

# Kabbalah for Beginners

*4th Edition*



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Rav Michael Laitman, PhD

# KABBALAH FOR BEGINNERS

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www.kabbalah.info      info@kabbalah.info

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## INTRODUCTION

Scientists have been studying the laws of Nature, our behavior, and our place in the world for thousands of years. Yet, these days, scientists are realizing that the more they advance in their research, the more confusing they find the world to be.

While science has undoubtedly brought enormous progress to our lives, there are boundaries beyond which it cannot penetrate. For instance, scientific tools cannot measure the human soul, or the basic motivation for our actions. If it could, we would be able to “program” people to behave as we wish. But because we cannot perceive our most essential motivations, we humans, the apex of Creation, are still unaware of why we come into this world!

Man has always been searching for the answers to life’s most basic questions: “Who am I?” “What is the

purpose of my life?” “Why does the world exist?” “Do we continue to exist after our physical being has ended?”

In the absence of sufficient answers, some find temporary refuge in Eastern teachings, meditations, or techniques that minimize personal expectations and reduce the suffering caused by disillusionment.

However, experience teaches us that we can never satisfy all our desires; therefore, we will always experience some degree of discontentment. Yet, at the deepest level of our being, the true basis for suffering arises from our inability to answer life’s most fundamental question: “Why am I here?”

Kabbalah answers this very question, and in doing so, guides us toward complete and lasting satisfaction. It teaches us how to access the essential feeling of the spiritual realm—the sixth sense—and thus improve our lives in this world. With it, we can perceive the Upper World—the Creator—and assume control over our lives.

The Bible, *The Book of Zohar*, *The Tree of Life*, *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*, and other authentic Kabbalistic sources were given to us to promote us in the spiritual realms. With their help, we can obtain spiritual knowledge. They explain how we can turn our lives in this world into a path to spiritual ascent.

Over the generations, Kabbalists have written many books in various styles, each adapted to the era in which they lived. Similarly, *Kabbalah for Beginners* has been written to help you take your first steps towards understanding



the roots of human behavior and the laws of Nature. The contents present the essential principles of the wisdom of Kabbalah and describe how these principles work. This book is intended for those searching for a reliable method of studying our world. It is written for those seeking to understand the reasons for suffering and pleasure, who strive to take charge over their lives and make them the exciting and joyous journeys they can be.

\* This book is based on essays and lectures given by Rav Michael Laitman, PhD, which were then edited by staff members of the Ashlag Research Institute (ARI).



# PART ONE

## The History of Kabbalah

**T**here is no real difference between the history of Kabbalah and the history of the world, except that Kabbalah tells the same story from the spiritual perspective. It is similar to examining our lives from two very different perspectives. From the historical perspective, our past is a sequence of events that happened to us or to our ancestors, while from the Kabbalistic perspective, our past is a sequence of spiritual events, expressed in a series of scenes we call “life on Earth.”

As we will see in Part Three, history isn’t really “unfolding” in Kabbalah; rather, it is experienced within each and every one of us separately. Kabbalists don’t relate to the external reality as a tangible reality, but explain that what we perceive as “external” is really a reflection of images that exist only within us.

Part One of the book will discuss the history of Kabbalah as experiences that occurred in the physical world. Part Two will explore the origin and structure of reality. Part Three will examine our inner reality, and Part Four combines all three into one coherent, practical worldview.

# 1

## KABBALAH CHRONICLES

The Rambam (Maimonides), a great 12<sup>th</sup> century Kabbalist, wrote that thousands of years ago, when humanity was deep in idol worship, one man couldn't go with the flow. His name was Abraham, and today we know him as "Abraham the Patriarch." Abraham pondered and searched until he found the truth: that the world had only *one* leader.

When he discovered this, he realized he had uncovered life's eternal truth, and ran to share it with the world. To clarify his message, he developed a method that helped him explain his perceptions more clearly. Since then, the world has had a method that reveals this truth. Today this method is as valid as it was then, and we call it "the wisdom of Kabbalah."

## STAGE ONE

In Chapter One of his book, *The Mighty Hand*, Maimonides describes how there was a time when people knew that there was only one force governing the world. He explained that after some time, due to a prolonged spiritual decline, they all forgot it. Instead, people believed that there were many forces in the world, each with its own responsibilities. Some forces were responsible for food provision, some were meant to help us marry more successfully, and some were in charge of keeping us wealthy and healthy.

