

SARAH MEDITATION SQUARE

Magic squares are discussed in a number of places in the Kabbalah. A magic square is an array of numbers where every row throughout the square (horizontal, vertical, and the 2 diagonals) each add up to the same number. This painting is a magic square with 10 numbers on each side, where the numbers have been converted into their alphabetic equivalent. Each row in this square, including the 2 diagonal rows, each adds up to 505. 505 is the numerical equivalent of שרה Sarah.

From the writings of the 16th century Kabbalist Rav Yosef Tzayach, it is apparent that magic squares can be used in a very special meditation. Each horizontal row is called a house, and each number is called a room. In a state of meditation, a person inwardly travels from room to room and house to house. Each room is said to contain 10 million colored lights and 10 million miles of space. Rav Tzayach writes that the reasons for the particular numbers in each room are among the deepest mysteries.

The basic spiritual structure discussed in the Kabbalah is the 10 *Sefirot*. The 10 *Sefirot* are 10 aspects of our inner consciousness, and represent 10 aspects of love within every person. Each of the 10 *Sefirot* contains all 10 of the *Sefirot*.

The 10 *Sefirot* are connected to each other by 22 channels of spiritual energy. Each one of the 22 Hebrew letters is associated with one of these channels of spiritual energy.

The Sarah meditation square contains 10 rows which each contain 10 numbers. This reflects the 10 *Sefirot* within each of the 10 *Sefirot*.

The Sarah meditation square contains 22 rows which add up to Sarah (10 horizontal, 10 vertical, and 2 diagonal). This reflects the 22 connecting lines of spiritual energy within the spiritual structure of the 10 *Sefirot*.

The Kabbalah explains that the Torah can be understood on an inner level as inner maps of consciousness. Every character in the Torah reflects an aspect of our inner self. One aspect of Sarah within ourselves, is the aspect of our inner self which is always in a state of joyfulness. Even when we are depressed or in a state of suffering, there is a point deep within our inner heart that is always in the state of thankfulness and joy. The Kabbalah explains that this point in our heart can be experienced through the spiritual consciousness of *Emuna*, which is a consciousness of unconditional love that transcends our normal intellectual state. The inner learning of the Kabbalah discusses the spiritual process of developing this higher awareness.

The Sarah meditation square can be used as a meditation to help us to awaken the inner spiritual aspect of Sarah within ourselves, which is the infinite joyfulness and unconditional love that is always shining in the deepest place in our heart.

Some of this information is taken from Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan's *Meditation and Kabbalah*.