

## WHAT IS KABBALAH ?

Kabbalah is a Jewish spiritual philosophy which illuminates the nature of God, the creation of the world, the descent of the soul, and the purpose of life on this earth and beyond. Grounded in traditional Jewish religious practice (belief in the sacredness of the Torah and the observance of the 613 “mitzvot” or instructions) the seminal literature of this mystical system first appeared in scholarly Medieval Jewish circles.

*The Zohar* or Book of Brilliance appeared around the end of the 13th century and was offered as a compilation of ancient esoteric wisdom. Much of the material was presented in parables and legends that provide unique and profound interpretations of the Old Testament. The development of the system of *Sephirot* (energy emanations of the Divine arranged on a Cosmic Tree of Life) continued, with implications for use by adepts in prayer, devotion, spiritual evolution and planetary healing.

The 16th and 17th century Kabbalists of *S’fat* in Northern Israel, and the miracle working Rabbis of 18th and 19th century Eastern Europe, added new dimensions to the study, teaching and application of Kabbalah to both personal and community life. Many translations and further commentaries on the *Zohar* followed; but all shared the original focus on a dynamic universe in which the polarities of Divine Masculine and Divine Feminine must be brought into balance for the good of all sentient beings.

This very complex system has a truly simple goal; to teach us that human beings hold the imprint of the Divine and have within them the faculties and capacity to bring down the flow of light energy into this physical dimension.

Humans, created in God’s image, are thus endowed with the ability to serve as the bridge between heaven and earth and are therefore capable of impacting on the direction of the universe towards an enlightened future.

Numerous contemporary books on Kabbalah are now available in modern languages, to guide us through this energy system which contains profound psychological and spiritual insights. Growth centers that specialize in Jewish mysticism and courses in a variety of settings add to our capacity to access the system for personal growth and healing.

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