But one man, whom we now know as Abraham, noticed that all these forces obeyed the same rules of birth and death, budding and withering. To discover what those rules were, he began to study Nature. Abraham's research taught him that there was really only one force, and everything else was only a partial manifestation of it. This was Stage One of the spiritual evolution of humanity.




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Perhaps one of the best known Native American traditions is the Council Circle. Here, the members sit in a circle, each member expressing a different aspect of the same issue. Similarly, Abraham didn't want to see things only from his perspective. He wanted to see through everyone's eyes, and thus discover the one force that made different people see different things.

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Once Abraham discovered this truth, he began to spread the word. Challenged by having to explain a concept that contradicted everything his contempo-

raries believed, Abraham was forced to develop a teaching method that would help him reveal this concept to them. This was the prototype of the teaching method we now call “Kabbalah” (from the Hebrew word, *Lekabel*, to receive). Today, Kabbalah teaches us how to discover the force that guides us, and in doing so, receive infinite joy and pleasure.

We will talk about Abraham’s discovery in greater detail later in the book, but we should mention here that the essence of his discovery is that the universe is “obeying” a force of love and giving. This force is what Abraham and all the prophets in the Bible call “The Creator.” When Biblical figures speak of the Creator, or the Lord, or God, they speak not of a being, but of a force of love and giving, and how they perceive it. If we keep this in mind, we will find the method of Kabbalah very clear and easy to understand.

Abraham’s discovery was no coincidence. It arrived just in time to counter an outbreak of egoism and selfishness that threatened to destroy both the love and unity among people, and between humankind and the Creator.

This unity was the natural way of life for humanity prior to the time of the Tower of Babel. This is what the Bible means by, “And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech” (Genesis 11:1). Everyone knew about the Creator, the force of love and giving, and all were united with it. People experienced it as part of their lives, and they didn’t need to “work” on their unity, as is done today, because no egoism was setting them apart.

This is why the Bible writes that they were of “one language” and “one speech.”

But as soon as people’s egoism began to develop, they wanted to use their unity for their own benefit. This prompted the Creator’s concern. Put differently, the force of love had to act to counter humankind’s egoism-caused separation. In the words of Genesis, “The Lord said, ‘Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. ...and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them’” (Genesis 11:6).

To save humanity from its own egoism, the Creator, the single force discovered by Abraham, could do one of two things: disperse humanity and thus prevent a catastrophic clash of self-interests, or teach people how to overcome their egoism.

The latter option offered an obvious benefit: if people remained united despite their egoism, they would not only retain their way of life, they would actually unite even more closely with the Creator. In other words, the efforts to bond, despite their growing egoism, would force people to become much more aligned and united with both the Creator and each other.

Here’s an illustration of this principle: Imagine you are rich and want a shiny new Jaguar. This is no big deal; you just walk into the nearest dealership and come out driving the car of your dreams. How long do you think your pleasure would last? A week? Probably even less. And how much would you really care about your new



Jag, which demanded nothing more than a visit to the dealership to get it?

But if you were *not* well off and had to work two shifts for two whole years to get that Jaguar, you would undoubtedly love and appreciate your car very much. The effort you put into “attaching” yourself to it would make that car much more important to you.

This is the benefit of bonding with the Creator despite growing egoism. Egoism serves an important purpose: it is there to give you something to strive to overcome, a “practice field” where you can make efforts that will make you appreciate the force of love—the Creator.

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(Abraham thought): “How is it possible that this wheel will always steer without a driver? And who is driving it? After all, it cannot drive itself! And he had no teacher, and no one to let him know. Instead, he was... surrounded by idolaters, fools. And his father and his mother, and all the people were idolaters. And he, too, was idol worshipping with them. And his heart roamed and understood, until he attained the path of truth.”



—Maimonides, *Yad HaChazakah (The Mighty Hand)*, Idolatry Rules

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So the Creator revealed Himself to Abraham to show him how humanity could “practice” and “work” at loving the Creator, and thus become closer to Him. This is also why Abraham was such an enthusiastic disseminator of his method. He knew that time was of the essence: either he taught his people how to unite through bonding with

the Creator—the force of love—or their growing egoism would alienate them from one another and they would disperse or kill each other off.

