successful harvest. There is evidence that suggest that over 4,500 years ago the Egyptians kept a detailed calendar to help them predict the rise of the Nile. Guided by the sun and the moon, these early farmers also noticed the other planets moving about the fixed constellations of stars. Attuning their lives to the repetitive rhythm of the seasons and the orbits of the planets simplified and insured their survival.

This dependable, clocklike rhythm of the skies became so critical to human life that humans began to view the planets, moons, and stars as gods. The people of Mesopotamia, circa 2000 B.C.E., for example, worshiped gods called Sin (the moon), Shamash (the sun), Ishtar (Venus), Nergal (Mars), Marduk (Jupiter), and Ninurta (Saturn). The earliest written evidence of astrology to be unearthed so far comes from the Babylonian Tablet of Amisaduqa, written around 1646 B.C.E:

In month XI, 15th day, Venus disappeared in the west. Three days it stayed away, then on the 18th day it became visible in the east. Springs will open and Adad (god of weather and abundance) will bring his rain and Ea (the Babylonian water deity) his floods. Messages of reconciliation will be sent from King to King.

The early astrologers of Babylon and elsewhere were the first to apply the old alchemical formula of “as above so below.” They took note of the correlation between events in the heavens and those on the earth. For example, let’s imagine a day when the king was angry, ranting and raving at his advisors and his servants. On that same day, multiple fights erupted between merchants in the market, and several people were murdered. The king’s star gazer might have observed all these events and then noticed that Mars, the fiery red planet, was on that day in the sign of Aries, the constellation associated today with aggression and war. This early astrologer probably would note this correlation in his diary and then await the next time that Mars orbited into Aries to see if a similar sort of strife appeared then too.

When the heavenly movements repeatedly corresponded with the reality on the ground, the associations crystallized. Astrology then unfurled her wings and traveled from Babylonia to Greece and Rome. It was picked up by the Indian scholars and then transported to China. It was assimilated into Judaism through Kabbalah and embraced by Christians and Muslims as well. As it spread over the centuries, it was tweaked into a coherent body of knowledge. Slowly, star-and-human-gazers clothed and reclothed the signs and planets in the names, tendencies, and colors that we use today.

The Kaaba in Mecca, the holiest shrine in the Muslim faith, functioned as a religious center long before the days of Muhammad. Back then, the cubical structure was said to have housed 365 pagan idols, corresponding to the number of days in the astrological year. In addition, anthropological evidence suggests that the tawaf, the ritualistic seven circumambulations of the Kaaba practiced by Muslim pilgrims to this day, was devised to mimic the orbits of the heavenly bodies around the sun.

Notches carved on animal bones that date back to 15,000 B.C.E. reveal evidence of human attention to the lunar phases. The ancient wise men and women who

carved the notches thought it necessary to trace the changes in the shape of the moon, which means these people could very well be the first lunar astrologers.

Evolutionary Astrologers?

Humans are not the only inhabitants of the planet to recognize a correlation between the above and the below, between the stars and life on earth. Every dawn, the faithful olive baboons in Sudan gather to await the rising of the sun. They salute the appearance of the solar disk with shrieks and screams, almost as if they believe that their cacophonous rejoicing insures that the sun will return every morning. Just as boisterous applause for an actor on a stage might encourage that performer to do it all again, the baboons reinforce the Sun with their loyal adoration.

The ancient Egyptians, who inhabited lands adjacent to the home of these baboons, surely noticed this unique worship of the sun because they portrayed Thoth, one of their oldest gods, as a baboon that held the solar disk in his hand. In the Egyptian pantheon, Thoth served as the god of writing, knowledge, magic, and astrology. As you can see, much of who and what we are derives from our evolution from primates . . .

STARS AND SPHERES

The author of *Sefer Yetzirah*—tradition suggests it was Abraham, the first monotheist of the Old Testament—provides precise associations between the zodiac signs and the Hebrew letters, yoking astrology to the sacred letters of the Torah. This manuscript details how God deployed the archetypal energies of the ten-sphered Kabbalistic Tree of Life and the twenty-two Hebrew letters to create the universe (see chapter 5).

The Midrash, a collection of Jewish myths and legends, tells us that King Solomon wore a magical ring engraved with Hebrew letters that afforded him the power to speak with animals. Since the word *zodiac* in Greek means “the wheel of animals,” one can say that King Solomon’s capacity to converse with animals referred to his ability to speak the language of the signs—to converse with rams (Aries), bulls (Taurus), lions (Leo), scorpions (Scorpio), horses (Sagittarius), goats (Capricorn),

dolphins (Pisces), and so forth. Maybe King Solomon really did communicate with animals, but perhaps the fable is simply a metaphoric testament to the wise king's remarkable ability to speak to, persuade, befriend, and make peace with every single person, no matter his or her sign. King Solomon was also famed as being the wisest men ever born, and I believe his wisdom derived from mastering the art of astrology and Kabbalah. His ring and his ability to master animal speech might hint at his astrological aptitude.

King Solomon's father, King David, according to tradition the author of the Old Testament book of Psalms and whose name is mentioned more than that of any other person in the Bible, embodies another example of the relationship between Kabbalah and astrology: the Star of David, a six-pointed star comprised of two interlocking triangles, one facing upwards and the other pointing down. In Hebrew, the Star of David is called *Magen David*, or the shield of David. While most people assume that David carved this symbol into his battle shield just as the Indianapolis Colts paint a horseshoe onto their football helmets, Jewish mystics ascribe a deeper import to the six-pointed logo. These mystics tell us that at the moment of King David's birth, six planets were aligned in a rare astrological formation that created a perfect six-pointed star within his astrological chart. This auspicious alignment—which I have witnessed just once in all of the thousands of charts I have ever read—astrologically reflected the protection King David enjoyed throughout his long, productive life. Hence “the [planetary] shield of David.” Today, this ancient link between the two disciplines is proudly displayed on the flag of the modern state of Israel.

The *Zohar*, or the *Book of Splendor*, another crucial work of Kabbalistic lore (written in thirteenth-century Spain), adds further details to the intricate relationship between the Hebrew letters and the astrological symbols. This book classifies the Hebrew letters as the DNA of the universe, the building blocks of existence. It asserts that the Creator first fashioned the twenty-two letters and then with them manufactured all of life. Kabbalah teaches us that just as God used the archetypal letters to create the cosmos, any of us can create whatever we need in our own universe.

The book of Genesis depicts an enchanting example of the power of this hybrid system. Abraham, the so-called patriarch of Jews, Christians, and Muslims, was not always called Abraham. His given name was Abram. His wife's name was Sarai. And

no matter how often they tried, they could not have children. One day, God felt sorry for Abram and urged him to “walk the talk.”

God said, “You wrote a book on the Hebrew letters and their connection to the astrological signs. Maybe it’s time to put the Hebrew letters to work for you.” Abram was skeptical. Though God had kept promising that he would father many nations, he had passed his 100th birthday, and still he and Sarai had no children. But he decided to give the letters a whirl. He sank into a deep meditation, summoning all the Hebrew letters one by one. When he arrived at the letter ‘Hey’ ה, he stopped and said to himself, “Hey, wait a minute. This is the letter of Aries, the sign that rules the sowing of seeds and the season of spring. Aries is the thing I need to up my dwindling sperm count. I will add the letter *Hey* to my name and my wife’s name too (after all, she’s ninety years old), and the power of Aries will bring some spring to our seeds.”

He inserted the *Hey* (H). *Abram* became *AbraHam*, and *Sarai* turned into *SaraH*. A few months later, Sarah began to crave pickles and ice cream. The conception of Isaac, the son of Abraham and Sarah, seems to be the first reference to an individual invoking the tools of Kabbalistic astrology to change his fate. And it marks the *Sefer Yetzirah* as the first self-help book ever published on planet earth.

