

On the Wings of Eagles

By Tami Lehman-Wilzig | Illustrated by Alisha Monnin

READING GUIDE

About the Book

Based on real events, this picture book for ages 5-8 dramatizes the story of young Haila, a Yemenite girl, who with her family was airlifted to safety by Alaska Airlines pilot Warren Metzger during Operation Magic Carpet, an international effort that rescued nearly 50,000 Jews from the dangers of Yemen in 1949 and 1950.

"You saw what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagles' wings to bring you to me." —Exodus 19:4

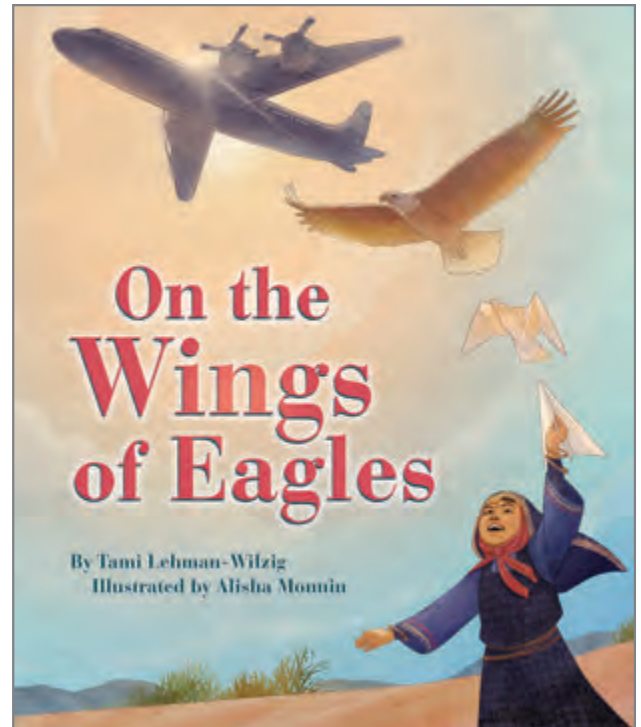
It's not safe for Haila and her family in Yemen anymore. They've been promised they will be carried to safety on the wings of eagles. But time is running short as they wait for help.

On the other side of the world, Warren is a pilot for Alaska Airlines. When he receives a telegram asking to aid the Jews fleeing Yemen, he knows he has to take the risk and do what he can to help.

After a long journey to Aden, a port city where they were to go to leave Yemen, Haila and her family are scared to see an airplane for the first time. Where are the eagles that were supposed to fly them to Israel? Warren needs to show everyone that they're safe, and hopefully, his plan will work.

Tami Lehman-Wilzig is an award-winning author of many picture books, including *SOOSIE*, *The Horse That Saved Shabbat*, *Boston Chocolate Party*, *Keeping the Promise*, and *Passover Around the World*. She has lived in Israel since 1977.

Alisha Monnin was born and raised in rural Ohio. She graduated from the Savannah College of Art and Design, and now resides in Cincinnati, Ohio.



Key Themes:

Immigration, Cross-Cultural Connection, Bravery, Israel

ISBN 978-1-68115-635-4

Ages 5–8 years

Use these questions to preface and conclude a reading of this book with children. Encourage them to share their observations as you read the book together, and take time to linger on pages or spreads that generate more discussion.

Before Reading

- What do you think this story is about by looking at the cover?

During Reading

- What do you think flying on an eagle means to Jada?
- What do you think “homeland” means? Does your family have a homeland?
- Imagine having to leave your home quickly, like Haila did. What would you take with you? What would you want to always remember about your home, and why?

After Reading

- Haila’s family was determined to make it to meet the eagle, they walked barefoot for days on hot sand, had their possessions stolen, and went through a lot of physical hardships to get to Aden. But yet they kept going. Describe a time when you continued to work toward something that maybe was hard and you could have given up before reaching the end. How did it make you feel to reach your goal?
- What do you do to help overcome something that at first may seem scary?
- Why do you think Jada kissed the ground with teary eyes when they got out of the airplane? Do you think you have ever felt those type of emotions before?

Optional: Extension Activity

- Telegrams were messages that could be sent quickly, before there were smartphones and Internet. They were very short and included just the most important items. When people wanted to say more, they wrote letters sent through the mail, which took longer. It’s fun to write letters and draw pictures to send through the mail. It’s even more fun to receive one in return. Write a letter and send it to someone. Hopefully they will write you back!
- Look up Adan, Yemen and Lod, Israel on a map to see the journey that Haila and her family made in the eagle airplane.





On the Wings of Eagles

By Tami Lehman-Wilzig | Illustrated by Alisha Monnin

Character Cut Outs

