

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.

Here is the link for a reading of this story:

https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/steveberkson/episodes/2022-05-29T12_18_42-07_00

Shavuot – Ruth Story

Shalom children! Today we are celebrating another special day of Yahweh's called Shavuot. A few weeks ago we read a parsha that told us what these special days are called. Do you remember what it was? **(Allow children to answer.)** They are called Appointed times. Appointed times are days that Yahweh set aside for us to meet with Him just like you may have an appointment to go to the dentist on a certain day. Unlike a dental appointment, we don't go to an office to meet with Yahweh. We meet with Him when we put aside going to work or school, and instead gather together at services to praise and worship Him.

Not too long ago, we celebrated the Appointed times of Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread. We learned a lot about what the Yisra'elites did on that 1st Passover, and what Yahweh wants us to do also. Do you remember what we ate during those days? Here's a hint: it's part of the name. **(Allow children to answer and place matzah on board.)** In the same way we learned about Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, today we are going to learn about Shavuot and what Yahweh wanted the Yisra'elites to do.

A long time ago, the Yisra'elites moved to their new land called Kena'an. They became farmers there **(place farmer plowing on board)**, people who plant and harvest things we can eat, as well as herders **(place shepherd and sheep on board)**, people who take care of animals. The Yisra'elites had to grow and gather or raise everything they needed to make the food they ate. They didn't have grocery stores like we do.

The crops and herds also provided the Yisra'elites with the ingredients that Yahweh wanted them to use for their offerings to Him. One of the offerings we talked about in another lesson was the grain offering. We learned about different kinds of breads that were given as an offering to Yahweh. Some bread was unleavened **(point to matzah)** and some bread was leavened. **(Place 2 loaves of bread on board.)**

On this special day, called Shavuot, the Yisra'elites had to bring 2 loaves of the leavened kind of bread to the priest. He waved them in the air to present them as an offering of the first-fruits of their crops to Yahweh. **(Place priest waving 2 breads on board.)**



We don't gather our grain here or have a temple to take bread to, but there are some things that we do to celebrate this day. One of those things is counting time, so we know on what day to observe Shavuot. Yahweh tells us that we need to start with the day after the Sabbath during Days of Unleavened Bread and count 50 days (**place #50 on board**), as well as 7 completed Sabbaths to get to Shavuot (**Place #7 on board**). We call this counting the omer. You probably did this at home every day with a craft or special coloring page. Today we have finished this year's count and we are ready for the celebration!

Another way to remember this day is to have a set-apart gathering and not go to work or school. You can also eat foods with dairy (**place dairy desserts on board**) in them to make this day more special and talk about the giving of the 10 Commandments (**place tablets on board**) at Mt. Sinai, which also happened on this day.

(Remove all characters from board.)

Another thing we will do to make this day special is to read a Bible story about a woman named Ruth. (**Place Ruth on board.**) In the book of Ruth, we will see how the people were following many of the rules Yahweh gave in His Torah - rules that we learned about in our other lessons. We can also thank Yahweh for giving us His Torah.

Our story happened many years after the Yisra'elites had already moved to the land, made homes for themselves and started doing their jobs. The story of Ruth begins with a family that lived in Beyth Lehem. There was a mom named Na'omi (**place happy Na'omi on board**) and a dad named Elimelek (**place Elimelek on board**) and their 2 sons, named Mahlon and Kilyon. (**Place Mahlon and Kilyon on board.**) Do you remember the stories of Abraham having to move his family to Mitsrayim because of a famine? And do you remember later on, when Abraham's son Yitshaq had to move his family to the same place all over again? Well, the shortage of food happened again, and now it was Elimelek's family that had to move.

They chose to move to a nearby land called Mo'ab. Mo'ab was one of those lands that Yahweh wanted His people to be sure not to imitate in their behavior. Yahweh had said that the Mo'abites were so bad they could not become His people - not even for 10 generations. (**Place #10 on board.**) I don't know how long they had been living in Mo'ab, but sadly, the head of the family, Elimelek, died. (**Remove Elimelek from board.**)

Na'omi still had her 2 sons, who decided to get married. But they didn't wait to go back home to marry Yisra'elite women. Instead, they married 2 Mo'abite women. (**Place Orpah and Ruth on board next to each other.**) One was named Orpah (**point to Orpah**), and the other one was Ruth (**point to Ruth**) which is the name of the book in the Bible. The couples lived in Mo'ab for about 10 years, and then both the sons died too. (**Remove Mahlon and Kilyon from board.**) Na'omi was very sad, for her husband and both her sons were gone, and she was not living near any other family. (**Replace happy Na'omi with sad Na'omi.**)