In part III of this book, you will find the particular Hebrew letters that will connect you to the archetypal power of each of the zodiac’s twelve signs. By using these potent symbols as keys to accessing the energy of skies, you too will be able to manifest your dreams and transcend the confines of your astrological fate. This magic will transform you into a mystic, a creator. And rather than leaving yourself to be buffeted by the fatalistic luck of the astrological lotto, you, like Abraham, can become the master of your own destiny.

GIVING AND RECEIVING LIGHT

Kabbalah in Hebrew means both “to receive” and “to accept.” These mystical Judaic teachings avow that life is a dance between giving and receiving. They show us how to accept light, love, or any other form of energy. And, most importantly, they instruct us on how to share this energy with others. Kabbalah challenges us to create a balance in our lives—to receive as much as we give, to give as much as we receive. For example, someone who invites a hundred people to his birthday party, relishes

all of the gifts he amasses, but then mysteriously leaves town whenever his friends' birthdays roll around, is not a good Kabbalist. On the other hand, a saintly woman who continually offers her tender loving care to others but denies them the chance to help her lives in a similar state of disequilibrium.

Kabbalah views life as circular, nonlinear, and everlasting. When a person receives a gift and enthusiastically appreciates it, for example, he offers the giver an even greater gift. This gratitude generates a feeling of satisfaction in the giver that might very well exceed the value of the original present. Put more simply, Kabbalah is the spiritual art of receiving in order to give.

THE YIN AND YANG OF KABBALAH AND ASTROLOGY

Astrology similarly teaches us how to receive—specifically, how to receive the light and the energy of the sun, the moon, and the planets in order to share them with the entire universe. The moon and the planets signify diverse and sometimes contradictory energies, yet for billions of years these celestial bodies have peacefully shared the love and warmth of the sun. Astrology urges us to mimic this example of harmonious existence.

It designates the sun as the primary giver. In your own chart, the location of the sun represents the place in your life where you exude energy and vitality. Your sun sign illuminates your style of self-expression, how you radiate outward. Since the moon, in actuality, receives and then reflects the energy emitted by the sun, your moon sign provides clues to how effectively you receive light and energy. Thus, the moon epitomizes the primary principle of Kabbalah: it receives the light of the sun solely to give it back to all of us here on earth when we need it the most. In the darkness of the night, it is the moon that lights our way.

Early humans first recognized the sun and the moon, the two most conspicuous astrological bodies in the sky, as polarities, and up until about 12,000 years ago humanity had divided itself of necessity into two corresponding groups: lunar and solar, yin and yang.

The solar energy, typified by the masculine side of humanity or existence, engaged in venturing out, like the rays of the sun, to protect the clan, hunt for food, explore new territory, achieve fame and glory, and play around. Masculine energy is

found in the zodiac signs Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Libra, Aquarius, and Gemini. An arrow that shoots through the sky, a spear thrown far into the distance, or a rocket that soars to the moon all embody the energy of these macho archetypes. Masculine energy might have manifested in early human times as a bunch of hunters chasing a mammoth and might manifest today as some public relations company launching a presidential campaign.

The feminine or lunar energy, represented by Capricorn, Taurus, Virgo, Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces, manifested in those humans who adopted the tasks of collecting and gathering nuts, fruits, and medicinal herbs that grew naturally near their caves. The cave represented the womb and all it implies: home, nurturing, and security, both physical and emotional. The feminine side of humanity tended to the newborns and the injured hunters and developed innovative ways to heal. Kabbalah considers the feminine energy as receptive, a vessel that welcomes and contains the exploratory masculine force. It facilitates the magic of birth. The feminine egg receives the masculine sperm and the result is a new life. The sperm, which vigorously travels to a new world, is assimilated by the vessel called the ovum, which then becomes a whole new being.

The masculine signs—Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, Libra, and Aquarius—are generally more active, expressive, outgoing, childlike, and playful than the feminine signs. Their purpose is to explore the world and deliver what they discover to the feminine signs. The feminine signs—Capricorn, Taurus, Virgo, Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces—are more introverted, deep, practical, and intimate. They receive the gifts and experiences hunted by the masculine signs and find practical applications that improve life. Those with these signs are generally more mature, responsible, and reliable than the masculine signs.

In Kabbalah, the masculine force is associated with giving as well as the right side of the body. From now on, when you want to give someone a present, a check, or a bottle of catsup, try doing so with your right hand and notice what happens. You will see that whatever you gave was received more openly. Whenever you receive a gift from someone or change from a cashier, accept it with your left, feminine hand—the hand astrologically as well as Kabbalistically designed to

receive. Receiving with your left hand you are sending a message to the universe that you accept the gift and are in gratitude. This reinforces the universe to give you even more.

Astrology Hidden in Everyday Words

“The situation in Iraq is a *disaster*,” commented the political correspondent.

“*Mazal tov!*” a renowned scientist shouted to his friend during a birthday party.

Both of the individuals above called on astrological terminology to make their points. The first chose the word *disaster*, which in Greek means “against the stars.” The ancient Greeks, who were instrumental in bringing Babylonian astrology to the West, believed that events that violate the harmonious orbit of the stars signified bad news. For them, the orbit of the planets was symbolic of perfection; they called this silent symphony “the music of the spheres.” Anything that proved incongruous with such perfection was inevitably deemed disastrous. The scientist who toasted his friend with *mazal tov* unwittingly dipped into the realm of astrology as well. The skeptical man of science probably would be appalled to learn that the Hebrew phrase *mazal tov* translates to “may a benevolent astrological constellation shine upon you.” These common expressions illustrate how deeply astrology has embedded itself into everyone’s lives, even the lives of those who might judge astrology as nothing but hogwash.

Is Astrology Real?

We wish to caution the public against the unquestioning acceptance of the predictions and advice given privately and publicly by astrologers.

—A STATEMENT OF 186 SCIENTISTS SIGNED IN 1975

Let me be frank. There is no scientific proof of the efficacy of astrology. But that does not mean that astrology does not work or that it is not a great tool for analyzing cycles and understanding life. No one knows how love works, and yet we all believe in love. No one has definitely proven the existence of God, and yet the overwhelming majority of the population of earth strongly believes in God. My attitude towards the validity of astrology can be summed by the words of Alexander Graham Bell: “What this power is I cannot say. All I know is that it exists.”

I believe in astrology because I also believe in evolution—not just the evolution of species and advantageous mutations, like a larger brain or opposable thumbs, but also the evolution of ideas. According to the laws of Charles Darwin, only the strong survive. And astrology has survived. Cultures all over the world have adopted and refined astrology for thousands of years because it has served them well. It has conferred lasting benefits not in just one corner of the globe, but to myriad cultures everywhere. (This same evolutionary proof lends validity to many other intellectual properties. The Torah, Zohar, New Testament, Yoga, Jujitsu, Runes, Tarot, Upanishads, I Ching, and the Koran have all endured for thousands of years because the beliefs, ideas, and rituals they champion have proven constructive. They have helped and continue to help vast numbers of people.)

The evolutionary proof postulates that since astrology has helped so many people from so many different cultures for so many thousands of years, surviving buoyantly until this very day, then it must contain many a valid and universal truth.

The Natal Chart: Your Divine Contract with God

Astrology is not a fortune-telling tool. Our astrological chart is actually a spiritual contract that we signed with God and a constant reminder of our chosen path in life. That means that we cannot bellyache to God, our mothers, or anyone else that we don't like our chart. We can't loathe the fact that we have eight planets in the house of death or six planets in the house of suffering. We—and only we—created and agreed to it. Accepting our chart marks the first step in changing our lives.

THE CYCLE OF OUR MANY LIVES

We know from the accounts of people who have died clinically and then returned to life that when we die, our entire life flashes in front of our eyes. Reportedly, it feels like we relive our lives all over again. It sounds as if we download our lives from our body, which contains our memories in its cells, brain, and other organs, into the part of ourselves that is eternal. After completing this file transfer, we are welcomed into the Light by an entity that most mythologies call the psychopompus, or the guide of the souls. This guide helps us travel up and down the divine highway, which has two lanes: one that runs from life to the Light and one that leads from the Light to life. The first is known as the path of death; the other is called the path of birth.

