

THE SHABBAT PUPPY

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A little apple tree in the middle of a forest of majestic oaks wants more than anything else to have stars in its branches, as the oaks seem to have. God advises the apple tree to be content as it is and, eventually, the little tree makes a happy discovery.

For many, *Shabbat* is celebrated as a day of rest and spiritual enrichment. The word “*Shabbat*” comes from the Hebrew letters *shin-bet-tav*, meaning to cease, to end, or to rest. It is considered a *mitzvah* (sacred obligation) to remember the Sabbath day and observe it. By doing this, we emulate the divine example, resting on the seventh day as God did when the work of creation was completed. Making *Shabbat* a unique time can take many forms, depending on your family. Remember that *Shabbat* observance can grow and change just as families do.


SHALOM BAYIT

A number of Jewish prayers end with a petition for peace, revealing how central this concept is in Judaism. As an ancient midrash (interpretation) explains: “Those who make peace in their own homes are as if they made peace in all Israel.” Striving to build a home atmosphere that nurtures all family members is certainly a worthwhile goal. *Shabbat* is the perfect place to begin!

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Finding *Shabbat Shalom* (Sabbath peace) can sometimes be a challenge for families with young children (with or without pets like *Mazel!*). Introducing *Shabbat* customs, and adding

to your list on a regular basis, can help create a family oasis in the midst of our often hurried and hectic lives. Help create *Shabbat Shalom* in your family with some of the following ideas, and see where your *Shabbat* adventures lead:

- Spend time outdoors, as Noah and his grampa did: walk, explore and enjoy the changing seasons
- If your child has a quiet time or nap, allow yourself a rest as well
- Read aloud from Jewish children’s books checked out of your public library, a synagogue library—or from PJ Library!
- Make a special toy bag for use on *Shabbat* and holidays. Include games, puzzles and stickers with Jewish themes. 

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