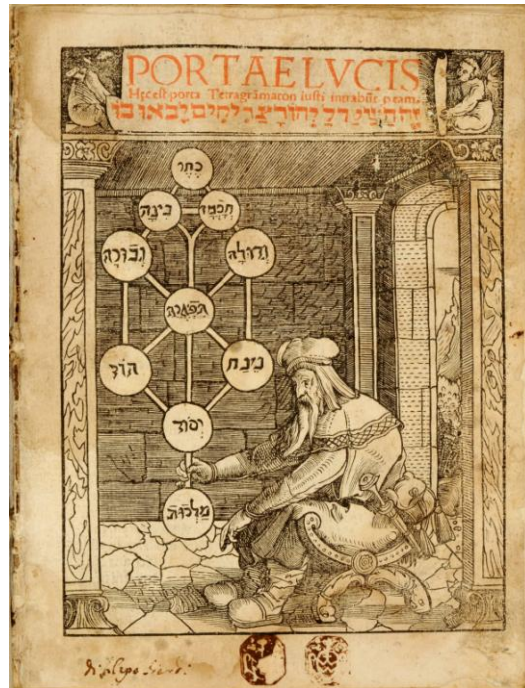
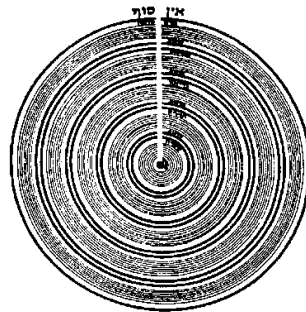


Spiritual Laws: Hidden Wisdom from the Kabbalah



The mystic is a different kind of traveler. Less concerned with destination, the mystic is the lover. Transfixed on the beauty and wisdom of the beloved, the mystic seeks divine union over ego, transcendent experience over titles. In “Spiritual Laws” by Rabbi Douglas Goldhamer with Peggy Bagley in the *Intelligence* issue of Parabola Magazine, the student is given a window into the heart and soul of Jewish mysticism through the hidden wisdom of the Kabbalah.



Pre-Reading Activity:

Many religions have mystic pathways. Identify and define the following terms:
Mysticism.

Kabbalah.

Rabbi.

Critical Thinking Question: How and why does the mystical religious experience differ from conventional religious experience?

Reading Questions:

1- What did people often tell Rabbi Goldhamer when they first met him?

2- How did Rabbi Goldhamer often feel when he heard such statements?

3- What did Rabbi Goldhamer think people were actually saying?

4- How did Rabbi Goldhamer's understanding of their statements change over time?

5- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, how is the universe governed?

6- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, what are each of us hardwired to?

7- What is a question Rabbi Goldhamer often hears?

8- How does Rabbi Goldhamer answer this question?

9- What does Judaism teach about death?

10- What do Jews believe about the soul?

11- What did Einstein teach about energy?

12- What does Kabbalah teach about the composition of everything and how does this connect to a deceased relative?

13- Why does Rabbi Goldhamer encourage the immediate family to say prayers for the deceased every day for a period of eleven months?

14- How are the multiple worlds that exist in this vast geography called the Universe related to one another?

15- What is the *Law of Correspondence*?

16- Explain the *Law of Correspondence*.

17- What did Rabbi Goldhamer learn in high school physics?

18- What did Rabbi Goldhamer learn from psychology?

19- What did the rabbis repeat again and again in rabbinical school?

20- What does biology teach about humans and animals?

21- What does physics teach about atoms and molecules?

22- What does Kabbalah teach about God before creating the universe?

23- Who was Rabbi Menachem Nahum of Chernobyl and what did he write in *The Light of the Eyes*?

24- What did Rabbi Nahum's Kabbalistic theory maintain?

25- What did Rabbi Isaac Luria teach?

26- According to Rabbi Isaac Luria, what is the single most compelling desire of God's?

27- Explain the Divine Providence?

28- How do cause and effect reflect the Law of Correspondence?

29- Why is Yom Kippur a significant day in Judaism?

30- How does prayer make the growth process possible?

31- What is the healing an individual wants for himself a glimpse of?

32- What is the Kabbalistic secret of the Law of Correspondence?

33- What does Kabbalah teach about an individual's desire, will, and prayer for healing?

34- According to Kabbalah, what does God want?

35- How does Kabbalah teach the individual to pray?

36- What is the secret of Jewish karma, hashgaha pratit?

37- What does Kabbalah teach about why humans were given the Torah, the Five Books of Moses?

38- What does the Torah teach?

39- How is God's Presence in our lives like a mirror according to Kabbalah?

40- Why must an individual act in a Godlike manner according to Rabbi Goldhamer?

41- Why must an individual be the kindest person when looking in the mirror?

42- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, where does God reside?

43- What is the *Shechina*?

44- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, what must we do if we want our healing prayers to be efficacious?

45- What do we become when we pray for the Shecina?

46- How do our prayers impact the Shechina?

47- According to the rabbi, why must we bless God again and again?

48- Summarize the story told by Reb Ishmael ben Elisha.

49- How did Ishmael bless the Lord?

50- Why was the innermost part of the Sanctuary the Holy of Holies?

51- When was the High Priest allowed to enter the Holy of Holies?

52- What does the High Priest become completely aware of in the Holy of Holies?

53- How does Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin, the great Kabbalist of nineteenth-century Vilna, explain the purpose of a blessing?

54- What does Rabbi Chaim further teach about a blessing?

55- According to Rabbi Chaim, what is a blessing a prayer for?

56- What did Rabbi Ishmael understand about the deepest truth in God's soul?

57- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, what is a prayer for another person?

58- What did Rabbi Menachem Nahum of Chernobyl write about healing and illness?

59- What is the great Kabbalistic secret?

60- What did Rabbi Ishmael understand about God?

61- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, what are the secrets of Kabbalah and what is Kabbalah a huge textbook on?

62- According to Rabbi Goldhamer, what does Kabbalah teach us?

Enrichment Activity: In Search of Our Ancestors

Throughout the reading, there were references to great spiritual teachers of the past. Select one spiritual teacher mentioned in the article and research more about the individual and the individual's spiritual insights. Create a poster honoring the great teacher. Place your posters around the classroom.

“When I was young, I admired clever people. Now that I am old, I admire kind people.”

~ Abraham Joshua Heschel