As the Bible and other ancient Hebrew texts teach us, the Babylonians rejected and scorned Abraham's offer. Abraham confronted their king, Nimrod, and proved that his method could work. But instead of adopting it, Nimrod attempted to assassinate Abraham. Now, with his life at stake, Abraham fled from Babylon and began to teach his method while roaming "from town to town and from kingdom to kingdom, until he arrived in the Land of Israel" (Maimonides, *The Mighty Hand*, Idolatry Rules, Chapter 1).

Despite hardships and challenges, Abraham's teachings gained some support, and his followers helped him share his knowledge with others, filling the ranks with "new recruits." In time, the lone fighter for truth had multiplied, creating a nation whose name, "the nation of Israel," symbolizes the one thing they had in common—their desire for the Creator. The word "Israel" is really a combination of two Hebrew words: *Yashar* (straight) and *El* (God). The people of Israel are those who have one desire in their hearts: to be like the Creator, united by altruism and love.

The collapse of the Tower of Babel was not, however, the end of the story, but only the beginning. The force of love, which Abraham had discovered, wanted to tighten its bond with humanity. But since the Creator is a force of love, and loves us as much as anyone can love

another, the only tightening of the bond can come from us. Hence, this force, the Creator, keeps increasing our egoism, so we may rise above it by strengthening our ties with Him.

For those who want to remain egoists, increased egoism means greater alienation. As a result, the people who were once united split into different nations and invented new technologies with which they could create new weapons. They used these weapons to protect what they thought was their freedom, but which was actually their increased self-centeredness and alienation from the Creator and from one another.

Without noticing it, they became increasingly subjugated to their egoism while mistakenly thinking they were defending themselves from those who wanted to harm them. Their egoism made them forget that when they were united, they hadn't needed weapons, as they had no egoism to make them feel their freedom was threatened.

But those who wanted to remain united, and even deepen their bond of love, treated their increased egoism as an opportunity for growth. To them, it was a welcome challenge, rather than a problem or crisis.

But to cope with their heightened egoism they needed to upgrade Abraham's method. This was Moses' cue. As with the Babylonians and their king, Nimrod, overcoming the new level of egoism—this time represented by the Egyptians and their king, Pharaoh—meant escaping it.

Pharaoh wasn't simply an evil king. He actually brought Israel (those who want the Creator) closer to the Creator. In Kabbalah, Pharaoh is the epitome of egoism, and the only way to escape him is to unite (with each other and with the Creator). As we've seen before, unity makes you closer (more similar) to the Creator. To defeat Pharaoh, Moses returned to Egypt after his escape, united the people around the same idea that Abraham promoted many years previously, and once again helped his people escape.


But this time, Israel defeated a much more powerful ego. Pharaoh was not like Nimrod, King of Babel; he could not be defeated by one determined man. Defeating Pharaoh required a whole, united nation. And because Moses needed to teach Abraham's method to a whole nation, he wrote a new book, an adaptation of Abraham's teachings for an entire nation: The Torah (Pentateuch).

But the Creator, being a force of love and generosity, wanted to give more than to just one nation. He wanted the *whole world* to know that there was only one force and that they would take the gift He wished to give humanity—Himself.

So while Moses' Torah was a big step forward, since it helped a whole nation connect with the Creator, it was not the end of the road. The end of the road will arrive only when the whole world is in touch with Him, experiencing the bond of love and unity that the ancient Babylonians did, before the first outbreak of egoism. Put

differently, the end of the road will arrive when all of humanity reclaims what it once had, and then lost.

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In the article, "The Essence of the Wisdom of Kabbalah," Kabbalist Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag  describes the purpose of Creation as a "single, exalted goal described as 'the revelation of His Godliness to His creatures in this world.'" 

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## STAGE TWO

The second stage in humanity's spiritual evolution started about two thousand years ago, when *The Book of Zohar*, the most important book of Kabbalah, was written and then concealed. It was written shortly after the people of Israel were exiled for what was to be their last and longest exile.

Just like Abraham and Moses in Stage One, the second stage had two giants of its own: Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochai (Rashbi) and The Holy Ari (Rabbi Isaac Luria). Rashbi's *Book of Zohar* is, as the book itself states, a commentary on the Torah. Just as Moses explained Abraham's words to the entire nation, *The Book of Zohar* is intended to explain Moses' words to the entire world. This is why one often reads that *The Book of Zohar* is destined to appear in the time of the Messiah, at the "end of days." It is also why Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, the great twentieth-century Kabbalist, wrote that the rediscovery of *The Book of Zohar* is proof that the "days of the Messiah" are here.

