

# 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.

### Right-Rulings

Shalom, children! How many of you know what "do's" and "don'ts are?" (**Allow children to answer.**) Do's and don'ts are rules that tell you the right way to act and warn you about the wrong way to act. When you are in class, your teachers have a rule about not talking to each other when they want you to listen, right? And at home your parents have rules also, like, "Come straight inside when I call you for dinner," or "Treat your sibling nicely." (**What are some rules your parents have children?**) When you listen to your teacher or parents, this makes them happy. (**Place happy emoji on board.**) When you don't listen to your teachers or parents, this makes them sad. (**Place sad emoji on board.**)

Sometimes we don't like the rules but just imagine having no rules! Would we stay safe and happy? No way! And what about Yahweh? We'd always be doing things that make Him sad, wouldn't we? (**Point to sad emoji.**) So, to keep everyone safe and happy, Yahweh gave His people a list of rules that told them how He wanted them to act in all kinds of situations, and what had to be done to anyone who broke them. The Scriptures call them "right-rulings," or "mishpatim" in Hebrew. (**Place right-rulings on board.**) Let's say it together: MISH-PA-TIM. Very good!

Now, some of the rules Elohim gave them might seem strange to us, but back then His rules made perfect sense. Remember, the Yisra'elites lived a very, very long time ago. They had no running water, no bicycles, no cars or trucks, no computers, and no grocery stores, just to mention a few. (**Place faucet, bicycle, car, truck, computer and grocery store on board.**) They raised all their own animals for meat and all their grain and fruits for food. (**Place animals, grain, and fruit on board.**) If you got rich, would you have lots of money in the bank? No, because there weren't any banks! You could tell someone was rich because they had lots of cows, sheep and goats, and they lived in nice, big tents. (**Place man in tent on board and point to animals.**) They didn't want to mess up their nice clothes, so they had servants to do all the heavy work and the cooking.

So, let's look at some rules about servants. Sometimes an Yisra'elite would become a servant if they owed someone a lot of money and couldn't pay it back. Yahweh made a rule that if you had a load of debt, you could work it off by serving a master for 6 years. (**Place #6 on board.**) Then, in the 7<sup>th</sup> year, the master must set you free. (**Place #7 on board.**) Just think how happy you'd be when the 7<sup>th</sup> year came along! You would be set free and not owe anyone money. And here's the exciting part. Your master couldn't send you out empty-handed, but had to give you flocks and grain and wine, so you could start life over again without being poor. (**Place servant leaving with flocks, grain and wine on board.**)



And guess what? Once in a while, a servant loved his master so much that when Year 7 came, he didn't want to leave. Instead, he promised to serve that master for the rest of his life. Can you think of a Master who is so good to us that we should all want to serve Him forever?

The next set of right-rulings had to do with fighting and getting violent. **(Place fighting men on board.)** Have you ever been so mad at another kid that you hit them, or pushed them down? Or maybe you're the one who got hurt. Yahweh is very strict about violence. That's why He commanded us never to murder. So, if a person wanted to kill someone else and actually did it, that person would be put to death himself. But what if you injured someone in a fight, and they didn't die? Well, you wouldn't be put to death, but still you had to pay for the doctor, and also pay for the work they missed while they were healing. That's only fair, don't you think? Yahweh's rules are fair and right; that's why they're called "right-rulings!" **(Point to word right-rulings.)**

Let's talk about the rules for animals. **(Place vicious dog on board.)** If you've ever felt a little scared to touch a big animal, raise your hand. I know I have! Back in those days, big animals were used to pull carts and wagons and plows. **(Place cart, wagon and plow on board.)** They were everywhere, just like bicycles, cars and trucks are today. **(Point to bicycle, car and truck.)** We know that animals can be dangerous if they are not well-trained. If someone's animal got cranky and injured a person so that they died, then that animal had to die, too, before they could hurt anyone else. But the animal's owner would be innocent, because he had no idea his animal would suddenly turn so mean. But if the owner had already been warned, and knew that his animal was dangerous, then the animal and the owner both had to be put to death! The owner did not bother to protect people from his angry beast, so Yahweh decided he was just as dangerous as his animal and would have to die. **(Remove all image from board except for right-rulings.)**

