

THE WISDOM OF THE KABBALAH

Kabbalist Rabbi Michael Laitman, head of the Bnei Baruch Kabbalah Research and Education Institute, will lecture about the wisdom of the Kabbalah in Toronto on October 16. In an interview with Shalom Toronto, Rabbi Laitman explained that studying the Kabbalah can help humanity have a positive influence on the forces at work in the world and reach a high spiritual level to become one with nature and God. A glimpse into Judaism's secret world

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Judaism has a thousand faces, and each trend is unique, with its own tradition and truth. The Kabbalah has always been a mystery to the general population and a riddle piquing the curiosity of many. The Rambam stated that dealing with the Kabbalah was forbidden, because for every four people who studied it, three were driven insane.

Nevertheless, in recent years interest in the Kabbalah has become popular even among non-Jews, and received even more attention when many Israeli artists, to say nothing of Madonna, joined study circles. What is the Kabbalah and why are so many attracted to its mysteries? Last week Shalom Toronto spoke to Rabbi Michael Laitman, PhD, professor of ontology and epistemology, and head of the Bnei Baruch Kabbalah Research and Education Institute.

Shalom Toronto: How would you define the Kabbalah?

Rabbi Laitman: The Kabbalah is a science that explains how the world is constructed and how we can lead happy lives. It is a science like physics and biology. The wisdom of the Kabbalah helps the individual develop his sixth sense, through which he can understand how the world is constructed and how to act. The individual can use the Kabbalah to improve his life and he can use the powers he acquires for his own good and the good of others.

Shalom Toronto: What is that sixth sense you just mentioned?

Rabbi Laitman: People have the ability to develop their sixth sense, which is used to feel the power of nature. The sense is unlimited, and thus it can be used to understand how nature works. For example, I don't know what will happen a minute from now or an hour from now and what will be beneficial for me and what will harm me. By studying the wisdom of the Kabbalah we can learn how nature works, what forces exist and how to change the system in a positive way. We can make the world a better place, especially now that the world is in a state of crisis, it is permissible to divulge the wisdom of the Kabbalah to mankind to help save the world.

Shalom Toronto: Does the Kabbalah have the power to solve global problems?

Rabbi Laitman: The Kabbalah is the answer to all the world's problems because it deals with the world in general. Man is driven by his ego. The development of the ego leads to hatred, despair, drugs, terrorism and air pollution, and for all

those things there is the Kabbalah which teaches us how to relate to the world and our fellow men to reach harmony, to have a positive influence and to reduce human suffering.

Shalom Toronto: How can the Kabbalah solve the problem of air pollution?

Rabbi Laitman: The Kyoto Protocol [an international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions] and other agreements cannot reduce air pollution. Nature has another program. Nature needs to bring us into a state of balance. It is a mistake to think that all we have to do is burn less. What we have to do is understand nature's program and then we will know what path to take. Air pollution is not the main issue, but human thoughts and behavior are what influence nature and everything else is completely marginal.

Shalom Toronto: What is the power of thought and how strong is it?

Rabbi Laitman: The power of human thought is the strongest force, it is not felt, it is a great destructive force, thus it influences the animal, vegetable and mineral worlds of which nature is organized. The more hidden a power, the stronger it is. Through self-correction we can influence the world and nature, and nature is God. God and nature are the same. God and nature have the same value in gematria (Hebrew numerology which assigns a numerical value to each letter).

Shalom Toronto: How does the Kabbalah view the next world?