According to many spiritual traditions, we have all made this journey from death to life and back again many times, and we will experience it again and again until we attain enlightenment. It goes something like this. After recovering from the shock of dying, we slowly begin to accept the fact that this round is done and we are about

to begin anew. We meet a guide, who often appears in the guise of a relative. This benevolent *sherpa* of our soul leads us to a place where we can review the file that we downloaded from our body and contemplate all that occurred in our life. Then, with the aid of our mentor, who is actually an ambassador of God, we identify the uncompleted trials and lessons that we probably ought to deal with in our next lifetime. Together with our guide, we figure out how best to do that. Should we be reborn a woman or a man, a Christian or a Jew, black or white, rich or poor?

As an example of how this all works, let's imagine a soul who lives as a bartender in a Chicago nightclub. He is a good man who strives to help his endless stream of imbibers with a sympathetic ear and savvy advice. As he serves up his words of wisdom, however, he also pours liquor into their empty glasses. And he soon realizes that by the time his counsel finally registers with his customers, they are too drunk to remember it. The next night, they inevitably return to the bar, complaining still about the same problems and misfortunes, without any recollection of the insights he had imparted just twenty-four hours before.

The barman dies. His soul travels to the Light (or God, if you want) and plays a melody, the music of his life. Because he lived a rather rough and rugged life amongst drunks and melancholy and frequent fisticuffs, he pumps out too much bass in his song. He lacks treble, the tenderness of the melodic instruments. His guide listens to this lively but discordant tune and suggests that he reincarnate as a woman psychologist. He—now she—is born once again and matures into a therapist in China.

She becomes a great healer, and when she dies, she returns to the Light and plays her song. It sounds so much fuller now, but it still does not match the perfect symphony of God. This soul yet misses the midrange tones and a few other crucial notes. And so she reincarnates as an inner city football coach in Los Angeles. With monumental strength and compassion, he single-handedly transforms the community. He fights the drug dealers, the skeptics, and even the board of education. When the coach dies, the entire city mourns. More than five thousand people arrive to grieve at his funeral. When he returns to the Light this time, his music rings so beautifully that it harmonizes perfectly with the melody of God. This soul is then ready to wash seamlessly into the Light, like a river that finally joins the sea.

Each of us sits with the ambassador of God before the Light between our every incarnation to outline our next plan of action on earth. Each of us decides what we

will experience on this planet. All the challenges, joys, our parents, our hometown, our profession are selected by our soul prior to your arrival in your mother's womb. God merely gives us a seal of approval and perhaps a few editorial notes. The rest is up to us.

"GOD, WHY DID YOU DO THIS TO ME?"

According to Kabbalah and many other spiritual traditions, our prime mission in life is to fix our soul or "burn" our karma. Kabbalah's name for karma is *Tikkun*, which in Hebrew means "rectification." Your astrological chart outlines exactly how you can rectify your soul. Next time you find yourself in trouble, and you cry, "God, why have you done this to me?" you should not be surprised if God, or God's lawyer, replies, "What are you talking about? Haven't you looked at your chart? Don't you know that you agreed to embrace this obstacle? I warned you that it'd be difficult, but you assured me that you could handle it. So come on, face the challenge, don't start blaming me now!" Even in the face of such difficult challenges as a fatal disease or the loss of a loved one, we should remember that we signed up for it all.



Our astrological chart is a spiritual contract that we signed with God and a constant reminder of our chosen path in life. We—and only we—created and agreed to it. Accepting our chart marks the first step in changing our lives.



You might say to yourself, "Why don't I remember signing this contract? Was I drunk or something?" Well, yes, in a sense you were intoxicated by God's presence. When we find ourselves up there in the proximity of God, engulfed by so much perfection and Light, we are likely willing to sign just about anything that will propel us toward a day when we can sit there with God permanently. But you signed because you understood that the sorrows and challenges that you'd face on earth,

that you might face today, would not be rotten, horrible misfortunes, but blessings in disguise that would push you closer to that everlasting embrace of Light.

At the moment of birth, every baby, fresh from the lap of God, remembers the rationale of his or her chart and his or her accepted mission. Yet this information could interfere with the process of pure experience. For example, would you truly enjoy a basketball game if you knew the outcome before the game was played? When

we are born, one beautiful Kabbalist tale recounts, an angel of God with a finger of fire seals the lips of the newborn and quietly whispers, “Shhh, don’t tell anyone you know all that you do. Don’t even tell yourself.” At the angel’s touch, the story explains, the baby forgets everything—the divine contract, past lifetimes, the image as well as name of God. And that is why we all sport the finger-width indentation—what’s known as the Cupid’s bow—in the strip of skin between our upper lip and our nose.

THE DIVINE CONTRACT: A CASE STUDY

A Nobel Prize winner dies at the age of fifty-eight in a skiing accident. The world of science mourns. Indeed, much of the entire world mourns. A prestigious scientist who moved humankind closer and closer to a cure for cancer, he earned medals and fame and applause around the globe. Suddenly, he is gone.

The ambassador of Light meets him in the land beyond the living and asks, “So, my friend, what do you want to be in the next round?”

The brilliant soul thinks for a few minutes and then answers, “I want to work on my emotional side. As you surely know, I was a protégé; people were feeding me chemical formulas before I even had a chance to learn about the nourishment of love.”

The guide listens, nods and asks, “How can we rectify that?”

The soul hesitates and then says quietly, “I wish to avoid the temptations of the mind, to shut down my intellectual faculties.”

The guide pretends to be concerned. “Do you have the spiritual *credit* for this? Remember, you will not recall making this choice. I don’t want you going about later slandering God.”

The soul says, “Please, let me be born under a silent star.”

The guide shakes his head. “Hmm, I am not sure about this. Do you have anyone to cosign for you?”

The prizewinning soul calls forth two other souls with whom he had traveled in many past lifetimes. “Here, these two soul mates of mine share the problem of an over-exercised and over-cherished intellect. They are too clever for their own good, and they too yearn to nurture their emotional potentials. They are willing to be born before me, and I will be their son.”



Cosmic navigators take responsibility for everything that occurs in our lives. All that we do, all that we experience, is designed solely to make us better, stronger, and more equipped for our ascension back to the divine.



thing that other people go through, and yet you won't possess the capacity to communicate it intellectually. Do you accept?"

All three agree.

Twenty-nine years later, a young and successful couple buys a huge loft in Manhattan. She is CEO of a software company, and he is a litigation attorney who has never lost a case. Everyone, including their so-called friends, envies them. They are masters of their little universes. They meet up on occasion late at night to have sex—a high-performance ritual, but not a truly intimate one. Finally, she becomes pregnant. They don't bother to check on the progress of the fetus. There is no need—they are both winners. Their confidence clouds their judgment. They plan to call the newborn Leonardo, after Leonardo da Vinci.

Leonardo's birth goes smoothly. And then, to their horror, they discover that little Leonardo has Trisomy 21.

"What does that mean?" the father asks.

In her frustration, the mother screams at him, "He's retarded!" She wails to the God she never believed in, "What did I do to deserve this? What am I being punished for?"

The father is perplexed. Nothing in law school prepared him for this. He suddenly despises his wife. He hypothesizes some genetic anomaly in her family that she kept secret from him. Then he suspects that she must have been unfaithful to him, because surely this child is the product of an inferior gene pool. And then he begins to sob. How can he possibly present this . . . this . . . *thing* to his colleagues?

The baby grows, slower and differently than others. Strangers in the park could see that something was different about the boy, but they were too polite to inquire. And yet anyone who looked at the smiling child could not help but notice some

The guide knows them well; in fact, they were his two previous appointments. He looks at their charts, specifically into their house of children, to determine how the scientist might fit as their child. He finally smiles. "OK. You will be born in a body that has three of the twenty-first chromosome; you will be born with Down's syndrome. Your IQ will be one-third of what it was in the life you just concluded, but you will be an emotional genius. You will feel intensely every-

deeper understanding, a wisdom not spoken in words but communicated silently through his innocent and pure joy. The boy knows nothing but love and kindness. No matter what his parents think of him, he expresses nothing but love for them. He does not love them for their success or status. He has no means of evaluating their intellectual brilliance or professional acclaim. His IQ checks in at sixty-two, but what test can measure spiritual intelligence?

