

If You Liked this Book, Try...



Also by Deborah Bodin Cohen:

The Seventh Day

Other books featuring interfaith families:

Jalapeño Bagels by Natasha Wing

Elijah's Angel by Michael Rosen

My Two Grandmothers by Effin Older

The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco

Kaddish for Grandpa in Jesus' Name Amen

by James Howe

Other books that bring to life Biblical characters:

Abraham's Search for God by Jacqueline Jules

Sarah Laughs by Jacqueline Jules

The First Gift by A.S. Gadot

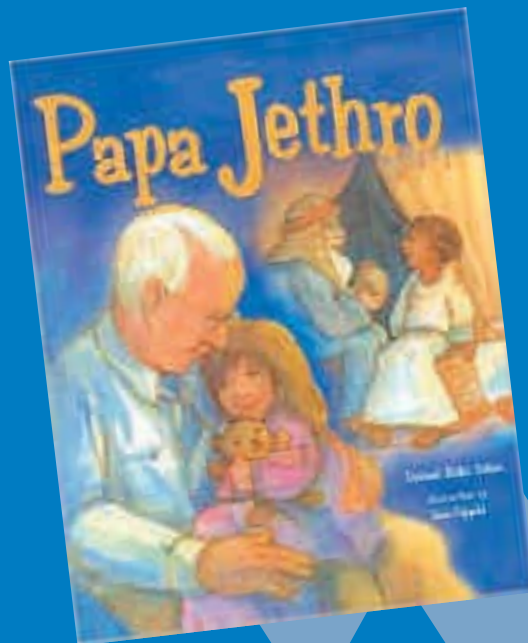
Jean Marzollo's Bible Stories

Papa Jethro

By Deborah Bodin Cohen

Illustrated by Jane Dippold

Kar Ben, 2007





Few children's books to date have dealt with the growing population of families in which children have close relatives whose religious background is different than their own. Whether your child has non-Jewish grandparents or not, most of our families have practices that differ from one generation to the next.

While it may be impossible for very young children to understand the complexities of family dynamics and the additional nuances of their own family, they can internalize the critical knowledge that families are based on love and caring. The respect we show toward our relatives and friends teaches our children the critical lesson that we don't need others to be just like us for them to be part of our family.

This message of inclusion and respect clearly comes across in *Papa Jethro*. The soft pastel illustrations unmistakably depict Rachel and Grandpa Nick's love for each other, and Grandpa's gentle words of explanation are surely meant to reassure Rachel. That the parallel Biblical story of Jethro, father-in-law of Moses, is included in this book seems a wonderful bonus. (To read the complete narrative, go to the book of Exodus, chapter 18 in the Bible.)



- During a quiet time, with bedtime being a great option, talk with your children about various members of your extended family. Take turns telling one positive attribute that you love about each person. Are there common attributes among your family members?
- This is also a lovely time to tell family anecdotes which never fail to capture the interest of children.
- Judaism encourages a special level of respect for the elderly. Invite your children to select one relative, perhaps a grandparent, who they don't frequently see. Explain how meaningful it will be for that family member to receive a card, picture or note.
- For another perspective, the adults in your family might wish to read the moving narrative of Ruth, considered by many to be the first Jew-by-Choice. In this Biblical story, Ruth chooses to remain with her mother-in-law, Naomi, rather than return to her distant family of origin, following her husband's death. It is at this point that Ruth chooses to accept the Jewish way of life. This story can be found in the Bible in the book that bears her name.