

“What is Kabbalah?”

Over the last few years a religious phenomenon has influenced people from Los Angeles to New York to, believe it or not, Tyler, Texas. This new phenomenon is not new but is hundreds of years old. It is Kabbalah.

The original Kabbalah movement developed in the early Middle Ages as a form of Orthodox Jewish mysticism. The original Kabbalah is based on the idea that God can be known only through ten emanations that enable humans to develop a better understanding of God, through his knowable attributes. It is important that you understand that many people at the core of their beliefs, especially advocates of Kabbalah, do not understand that humans (you and I) can truly know God.

According to Kabbalah, this process of “knowing” the unknowable God (or *ein sof*) is a long and arduous process. Dedicated study and devout adherence to such books as *The Zohar* is the only way one can even approach a personal relationship (understanding) with God.

And while original Kabbalah has its own share of defects and errors, please understand that the celebrity Kabbalah that you see today on TV has nothing to do with the Kabbalah of Orthodox Judaism. Spending \$25.00 for a red string to ward off evil spirits or five bucks for “Kabbalah Water” will bring no one closer to God. All this does is to deceive and offer false hope to desperate people searching for answers to their spiritual questions.

This spiritual desperation is at the root of Kabbalah. One can be an Orthodox Jew searching for ways to become so enlightened that they “understand” all ten emanations of God. Or one can be a follower of the latest religious fad. The root longing for all these people is the desire to know that God loves them – to realize that there is a plan and purpose for their lives.

In other words, they need to have a personal relationship with Messiah Jesus. The Orthodox need to realize that knowing God is not only possible but also what God intended when He created us. The fad followers, many of whom are Jewish by birth and believe this is one way in which to maintain their Jewishness, need to be told that a personal relationship is not a fad but something which can last forever. Please pray over the next three months for followers of Kabbalah – both the original and those “folks” who just spent \$25.00 for a piece of red string to wear around their wrist.

Amy Downey

For more information on Kabbalah from a Christian perspective, contact the Watchman Fellowship or go online to www.equip.org and read the recent article from the *Christian Research Journal*, vol. 28, no. 2.

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The High Holy Days as Believers

Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) begins a ten-day period of spiritual reflection for Jewish people around the world. The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, known as the Days of Awe, are spent seeking atonement (**Kippur** in Hebrew) for all sins committed during the year.

This sounds like a wonderful thing to do and we as Christians should remember the importance of spiritual evaluation. However, the difference is that the Jewish people believe that these actions done over a ten-day period will bring spiritual justification (atonement) until next year, when they have to start the process all over again.

Believers in Jesus understand the reality of Isaiah 64:6 and know that our “very best” is as filthy rags before God. In other words, we can never be good enough, and that is why we need a personal and daily relationship with Messiah Jesus.

Therefore we as believers, Jewish and Gentile, should look at the High Holy Days as a time to remember what Jesus did for us as the ultimate and final sacrifice for our sins. What Jesus did on the cross is the ultimate fulfillment of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Jesus is our High Priest (Heb. 5:1-10), the sinless sacrifice for the world (Isaiah 53:4-6), the mediator between God and man (Heb. 7:11-28), and he is accessible every day of the year (Heb. 6:19-20).

So as the “Days of Awe” begin and conclude this October, please pray for the Jewish people that they will soon realize that true, ultimate and eternal atonement is only available through Messiah Jesus.

More People ... More Names

Since the last newsletter, three new names (souls) have been added to my personal and daily prayer list. Please add these names (which have been changed for privacy reasons) to your daily prayers. If you know of someone who needs Jesus, please let Tzedakah Ministries know by sending an email to info@tzedakahministries.org.

Suzie – lost her mom but needs to find Jesus

Maureen – has a friend in the “Aloha State” who cares deeply for her soul

Jack – searching for answers to eternal questions

Ministry Calendar

October 2 – “Jesus in Yom Kippur” – Franklin Street Baptist Church – Farmerville, Louisiana

October 30 – “Seven Reasons for Jewish Evangelism” – Harvest Fellowship Church – Leedey, Oklahoma

November 14-16 – Ministry Display and Booth – BMA of Texas State Meeting – Waco, Texas

January 10, 2006 – “Seven Reasons for Jewish Evangelism” – Suburban Wood Baptist Church (Harris Co. District WMA), Houston, Texas

January 19, 2006 – “Mothers of the Messiah” – Polk Co. District WMA, Livingston, Texas

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