Of necessity, his parents alter their lifestyle. Since Leo demands extra attention and care, they start to spend more time together. After just four years, little Leonardo has generated more tears and hugs and authentic bursts of emotion from his parents than they had experienced in their entire lives. At the beginning, feelings of rejection, blame, anger, and guilt triggered these emotional displays. But soon these awful feelings transformed into nothing but love and compassion.

The two young parents slowly fall in love with the little Leo, and they learn to treasure him. The mother decides to work from home on a new Web design business. The logistics involved in raising Leo also compel her to spend time with her own mother, a woman she once disliked and shunned. Moved by the perspective gained in caring for this child, adult daughter and mother begin to appreciate each other in ways no one thought possible. Such was the powerful magic of little Leonardo. What his mother's highly intelligent therapist failed to mend in hundreds of long hours, Leo fixed with a smile.

His father changes too. He quits his job at the big firm in Manhattan to head up a nonprofit organization that supports children with special needs. Best of all, he begins to relish his softening, loving wife, often holding her for hours after they put their son to sleep. And this newfound intimacy delivers two more children. They name their second miracle Kuan, for the goddess of compassion, and the other John, after the Baptist.

This story illustrates the core premise of Kabbalistic astrology: you are the maker of your own chart. It is not fate that ordained you to be sick, broke, wealthy, happy, or miserable. You made that solemn decision yourself. Your chart, merely one page long but signed with your first breath of air, symbolizes your divine contract with God.

Cosmic navigators take responsibility for everything that occurs in our lives, the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly. All that we do, all that we experience—whether we soar, fall in love, or tumble hard against the rocks—is designed solely to make us better, stronger, and more equipped for our ascension back to the divine.

CHAPTER 4

Nuts and Bolts of the Zodiac

THE FOUR ELEMENTS

Navigators on sea and land rely on the four directions of the compass for orientation. Cosmic navigators use the four elements:

Fire, representing action and creativity, fuels the signs of Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius.

Water, symbolizing emotions, underlies the signs of Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces.

Air, corresponding to intellect, is the dominating force for Libra, Aquarius, and Gemini.

Earth, which stands for substance and practicality, is the hallmark of Capricorn, Taurus, and Virgo.

According to the ancient wisdom of alchemy, these four elements form the basis of all life. Right now, as you hold this book in your hands, you embody the four elements. The *physical* aspect of the book (cover, paper, ink) belongs to the element of earth, the words and information that appeal to your *intellect* evoke air, the *action* of holding and reading the book falls under the rule of fire, while the *emotions* triggered by the information in the book come from the element of water. When you kiss your lover, you also create alchemy. You generate the physical touch of the lips (earth), the emotional rush (water), the thoughts running through your brain (air), as well as the passion and attraction (fire).

Alchemists endeavor to balance the four elements in order to transmute imperfect, ordinary, and mundane situations, symbolized by the metal lead, into the perfection of love, symbolized by the heart and the metal gold. The alchemist's or astrologer's laboratory is his or her own body.

We can group the four elements into two folders: feminine (water and earth) and masculine (fire and air), which mirrors the two major human archetypes, feminine (nurturing and practical) and masculine (active and communicative). That division tells us that for balance, to create a golden life, we need to honor and augment both our traditionally female and male characteristics, regardless of our gender.

THE THREE MODALITIES

The four elements form the backbone of all Western mysteries, including Kabbalah. So why do we need twelve signs?

Each of the four elements can be expressed in three different styles. These varied modes of expression are called the three modalities. Astrology follows the four seasons, which correspond to the four elements, and each of these three-month-long seasons is comprised of a beginning, middle, and end. Every month manifests in nature in a slightly varied way. The beginning of winter, for example, is not as frigid as the middle. The middle of summer is usually quite a bit hotter than the end. The three modalities represent those three parts of the seasons:

The **cardinal** modality marks the beginning of the season and the power of initiation.

The **fixed** modality corresponds to the middle of the season and the power of sustaining.

The **mutable** modality represents the end of the season and the power of change.

Elements and Modalities

	Fire	Water	Air	Earth
Cardinal	Aries	Cancer	Libra	Capricorn
Fixed	Leo	Scorpio	Aquarius	Taurus
Mutable	Sagittarius	Pisces	Gemini	Virgo

Each of the four elements presents a cardinal expression, a fixed expression, and a mutable expression. Four elements times three modalities equals twelve distinct energy fields and therefore the twelve signs. Even though Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius, for example, are all fire signs, they each represent a different archetype. Aries personifies the warrior or soldier. Leo embodies the king, who is protected by the warrior. And Sagittarius connotes the prophet, wizard, or adviser, who insures the upholding of the ethics of both the warrior and the king. In the Bible, David, the redheaded Aries warrior, was anointed by Samuel, a prophetic sage emblematic of Sagittarius. David usurped the kingdom from the old king Saul, initiating a dynasty. Aries, the cardinal fire sign, begins the process. Sagittarius, the mutable sign, acted as the messenger, the connector, the agent of change from one season to the next—in this case from one dynasty (Saul) to another (David). Leo, the fixed fire sign, then receives the flame from Aries and strives to maintain it. In this case, King Solomon, who symbolizes the born-a-king sign of Leo, inherited the kingdom from his father and ruled peaceably with his harem of a thousand wives. After all, a Leo is a Leo The cardinal signs initiate the seasons: Aries kicks off spring, Cancer births summer, Libra brings autumn, and Capricorn delivers us into winter. These cardinal signs push us forward, urging the best from us. They act as personal trainers who cajole our finest, our healthiest muscles, out into view.

The fixed signs, embedded in the middle of the season, radiate the full force of the seasonal trend. Taurus occurs when spring blooms everywhere; Leo falls under the strongest sun. Scorpio, the sign of death, rules when the leaves fall from the trees, and Aquarius rules when ice and cold fiercely grip the ground.

Kabbalah calls these four fixed signs *Hayot*, or “the Creatures.” They are yoked to “the chariot,” a mystical Kabbalistic code for the vehicle (or meditation) used to ascend to a communion with the divine. These creatures first appear in Ezekiel’s transcendent vision (Exekiel 11:10): “As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man [Aquarius], and the face of a lion [Leo] . . . they four had the face of an ox [Taurus] . . . they four also had the face of an eagle [Scorpio].” Later, Christian mystics associated the four creatures with the four apostles Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John. What is the significance of all this? Well, the fixed signs tend to take themselves very seriously and demand that we take them seriously too. No wonder the accounts ascribed to these apostles were later compiled into the New Testament and came to be regarded by close to a billion people as the word of God. The fixed signs stand as the pillars that support the zodiac, just as the four creatures support many of the esoteric mysteries of Kabbalah and the four gospels form the basis of Christendom.

The mutable signs, meanwhile, foster the transition of one season to the next in the same way that film editors endeavor to avoid jarring jump cuts between scenes. Gemini bridges spring and summer, Virgo ushers summer into autumn, Sagittarius shoots arrows from autumn to winter, and Pisces thaws winter into spring. Just as diversity and mutations in evolution insure the survival of many different species and therefore a dynamic and functioning biosphere, the mutable signs provide the change and diversity that permit survival amid the earth’s changing physical states. The mutables guarantee our ability to adjust.

In Hinduism, these three modalities, or principles, gave birth to the Divine Triad: Brahma, the god of creation and initiation; Vishnu, the sustainer; and Shiva, the destroyer. The Greco-Roman culture mirrored this essential trio in the three goddesses of Fate; the first offers the thread of life, the second measures the thread, and the third cuts it. The Kabbalistic Tree of Life similarly features three pillars: a pillar on the right that expands, a pillar on the left that constricts, and a central pillar that balances and sustains.

