

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.

Tahor & Tamei

Shalom children! Today we are going to be talking about food! To be exact, we are going to find out what animals Yahweh allows His people to eat and what animals He does NOT. The animals we can eat are called clean animals, and the animals we cannot eat are called unclean animals.

Yahweh made some land animals specifically for us to eat, and some other ones that had different purposes. He instructed Mosheh and Aharon to tell the people how to know which land animals were fine to eat. He said, "Tell them that if an animal's foot, called a hoof, is separated in two like this (**place split hoof on board**), and that animal also eats grass and then spits it out and eats it again, then those land animals you can eat." (**Place cow chewing cud on board.**) Wait, what? That sounds really gross. Alright, so let me explain. Some animals have more than one tummy inside, and Yahweh made them that way so their food would get very well chewed. This is called chewing the cud.

Now, the clean animals that were for eating had to be just as described, with both a split hoof and chewing the cud. (**Point to split hoof and cow chewing cud.**) To make sure that we recognize at least some of the clean animals, He named some as examples. They probably saw a lot of camels around there (**place camels on board**), but they were NOT to eat them. They could use them for other things. See, camels chew the cud, but they don't have a split hoof, so don't get confused. (**Place unsplit hoof on board.**) In fact, those cute little bunnies you see hopping about (**place rabbit on board**), are NOT to be eaten, either. They chew their cud but don't have split hooves. In fact, they don't have hooves at all.

Now let's look at the pig (**place pig on board**). If you look at their feet, they have split hooves. And they like to eat a lot, but they eat it only once and keep on going. They don't chew the cud, but they seem to eat just about everything else. So even though those little piggies like to eat everything, don't you go eating them. The Yisra'elites knew they could eat some land animals, like sheep, goats and cows (**place clean animals on board**), because Yahweh had said they were good for sacrifices and for the priest to eat.

Now, let's move on to the water animals. Yahweh made a lot of fish and other aquatic creatures. In fact, they probably got to see some of them as they crossed the Sea of Reeds. Yahweh knew that they would probably want to go fishing in the rivers and the seas. He said, "Now, I know there are a lot of swimming creatures in the water, but make sure you take a good look at what you catch and only keep the ones that have both fins and scales on them. (**Place clean fish on board.**) Again, don't look for only one of those things; make sure the fish has both. No catfish, octopus or crab. (**Place unclean water creatures on board.**) They have their purpose, and it is not for feeding you."



Just as you can see water animals of all colors, shapes, and sizes, the sky is filled with flying creatures of every color, shape, and size. But they are the same as the water animals; they are NOT all for you to eat. Yahweh didn't really say how to tell one type of bird from another the way He did with the water animals and the land animals, but He didn't leave us to guess either. Instead, He gave us a long list of the birds we could NOT eat.

Now, I am not going to go through that whole list, but I will name some you are familiar with. He said not to eat any of the owls (**place owl on board**), and boy, there are a lot of different kinds of owl! He said we couldn't eat eagles, ravens, ostriches, or seagulls. (**Place unclean birds on board.**) He also said NOT to eat bats (**place bat on board**), so He covered animals that flew even if they were not birds. Can you guess which creature was NOT on the list of unclean animals that were forbidden? I will give you a hint. It's a bird. And it can be made into nuggets. (**Place chicken on board.**) Did you think of a chicken? That's right! Chicken was a bird that we COULD eat. Yay, I love chicken nuggets! I am glad we can still enjoy them. Another clean bird we may eat is something we eat on Thanksgiving. Can you tell me what that is children? (**Wait for children to respond.**) Yes, you got it! (**Place turkey on board.**)

Now, you know that a while back, we read about the plagues in Mitsrayim. Do you remember that there was a certain flying creature that covered all the plants and ate them all up? Do you remember what it was? (**Place locust on board.**) They are insects called locusts, and who can guess whether we can eat them or not? (**Allow children to respond, then say...**) I would not want to eat locusts either, but guess what? Yahweh said we could eat locusts, and also crickets and grasshoppers. (**Place additional insects on board.**) But we can't eat crocodiles, tortoises, or lizards. (**Place unclean reptiles on board.**) I am glad about that, because I don't think they would taste very good anyway.

There is a lot written in the Scripture about animals that should not be eaten and those that we can eat. Your parents can teach you more about that. I just think Yahweh is so loving to teach us what is food for us and what is not. (**Place care emoji on board.**)

Besides what animals we can eat and cannot eat, the Scripture tells us that if an animal that was dead touched certain things like pots or pans or drinking cups, those things were unclean and the person who touched them was unclean. (**Place pot with dead mouse on board.**) They didn't stay that way forever, only until that evening. Then they could go be with their families. If we obey what Yahweh tells us to do, then He will be happy with us and we shall be blessed. I don't know about you but I want Yahweh to be happy with me, don't you?

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!

