

# SHABBAT GUIDE

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## VAYERA

### ABOUT THE STORY OF VAYERA

This section is deeply layered with meaning, offering us numerous lessons and spiritual Light for our lives. A single verse may be deciphered and studied for years, yet it will still not have yielded up all its spiritual treasures. When the Zohar's Light is brought to bear—as it is now—even the unworthy are saved. They are purified by the efforts we make each day through the enormous power of this holy Book and of the selfless actions of Abraham the Patriarch.

### MICHAEL BERG ON VAYERA

The portion of Vayera reminds us of one of the important parts of our spiritual work, which is to give up our desire when it is coming up against the Creator's desire. We all have desires and needs that are being met or not being met. But, in order for true spiritual growth to occur, there has to be both a desire and actual removal of our desires in the face of the Creator's desires.

Unless a constant part of our spiritual work is finding what it is we are willing to give up in order to allow more of the Light of the Creator to be revealed in this world, we are not truly revealing Light in this world. We have to ask ourselves this question: in what areas of my life am I pushing away my own desire in order to allow more of the Light of the Creator to be revealed?

On this Shabbat, we want to ask to be given the strength to nullify our desire in front of the Creator's desire. When a person begins to really live his or her life in this way, when every single day you are nullifying this level of your desire in order to allow

more of the Light of the Creator to be revealed, it comes to the point that when you have a true and important desire, the Creator nullifies any judgment or negativity that is standing in front of you. That is the gift and blessing you receive from living in this way. And that is a gift we are given on this Shabbat.



### CONSCIOUSNESS FOR NEXT WEEK

The next portion of the Zohar, Chayei Sarah, challenges us to live for the entire world, not just ourselves. The energy of this week amplifies our inner Light for all humanity. This is a time to be extra mindful about our actions and words, for if we elevate our consciousness we raise that of the whole world.

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## CANDLE LIGHTING

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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.

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## EVENING CONNECTION (KABBALAT SHABBAT)

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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.

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## SHABBAT DINNER

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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.

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## BIRKAT HAMAZON (PRAYERS AFTER EATING)

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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.

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## MORNING CONNECTION (SHACHARIT)

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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.

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## CONSCIOUSNESS LECTURE

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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.

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## TORAH READING

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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.

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## AFTERNOON CONNECTION

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

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## SHABBAT LUNCH

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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.

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## THIRD MEAL

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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.

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## EVENING CONNECTION

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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.

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## HAVDALAH

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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.