One day, Na'omi heard that Yahweh had blessed the Yisra'elites once again, and they now had bread to eat. When she heard this news, Na'omi decided it was time to go back home to Beyth Lehem. Her 2 Mo'abite daughters-in-law began the journey with her, but then Na'omi decided it was not fair to make the 2 women move so far away from their families. She urged them to go back home to Mo'ab, and see if they could get new husbands. She said she would not be upset with them if they left her, and that she hoped they would be blessed.

The 2 young women were sad to hear this. They cried and hugged her, and at last Orpah said goodbye and headed back home. **(Remove Orpah from board.)** Ruth was also sad, but she wasn't willing to say goodbye to her dear mother-in-law. She told Na'omi that she wanted to stay with her. **(Place Ruth next to sad Na'omi.)** Even though Na'omi urged Ruth to go back to her hometown and to the familiar gods of her own nation, Ruth said no. She begged Na'omi not to make her leave, but rather to let her go with her to Beyth Lehem. She truly wanted to worship Yahweh and learn how to become a Yisra'elite. So the 2 women began their journey back to Na'omi's hometown.

When Na'omi and Ruth arrived in town **(place town on board)**, Na'omi's old friends **(place Na'omi's friends on board)** welcomed her back. Na'omi told them she was sad because Yahweh had taken away her husband and sons. **(Point to sad Na'omi.)** She felt her life was no longer happy, but bitter and gloomy. She asked them not to call her Na'omi anymore, but to change her name to Mara, which means 'bitter'.

(Remove Na'omi's friends from board and replace town with Na'omi's house. Place sad Na'omi and Ruth near the house on board.)

Not too long ago, you may have listened to a story or lesson that talked about one of Yahweh's rules for the grain harvest. The rule was to not be greedy by picking up all the grain off the ground when it was harvested. Yahweh knew there would be poorer people who would have no fields to provide grain for them, so they were permitted to come and pick up some of the grain that was left behind. Ruth must have learned at least some of the rules of the Torah, because she asked Na'omi if she could go pick up some of the leftover grain for them to eat. Na'omi told her yes. When Ruth went to glean the grain left behind by the reapers, she ended up in the field belonging to a wealthy man named Bo'az. Now Bo'az just happened to be a relative of Na'omi.

(Remove sad Na'omi and Na'omi's house from board. Place barley field on board, and place Ruth beside edge of field.)

Bo'az was very rich, and he had hired servants taking care of his fields. He had just returned from a trip away from home (**place Bo'az on board**) and was looking over his fields when he noticed Ruth among those who were gathering left-over grain. Bo'az asked his manager (**place manager on board near Bo'az**) who this young woman might be. The manager explained that it was a girl from Mo'ab, Na'omi's daughter-in-law, and that she was gathering grain for their food because they didn't have husbands to take care of them.

Bo'az went to Ruth (**place Bo'az near Ruth**) and told her to gather grain from no other field but his only, so he could make sure she was safe. He also told Ruth that when she got thirsty, she could drink from the same water as his workers did. Ruth was very happy to hear this, and asked Bo'az why he was being so nice to her.

Bo'az, who knew Yahweh's Torah, told her that he admired her goodness to Na'omi and her courage in coming to a strange place where she didn't know the customs and the rules they lived by. Ruth was amazed that this man could be so kind to someone who looked and seemed so different from the people who lived there. Bo'az replied that since she had decided to find refuge with Yahweh, it was Yahweh Himself who was taking care of her. Bo'az knew Yahweh's command not to treat strangers unkindly, because the Yisra'elites themselves had been strangers in Mitsrayim.

Bo'az invited Ruth to lunch, and she got to sit down and eat with him and his hired servants. (**Place bread and jug on board near Bo'az and Ruth.**)

Bo'az did not want to embarrass Ruth, who did not yet know all the rules of gleaning, so he asked his servants to let her pick grain from anywhere she wanted. He also told them to leave some extra, so she had plenty to pick from.

(Remove bread and jug, and Bo'az from board. Place Ruth near barley field.)