As always, the only antidote to a rise in egoism is unity, and the greater the egoism, the more important it is for people to unite. At first, uniting Abraham's followers and family was enough. Then, when Moses fled from Egypt, he had to unite a whole nation in order to succeed. Today, we need to unite the whole of humanity. Egoism has reached such intensity that unless the whole of humankind unites to overcome it, we will not succeed.




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"I have found it written that the above decree to not openly engage in the wisdom of truth was only for a time—until the end of 1490. From then on ...the sentence has been lifted, and permission has been given to engage in *The Book of Zohar*. And from the year 1540 it has become praiseworthy to engage in great numbers, since it is by this virtue that the Messiah King will come, and not by another virtue."

-- Rabbi Avraham Azulai

Introduction to the book, *Ohr ha Chama (Light of the Sun)*

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The second stage in the process of humanity's bonding with the Creator was very different from the first. It was a time of subtle growth, when the tool to unite humanity—the wisdom of Kabbalah—was being refined and improved in dimly lit rooms and within small, inconspicuous groups. This is why the two most significant works of that period, Rashbi's *Book of Zohar* and the Ari's *Tree of Life*, were hidden by their own au-

thors as soon as they were completed. They resurfaced many years later, and in the case of *The Zohar*, many centuries later.

### STAGE THREE

The third and last stage of humanity's spiritual evolution began in the 1990s. In 1945, Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag, author of the *Sulam* (Ladder) commentary on *The Book of Zohar*, predicted that the final stage would begin in 1995. Similarly, the Vilna Gaon (GRA) wrote in his book, *The Voice of the Turtledove*, that this stage would begin in 1990. Many other Kabbalists made similar predictions, leading to the conclusion that the future is already here, and now is the time to unite as one and defeat egoism once and for all.

Humanity's entire history is paved with battles against egoism, followed by attempts to unite despite it. Today, most scientists agree that man's self-centeredness and misunderstanding of Nature's rules are the causes of all that is wrong with our world. Yehuda Ashlag wrote about this in the 1930s and 1940s, but in those days, he was a voice in the wilderness.

In recent years it has become evident that unless we change ourselves, the world will not change for the better. In fact, we are ruining our planet and our society in so many ways that solving the problems separately has become impossible. To solve our problems, we need an inclusive solution, which can only be found when we

transform human egoism into altruism, and bond with the force of love—the Creator.

In his article, “Peace in the World,” Ashlag writes that if we unite, every single member of humankind will personally experience the Creator in the deepest sense of the word, as it is written, “they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them” (Jeremiah 31:33). The wisdom of Kabbalah has been prepared as a method that can help us do just that—unite—and experience the Creator. In his “Introduction to the Book of Zohar,” Ashlag wrote that if we integrate Kabbalah into our day-to-day lives, we will achieve the goal for which we were created, and we will again be “of one language and of one speech,” at one with the Creator, and we will never to part again.



## APPENDIX TWO FURTHER READING

Now that you have finished *Kabbalah for Beginners*, you must be wondering what's next. This appendix will help you decide.

We have divided the books into four categories—Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced, and All Around. The first three categories are divided by the level of prior knowledge readers are required to have. The fourth category, All Around, includes books that you can always enjoy, whether you are a complete novice or well versed in Kabbalah.

If *Kabbalah for Beginners* is your first book published by Laitman Kabbalah Publishers or Upper Light Publishing, we recommend that you read one more book for beginners, but with a different perspective, such as

*Kabbalah, Science and the Meaning of Life* or *From Chaos to Harmony* before you move on to the intermediate level.

## BEGINNERS

### ***Kabbalah Revealed***

This is a clearly written, reader-friendly guide to making sense of the surrounding world. Each of its six chapters focuses on a different aspect of the wisdom of Kabbalah, illuminating the teachings and explaining them using various examples from our day-to-day lives.

The first three chapters in *Kabbalah Revealed* explain why the world is in a state of crisis, how our growing desires promote progress as well as alienation, and why the biggest deterrent to achieving positive change is rooted in our own spirits. Chapters Four through Six offer a prescription for positive change. In these chapters, we learn how we can use our spirits to build a personally peaceful life in harmony with all of Creation.

