



## RISE & SHINE: A CHALLAH DAY TALE

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*In this story, Sophie and Sammy find a special recipe for challah – a delicious braided bread eaten on Shabbat and other Jewish holidays – and it leads them on a delicious adventure with Grandma Gert at her retirement center.*

### AN OLD TRADITION

It is traditional to place two covered challot (plural) on the Sabbath table. This is to remind us of the manna that fell from heaven while the Hebrews trekked through the desert after the Exodus from Egypt -- they would collect a double portion of manna on Fridays to prepare for Shabbat. The shape of challah is symbolic, too -- the braiding is meant to look like interwoven arms, inviting love and peace into the home in a warm embrace. And on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, it's customary to bake a round challah, signifying the cycle of life.

### HONORING OUR ELDERERS

Sophie and Sammy do more than just make a yummy treat. When they bring the mysterious recipe to their elders, they are following the advice of fifth-century scholars who stated, "One who takes counsel with the old never falters" (Exodus Rabbah). Jewish culture places great value on respecting our elders. The Torah teaches, "Rise in the presence of the gray-haired, and honor the elderly" (Leviticus 19:32).

Grandma Gert and her friends are thrilled to share their Yiddish and challah-baking skills with their young visitors.

Seniors, like all of us, want to be recognized for all they have to offer. Perhaps you have an elderly friend or relative with expertise to share. Call, Skype, or invite someone to your home to tell stories, re-create a family recipe, or make toys or doll clothes. You may choose to visit a senior center to volunteer, sing songs, or play cards. Making challah is fun and easy -- you just have to wait for the dough to rise. The recipe in this book calls for sesame seeds, but some people prefer poppyseeds -- or no seeds at all. You can also add raisins or cinnamon for a little extra sweetness. Once you've made your challah, it's time to eat!

The customary blessing over challah is:

**Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech  
ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.**

*Blessed are you, Lord our God,*

*Ruler of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.*

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN READING:

- Why do you think Grumpy Old Ned is no longer grumpy at the end of the book?
- In what ways can you show respect to senior citizens you know?