

Can You Say “Kabbalah”?

by Tal Davis

“What’s that red string bracelet you’re wearing?” Abby asked her friend Megan one morning as they were walking into school.

“It’s called a *bendel*,” Megan replied, holding her arm so Abby could get a better look. “I wear it for good luck. It’s part of my *Kabbalah*.”

“Kabba ... what?” Abby asked.

“Kabbalah.”

“Kallabah?” Abby tried.

“Kab-BA-lah,” Megan answered. “You haven’t heard of it? It’s the big thing in Hollywood. Madonna, Britney, and lot of others are into it! You’ve gotta learn about it.”

What Is Kabbalah?

Have you heard of Kabbalah? Even if you cannot say it, possibly you have heard it mentioned on TV or by one of your friends and wondered what she was talking about. The word *Kabbalah* (or *Cabbala*) comes from a Hebrew word that means “to receive or accept.” It refers to an ancient Jewish spiritual movement that utilizes mystical experiences and the study of ancient books.

One book is called the *Zohar* or *Book of Radiance*. It includes several volumes of secret and mystical teachings based on the first five books of the Old Testament, which Jewish people call the Torah. The *Zohar* supposedly explains hidden coded teachings that cannot be understood by just reading the Bible. Followers of Kabbalah believe that its teachers and books discover deeper meanings of the Bible to reveal its “true and more advanced” teachings.

“Secret” Messages? No Way!

Kabbalah is actually a form of the occult disguised as part of Judaism, the religion of Jewish people based on the Old Testament. The occult refers to any belief system that involves hidden teachings, magic, or other supernatural practices.

The Bible warns that followers of Jesus should avoid even playing around with the occult (see Deuteronomy 18:10-12). What’s more, the Bible does not contain secret, hidden, or coded messages. We should study the Bible in the plain, understandable way it is written and follow its clear teachings.

In 2 Timothy 3:14-17, Paul told Timothy not to get sidetracked by strange teachings but to stick to the Scriptures: “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing those from whom you learned, and that from childhood you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is

profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” 

How should Abby respond to Kabbalah? She should simply tell Megan that she doesn’t need to study anything but the Bible and that she follows Jesus, the source of *real* spiritual truth.

The Bible does not contain secret messages.