### ***Wondrous Wisdom***

This book offers an initial course on Kabbalah. Like all the books presented here, *Wondrous Wisdom* is based solely on authentic teachings passed down from Kabbalist teacher to student over thousands of years. At the heart of the book is a sequence of lessons revealing the nature of Kabbalah's wisdom and explaining how to attain it. For every person questioning "Who am I really?" and "Why am I on this planet?" this book is a must.

### ***Awakening to Kabbalah***

A distinctive, personal, and awe-filled introduction to an ancient wisdom tradition. In this book, Rav Laitman offers a deeper understanding of the fundamental teachings of Kabbalah, and how you can use its wisdom to clarify your relationship with others and the world around you.

Using language both scientific and poetic, he probes the most profound questions of spirituality and existence. This provocative, unique guide will inspire and invigorate you to see beyond the world as it is and the limitations of your everyday life, become closer to the Creator, and reach new depths of the soul.

### ***Kabbalah, Science, and the Meaning of Life***

Science explains the mechanisms that sustain life; Kabbalah explains why life exists. In *Kabbalah, Science, and the Meaning of Life*, Rav Laitman combines science and spirituality in a captivating dialogue that reveals life's meaning.

For thousands of years Kabbalists have been writing that the world is a single entity divided into separate beings. Today the cutting-edge science of quantum physics states a very similar idea: that at the most fundamental level of matter, we are all literally one.

Science proves that reality is affected by the observer who examines it; and so does Kabbalah. But Kabbalah makes an even bolder statement: even the Creator, the Maker of reality, is within the observer. In other words, God is inside of us; He doesn't exist anywhere else. When we pass away, so does He.

These earthshaking concepts and more are eloquently introduced so that even readers new to Kabbalah or science will easily understand them. Therefore, if you're just a little curious about why you are here, what life means, and what you can do to enjoy it more, this book is for you.

### ***From Chaos to Harmony***

Many researchers and scientists agree that the ego is the reason behind the perilous state our world is in today. Laitman's groundbreaking book not only demonstrates that ego has been the basis for all suffering throughout human history, but also shows how we can turn our plight to pleasure.

The book contains a clear analysis of the human soul and its problems, and provides a "roadmap" of what we need to do to once again be happy. *From Chaos to Harmony* explains how we can rise to a new level of existence on personal, social, national, and international levels.

## **INTERMEDIATE**

### ***The Kabbalah Experience***

The depth of the wisdom revealed in the questions and answers within this book will inspire readers to reflect and contemplate. This is not a book to race through, but rather one that should be read thoughtfully and carefully. With this approach, readers will begin to experience a growing sense of enlightenment while simply absorbing

the answers to the questions every Kabbalah student asks along the way.

*The Kabbalah Experience* is a guide from the past to the future, revealing situations that all students of Kabbalah will experience at some point along their journeys. For those who cherish every moment in life, this book offers unparalleled insights into the timeless wisdom of Kabbalah.

### ***The Path of Kabbalah***

This unique book combines beginners' material with more advanced concepts and teachings. If you have read a book or two of Laitman's, you will find this book very easy to relate to.

While touching upon basic concepts such as perception of reality and Freedom of Choice, *The Path of Kabbalah* goes deeper and expands beyond the scope of beginners' books. The structure of the worlds, for example, is explained in greater detail here than in the "pure" beginners' books. Also described is the spiritual root of mundane matters such as the Hebrew calendar and the holidays.

## **ADVANCED**

### ***The Science of Kabbalah***

Kabbalist and scientist Rav Michael Laitman, PhD, designed this book to introduce readers to the special language and terms of the authentic wisdom of Kabbalah. Here, Rav Laitman reveals authentic Kabbalah in a manner both rational and mature. Readers are gradually led

to understand the logical design of the Universe and the life that exists in it.

The Science of Kabbalah, a revolutionary work unmatched in its clarity, depth, and appeal to the intellect, will enable readers to approach the more technical works of Baal HaSulam (Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag), such as *The Study of the Ten Sefirot* and *The Book of Zohar*. Readers of this book will enjoy the satisfying answers to the riddles of life that only authentic Kabbalah provides. Travel through the pages and prepare for an astonishing journey into the Upper Worlds.

### ***Introduction to the Book of Zohar***

This volume, along with *The Science of Kabbalah*, is a required preparation for those who wish to understand the hidden message of *The Book of Zohar*. Among the many helpful topics dealt with in this text is an introduction to the “language of roots and branches,” without which the stories in *The Zohar* are mere fable and legend. *Introduction to the Book of Zohar* will provide readers with the necessary tools to understand authentic Kabbalah as it was originally meant to be, as a means to attain the Upper Worlds.