THE CORE POWER OF THE SIGNS

You can learn much about any astrological sign simply by combining the characteristics of its element with those of its modality. This easy formula will help you

determine the root power of any particular archetype, which will deepen your understanding of the people around you and the events that seem to occur during particular times of the calendar year.

Root Power = Modality + Element

Aries: You are cardinal fire. Your root power stems from an ability to initiate (cardinal) action (fire). Your success requires initiation, the pushing and furthering of your goals. You need to liberate (fire) yourself from any oppression so that you will be able to lead (cardinal) yourself and others.

Taurus: You are fixed earth. Your root power comes from stability (earth), patience, and sustaining (fixed) an effort for long periods of time. You need to connect to your five senses and ground yourself (earth and fixed) in matters that concern your talents, values, and finances.

Gemini: You are mutable air. Your root power manifests in the ability to adjust (mutable) the style of communication (air) to any fluctuating circumstance. As long as you improvise (mutable) and wield your intelligence (air), you will achieve your aspirations.

Cancer: You are cardinal water. Your root power derives from initiating (cardinal) emotional processes (water). You are a giver (cardinal) of life. To tap your potential, you need to give birth (cardinal) to situations that will allow you to nurture (water) people or projects.

Leo: You are fixed fire. Your root power comes from perseverance (fixed) in action (fire). You can become famous and respected in your circles if you maintain a steady and focused (fixed) creative force (fire) with the ultimate goal of benevolence.

Virgo: You are mutable earth. Your root power emerges from your ability to edit, fix, and adjust (mutable) situations so that life around you becomes more efficient and effective (earth). This editorial work ultimately ought to be directed toward service to humankind.

Libra: You are cardinal air. Your power root lies in initiating (cardinal) communication (air). This ability grants you mastery over relationships and justice, provided that you initiate (cardinal) conversations and work on your diplomacy (air).

Scorpio: You are fixed water. Your power root springs from the ability to remain (fixed) intensely emotional and intimate (water) in relationships. You can be successful if you allow yourself to expose and be exposed, to heal and be healed, and to dive as deep as you can into the fundamental (fixed) essence of the emotional (water) motives of others.

Sagittarius: You are mutable fire. Your root power emerges from your capacity to spread (mutable) philosophies, moral codes, and belief systems (fire), especially when you engage your innate sense of optimism. Your duty to humankind relates to teaching, learning, and adjusting (mutable) the negative attitudes and actions (fire) of others.

Capricorn: You are cardinal earth. Your root power comes from initiating (cardinal) practical applications of talents, assets, and resources (earth). You embody the business plan of the zodiac wheel. Your success is assured when you set a definite goal (cardinal) and then practice patience and discipline (earth).

Aquarius: You are fixed air. Your root power stems from a stable and consistent (fixed) interplay with your community and friends (air). You are the pillar (fixed) of a large group of people (air). Your success lies in cultivating innovative, funny, and futuristic ideas (air).

Pisces: You are mutable water. Your root power derives from your capacity to improve life and generate change (mutable) via imagination, mysticism, and compassion (water). You can cultivate success with your sensitivity to the emotional (water) states of others. Dreams and fantasy (water) often serve as the tools by which you manifest your preferred life.

THE MERRY-GO-ROUND OF ASTROLOGY

We've all heard the old postulate that humankind's greatest invention is the wheel. I have always questioned that assumption. I guess it really depends on what wheel you're talking about. If you mean the ox-cart, wheelbarrow wheel, I have to point out that the Maya, Inca, and many other cultures in the Americas prospered just fine without it. Master architects and astronomers, they built complex and sophisticated civilizations without that particular bit of human ingenuity. However, these cultures

were cognizant of the importance of the philosophical or symbolic wheel. They used advanced astronomy and math to chart space and time (the Mayan and Aztec calendar is written on a circular stone tablet) and investigated deeply the intricacies of astronomy and math (the Mayans invented the numerical zero).

In spirituality, the wheel represents completion, perfection, and equality (as proven by King Arthur's Round Table, which even the king could not sit at the head of). It also suggests the eternally repeating concept of reincarnation—life followed by death followed by life. In Kabbalah, the Tree of Life is composed of ten wheels or spheres. The Sanskrit word *chakra*, the fundamental building block of the Hindu tradition, translates as “wheel.” In Sufism, the mystical tradition of Islam, the whirling dervishes worship God by spinning round and round in imitation of the wheel of life. Astrology uses the wheel of the zodiac as the symbol of life on earth, and it emphasizes degrees rather than sharp cliffs of yes-no, good-bad, wrong-right.

While it is true that year after year we travel in circles around the astrological cycle, when we work with astrology and Kabbalah, we nonetheless end up not in the same spot, but in a higher, more conscious place. Just think how much a baby learns and grows before the age of one and then between the ages of one to two, even though she finishes up each year in the same place on the zodiac circle. When we work with the wheel, we liberate ourselves from the repetitive cycles of the seasons. We mutate (in a good way) and elevate via the lessons and *Tikkun* (rectification) that we encounter on a daily basis. This work transforms the wheel into a spiral, the sacred symbol of the Crown, the loftiest sphere in the Kabbalistic Tree of Life (see chapter 5). A spiral is basically a three-dimensional wheel. Every time we return to the place of origin, we find ourselves in a slightly elevated spot. With every lesson we master, with every astrological sign we assimilate, we soar higher and higher, turning the monotonous



The cardinal signs make things happen. They ignite the energy and give it direction. They therefore tend to be bossy. The fixed signs maintain the energy. They crystallize and focus it. Thus they can be rather stubborn. The mutable signs induce change, destroying the old to create space for the new. This responsibility sometimes makes them a little wishy-washy or flaky.



circle into an enchanted spiral reaching for the heavens. It's like the rings of a tree, the central totem of Kabbalah. As it matures each year, the tree adds another ring to its core. Each year these rings grow larger and larger, a symbolic confirmation for us of the escalating vitality of the experiences gained, the lessons learned, and the growth invested in our own karmic bank.

CHAPTER 5

The Tree of Life

While astrology maps the energies of our solar system and galaxy, Kabbalah explores the entire creation—physical, astral, and whatever lies hidden and beyond. The Tree of Life blooms in the center of the mystical garden of Kabbalah. It functions as the spiritual organizer for all cosmic navigators, who can use its ever-present power to improve their lives and climb their way closer to God. Kabbalah teaches us how to transform ourselves into cables that transmit the divine to the earthly and to bridge—via the energetic magic of the Tree of Life—the above and the below.

The Tree of Life is made of ten archetypal energy spheres, or *Sefirot* in Hebrew. Only one of the ten spheres of the Tree of Life represents the physical existence that we can see, touch, hear, smell, and taste. The other nine all designate some form of “dark matter,” the ethereal mysteries of the creation that resonate beyond our material world.

The Tree of Life endures as an ancient symbol, still used by different races and cultures, as it has been throughout history. For thousands of years, people everywhere have revered trees as a source of spiritual sustenance. From the esoteric traditions of Siberia, which claim that their shamans gestate on treetops, to the Buddhists, who contend that the Lord Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree, trees always have served as an anchor for spiritual work. A tree also links Kabbalah and astrology. This connection emerges in the ancient association between the Kabbalistic spheres of the Tree of Life and the astrological planets, as well as in the correlation between the zodiac signs and the paths that connect the spheres. For a deeper understanding of the ten spheres of the Tree of Life and how to use this timeless, radiant tool for practical self-improvement, please refer to my first book, *A Wish Can Change Your Life*.

Planting Your Own Tree of Life

I urge you to plant a few trees as part of your study of astrology and Kabbalah. I have created two forests in which you can plant new trees via donations to nonprofit organizations. The first, located in Northern California, is managed by American Forests at www.TreeofLifeGrove.org. The second grove is situated in Israel, near the holy city of Tzfat, the legendary home of many of the most prominent Kabbalists in history. KKL oversees this forest at www.TreeofLifeGrove.org.il. I thank you in the name of all the trees you will plant.

