

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.

Broken Tablets, Broken Covenant

Shalom children! Well, last time we met, we left Mosheh still up on the mountain talking with Yahweh. Mosheh was hearing all about the special job his brother Aharon would have, and about the priestly clothes that were to be made just for him. But of course, none of the people at the bottom of the mountain knew what Mosheh was really doing up there, and they started getting restless. You know, it's like when a grown-up promises to take you somewhere exciting, but then it seems as though it is taking forever, and you begin thinking probably it will never happen. Well, Mosheh was taking so long up there that the Yisra'elites decided that their leader was NOT coming back, after all.

(Place mountain on board and Mosheh above the mountain. Place some people at the bottom of the mountain but away from it, and place Aharon by the people.)

Now, when you get restless, don't you start doing things you shouldn't, like picking on your siblings or touching things you know you are NOT supposed to touch? Well, here is where the trouble started, because the Yisra'elites also began thinking of doing things they shouldn't be doing. All the people came up to Aharon and complained, saying that they didn't know where Mosheh was or what had happened to him. They wanted to have a god that they could see.

Well, you would think Aharon, being Mosheh's older brother, would just tell them to be patient and wait a little longer. But no; instead Aharon told all the people to take off their gold earrings and bring them to him. **(Place earrings on board by Aharon.)** And guess what Aharon did with all their earrings? He made them into a golden calf! He told the people that this was the god they wanted, and that the next day there would be a big celebration for Yahweh. People listened to Aharon and brought sacrifices to offer to Yahweh. **(Place golden calf on the board.)** They had a big party, with food and music and dancing. **(Place dancing men and women on board.)**

Now, do you think Yahweh saw what the people were doing? Of course He did! He can see everything. I don't know what these people were thinking, but their actions made Yahweh very angry. The Yisra'elites had already forgotten that they made a promise to obey whatever Yahweh told them to do. They had been told NOT to worship idols, but that's exactly what they did.



Finally, Yahweh had to send Mosheh back down the mountain to take care of the situation, before something worse happened. Yahweh said, "I am going to show them how angry I am. Instead of making them My people, I will wipe them out and start over again with you and your children." Now you might think that would make Mosheh happy, but it didn't. Mosheh begged Yahweh NOT to hurt the people. Mosheh reminded Yahweh that the Mitsrites and all the nations around them would say that Yahweh was a bad god because He rescued His people and then led them into the wilderness to kill them all. Mosheh said, "Remember, You made a promise to Abraham, Yitshaq, and Yisra'el that their great-great-grandchildren would be Your people, and You would give them the land You promised!" Yahweh listened to Mosheh and didn't take out His anger on the people. Phew, that was a close one. I wouldn't want Yahweh angry with me, would you?

So Mosheh took the tablets (**place tablets by Mosheh**) that Yahweh had been writing on and started heading down the mountain. Yehoshua met Mosheh part way down (**place Yehoshua next to Mosheh**) and urged Mosheh to hurry, because the noise from below sounded like an enemy attack. Yehoshua was a soldier and wanted to get down there and help the people. But Mosheh set him straight. He said, "That noise you are hearing is NOT from people being scared. It's from people partying too much."

Oh man, are the Yisra'elites in trouble! They may be having a good time now but wait 'til Mosheh gets down there. Have you ever been enjoying doing something wrong, until suddenly your Mom or Dad caught you? Maybe some of you thought jumping in a mud puddle would be fun, until your parents saw your ruined shoes and clothes. Well, the Yisra'elites are about to find out they ruined more than just the outer stuff.

As Mosheh approached the bottom of the mountain, he saw what the people were doing, and it was worse than he ever imagined. (**Place Mosheh and Yehoshua closer to the bottom of mountain**) It made him very angry, and he understood why Yahweh was so upset. These people had just promised they were going to be good, and now they were dancing and bowing down to a golden calf! Mosheh was so furious that he threw down the tablets in his hands and busted them all to pieces (**Remove tablets and place broken tablets on board at the bottom of the mountain.**) Oh man, how do you think the people felt now? Afraid? Ashamed? Sad? Maybe all of those. But one thing was for sure: they knew that they were in trouble.

First Mosheh ground up the golden calf into powder, put it in the water, and made the Yisra'elites drink it. (**Place people drinking gold water on board.**) Ugghhh, that sounds nasty. But I bet they knew that wasn't all the punishment they had coming. Mosheh turned to his older brother Aharon and asked, "What were you thinking?" Aharon told him how the people were restless and had brought him all their gold earrings. "I threw the gold in the fire," he said, "and poof! Out came this calf."

Now, we know that's pretty hard to believe. But I am sure we have all tried to explain something we did wrong and ended up sounding pretty silly, haven't we? Well, Mosheh was NOT happy with Aharon. I wonder if he was sad, thinking about all Yahweh's good plans for Aharon and wondering if his brother would actually be the right one for the job of high priest.



Now came the 2nd test. Mosheh called for everyone who was willing to continue obeying Yahweh to come and stand by his side. All of Lewi's tribe came to him. Maybe that reassured Mosheh that they were the right people for Yahweh's job. **(Put Lewite men by Mosheh and some people on the opposite side.)** He asked them to go through the camp and get rid of anyone who had NOT made the choice to obey Yahweh, even after they knew what they did was wrong. So the Lewites did, and about 3,000 people were no longer part of the camp. **(Take some people off the board.)** Mosheh told the Lewites that they would be receiving a special blessing, because they had chosen to do the right thing even if it meant getting rid of family members. I am sure it made them sad to have to do that, but sometimes we have to tell people we care about that we can't be with them if they are NOT willing to stop doing bad things.

A lot of people were still left, and Mosheh made it clear to them that they had done wrong. Even so, he said that he would go back up to the mountain and ask Yahweh to forgive them all. **(Place Mosheh up on the mountain.)** Mosheh confessed to Yahweh that the people had been very bad. They had made an idol and had worshipped it, and Mosheh begged Yahweh to please forgive them. If He didn't, Mosheh didn't even want his name written in Yahweh's special book. Yahweh told Mosheh that He would NOT erase his name from His book, because Mosheh didn't do the bad thing. Only the people who had done the bad thing would have their names erased. Yahweh told Mosheh to keep on leading the people to the Promised Land, and Yahweh would choose the right punishment and the time He wanted to do it.

Yahweh sent terrible sickness to the people who had participated in worshipping the golden calf. Oh man, I bet the people who did that were really sad and sorry for what they had done. **(Place sad looking men and women on board.)**

We hope they will listen and obey better next time. Yahweh also told Mosheh to cut out 2 more tablets just like the ones he broke, so that Yahweh could write on them. But this time, no one could come up with him, NOT even Yehoshua. And no pets allowed either - just Mosheh. So Mosheh cut out 2 more tablets, and the next morning he went back to the mountain to spend more quality time with Yahweh. **(Place tablets on top of mountain again.)**

Wow, what a sad story this was! The people had made Yahweh and Mosheh very angry. They had lost a lot of their friends and family, and they had gotten very sick. Well, let's hope everyone learned their lesson, so that next time we'll have a more pleasant story to tell.

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!