## **ALL AROUND**

### ***Attaining the Worlds Beyond***

From the introduction to *Attaining the Worlds Beyond*: “...Not feeling well on the Jewish New Year in September 1991, my teacher called me to his bedside and handed me his notebook, saying, “Take it and learn from it.” The

following morning, my teacher perished in my arms, leaving me and many of his other disciples without guidance in this world.

He used to say, “I want to teach you to turn to the Creator, rather than to me, because He is the only strength, the only Source of all that exists, the only One who can really help you, and He awaits your prayers for help. When you seek help in your search for freedom from the bondage of this world, help in elevating yourself above this world, help in finding the self, and help in determining your purpose in life, you must turn to the Creator, who sends you all those aspirations in order to compel you to turn to Him.”

*Attaining the Worlds Beyond* holds within it the content of that notebook, as well as other inspiring texts. This book reaches out to all those seekers who want to find a logical, reliable way to understand the world’s phenomena. This fascinating introduction to the wisdom of Kabbalah will enlighten the mind, invigorate the heart, and move readers to the depths of their souls.

### ***Basic Concepts in Kabbalah***

This is a book to help readers cultivate an *approach to the concepts* of Kabbalah, to spiritual objects, and to spiritual terms. By reading and re-reading in this book, one develops internal observations, senses, and approaches that did not previously exist within. These newly acquired observations are like sensors that “feel” the space around us that is hidden from our ordinary senses.

Hence, *Basic Concepts in Kabbalah* is intended to foster the contemplation of spiritual terms. Once we are integrated with these terms, we can begin to see, with our inner vision, the unveiling of the spiritual structure that surrounds us, almost as if a mist has been lifted.

Again, this book is not aimed at the study of facts. Instead, it is a book for those who wish to awaken the deepest and subtlest sensations they can possess.



## APPENDIX THREE ABOUT BNEI BARUCH

Bnei Baruch is a group of Kabbalists in Israel, sharing the wisdom of Kabbalah with the entire world. Study materials in over 20 languages are based on authentic Kabbalah texts that were passed down from generation to generation.

### HISTORY AND ORIGIN

In 1991, following the passing of his teacher, Rabbi Baruch Shalom HaLevi Ashlag (The Rabash), Rav Michael Laitman, Professor of Ontology and the Theory of Knowledge, PhD in Philosophy and Kabbalah, and MSc in Medical Bio-Cybernetics, established a Kabbalah study group called “Bnei Baruch.” He called it Bnei Baruch (“Sons of Baruch”) to commemorate the memory of his mentor, whose side he never left in the

final twelve years of his life, from 1979 to 1991. Rav Laitman had been Ashlag's prime student and personal assistant, and is recognized as the successor to Rabash's teaching method.

The Rabash was the firstborn son and successor of Rabbi Yehuda Leib HaLevi Ashlag, the greatest Kabbalist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Rabbi Ashlag authored the most authoritative and comprehensive commentary on *The Book of Zohar*, titled *The Sulam Commentary (The Ladder Commentary)*. He was the first to reveal the complete method for spiritual ascent, and thus was known as Baal HaSulam ("Owner of the Ladder").

Today, Bnei Baruch bases its entire study method on the path paved by these two great spiritual leaders.

## THE STUDY METHOD

The unique study method developed by Baal HaSulam and his son, the Rabash, is taught and applied on a daily basis by Bnei Baruch. This method relies on authentic Kabbalah sources such as *The Book of Zohar*, by Rabbi Shimon Bar-Yochai, *The Tree of Life*, by the Holy Ari, and *The Study of the Ten Sefirot*, by Baal HaSulam.

While the study relies on authentic Kabbalah sources, it is carried out in simple language and uses a scientific, contemporary approach. Developing this approach has made Bnei Baruch an internationally respected organization, both in Israel and in the world at large.

The unique combination of an academic study method and personal experiences broadens the students' perspective and awards them a new perception of the reality they live in. Those on the spiritual path are thus given the necessary tools to research themselves and their surrounding reality.

### THE MESSAGE

Bnei Baruch is a diverse movement of many thousands of students worldwide. Students can choose their own paths and the personal intensity of their studies, according to their unique conditions and abilities. The essence of the message disseminated by Bnei Baruch is universal: "unity of the people, unity of nations and love of man."