Figure 1 depicts the Kabbalistic Tree of Life and its astrological attributes. Each of the ten spheres of the Tree of Life represents a different archetype or energy field. The term *archetype* derives from the Greek words *arkhe* meaning “first” and *typos* meaning “model” or “pattern.” With this etymology, *archetype* appropriately describes the spheres since, according to Kabbalah, God first created the ten spheres, and then from that blueprint God then crafted all the rest of the creation.

The ten spheres are arranged in three pillars, which correspond to the three modalities in astrology (cardinal, fixed, and mutable). The right pillar is called the Pillar of Mercy or the Pillar of Expansion. It corresponds to the cardinal signs and holds the spheres Wisdom, Mercy, and Eternity. The left pillar, also called the Pillar of Severity or the Pillar of Restriction, correlates to the mutable signs and contains the spheres Understanding, Severity, and Splendor. The middle Pillar, the Pillar of Harmony, relates to the fixed signs and holds the spheres Crown, Beauty, Foundation, and Kingdom.

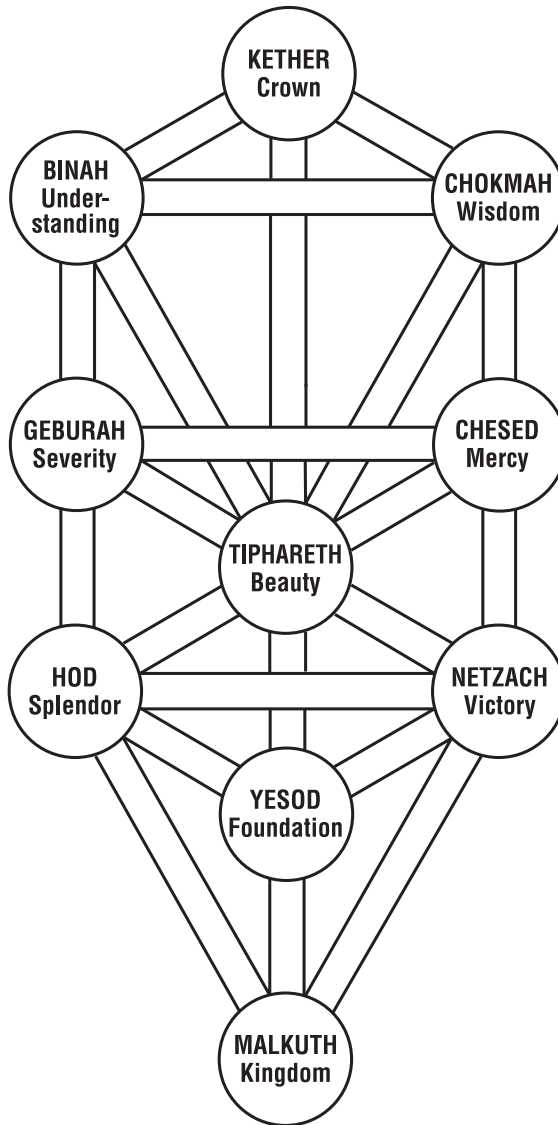


Figure 1: The Tree of Life

THE TEN WORDS OF CREATION

In the beginning of time there was the Word; and the Word was with God.

—|OHN 1:1

The ten spheres can be seen as the ten words or ten magic spells spoken by God at the creation of the cosmos. These ten divine utterances emitted ripples of energies that radiated into the emptiness of space, eventually blending and coalescing into everything we see around us. Kabbalah assigns a distinct name of God to each sphere. That name, mantra, or magic spell functions as an invocation of the energies of that particular archetype. And just as God uttered these ten words to manifest the energies of the cosmos, you can speak or chant these ten names to encase yourself in the ethereal energy you need most. For example, if you'd benefit from a more intense connection to the sphere Beauty, the sphere of balance and health, you can amplify that relationship simply by imagining yourself sitting in a golden sphere (the color of the sphere Beauty) while chanting the name of God for Beauty (*Yod Hey Vav Hey Eloha Va'Da'At*).

The first sphere or archetype to emanate as a word from God's mouth is called **Crown** (*Keter* in Hebrew). Crown symbolizes the will of God, and that will, according to Kabbalah, is the will for oneness. God is One. God's will is unity. Humans arrive as individuals, each of us unique in form, appearance, and personality. But the message of the Crown resounds clearly: we are all connected; we are all the same. All of us—in fact, all of creation—emanated from this first word uttered by God just as the entire universe materialized out of the Big Bang. The color for this sphere is white, the color that contains all the colors of the spectrum. Crown isn't associated with a particular planet or sign because this sphere symbolizes emptiness or nothingness. That does not mean that Crown represents an empty vessel. It simply suggests that we do not possess the mental capacity to comprehend, grasp, or contain the infinite magnitude of this original sphere. Name of God for this sphere is Ehey. Look at this name of God as a mantra, a key that can open before you the powers and potentials of the sphere. Just like you might need a web address to download a file, so does the name of God connect you to a certain aspect of the one God that can in turn help you access the content you need to connect with.

To learn more about how to connect to the ten spheres as well as the relevance of the names of God, please refer to my book *A Wish Can Change Your Life*. You can also find audio examples of each mantra at www.CosmicNavigator.com.

The next word uttered by God was **Wisdom** (*Hochma*). Wisdom represents reflection, meditation, intuition, and insights. Wisdom is the echo of the first archetype, Crown. It symbolizes the mirror in which God's Oneness reflects itself. Reflection—via meditation or other techniques of inner discovery—enables us to locate the divine part of ourselves. Kabbalists paint Wisdom in silver-gray to signify the wisdom we attain as we age. Gray also suggests that life is not black and white, all or nothing, good or bad. Wisdom correlates not to any particular planet, but to the zodiac wheel in its entirety. It is wise, then, to examine the entire, complicated, circular (endless) picture. As the source of the astrological wheel, Wisdom also generates and oversees the divine astrological contracts that guide our paths here on earth. Name of God: YOD HEY VAV HEY.

The word **Understanding** (*Binah*) follows next. No wonder few of us can understand Wisdom; Wisdom arrives in the creation before the sphere that gives birth to Understanding. This third sphere imparts the energies we need to comprehend ourselves, our identity, and our mission in life. It brings us logic, science, education, and discipline, as well as the concepts of time and space that provide a structure in which to practice all that science and discipline. This sphere is colored dark indigo. Understanding marks the first sphere to be assigned an astrological planet. It brings Saturn, the ruler of Aquarius and Capricorn and the planet associated in traditional astrology with malevolence, plagues, disasters, and other misfortunes. But Kabbalistic astrology places Saturn in the most lofty and vital domain, the closest of all the planets to Crown and the Will of God. In your chart, Understanding—represented by Saturn—highlights the area of life in which you must practice persistence and focus in order to succeed and grow. Saturn helps us in the Understanding of our *Tikkun* (fixing our soul), as well as with the construction of a structure (such as regular yoga, meditation, community and service) that will drive that rectification. Name of God: ELOHIM.

Next God spoke **Mercy** (*Hesed*). Mercy embodies the archetype of compassion, unconditional love, expansion, benevolence, and the grace of God. Whenever you feel good about yourself and those around you, you experience the energy of Mercy.

The sphere is associated with Jupiter, the ruler of Sagittarius and Pisces. Jupiter in our chart marks the area of our life in which we are likely to enjoy benevolence and boundless opportunities. Jupiter/Mercy also highlights the potential that you can transform into actuality. Mercy represents the most accepting and forgiving energy of the Tree of Life and creation as a whole. It works as a reinforcement of the prior sphere, Understanding. If you *gave* to the universe what Understanding asked of you, in Mercy you will *receive* or reap the rewards of that discipline and effort. The color of Mercy is blue, the color of the boundless seas and sky. Name of God: EL.

