



WISDOM OF THE KABBALAH

Syllabus

<p>Israelite Academy Summer 2015 Thursday 8:00 – 10:00</p>	<p>Professor: Rabbi Sholomo Ben Levy Office (718) 712-4646 Email: rabbilevy@blackjews.org</p>
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Course Description

This course is intended for the intelligent student of faith. Originally, it was only offered to rabbinical students in the final year of their study. As a prerequisite for this course, a student must have a firm foundation in the Torah, a solid understanding of Judaic practices and beliefs, and the ability to read Hebrew. From this foundation the content of the course attempts to elevate one's mind from the literal and terrestrial understanding of existence into the mystical and metaphysical realms of knowledge. The word Kabbalah derives from the verb קבל meaning “receive.” Therefore, it is received wisdom. Good teachers can provide students with information, but only students with an open heart can truly receive what the Creator has to offer. I pray that your heart is open and receptive to the concepts we will encounter in this seminar.

The methodology of this course was developed by my father, Chief Rabbi Levi Ben Levy, a kaballistic master who inherited the esoteric tradition from his teacher, Chief Rabbi W.A. Matthew, who taught many of the topics presented here in a masonic lodge he founded called “The Royal Order of Ethiopian Hebrews Sons and Daughters of Culture.” In addition, we are using an authoritative text entitled *Meditation and Kabbalah* written by the great zadek, Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan. Through a combination of these sources, the student will acquire an understanding of all the major kaballistic schools of thought. However, our emphasis will be on learning those techniques that allow us to achieve higher spiritual enlightenment—specifically the study of sefirot and gematria.

This course is a gateway into a world of kabballistic mysteries. Mastering these techniques will require a lifetime. This seminar is where your metaphysical journey begins.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, successful students will have acquired the ability to:

- ✓ *Explain* the sefirot.
- ✓ *Apply* gematria to various names, words, and prayers.
- ✓ *Engage* in several forms of kabballistic meditation.

Course Requirements

1. Prompt attendance and thoughtful participation in class discussions 10%
2. Completion of a 5-8 page research paper or portfolio 25%
3. Midterm Exam 25%
4. Final Exam 40%

Necessary Texts

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *Meditation and Kabbalah* (New York: Weiser Books 1989).

Siddur (any Orthodox siddur will be acceptable)

TaNach (must have Hebrew and English text)

Journal (A notebook that you will use to record your kabbalistic experiences)

Class Policy

Respect must be mutually given and received at all times. Although spirited debate is strongly encouraged, all comments should be directed to the professor who will moderate discussion. Improper remarks, refusal to desist, or verbal disruptions will result in disciplinary action.

Attendance and Late Assignments. If a student misses four or more classes he or she may be dropped from the course without refund. Late assignments and makeup exams are given only at the discretion of the professor.

Class Policy. This course follows the rules, regulations, and decisions set by the Israelite Academy and directives of its dean.

Topical Outline and Weekly Assignments

Week 1 August 6	Introduction to Kabbalah Orientation to the course Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, <i>Meditation and Kabbalah</i> , pages 1-15. Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation “The World of Kabbalah” Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal.
Week 2 August 13	The Zohar Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, <i>Meditation and Kabbalah</i> , pages 14-41. Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation “Creation and the Talmudist” Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal
Week 3 August 20	The School of Rabbi Abraham Abulafia Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, <i>Meditation and Kabbalah</i> , pages 55-111. Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation “The Power of Names” Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal
Week 4 August 27 Midterm	Making of the Chariot Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, <i>Meditation and Kabbalah</i> , pages 115-190 (Two Chapters!) Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation “The Mathematics of Kabbalah” Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal
Week 5 September 3	Lurianic Kabbalah “The Ari” Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, <i>Meditation and Kabbalah</i> , pages 199-222 Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation “Etz Chaim: The Tree of Life” Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal

Week 6

September 10

Final Exam

Hasidim

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *Meditation and Kabbalah*, pages 260-307
Rabbi Sholomo Levy, presentation "The Baal Shem Tov and Kavanah"
Homework: Record entry in your prayer journal

