



YOSEF'S DREAM

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When Yosef was a child in Ethiopia, he had a strange dream, one that didn't make sense until later when he – along with thousands of others in his community – was flown to Israel as part of Operation Solomon. Sometimes our dreams tell us more than we know.

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Throughout Jewish history, dreams have conveyed messages of great religious and cultural significance. They have sometimes been seen as keys to survival because they strengthen the dreamer, help prepare for the future, and offer both wisdom and power.

In one of the first dreams described in the Bible, Jacob sees a ladder between earth and heaven (Genesis 28:12). This dream prepares Jacob to leave his home and journey to Charan, a land of trickery and deception. His dream gives Jacob the strength to stay true to his spiritual values, even in a corrupt environment.

As a young man, Jacob's son Joseph dreams that he will eventually rule over his own brothers. When Joseph is later summoned to interpret the Egyptian Pharaoh's dreams, he predicts that seven years of abundance will be followed by seven years of famine, and suggests a plan to prepare for the crisis and prevent starvation (Genesis 41:25-32). The influence Joseph gains by offering this guidance gives him power throughout Egypt and, as his earlier dreams foretold, over all his brothers.

Sylvia Rouss wrote *Yosef's Dream* with the help of the Israeli ambassador who engineered a daring plan to rescue thousands of Jews from Ethiopia. This powerful story of a dream that leads to safety is part of a historic Jewish tradition—dreams of great consequence

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

The indigenous Jews of Ethiopia were outcasts and treated as strangers. The social concept of strangers is very complex. On the one hand, *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming strangers and offering them hospitality) is an important Jewish value. At the same time, parents protect their children by talking with them about the need to be cautious around those unfamiliar to us. You might use this book to have a conversation about the concept of strangers. Begin by asking questions like:

- *Can a stranger sometimes be a guest?*
- *Do you ever feel that you're a stranger?*
- *How does our family think about strangers?*
- *What might make you uncomfortable about a stranger?*
- *How can you tell if a stranger is safe?*

Reading about another child's dream also gives children an opportunity to talk about their own dreams. The animals in *Yosef's Dream* represent hopes and fears that many young people share. Invite your child to discuss and expand on the words of each animal in the story, asking:

- *What does Gazelle want to do with Yosef?*
- *Do you think Hyena wants to say anything else?*
- *Who talks to you the way Eagle talks to Yosef?*
- *What animals do you see in your dreams?*