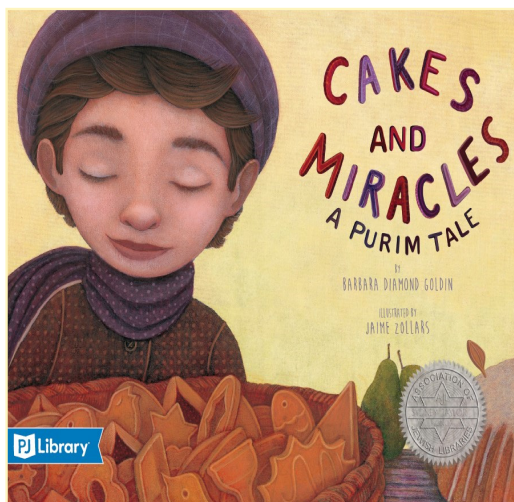


Cakes and Miracles

written by
Barbara Diamond Goldin

illustrated by
Jaime Zollars

{ Who believes in you? }



Purim Miracles

Hershel makes beautiful cookies that he cannot see. “Truly a miracle,” his mother says. What makes it possible is Hershel’s self-acceptance and courage, which is in keeping with the story of Purim. Back in the fourth century BCE, a young woman named Esther married the Persian king, but hid that she was Jewish. When the king’s minister, Haman, plotted to destroy the Jews of Persia, Esther revealed her identity to help save her people. Esther’s strength in her identity and her courage to speak the truth had miraculous results. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/cakesandmiracles.

HANDS ON!

Make Play Dough

In this story, Hershel imagines he’s making beautiful cakes out of mud. How about using play dough instead? It’s another fun way to use your imagination, just as Hershel does.

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup salt
- ½ cup water
- Food coloring (optional)

Mix flour and salt together in a large bowl, then stir in the water.

Knead the dough with your hands. If the dough feels too dry, you can add a few more drops of water at a time; if it feels too sticky, add a tiny bit more flour.

If you like, you can add a few drops of food coloring to the bowl. (To make different colors, divide the dough and place them in separate bowls, then add different colors to each bowl).

What beautiful cakes and cookies will you make with your dough?

I Think I Can

Hershel is a child who believes in himself. He exemplifies bitachon atzmi, Hebrew for “confidence.” He may not be able to see, but he can still learn at school and play at the river -- and he’s pretty sure he can make beautiful cookies. After his triumph at the Purim market, Hershel’s confidence only grows. He feels “talent excitement” because he believes he can do anything he sets his mind to. And we believe it, too.

Cookies for Everyone

Why are the folks in Hershel’s village buying so many cakes and cookies? People are getting ready to fill up mishloach manot (“gift baskets”) to share with friends and neighbors. In fact, two of the four traditional Purim mitzvot (“commandments”) involve food: listening to the story of Purim, enjoying a big meal, giving out mishloach manot, and donating to the poor. No wonder there’s such a market for Hershel’s cakes and cookies.

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

HERSHEL is excited to make cakes partly because he knows he’s helping his mother. How do you help the grownups in your household?

EVEN though he is blind, Hershel “sees” in his imagination. Imagination is powerful. What do you imagine doing that you haven’t done yet?

HAVE you ever made any cookies or cakes? Which ones are your favorite?