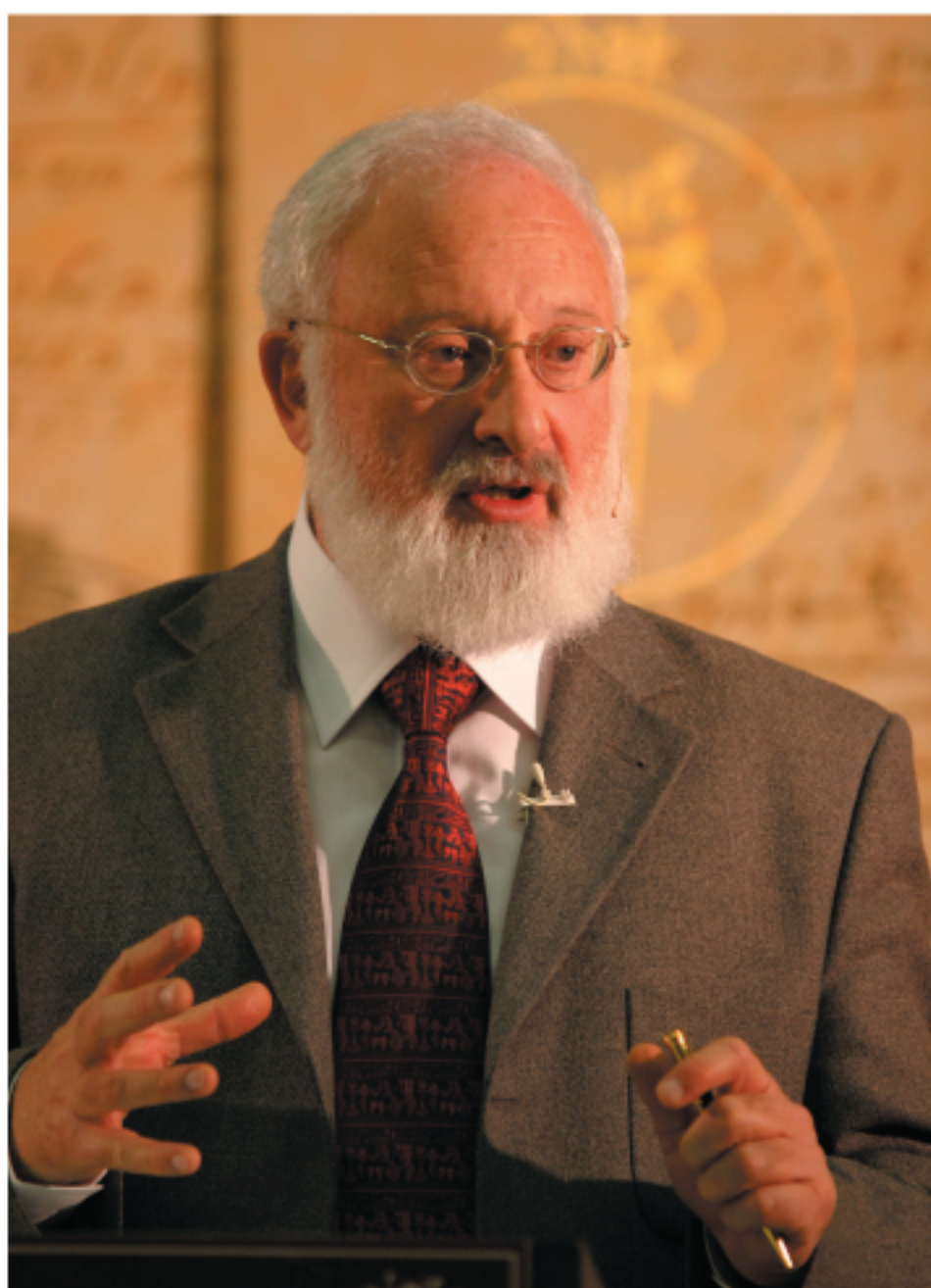
Rabbi Laitman: According to the Kabbalah, there is no such thing. The next world is the perfection an individual can reach in this world. If the individual changes in accordance with God and nature he can sense the next world during his life without dying.

Shalom Toronto: Where does the soul go after death?

Rabbi Laitman: When a person dies his soul has a new sensation. That sensation can be felt during this life before death. If an individual did not develop his soul in this life, his soul will be born again into a new life to give him another opportunity. That can happen a number of times until he develops his soul and senses the next world in this one. If he discovers nature and its forces, his soul has become one with nature, which is in effect God.

Shalom Toronto: Can a person who is not religious study the Kabbalah?

Rabbi Laitman: There are no limitations of Kabbalah study. Everyone can study it and no one will be harmed. The patri-



arch Abraham revealed the wisdom of the Kabbalah when he began to study the world like a scientist.

Shalom Toronto: Are non-Jews like Madonna allowed to study the Kabbalah?

Rabbi Laitman: Yes. Every person must repair himself to repair the world. The role of the Jews is to be the bridge between the wisdom of the Kabbalah and the non-Jewish world.

Shalom Toronto: Is there mysticism in the Kabbalah?

Rabbi Laitman: No, not at all. There is no reference in the Kabbalah to mysticism, nor to holy water nor red threads, and charms and amulets are forbidden. The Kabbalah is a science.

Shalom Toronto: What will you deal with in your lecture in Toronto?

Rabbi Laitman: I want to explain why the world is the way it is today, why there is a global crisis and how we can see the works of the God and live a better life according to our holy Torah. If we don't, anti-Semitism will spread and we will suffer in Canada and the United States and be the most hated of all peoples. Therefore it is up to the Jews to reveal the wisdom of the Kabbalah. Why do they hate us? Because we have a way to repair the world and they blame us for not doing it, and that is why we have to reveal the way to everyone. After the lecture there will be time for questions from the audience and to purchase books and other publications about the Kabbalah. Anyone can find out about the Bnei Baruch movement through the Internet (<http://www.kabbalah.info/>) and participate in Kabbalah lessons.