Let's talk about stealing. **(Place man stealing on board.)** How awful life would be if thieves could get away with taking all the stuff they wanted! There were lots of rules about how a thief had to return what he took, plus pay a fine. And the fine would be at least twice the value of what he stole! **(Place man restoring money on board.)** And even worse, there is one kind of stealing that is so bad it deserves death. Can anyone guess? If you said kidnapping, you're right! You see, kidnapping is actually stealing a person, and robbing them of the life Yahweh planned for them. Your parents and teachers watch to protect you from a stranger who might be a kidnapper! They will do whatever it takes to keep you safe. So, should we follow their safety rules? Let me hear a big YES!

Okay, who can tell me what it means to oppress someone? That's when you take unfair advantage of someone weaker or poorer than you. Yahweh wanted to make sure that foreigners, widows and orphans would be treated kindly and fairly. **(Place foreigner, widow and orphan on board.)** If you took advantage of someone weaker, Yahweh said that it would not be a judge, but He Himself who would repay you. Now that is a scary thought!



Yahweh made even more rules about how Yisra'elites were to treat one another. For one thing, He commanded them never to give a false report or a lying witness against a neighbor. **(Place judge scene on board.)** What if your false testimony ended up causing an innocent person to be judged and unfairly punished? Yahweh hates that. Your other friends might want to get someone in trouble by reporting something that's not true, but don't do it! He'll hold you guilty if you don't stand up for the truth. And what about the judges? It was common in those days for a judge to accept bribes, and Yahweh said that's very wrong. Who knows what a bribe is? Yes, that's when someone secretly pays money to convince a judge to rule in their favor. That's a big no-no! A good judge is always fair. **(Point to judge.)**

There were special right-rulings about resting, too. What day of the week is Yahweh's day of rest? Of course—the Sabbath day! Every seventh day, we rest from normal activities and spend a day together to honor Him. **(Place Sabbath scene on board.)** Keeping Sabbath is a really important command, because it shows we are His own people. He gave us rules about other holy days, too, such as Shavu'ot and Sukkot. What important feast is coming up soon? Yes, Passover! And don't forget the week of Unleavened Bread right after that. We're going to have so much fun!

Finally, let's talk about giving. Back then, there was the Dwelling Place, where people were told to bring their offerings of clean animals. **(Place Dwelling Place with courtyard on board.)** They were also to bring grain, oil and a spice called frankincense. Yahweh made right-rulings about exactly what and how much they should bring, and everything the people and the Lewites had to do so that their offerings would please Him. And when harvest times came along, they were to bring the first-fruits of it. That meant that before they could eat any of it, they had to give a tenth of their crops to the priests and Lewites. All these offerings were given because the Lewites owned no land to grow crops. The offerings gave them food to eat while they were serving Yahweh in His Dwelling Place.

Right now, we don't have a temple or Lewites or priests, but our leaders still have needs, because they serve us instead of working regular jobs. So, we are still to bring tithes and offerings, just as they did for the priests. Most of us don't own cattle, goats or sheep. But when you're old enough to earn money, you are to give Yahweh one-tenth of your money to take care of His leaders. **(Place currency on board.)** Then He will smile on you for your obedience and will make sure you have everything you need to live well and be generous to others. **(Place happy emoji on board.)**

Before we close, let's think about the Number 1 thing we must give to Yahweh. It's not something you can hold in your hand; you have to hold it in your heart. It's respect for His rulership and authority. The Bible calls it "the fear of Yahweh." We remember how great He is, and that He created everything that is. We are not to let anything, or anyone be more important to us than Yahweh! He is the Ruler of everything, and He has chosen His leaders here on earth so they can teach us how to follow His rules today. **(Place Rabbi on board.)** When we obey His leaders, He will give them His wisdom to help us live peacefully with ourselves and with each other. It is such a happy thing when we follow Yahweh's right-rulings! **(Point to happy emoji.)**

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