And fifth, God uttered **Severity** (*Gevurah*), which in Hebrew translates to “heroism,” “bravery,” or “valor.” This sphere resonates with strength, power, pure energy, and force. It can also be severe. The biographies of heroes and heroines such as Moses or Superman often feature harsh childhoods or incidents that forged them into remarkable people. Kabbalah also calls this sphere *Din*, which means “judgment.” This sphere is designed to balance the unconditionally expansive, loving, giving nature of Mercy. Severity is associated with Mars, the ruler of Aries and Scorpio. Since Mars is the red planet, it makes sense that Severity is also colored red. Red warns us of danger (“red alert”), protects (the Red Cross), and prevents us from crashing into each other (a red light). In astrological charts, this sphere underscores the area in your life in which you possess great courage, where you might need to be more of a hero, or where you fight for your rights as well as those of others. Severity/Mars asks us to put your foot down so that you might receive what is duly yours. Name of God: ELOHIM GIBOR.

The sixth word in God’s divine poem was **Beauty** (*Tiferet*). Located in the heart of the Tree of Life, Beauty balances constriction and expansion, feminine and masculine, and the above and the below. Some Kabbalists dub it the Throne of God, and Beauty is therefore associated with the higher self, as well as the sign Leo. The color of the sphere is bright yellow or gold; the latter is also the color and name of the most acclaimed of all metals and by far the most regal and royal. Beauty teaches that God’s presence is felt most profoundly when you balance giving with receiving, masculine with feminine, judgment with forgiveness. Health, happiness, children, playfulness, and love all emanate from this beloved archetype. Just as all of the spheres revolve around this central sphere, all of the planets orbit the sun, the primary symbol of astrology and the celestial body associated with Beauty. The location of the sun in your chart describes the area in your life in which you can express most fervently

your highest good and emit the greatest amount of light upon your fellow sentient beings. Name of God: YOD HEY VAV HEY ELOHA VA'DA'AT.

Then God whispered the word **Eternity** (*Netzach*). This marvelous archetype brings pleasure, art, talent, and all slices of life that provide us with sensuous joy. Because this sphere governs pleasure, it also generates the mechanism of repetition and reproduction. For example, when you dine at a delicious restaurant, you generally yearn to repeat that experience by going back there again and again. Mother Nature operates on this same principle. One tree seeds a second and then a third and fourth on into eternity until we find a gigantic forest. Green, the color of nature, is the color of the sphere. Eternity embodies the energy of Venus, the planet affiliated with both Taurus and Libra. This sphere oversees peace, diplomacy, negotiation, and relationships, as well as personal talents and money. Venus/Eternity in your chart underlines the area of your life in which your idiosyncratic talents can be deployed to generate financial security and abundance. Name of God: YOD HEY VAV HEY TZEVAOT.

The eighth word spoken by God was **Splendor**, or *Hod*, which is Hebrew for “reverberation.” This sphere enables communication, that most human characteristic, which demands both speaking *and* listening. Splendor guides commerce, business, and trade. It enables us to absorb the messages, signs, and synchronicities that we encounter so that we can translate and transmit them to the rest of humankind. Splendor is associated with magic, spells, and the ability to manifest mind over matter. Orange—the color chosen to herald the new millennium, our information age—is the color of the sphere, and Mercury, the planet linked to Gemini and Virgo, is its ambassador. In your astrological chart, Splendor/Mercury signifies your antenna, highlighting your style of communication, as well as your strengths and perhaps your weaknesses when it comes to conveying and receiving messages and knowledge. Name of God: ELOHIM TZEVAOT.

Ninth came the word **Foundation** (*Yesod*). This sphere holds all the secrets and subconscious powers of the universe. The word *sod*, which is the root of the Hebrew name of this sphere, means “secret.” Kabbalists have been stressing for millennia that at the foundation of the universe lies the secret of the law of attraction (the same law described in the bestselling book and DVD *The Secret*). That is one of the reasons why sexuality and passion are governed by this sphere. This intense and mysterious wheel of energy also governs transformation, healing, intimacy, and death. The law

of attraction can transform your life and afford you what you always dreamt of. Foundation is linked to the moon, the ruler of the night, as well as the sign Scorpio. It is colored purple/violet, a rich tone that nonetheless emits the highest visible frequency in the spectrum. In your chart, Foundation/the moon exposes your inner reflexes—how you instinctively react to various situations in your life. It also might reveal hidden memories of early childhood or trauma, as well as the places in which you safeguard all your secrets. Name of God: SHADDAI EL CHAI.

And the last word to emerge from God's consciousness in the Kabbalistic story of creation is **Kingdom** (*Malchut*). In Kabbalistic astrology, Kingdom relates to your rising sign or ascendant, the path you chose to walk in this lifetime, the highway that leads to your destiny. This sphere encompasses the entire physical creation—from unseen viruses and your neighbor next door to alien starships and vast galaxies millions of light years away. Name of God: ADONI HA'ARETZ.



Aries: The Liberator

March 21 to April 19

Key Phrase: “I am”—identity

General Qualities: Leadership, initiative, the warrior, direct, powerful, liberating, strong sense of justice

Dark Side: Self-centered, aggressive, macho, blunt, pushy, inconsistent, accident prone

Element: Cardinal fire

Planet: Mars

Day: Tuesday

Theme: The spark

Parts of the Body: Head, blood, face, genital area, muscles

Color: Red

Gemstone: Diamond

Musical Note: C—the beginning of the scale

Hebrew Letter: Hey h.]

Kabbalistic Meaning of the Letter: The window of the soul and the abbreviation of the name of God

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 4, connecting Beauty and Wisdom

Tarot Card: The Emperor

Movies: Gladiator, 300, The Matrix, Henry the V, superhero movies, action films

Affirmation: “I am powerful and all conquering. I am grateful for all that I have accomplished and all that I will achieve.”



Taurus: The Artist and Financier

April 20 to May 20

Key Phrase: “I have”—from self-worth to a bank account

General Qualities: Artistic, affectionate, stable, reliable, patient, practical, financial facility, a knack for sensual enjoyment, and a love of nature

Dark Side: Materialistic, possessive, resistant to change, stubborn, fanatical, narrow-minded, gluttonous, and indulgent

Element: Fixed earth

Planet: Venus

Day: Friday

Theme: The sustainer

Parts of the Body: Throat, neck, thyroid gland

Color: Red-orange

Gemstone: Jade

Musical Note: C sharp—the second tone

Hebrew Letter: *Vav* ך

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The hook or nail

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 5, connecting Wisdom and Mercy

Tarot Card: The Hierophant

Movies: *Chocolat*, *Like Water For Chocolate*, *Perfume*

Affirmation: “I am my own spiritual guide. I possess the ability to translate my inner wealth into material abundance. I am worthy of success and financial abundance.”

II

Gemini: The Messenger

May 21 to June 20

Key Phrase: “I think” — “I think, therefore I am.”

General Qualities: Intelligent, informative, versatile, agile, adaptable, powerful communication skills, well-connected, adept networker, writer, speaker, and messenger

Dark Side: Overly talkative, prone to exaggeration, deceptive, propensity for lies and theft, emotionally detached, swings of moods, double personality, and overrationalism

Element: Mutable air

Planet: Mercury, the messenger of the gods

Day: Wednesday

Theme: Flexibility

Parts of the Body: Hands, lungs, nervous system

Color: Orange

Gemstone: Clear crystal

Musical Note: D, the Beatles’ favorite key

Hebrew Letter: *Zain* ז

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The sword of reason

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 6, connecting Understanding with Beauty

Tarot Card: The Lovers

Movies: *American Beauty*, *Sliding Doors*

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Cancer: The Master of Compassion

June 21 to July 22

Key Phrase: “I feel” — unconditional love

General Qualities: Nurturing, natural-born healer, supportive, compassionate, family oriented, sensitive, homey, and maternal

Dark Side: Guilt, attachment, dependency, passive aggressiveness, and a deep need to be needed

Element: Cardinal water

Planet: The moon, the giver of light in our darkest moments

Day: Monday

Theme: Birth

Parts of the Body: Ribs, stomach, breasts, internal organs, womb

Color: Orange-yellow

Gemstone: Pearl

Musical Note: D sharp

Hebrew Letter: *Chet* ח

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The wall

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 7, connecting Understanding and Severity

Tarot Card: The Chariot

Movies: *The Piano*, *Kundun*, and all family-related movies

Affirmation: “I am loved by my family and nurtured by the universe. I forgive those who have wronged me and ask forgiveness from those I have injured.”



