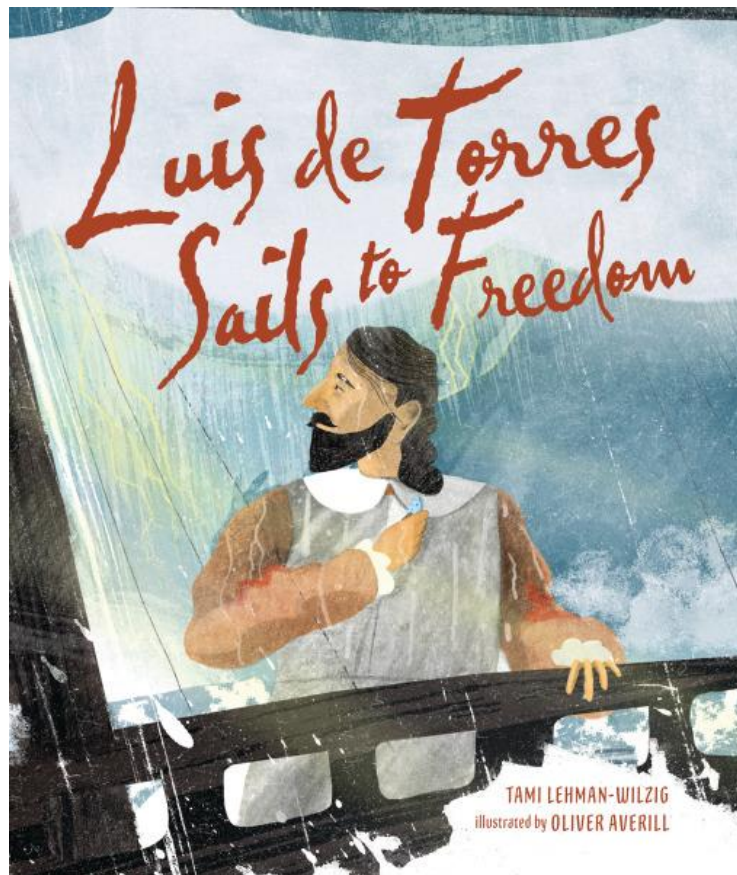


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## Educator Guide



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# Luis de Torres Sails to Freedom

## Activity Guide

### Story Summary

Yosef ben HaLevi Halvri lives in Spain, where Jews are discriminated against. Yosef becomes a Catholic and changes his name to Luis de Torres. But like many other Spanish Jews who converted, he is really a “Converso”, a Jew who has converted but in his heart remains Jewish, and practices his religion in secret. When the King and Queen set a deadline for all Jews who haven’t converted to leave Spain on *Tisha B’Av*, Luis informs his family that he is joining a sailing expedition to distant lands. He hopes there he will find religious freedom. All he has is his faith, his wits, and a silver *hamsa* his nephew gave him to protect him on his journey. As he boards the ship, he finds that a few other Jews have joined the expedition. Shortly before the ship is set to sail, a terrible storm hits. Can the Jewish traditions of *Tisha B’Av* help save the ship from the rough, choppy waters?

### Let’s Talk About This

1. Luis de Torres leaves Spain because of religious persecution. Many American Jews are the children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren of Jews who had to flee their country. Do you know when, how, and why your family originally came to America?
2. On *Tisha B’Av* we remember the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem. The Rabbis say that the Second Temple was destroyed because of senseless hatred towards each other. Today there is a lot of meanness with no reason. Give examples. What can we do to stop it?

### Let’s Combine These Two Points Through Play Acting

Create a scene where new immigrants have just arrived in your city/state. They don’t speak English. They need housing, jobs, schools. How are you going to greet them? Someone makes a bullying remark. What will be your response? How can you make them feel at home?

### What is a *Hamsa*?

A *Hamsa* is a good luck charm that provides protection. It is shaped to look like a hand. What is the connection between the Hebrew word for five – *Hamisha* – and *Hamsa*?

### Let’s Make a Hamsa

Show kids a few examples of a hamsa and let them draw their own!