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As Kids Head Back to School, Help Your Child Make a Friend of *Strangers in Jerusalem*

written by Kerry Olitzky and Inas Younis

illustrated by Maryana Kachmar

On Sale Now!

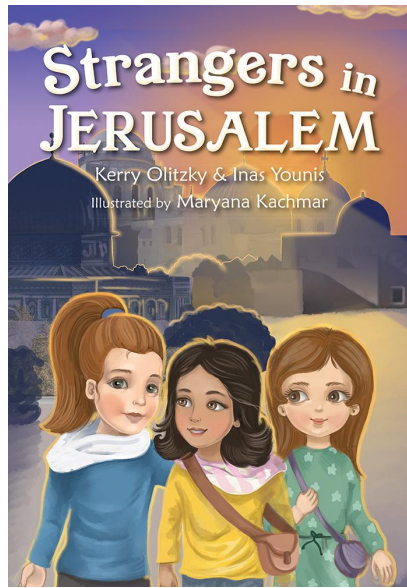
“A beautifully written and illustrated story. . . . Children will be entranced by this book, and parents will be grateful [for] this inspiring and optimistic vision of a world that can be. A perfect gift for the children of your friends and relatives!”

- Rabbi David Ellenson, chancellor emeritus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

[Brandylane Publishers, Inc.](#) of Richmond, Virginia, is excited to announce the August 3rd release of a new children’s book, [Strangers in Jerusalem](#), written by Kerry Olitzky and Inas Younis and illustrated by Maryana Kachmar.

The ancient city of Jerusalem is a multicultural melting pot of faiths and peoples—and for three young girls with compassion in their hearts, their diversity only inspires them. Join Leila, Asma, and Rachel as they visit prominent landmarks and wholeheartedly perform acts of service for others not of their own faiths, and in this city that is holy for so many, are themselves helped in return. As Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, university chaplain and cofounder of the Of Many Institute for Multifaith Leadership at NYU, puts it: “Through its beautiful narrative of friendship, mutual respect, and curiosity, *Strangers in Jerusalem* reminds us of our common humanity, a value that, if prioritized, can set a new tone of tolerance in the Middle East for future generations.”

A story from two interfaith leaders reminding us that friendship can flourish among people of different faiths, *Strangers in Jerusalem* is available for purchase from Amazon and other fine book retailers, with an ebook release scheduled for September 26, 2022.



After many years, Leila is back in her birthplace, Jerusalem, and she's on a mission. Before she left for the Holy Land, Leila promised that she'd say a healing prayer for her best friend back home, even though Leila is Muslim and has never prayed in a Christian church. While making her way through the crooked streets in the Old City of Jerusalem, Leila meets Asma and Rachel, two girls also trying to find holy sites of religions that are different from their own. Together, they'll discover that Jerusalem is perhaps the most special and welcoming place in the world.

About the Authors

[Kerry Olitzky](#), an ordained rabbi, was named one of the leading fifty rabbis of North America by *Newsweek*. He is the former longtime executive director of Big Tent Judaism (formerly the Jewish Outreach Institute) and served on the faculty and administration of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City. He is the author of over seventy-five books and hundreds of articles in a variety of fields, including spirituality, healing, and religious practice. His most recent children's books are *Where's the Potty on This Ark?* and *The Littlest Candle: A Hanukkah Story*.

[Inas Younis](#) was born in Mosul, Iraq, and emigrated to the United States as a child in 1982. She is an independent journalist and commentator and has been widely published in various magazines and websites. She currently writes for the *Kansas Reflector* and is a community engagement representative for the *Kansas City Beacon*. Inas is an alum of the University of Southern California's American Muslim Civic Leadership Institute. She also sits on the board of the Faith Always Wins Foundation and is vice-chair of the Friends of Overland Park Arts.

About the Illustrator

[Maryana Kachmar](#) was born in Lviv, Ukraine in 1983. She is a certified Master of Sacred Art, and the founder of the Christian children's magazines *Angel* and *Flashlight*, where she has worked as editor and artist. She has also illustrated many children's books. Maryana loves the

smell of flowers in the spring and appreciates every moment given to her by God. She is the mother of three cheerful and energetic children, who inspire her daily with new pictures!

Interviews available upon request.

[Brandylane Publishers, Inc.](#) is an independent press located in Richmond, Virginia, that has published books since 1985.

Strangers in Jerusalem (hardcover, 32 pages, \$23.95 / paperback, 32 pages, \$13.95 / Kindle e-book, \$2.99) is available from [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#), and other fine booksellers.