



# ROSH HASHANAH IS COMING!

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*How do we know Rosh Hashanah is coming? There are so many hints! In this story, children point to all the signals that the Jewish New Year is approaching.*

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## JEWISH CONCEPTS

The Jewish High Holidays begin with *Rosh Hashanah*, the New Year, and finish ten days later with *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. The new year is a joyous time filled with family, friends, and food, but it is also an opportunity to reflect on our actions of the past year and to consider ways to improve ourselves in the next. During the ten day period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, it is traditional to apologize to people we may have hurt and to forgive those who have hurt us. Jews the world over go to synagogue to hear the *shofar* (ram's horn), whose sharp calls are meant to awaken us and remind us to pay attention to our behavior and actions. Many families also participate in *tashlich*, a ceremony in which people symbolically cast away the mistakes of the past year by throwing breadcrumbs into a body of moving water – a wonderful way to include youngsters in a meaningful Rosh Hashanah observance. Very small children will likely focus on the many sensory experiences of the holiday – as does the child in this story. Rosh Hashanah is marked by the trumpet-like blasts of the shofar, the taste of challah (egg bread, traditionally braided in a circle on this holiday to represent the cycle of the year), and the sweetness of apples dipped in honey. *L'shana tova u'metukah* – a good and sweet new year!

