

Gem Seeking

LITTLE GEMS STORY

Parent/Teacher Preparation:

Please see the [Instructions for the Little Gems Story](#) on the YMTOI website. This will help you to understand how to prepare for the story.

Wrestling Match

Shalom children! Now that Ya'aqob's long season of serving his Uncle Laban is over at last, we will watch this week to see what happens on his way back to his homeland. His large family, his many flocks and his great possessions are all coming with him. **(Place Ya'aqob, wives and children on board.)** But Ya'aqob is very fearful about running into a certain person on the way. Can you guess who? Yes, his brother Esaw! **(Place Esaw on board.)** It's been years since Esaw wanted to kill him, and now Ya'aqob deeply hopes that his brother is willing to make peace. Do you remember what happened back when he was running away from Esaw and stopped to rest for the night? That's right, he had an amazing dream about a ladder reaching up to the heavens. **(Place ladder dream scene on board.)** In that dream Yahweh promised to continue His covenant with him and spoke to him the same promises He had made to Ya'aqob's grandfather Abraham and to his father Yitshaq. Now let's see what happens this time.

As Ya'aqob's company slowly made its way home, he decided to stop and rest for the night by the crossing place of a wide stream called Yabboq. **(Place stream on board.)** On the other side lay the mountain country where Esaw and his clan had made their home, and Ya'aqob was thinking very hard about how he should approach his brother. **(Remove all characters from board except for Ya'aqob.)**

Finally, he came up with a plan. Since Esaw had nothing against Ya'aqob's wives and children, Ya'aqob hoped to soften his brother's heart by sending his young family across the water ahead of him, while he stayed on the other side by himself. Along with his family he sent costly gifts and many fine animals from his flock, as well as servants to speak words of peace and blessing to Esaw. **(Place coin bag, animals and servants on board.)**

Then Ya'aqob made ready to settle down by the brook for the night. But suddenly, out of nowhere, a mysterious Man showed up. Without a word, this Man began to wrestle with Ya'aqob. **(Place moon and Ya'aqob wrestling Man on board.)** Back and forth they went, struggling with each other the whole night long. Ya'aqob recognized something heavenly about this Man. Could He be Elohim in person? Certainly He was at least a special Messenger from Elohim, because when the sun finally rose, the Man quit wrestling and simply touched Ya'aqob's hip, causing it to pop out of joint. **(Remove moon and place sun and hand touching hip socket scene on board).** Ouch - that must have hurt!



Even with his hip dislocated and surely causing him a lot of pain, Ya'aqob clung tight and said he wouldn't let go of the Man until he got a blessing from Him. So, the Man asked, "What is your name?" As soon as he told the Man his name, the Man replied that Ya'aqob would no longer be his name, but rather his new name would be Yisra'el (**place name change scene on board**), because he had fought with Elohim and with man and he had won.

Ya'aqob wanted the Man to reveal His Name as well, but the Man only said, "Why do you want to know about My Name?" And then the Man blessed Ya'aqob, as he had demanded. After the Man left, Ya'aqob wanted to remember that spot in a special way, because he knew he had met with Elohim face to face. So, he gave that place the name of Peni'el, which means Face of El. (**Place word Peni'el and Face of El on board and see if any child can read it**).

After this Ya'aqob walked onward with a limp. (**Remove Ya'aqob wrestling Man from board and place Ya'aqob with staff on board.**) The Scriptures do not tell us if he walked with that limp for the rest of his life, but because of this story, the Jews have always shown respect for their forefather Ya'aqob by not eating the hip area of an animal. (**Place animal showing kosher and unkosher parts on board.**)

Ya'aqob, who was now named Yisra'el, had a lot to think about as he limped along, some distance behind his family and flocks and herds. He was weary from all that wrestling, and weak because of one very sore hip. His new name, Yisra'el, meant that through all his struggles, Elohim would make him come out a winner in the end. Do you think he was still afraid of Esaw, or of anyone else? Very soon the brothers will meet, and then we will find out what happens.

Well children, we have come to the end of our story for today. We will see you next week for another exciting Little Gems story!

