



Welcome Mat Parshat Vayera

Introduction:

In this beginning of this week's Torah reading, Parshat Vayera, three men (aka angels) appear at Abraham's tent. Abraham immediately runs to greet them, bow to them, and feed them. This story is the basis for associating Abraham and Sarah with the great Jewish value of *Hachnasat Orchim* or the welcoming of guests. Ask your children why they think this is such an important mitzvah. Ask them what they do and do not enjoy about having guests in their own home. You can also discuss what makes a "good" host and what makes a "good" guest. Finally, in an attempt to emulate our great ancestors, you can make a personalized doormat so that guests will feel immediately welcomed into your home!

Materials:

- Inexpensive plain store-bought doormat
- Paints or permanent markers
- Optional: Stencils

Instructions:

Decide what phrases or images you want to include on your doormat. For example, you might want to write "WELCOME" or in Hebrew "BRUCHIM HABAIM." Or, you might want to write the names or initials of the people in your family. For images, you might want to paint abstract shapes and designs or pictures of people like your friends and family.

Either using stencils or freehand, paint or draw your images and words onto the doormat. Allow sufficient time for your work to dry and then put your doormat out to welcome your Shabbat guests!

You can also invite your guests to sign their name, write a message, or draw a picture on your welcome mat.