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Far from Zion

In Search of a Global Jewish Community

Charles London

Charles London explores the Jewish Diaspora in some of the most unexpected places—from Burma to Tehran to Cuba and even Bentonville, Arkansas—in this fascinating narrative of community and faith

Throughout history, Jews have been targeted for discrimination and violence at nearly every turn. Their frequent flights from persecution and numerous relocations have led them to establish communities in some of the most surprising places. With the founding of Israel in 1948, many of these far flung Jews emigrated, some on their own, some at gunpoint, and others as a result of Israel's vast rescue program which located scattered Jews—particularly those in peril—and brought them “home” to Zion.

But what of those Jews who chose to stay behind? In *Far from Zion*, Charles London locates Jewish communities, from Tehran to Bentonville, Arkansas (home to the fastest-growing Jewish community in America), from Bosnia to the hills of Uganda, to understand why they decided to remain in the countries of their birth and what their decision means for Judaism, the Jews, and the world. In their stories he finds hope and argues that peace may lie not in congregating behind national borders, but in the promise of a global community of diverse neighbors, guided by a unique historical mission.

Juxtaposed with this global story is the author's own personal journey of religious and...

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Author Bio

Charles London is the Program Director for War Kids Relief, a youth peacebuilding organization, and the author of *One Day the Soldiers Came: Voices of Children in War*. His writing has appeared in a variety of publications, including the *New York Times Magazine*, *O: The Oprah Magazine*, the *Baltimore Times*, *Hadassah*, and *New Voices*. In 1999, he won the *Rolling Stone* College Journalism Award. He has been a Young Adult Librarian for the New York Public Library, a Research Associate for Refugees International, an assistant at a talent agency, and an after-school program coordinator. He grew up in Baltimore, but now lives in Brooklyn, New York.