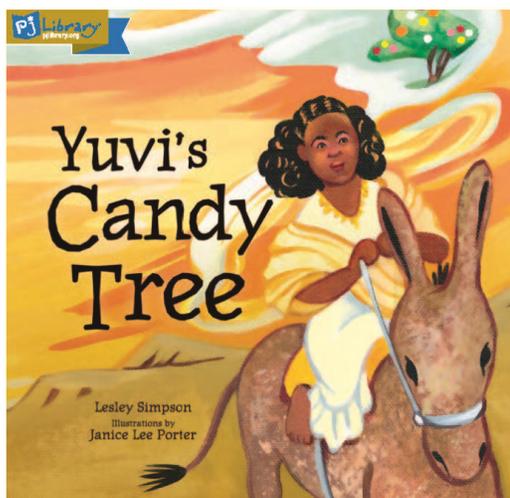


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Can a place be “home”
if you’ve never been there?

On a Wing and a Prayer

Thousands of Ethiopian Jews were airlifted to Israel between 1984 and 1991. The relocation process involved two major airlifts: Operation Moses, which carried 8,000 people (including the real-life Yuvi), and Operation Solomon, which brought more than 14,000 people to Israel in 36 hours. The flights out were the easiest part. As Yuvi’s story shows, getting to the planes was far harder – but worth the risk. The Hebrew word for Jewish immigration to Israel, *aliyah*, literally means “going up.” (Aliyah also refers to the honor bestowed on those invited to recite blessings before and after reading the Torah in synagogue.) Yuvi and her family actually do ascend into the air as they make their way to Israel, but no matter how immigrants arrive, they are greeted with social programs intended to make the transition a little easier, such as help with housing, finding work, learning a new language, and countless other small details that arise. The orange trees? Those are just a happy surprise – but for Yuvi they are a sign that her wishes have indeed come true. To learn more visit pjlibrary.org/yuvi.

HANDS ON!

Make Dabu

Yuvi and her siblings pretend to make *dabu*, an Ethiopian honey bread. This version is simple, hearty, and delicious.

Ingredients

- 2 ¼ cups warm water
- 1 ½ tablespoons yeast
- 3 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 ½ cups whole-wheat flour
(optional – can also use all-purpose)
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 to 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh herbs like rosemary, thyme, or sage (optional)
- 1 cup honey (can also use agave, maple syrup, or a combination)
- ¼ cup vegetable oil



- 1 Combine water and yeast in a bowl and set aside until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes.
- 2 In a separate bowl, combine flour, salt, and herbs. While mixing, slowly add the water and yeast mixture, honey, and oil until combined.
- 3 Knead dough on a lightly floured surface until a ball forms. If dough is too sticky, add a tablespoon of flour at time.
- 4 Place dough in a large oiled bowl and cover with plastic wrap or a damp cloth. Allow dough to rise for about 1 ½ hours or until doubled.
- 5 Preheat oven to 375 degrees and grease two 9x4-inch loaf pans. Divide dough into two oblong halves, put each half in a prepared loaf pan, cover, and let rise for half an hour.
- 6 Bake loaves until the tops are golden brown, approximately 35 minutes. Let loaves rest for 10 minutes, then transfer to a cooling rack. Enjoy!

A Dream Come True

Beta Israel, the community of Ethiopian Jews that includes Yuvi, has existed for centuries. Scholars believe this group of Jews arrived in Ethiopia sometime between the first and sixth centuries CE. Members of Beta Israel developed their own customs and traditions over time. One example is *Sigd*, a holiday that has been adopted as an official national holiday in Israel, just as many traditions and practices from other parts of the world have been woven into the rich fabric that makes up the Jewish homeland. For centuries, *Sigd* was a day to pray for the community’s return to the land of Israel. That prayer has been answered, so today *Sigd* is an opportunity for thanksgiving. Similar to Yom Kippur, the Jewish day of atonement, *Sigd* is observed with fasting and prayer, followed by a joyful breaking of the fast.

Movement of the People

Yuvi’s story is unique, but it’s also familiar: A family makes a dangerous journey to a faraway place in search of a better life. The Torah (the first five books of the Bible) is filled with accounts of families and even entire communities making such moves. The story of the very first Jews, Abraham and Sarah, was about their leaving home to make the long trip to Canaan (ancient Israel), and the Book of Exodus recounts how the Israelite slaves made their way from Egypt back to that same land. Jewish people have lived in every corner of the globe, but with the founding of the modern state of Israel (roughly the same place Abraham and Sarah and the ancient Israelites went!), many families now leave those countries in order to go “home,” just as Yuvi does in this story. “We are going to our real home, to Israel,” says Yuvi’s grandmother in the story. “In Jerusalem, your wishes will come true.”

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

Can you imagine how Yuvi feels when armed thieves threaten her family?

How does Yuvi’s family stay hopeful on such a hard journey?

What would you find challenging about moving to a country where everything was different?