Leo: The King and Queen

July 23 to August 22

Key Phrase: “I will” — authority

General Qualities: Childlike, playful, fun-loving, generous, loyal, powerful, attractive, regal, authoritative, charismatic, and creative

Dark Side: Willful, dominating, egotistical, stubborn, controlling, and fixed in their opinions

Element: Fixed fire

Planet: The sun

Day: Sunday

Theme: The dynasty

Parts of the Body: Heart and spine

Color: Gold and yellow

Gemstone: Tiger’s eye

Musical note: E

Hebrew Letter: *Tet* ט

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The serpent

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 8, connecting Mercy and Severity

Tarot Card: Strength

Movies: *Braveheart, The Lion King, The Chronicles of Narnia, The Fifth Element*

Famous Personalities: Bill Clinton, Napoleon Bonaparte, Madonna, Alfred Hitchcock, Fidel Castro, and Carl Jung



Virgo: The Fixer and Doer

August 23 to September 22

Key Phrase: “I analyze”—authority

General Qualities: Modest, honest, humble, discriminating, orderly, analytical, logical, responsible, altruistic, hardworking, and possessed of healing and diagnostic powers

Dark Side: Perfectionistic, obsessive-compulsive, overly critical, and paying excessive attention to small, insignificant details

Element: Mutable earth

Planet: Mercury

Day: Wednesday

Theme: Making things happen

Parts of the Body: Intestines, colon

Color: Yellow-green

Gemstone: Agate

Musical Note: F

Hebrew Letter: *Yod* ך

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The hand of God

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 9, connecting Mercy and Beauty

Tarot Card: The Hermit

Movies: *Elizabeth: The Virgin Queen*, *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, *Mary Poppins*, *As Good as It Gets*, *The Sound of Music*, *The Name of the Rose*



Libra: The Beauty and the Lawyer

September 23 to October 22

Key Phrase: “I balance” —harmony

General Qualities: Logical, friendly, polished and refined, easygoing, social, possessed of aesthetic good taste, diplomatic, and having a strong sense of justice

Dark Side: Superficial, indecisive, self-serving, hypocritical, indulgent

Element: Cardinal air

Planet: Venus

Day: Friday

Theme: The mirror of relationships

Parts of the Body: Kidneys, waistline, ovaries

Color: Green

Gemstone: Opal

Musical Note: F sharp

Hebrew Letter: *Lamed* ל

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: Learning and teaching

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 11, connecting Severity and Beauty

Tarot Card: The Lady of Justice

Movies: *Beauty and the Beast*, *Gandhi*, *Kramer vs. Kramer*, and any film about relationships or lawyers

Affirmation: “I am balanced, in harmony with life. Justice will prevail, and I will be rewarded for all my efforts. I generate peace and tranquility with all my relationships.”



Scorpio: The Lord of Transformation

October 23 to November 22

Key Phrase: “I desire”—the drive

General Qualities: Intense, sexual, intimate, passionate, driven, powerful research abilities, skilled at healing, secretive, drawn to the occult

Dark Side: Possessive, vindictive, emotionally self-centered, possessed of criminal urges, paranoid, and destructive

Element: Fixed water

Planet: Mars

Day: Tuesday

Theme: Regeneration

Parts of the Body: Sexual organs, reproductive organs, and the nose

Color: Turquoise/green-blue

Gemstone: Topaz

Musical Note: G

Hebrew Letter: *Nun* ך

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The fish and the serpent

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 13, connecting Beauty and Eternity

Tarot Card: Death

Movies: *Children of Men*, *Angel Heart*, *V for Vendetta*, all spy and horror movies

Affirmation: “I am passionate and sexual, creating intimacy with everyone I encounter. I accept death, knowing it will lead to a rebirth. I am open to being a vehicle for God’s healing powers.”



Sagittarius: The Traveling Prophet

November 23 to December 21

Key Phrase: “I see” —prophecy

General Qualities: Optimistic, lucky, free-spirited, wise, enthusiastic, seekers of knowledge, natural teachers, athletic, adventurous, and deeply moral

Dark Side: Overly optimistic, gluttonous, irresponsible, and lazy

Element: Mutable fire

Planet: Jupiter

Day: Thursday

Theme: The ember and the torch

Parts of the Body: Liver, thighs, and hips

Color: Blue

Gemstone: Turquoise

Musical Note: G sharp

Hebrew Letter: Samech ט

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: Trust and support

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 14, connecting Beauty and Foundation

Tarot Card: Temperance

Movies: *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*, and any other adventure films and documentaries

Affirmation: “I am lucky and optimistic, at one with synchronicities. I create alchemy between giving and receiving. I trust God to provide me with all I need.”



Capricorn: The Achiever

December 22 to January 19

Key Phrase: “I use” —winning with what I have

General Qualities: Persistent, ambitious, successful, career-oriented, disciplined, responsible, reliable, funny, and mature

Dark Side: Pessimistic, opportunistic, greedy, overly skeptical, cynical, fearful, having a willingness to step over bodies to achieve a goal, holding the view that the end justifies the means

Element: Cardinal earth

Planet: Saturn, ruler of karma and understanding

Day: Saturday

Theme: The business plan

Parts of the Body: Skin, teeth, skeleton, knees

Color: Indigo

Gemstones: Garnet, black onyx, hematite

Musical Note: A

Hebrew Letter: *Ain* א

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The all-seeing eye

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 15, connecting Beauty and Splendor

Tarot Card: The Devil

Movies: *The Devil Wears Prada*, *The Advocate*, *Fiddler on the Roof*



Aquarius: The Joker

January 21 to February 18

Key Phrase: “I know”—awareness

General Qualities: Intelligent, ingenious, original, inventive, innovative, rebellious, reformative, humanistic, friendly, altruistic, sociable

Dark Side: Impersonal, require too much freedom, rebels without a cause, scatterbrained, irresponsible, and emotionally detached

Element: Fixed air

Planet: Uranus

Day: Saturday

Theme: Friendship

Parts of the Body: Ankles, shins, and the circulatory system

Color: Purple

Gemstone: Sapphire

Musical Note: A sharp

Hebrew Letter: *Tzadik* ז

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The righteous and the saint, the fish hook

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 17, connecting Foundation and Eternity

Tarot Card: The Star

Movies: *Star Wars*, the *Star Trek* movies, all science-fiction movies, *Powder*, *Hair*, *Rebel Without a Cause*

Affirmation: “I attract beneficial friends and organizations to my life. I am a beacon of awareness and hope to the rest of humankind.”



Pisces: The Mystic

February 19 to March 20

Key Phrase: “I believe”—the leap of faith

General Qualities: Mystical, poetic, sensitive, compassionate, multitalented, psychic, emotional, perceptive, receptive, intuitive, graceful, imaginative, and creative

Dark Side: Confused, prone to addiction, frequent inferiority complexes, dependent and codependent, escapist, self-pitying, lacking boundaries, lethargic, indolent, submissive, and unrealistic

Element: Mutable water

Planet: Neptune, ruler of the oceans

Day: Thursday

Theme: Mysticism

Parts of the Body: Feet, immune system, and lymphatic system

Color: Red-violet

Gemstone: Amethyst

Musical Note: B, the last tone in the musical scale

Hebrew Letter: *Kuf* פ

Kabbalistic Meaning of Letter: The back of the head

Path in the Tree of Life: Path 18, connecting Victory and Kingdom

Tarot Card: The Moon