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The Diamond Tree- Jewish Tales from Around the World Selected and Retold by Howard Schwartz & Barbara Rush

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Authors: Schwartz, Howard & Rush, Barbara

Title: *The Diamond Tree: Jewish Tales from Around the World*

Illustrator: Shulevitz, Uri

Year of Publication: 1991

Publisher: HarperCollins

ISBN: 9780060252397

Number of Pages: 120

Rating: Excellent

Reading/Interest Level: Primary

Keywords: Fairytales; Folklore; Religious; Short Stories; Judaism; Multicultural

Review:

This collection of ancient tales sparkles with messages that children will learn with a laugh or a gasp. Many of the characters, like Noah and his ark, are familiar from holy texts that are well-known in the western world. Readers will meet others characters as well, such as Chusham and Abu Kassim— favorites from the Jewish tradition. These folklore stories address a wide range of scenarios. Princes, poor boat makers, children, and giants make up the heroes who overcome a variety of challenges from witches to bears. Even Solomon discovers that a king should never be too proud to admit a mistake.

The book's vibrant watercolor illustrations are beautiful renditions that bring each story to life. Some of the tales may seem a bit old-fashioned to young readers. They will be surprised to learn that children in fifth-century Babylon knew these stories by heart! But here professionals and parents will find a wonderful opportunity to show how much has changed since the time when theses stories were first spoken. *The Diamond Tree* is a noble example of the timeless tradition of storytelling that we love to keep sharing.

Reviewer: Brittney Johansen

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