For millennia, Kabbalists have been teaching that love of man should be the foundation of all human relations. This love prevailed in the days of Abraham, Moses, and the group of Kabbalists that they established. If we make room for these seasoned, yet contemporary values, we will discover that we possess the power to put differences aside and unite.

The wisdom of Kabbalah, hidden for millennia, has been waiting for the time when we would be sufficiently developed and ready to implement its message. Now, it is emerging as a solution that can unite diverse factions everywhere, better enabling us, as individuals and as a society, to meet today's challenges.

## ACTIVITIES

Bnei Baruch was established on the premise that “only by expansion of the wisdom of Kabbalah to the public can we be awarded complete redemption” (Baal HaSulam).

Therefore, Bnei Baruch offers a variety of ways for people to explore and discover the purpose of their lives, providing careful guidance for the beginners and the advanced student alike.

### ***Kabbalah Today***

*Kabbalah Today* is a free monthly paper produced and disseminated by Bnei Baruch. It is apolitical, non-commercial, and written in a clear, contemporary style. Its purpose is to expose the vast body of knowledge hidden in the wisdom of Kabbalah at no cost and in a clear, engaging format and style for readers everywhere.

*Kabbalah Today* is distributed for free in every major U.S. city, as well as in Toronto, Canada, London, England, and Sydney, Australia. It is printed in English, Hebrew, and Russian, and is also available on the Internet, at [www.kabtoday.com](http://www.kabtoday.com).

Additionally, a hard copy of the paper is sent to subscribers at delivery cost only.

### **Internet Website**

Bnei Baruch’s homepage, [www.kabbalah.info](http://www.kabbalah.info), presents the authentic wisdom of Kabbalah using essays, books, and original texts. It is the largest Kabbalah website on the net, and contains a unique, extensive library for readers

to thoroughly explore the wisdom of Kabbalah. Additionally, there is a media archive, [www.kabbalahmedia.info](http://www.kabbalahmedia.info), containing more than 5,000 media items, downloadable books, and a vast reservoir of texts, video and audio files in many languages. All of this material is available for free download.

### **Kabbalah Television**

Bnei Baruch established a production company, ARI Films ([www.arifilms.tv](http://www.arifilms.tv)) specializing in the production of educational TV programs throughout the world, and in many languages.

In Israel, Bnei Baruch broadcasts are aired live through cable and satellite on Channel 98 Sunday through Friday. All broadcasts on these channels are free of charge. The programs are adapted specifically for beginners, and do not require prior knowledge of the material. This convenient learning process is complemented by programs featuring Rav Laitman's meetings with publicly known figures in Israel and throughout the world.

Additionally, ARI Films produces educational series and documentaries on DVDs, as well as other visual teaching aids.

### **Kabbalah Books**

Rav Laitman writes his books in a clear, contemporary style based on the key concepts of Baal HaSulam. These books serve as a vital link between today's readers and the original texts. All of Rav Laitman's books are available for

sale, as well as for free download. Rav Laitman has thus far written thirty books, translated into ten languages.

### **Kabbalah Lessons**

As Kabbalists have been doing for centuries, Rav Laitman gives a daily lesson at the Bnei Baruch center in Israel between 3:15-6:00 a.m. Israel time. The lessons are simultaneously translated into six languages: English, Russian, Spanish, German, Italian, and Turkish. In the near future, broadcasts will also be translated into French, Greek, Polish, and Portuguese. As with everything else, the live broadcast is provided gratis to thousands of students worldwide.

### **Funding**

Bnei Baruch is a non-profit organization for teaching and sharing the wisdom of Kabbalah. To maintain its independence and purity of intentions, Bnei Baruch is not supported, funded, or otherwise tied to any government or political organization.

Since the bulk of its activity is provided free of charge, the prime source of funding for the group's activities is donations, tithing—contributed by students on a voluntary basis—and Rav Laitman's books, which are sold at cost.

## HOW TO CONTACT BNEI BARUCH

1057 Steeles Avenue West, Suite 532  
Toronto, ON, M2R 3X1  
Canada

194 Quentin Rd, 2nd floor  
Brooklyn, New York, 11223  
USA

E-mail: [info@kabbalah.info](mailto:info@kabbalah.info)  
Web site: [www.kabbalah.info](http://www.kabbalah.info)

Toll free in USA and Canada:  
1-866-LAITMAN  
Fax: 1-905 886 9697