

# SHABBAT GUIDE

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## VAYESHEV

### ABOUT THE STORY OF VAYESHEV

After all his trials and tests, Jacob had become complacent. He felt that he had accomplished everything he was supposed to do. It was at this point that his son Joseph was taken from him. From this we learn that we should never rest on our laurels, spiritually speaking. We should always be ready to grow and to undertake the spiritual work that such growth requires.

### MICHAEL BERG ON VAYESHEV

The passage from Prophets that we read after the portion Vayeshev is from the Book of Amos, and it says: "The Creator says, 'I will take from your children to be prophets, and from the young ones, to be Nazirites.'" Here, Nazirites means to be separated from the physicality of this world completely, and therefore connected totally to the Light of the Creator. Rav Ashlag tells us that when we talk about prophecy, it means the ability to bring the Light down to those who are not yet awakened to a connection to the Creator. A prophet is an individual who awakens a connection to the Light of the Creator for others.

When it says in this passage, "I will take from your children," children represent those not yet connected to the Light of the Creator. In previous generations, one had to be of a higher state to be a prophet, to be chosen by the Creator to be a conduit for the Light to be revealed and to inspire others to connect to the Light of the Creator. However, in our generation, anybody who truly desires can become a prophet and can be chosen by the Creator to be the one who brings that Light to the world.

The Negative Side is going to tell us, "No, you're not able, you're not capable." But when that happens,

we have to remind ourselves what it says in this reading from Prophets in the week of the portion Vayeshev: that even the youngest of the young can become a prophet. We have to remind ourselves that it says the Creator will pour an abundance of Light and wisdom down to anybody who awakens a desire to be a prophet. In this generation, the "youngest" of us can become a prophet, a true conduit for the Light of the Creator to come into this world.

The Creator will pour down Light and wisdom to anybody who awakens the desire. And we have the merit on Shabbat Vayeshev to be awakened to both desire and receive this ability in greater and greater ways, to be a conduit to bring this Light to the world, moving all of us closer to the Final Redemption.



### CONSCIOUSNESS FOR NEXT WEEK

Miketz, the next portion of the Zohar, reveals an energy in the universe that gives us strength in our weakest moments. By understanding that everything in our lives comes from the Light, we attach to its essence of pure positivity. This is a week to practice seeing the Light in everything, even negative situations.

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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.