

SEFER YETZIRAH 4.7



**משנה ז': שבעה כוכבים בעולם שבתאי צדק מאדים חמה
נוגה כוכב לבנה. שבעה ימים בשנה שבעת ימי השבוע. שבעה
שערים בנפש זכר ונקבה שתי עינים שתי אזנים שני נקבי האף
והפה:**

4.7: Seven planets in the Universe: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. Seven days in the Year: The seven days of the week. Seven gates in the Soul, male and female: Two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, and the mouth. (*Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan translation*)

4:7 Seven planets in the world, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon, and Saturn . Seven days in the year, seven gates in the person, male and female, two eyes, two ears, two tunnels of the nose, and the mouth. (*Doc Benton translation*)

The seven gates in the person are identified as the two eyes, the two ears, the two tunnels of the nose, and the mouth. In the passages that follow, each of these will be assigned to a letter, and the pattern will be that the upper three paths found on the *Tree of Life* will be assigned to the right, and the lower paths to the left. This is nice because it associates the upper part of the *tree* also with giving and formlessness and the bottom part of the *tree* with receiving and physical structure. However, this is another one of those areas where there is disagreement between the major versions of the text. Nonetheless, what is important is the repetition of pattern. The text wants to say that *seven* represents a fundamental pattern, and that we create complexity in the world by simply *exchanging* one background for another as we repeat the pattern. The actual letter assignments are less important.

For the most part, I am following the pattern found in the *GRA*, but I am also making what I consider to be a few improvements. As will be seen in my chapter on the *Tree of Life*, the seven double letters are assigned to the vertical paths of the *Tree of Life* in a pattern from top to bottom of *right-left-center-right-left-center-center*. If we follow this pattern with the seven gates, then we can argue that the sense of smell is the least structured of the senses while hearing, which in humans requires information to be assembled along a linear timeline, is the most structured of the senses. And sight which, by itself, provides geometric structure, but not the verbal analysis that is given by the conscious mind, is intermediate in structure between smelling and hearing.

Thus, it makes the most sense to me to assign *bet*, the letter on the upper right, formless side of the tree, to the right tunnel, *gimmel*, the letter on the upper left, structured side of the tree, to the right ear, and *dalet*, the letter on the upper central column, to the right eye. Similarly, we'll assign *kaf* to the left tunnel, *peh* to the left ear, and *resh* to the left eye. And finally, *tav* corresponds to the mouth.

In terms of planetary correspondences, we now have *Jupiter* and *Venus* corresponding to the right and left tunnels of the nose, *Sun* and *Moon* corresponding to the right and left eyes, *Mars* and *Mercury* corresponding to the right and left ears, and *Saturn* corresponding to the mouth. Those who are familiar with astrology will know that this works out quite well!

THE GATES

| <i>Letters</i> | <i>Assembler</i> | <i>GRA</i> | <i>Short</i> | <i>Long</i> | <i>Saadia</i> |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Bet | right tunnel | right eye | right eye | mouth | mouth |
| Gimmel | right ear | right ear | left eye | right eye | right eye |
| Dalet | right eye | right tunnel | right ear | left eye | left eye |
| Kaf | left tunnel | left eye | left ear | right tunnel | right tunnel |
| Peh | left ear | left ear | right tunnel | left tunnel | left tunnel |
| Resh | left eye | left tunnel | left tunnel | right ear | right ear |
| Tav | mouth | mouth | mouth | left ear | left ear |