

# Big Sam

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## How do we fix our mistakes?

### A Very BIG Holiday

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, is the birthday of the world, and birthdays are big days. It's a time to take stock, both individually and as a community, and to think about ways to make the coming year even better than the last. It's also a time for a festive meal with family and friends. A Rosh Hashanah meal often includes apples dipped in honey, which symbolize a sweet new year, and a round challah (the braided egg bread that Big Sam makes in this story), which symbolizes renewal and the cycle of the Jewish year.

### Owning Up

Big Sam works hard to make a round challah that's large enough for everyone—but he makes a few mistakes along the way. The High Holidays—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, which follows ten days later—are an opportunity to think about our mistakes of the past year, apologize for them, and set goals to do better in the future. Everyone messes up, from the littlest among us to the biggest. The trick is to recognize our errors and try to fix them. We start with *tikkun atzmi*, self-improvement, before we take on the bigger project of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. To learn more, visit [pjlibrary.org/bigsam](http://pjlibrary.org/bigsam).

### A Tall Tale for a High Holiday

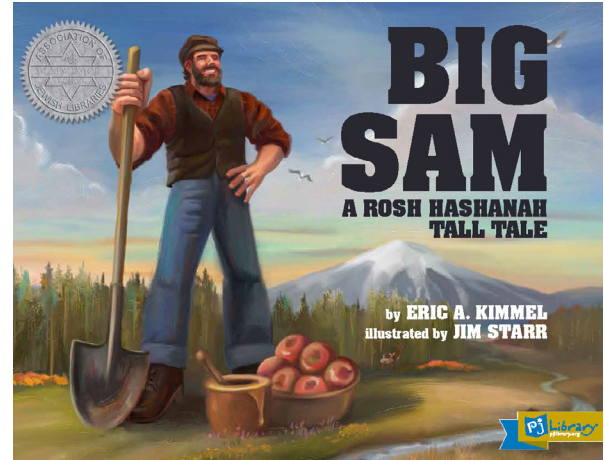
Big Sam is a Jewish American, and as such he falls into two folktale traditions. The exaggerated details in his story are reminiscent of a tall tale, which sits squarely in the pantheon of American folklore. Like Paul Bunyan and his blue ox, Babe, Big Sam helps define the American landscape. But Sam's story also focuses on a moral or value, which is typical of Jewish folktales. Humor? That's something you find in both storytelling cultures.

## TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

**B**ig Sam makes round challah for Rosh Hashanah. What do you like to eat at the New Year?

**W**hen Big Sam makes a mistake, he tries to fix it. Can you think of a time you tried to fix a mistake?

**C**an you think of any other stories that remind you of Big Sam?



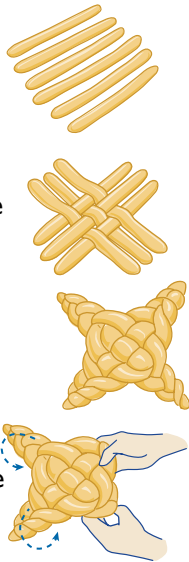
## HANDS ON!

### Make a Round Challah

Challah is usually shaped in a simple long braid, but you can turn any challah recipe into a Rosh Hashanah recipe by braiding it in the round.

Follow your favorite challah recipe (search [pjlibrary.org](http://pjlibrary.org) for a basic recipe).

- 1 When you reach the braiding stage, shape the dough into six strands of equal length.
- 2 Lay three strands horizontally on a floured surface, then weave the other three strands into them vertically. Lift the bottom strands as needed to weave the top strands in. The ends of the strands will stick out.
- 3 Now braid the ends together on all four sides. Gently tuck the braided edges underneath the middle section.



Grease a round baking tin and transfer your loaf into it. Bake according to the instructions of your favorite recipe.