

SHABBAT GUIDE

BAMIDBAR

ABOUT THE STORY OF BAMIDBAR

The word *Bamidbar*, in Aramaic, means "in the desert." We know that a desert is an abandoned place: anyone can go there and do whatever they desire. Throughout the generations, kabbalists have gone into the desert for spiritual reasons. As Rav Berg would teach, one of the reasons kabbalists went into the desert was because that is where the Opponent dwells, and so the desert is the place where we want to build our personal Tabernacle. Our spiritual work is to bring Light to places where there is none.

MICHAEL BERG ON BAMIDBAR

The kabbalists teach that before anything becomes manifest, it first has a root, a seed. And sometimes what happens is that a seed is planted a thousand years prior, and it takes a thousand years for that seed to manifest and become a tree. And what the Midrash is telling us is that Moses saw there was a seed inside the tribe of Dan that would sprout many years later in their great-great-great-great grandchildren that would allow them to think it's a good idea to have the Golden Calf in their land.

We often think that there are two states of being – there's the state before we do something negative, and there's the state when we actually do something negative. But really it's one continuum, because no negative action, even the worst, ever comes out of nowhere. It begins in a seed that is planted – sometimes with a thought, sometimes with a small action – and then it leads to the worse and worse manifestations of negative actions.

Every single one of us today is doing certain things, or allowing certain things to happen, that are not

terrible or might not even be so bad, but are negative nonetheless. If they're not uprooted today, then tomorrow, or next month, or ten years from now, it will lead us to a very negative place.

So the awakening we want to receive on this Shabbat is to really know that there are no little things that we can allow. Remind yourself that there is no such thing as small things; there's no such thing as a little bit of negative thought or action. Everything, every seed, sprouts a tree. Every little thought eventually manifests. Hear the message that Moses gave the tribe of Dan and gives to us on this Shabbat; find those small things and use the power of this Shabbat to begin to uproot those negative seeds today.



CONSCIOUSNESS FOR NEXT WEEK

Naso usually follows the cosmic opening of Shavuot, and connects to its energy of immortality. We must have a complete certainty that the Light is always with us so we can manifest all of the Creator's blessings. This is a week to work on our understanding of Shavuot and the gifts we received. Make time every day to grow your certainty and appreciate your connection to the Light of Shavuot.

CANDLE LIGHTING

We light candles at specific times and with pure intentions in order to establish a connection to the energy available. Like flipping the light switch upon entering a dark room, the simple act of lighting candles initiates a flow of energy.

EVENING CONNECTION (KABBALAT SHABBAT)

On Friday nights, we sing songs, recite kabbalistic prayers, and consume blessed wine and bread. These acts invite the energy of Shabbat into our lives and enhance our connection to the Light.

SHABBAT DINNER

The first of three meals, we bless the wine and bread before enjoying our Shabbat dinner. These kabbalistic blessings help us connect with our inner desire to share.

BIRKAT HAMAZON (PRAYERS AFTER EATING)

After eating the first meal, we engage in the Birkat Hamazon prayer. Reciting this prayer shows our appreciation for the food and our connection to the Light.

MORNING CONNECTION (SHACHARIT)

On Saturday mornings, we gather to recite prayers and meditate on our relationship with the Light. The energy awakened by the Morning Connection awakens the spiritual force of mercy, which helps keep chaos and judgment from our lives.

CONSCIOUSNESS LECTURE

In the Consciousness Lecture, we learn about the portion of the week that will be read during the Torah reading. This lecture helps us truly understand the forthcoming teachings and explains in detail the kabbalistic principles behind the stories.

TORAH READING

The Torah is read aloud, in Hebrew, by a Kabbalah Centre teacher. The stories of the Torah are actually codes that, when decoded, transmit energy and repel negativity for the week to come.

AFTERNOON CONNECTION

In the Afternoon Connection, we engage in prayers that strengthen our connection following the reading of the Torah.

SHABBAT LUNCH

During Shabbat Lunch, we sing a number of songs in Aramaic and Hebrew, many of which were written by history's greatest kabbalists. They help us manifest the Desire to Share aspect of the Morning Connection.

THIRD MEAL

The third meal is the highest point of Shabbat, known for its tremendous healing properties. This includes a blessing for hand washing, a connection with bread, and special prayers and meditations for creating positive change within ourselves and all of humanity.

EVENING CONNECTION

The Evening Connection consists of unique kabbalistic prayer and song. These recitations bring Shabbat to a close and help us determine our energy for the new week to come.

HAVDALAH

Havdalah refers to the verbal declaration made at the end of Shabbat that is recited once the sun sets on Saturday night. We say the Havdalah to demonstrate our appreciation for the Light, and to ask it for spiritual sustenance in the upcoming week.