

Meet the Jewish Ethiopian-Ukrainian singer staffing Birthright this summer **Culture**

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Former 'The Voice' contestant Bethlehem Endale is bringing her unique story and powerful pipes to Russian Taglit-Birthright groups in Israel Photo: Bethlehem Endale performing on 'The Voice' Ukraine (Screenshot)

By [TRACY FRYDBERG](#), The Times of Israel, May 26, 2018: Bethlehem Endale, or “Betty” as her friends call her, enjoys the shock she evokes speaking Russian in Israel. Endale was born and raised in Kharkiv, Ukraine, the daughter of two Ethiopian Jews. A former contestant on Ukraine’s “The Voice” and a finalist in Ukraine’s Eurovision competition, the emerging singer is spending her summer staffing Taglit-Birthright trips for Russian-speakers. She recently spoke with The Times of Israel from Birthright’s staff seminar in Jerusalem about her unique background and how she hopes to use it to inspire her groups. Endale is the daughter of two Jewish Ethiopian parents who met in the former-USSR under improbable circumstances. “In 1986 my parents were on an exchange program for Ethiopians and Soviet students,” Endale said. “Both of them came to the USSR — my dad to Bolhrad and my mom, Kharkiv. My dad didn’t like Bolhrad so he moved to Kharkiv where he met my mom.” “When they met, they realized they were both Jewish. They set a date and they got married and had me in 1988,” she said. “As I grew up, I was a part of the Jewish community. We keep the basics of Shabbat with challah and kiddush. We didn’t do everything, but it was good enough and I’m very grateful.” [⋮] <https://www.timesofisrael.com/meet-the ... cec92-67f826f03e-55347325>