Ruth worked hard. She didn't take for granted the gift she had been given of a good way to provide for herself and her mother-in-law. She was so excited to come back and show Na'omi all the grain she had gathered to make flour! (**Remove manager and barley field. Place Ruth and 1 bag of grain near Na'omi.**) Na'omi was surprised to see so much grain and wanted Ruth to tell her all about her day. Ruth told her where she had gone, and all about Bo'az and his kindness toward her. Na'omi was really excited to tell Ruth that Bo'az was her relative. (**Replace sad Na'omi with happy Na'omi.**) She realized then that Yahweh was still taking care of her, even though she hadn't seen it earlier. Ruth and Na'omi now had no worries about what they would eat every day! Ruth worked hard the whole season that the barley and wheat were being harvested. (**Place basket with grain sheaves on board.**)

Na'omi saw how hard Ruth had been working, and she felt that Ruth needed to have a good husband. She explained to Ruth another of Yahweh's rules in Torah, called the law of the kinsman redeemer. This law said that when a woman's husband died with no children, a close relative could marry her so he could take care of her and give her children. Na'omi told Ruth just what to do so that Bo'az would know she wanted to be redeemed by him.



Ruth did just as Na'omi taught her, and Bo'az let her know how happy he was to find out that she wanted him for her husband. **(Remove happy Na'omi and place Bo'az on board near Ruth.)** Even though Bo'az was older, and there were a lot of young men she could have married, he was glad Ruth wanted to do things the right way, the way Yahweh had given in His Torah.

However, Bo'az explained to Ruth that even though he wanted to redeem her, he would have to follow certain rules, and the rules said that there was another close relative who had the right to redeem her first. Bo'az promised to ask the other man for permission to redeem Ruth himself, and gave her lots more barley to take home to Na'omi. **(Remove Bo'az and place Ruth with 2 bags of grain near happy Na'omi.)** Na'omi was happy to hear the good report and told Ruth that Bo'az would do the right thing and make sure they were taken care of.

(Remove all characters from board.)

According to the rules, there had to be witnesses when Bo'az and the other person decided who would do the redeeming. **(Place kinsman and 10 witnesses on board, all near Bo'az.)**

If you were a man wanting to redeem and care for a piece of land that had belonged to a relative, the rule was that you also had to take care of his widow - that is, the woman whose husband had died - a woman like Ruth or Na'omi. As soon as Bo'az told the other relative that he could redeem the land, the man was all for it. But then Bo'az let him know that he would also have to take care of the widow Ruth and give her a child who would grow up to own the land later, after he had died. Wow, did that other relative change his mind in a hurry! He was like, "No, I am good. I don't want to take care of someone else's land and not give as much attention to mine."

Bo'az was hoping for that answer, and he was eager to seal the deal. One of the customs when 2 men made a land deal was that one man handed his sandal and gave it to the other man in front of witnesses so everyone could see it. So the nearest kinsman redeemer took his sandal off and handed it to Bo'az, and the deal was done. **(Place sandal between Bo'az and kinsman.)** I sure hope he brought along an extra sandal to walk home in! The witnesses all agreed that the deal was done and spoke blessings to Bo'az for doing the right thing.

(Remove sandal, kinsman, and 10 witnesses from board. Replace Bo'az and Ruth with Bo'az and Ruth under chuppah.)

So Bo'az and Ruth got married, and Yahweh blessed them both for doing the right thing and following Torah. The women of the town **(place Na'omi's friends by happy Na'omi)** praised Yahweh because they saw how well He had rewarded Ruth and Na'omi for their trust in Him.



Even though Ruth had not grown up knowing the rules of Yahweh, she had proven herself by working hard, learning Torah and obeying it. We, too, must remember to always follow Torah and do as Yahweh tells us, even when it is hard.

Soon Ruth and Bo'az had a baby, **(replace Bo'az and Ruth under chuppah with Bo'az and Ruth with baby)** and once again the women were joyful to see how blessed Na'omi was through Ruth, who had loved her mother-in-law, and had treated her better than if she'd had 7 sons taking care of her. **(Place Na'omi's friends and happy Na'omi next to Bo'az and Ruth with baby.)**

Wow, what a beautiful story! We have seen that when we follow Yahweh's Torah, it blesses us, and other people as well! We can cause others to praise Yahweh, just by being obedient and letting them see how Yahweh takes care of us. Ruth's story brings great joy and hope, because it shows us how any person, no matter what their past or where they come from, can choose to obey Torah, follow Yahweh, and become one of His children.

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

