

# 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.

### And These are Your Appointed Times

Shalom children! Today we will look at the instructions that Yahweh gave to the Yisra'elites through Mosheh about His Appointed Times, which are special feasts that He wants all the children of Yisra'el to celebrate. **(Place Mosheh and happy Yisra'elites on board.)**

The first feast and celebration we see in this chapter of the parsha is one that we get to do every single week. Can anyone tell me what that is? Yes, it is Shabbat! **(Place Shabbat scene on board.)** Yahweh told Mosheh to tell the Yisra'elites to rest on Shabbat and NOT do any work. **(Place Yisra'elite family at Shabbat table on board.)** Every 7<sup>th</sup> day, we take this special time to get together, relax, and learn about Yahweh. **(Place Yisra'elite family studying Torah on board.)** I don't know about you, but I look forward to Shabbat every week so that I can rest and go to Shabbat services to hear Rabbi teach **(place Rabbi teaching on board)** and the beautiful praise music **(place Briana praising on board)** and focus on Yahweh and enjoy a special meal with my family. **(Place modern family at Shabbat table on board.)**

Now, how many of you have ever celebrated one of Yahweh's 3 pilgrimage feasts, like Passover, Shavuot or Sukkot? **(Let children answer.)** Back in Bible times, the men were commanded to go to Yerushalayim for each of the pilgrimage feasts. **(Place people going to Yerushalayim scene on board.)** We always have a lot of fun celebrating those feasts, and once one feast is finished, we have months or even weeks to look forward to the next one!

So, the first of Yahweh's yearly appointed times and pilgrimage feasts are Passover and the Festival of Unleavened Bread, which begin together in the spring. The first Passover meal was eaten the night of the death of the first-born. Yahweh told the Yisra'elites to eat a roasted lamb with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. **(Place Yisra'elite family eating Passover meal on board.)** The man of the house was supposed to have his staff in his hand and his loins girded so that he would be ready to leave when Yahweh said it was time. **(Point to staff and loins girded.)** The bread they ate was unleavened because it didn't have time to rise before it was baked. **(Place unleavened breads on board.)** The bitter herbs they ate were to be a reminder of their slavery in Mitsrayim and the harshness they had to endure. **(Place bitter herbs on board.)**



Nowadays we usually eat unleavened bread such as matzah at the Passover meal. **(Place modern family performing Passover on board.)** Yahweh told His people that they are to observe this festival by eating only bread that is unleavened for 1 week. **(Place matzah on board.)** That means no puffy bread for 7 days! **(Place yeast with 'X' on board.)**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> day, we are not supposed to go to work and make money. **(Place man plowing on board.)** This is called servile work. We are supposed to gather together on the 1<sup>st</sup> day and also the 7<sup>th</sup> day for services. **(Point to Rabbi and Briana.)**

**(Remove all characters from board.)**

Now, once the Yisra'elites have settled into the land of Kena'an and begin to raise crops, there is a special offering that Yahweh's people are to bring during this time. It is called the offering of First-Fruits, or the Wave Sheaf offering. In Hebrew, it is called 'Bikkurim.' They would bring this sheaf to the priest who would present it to Yahweh as a wave sheaf offering. **(Place priest waving barley sheaf on board.)** They are also to bring a male lamb as a burnt offering, a grain offering, and a wine offering to Yahweh. **(Place first-fruits offerings on board.)** And they are NOT to eat bread, roasted grain, or fresh grain until they have brought this offering. Yahweh's offering comes first! We don't do this anymore because this instruction is connected to the land of Yisra'el.

Yahweh then told them about the Festival of Weeks, which in Hebrew is called Shavuot. The 10 Commandments were given on this day and is the second pilgrimage feast commanded by Yahweh to observe in the spring. **(Place Shavuot scene on board.)** To get to Shavuot you must have 7 completed Sabbaths, over a period of 49 days. Then on the 50<sup>th</sup> day, a new grain offering was brought to Yahweh. He wanted them to bring offerings of 2 loaves of bread made out of fine flour and baked with leaven, so they will be nice and puffy. **(Place 2 loaves of bread on board.)** They were to bring them to the priest who presented them before Yahweh as a wave offering. **(Place priest waving breads on board.)**

He also told them to bring 7 lambs, a bull, and 2 rams for a burnt offering as well as 1 male goat for a sin offering and 2 male lambs for a peace offering. Wow, that's a lot of animals! **(Place Shavuot offerings on board.)** They were also told to have a set-apart gathering and NOT to do any servile work, which is something we still do today.

**(Remove all characters from board.)**

Now we are going to talk about the fall feasts. Several months after Shavuot, comes the next appointed time of Yahweh, the Festival of Trumpets. **(Place shofars on board.)** You may have heard this one called Yom Teruah or Rosh Hashanah. This is the day that we get to hear lots and lots of shofar blasts! **(Place man blowing shofar on board.)** Yahweh told the Yisra'elites that this day is for resting and remembering Yahweh by blowing trumpets. He also told them to bring another offering.



Ten days after the Festival of Trumpets comes the Day of Atonement. It is a very solemn day, when the Yisra'elites are to gather together and afflict themselves. We practice this by fasting, which means that we go a whole day without having anything to eat or drink. **(Place food and drink with 'X' on board.)** Yahweh tells them to bring another offering, and then He tells them NOT to do any work. **(Place Day of Atonement scapegoat scene on board.)** And boy, is He serious! He says that they must remember this commandment forever - to afflict themselves and NOT to do any work on this day. And their children and their children's children, for all generations are to remember it too, no matter where they live.

Finally, we come to the Festival of Booths, or Sukkot, which is the Hebrew word for 'booths.' **(Place Sukkot scene on board.)** It is the third yearly pilgrimage feast, and lasts for 7 days, with a special 8<sup>th</sup> day festival added at the end, called Shemini Atzeret. **(Place 8<sup>th</sup> Day scene on board.)** Sukkot is a joyful time that takes place when they have gathered in the fruit of the land. Yahweh tells them to bring fruit of good trees, branches of palm trees, twigs of leafy trees, and willows of the stream and rejoice for 7 days. **(Place family rejoicing with 4 species on board.)** All the native Yisra'elites are to gather together and spend time living in booths during this festival. In the land of Yisra'el, harvest time always brings beautiful, sunny weather, so living in booths is like the best camp-out you could ever imagine! Have you ever helped build or decorate a sukkah? **(Place family decorating sukkah on board.)** It's lots of fun, isn't it? Yahweh explains to them that living in booths is meant to remind them how they lived in booths out in the wilderness, after He brought them out of the land of Mitsrayim. On the first day of this festival, they are to gather together and not go to work. Yahweh tells them to bring an offering for 7 days, and then on the 8<sup>th</sup> day, on Shemini Atzeret **(point to 8<sup>th</sup> Day scene)**, they are to have a final special gathering, bring another offering, and not go to work. It is a time of dancing and joy! **(Place happy Yisra'elites on board.)**

Well, we are at the end of Yahweh's list of all the appointed times He gave the Yisra'elites, and you may think that's a lot of gatherings and celebrations. But Yahweh wants His people to delight in Him and in His goodness, and I enjoy each one of them! If you get confused about which one is which, or need help remembering something about one of them, you can just ask your parents or one of the leaders in your congregation. These are all special times that are set apart for us to rest, think about Yahweh, and gather together to enjoy each other's company. **(Place group of Yisra'elites on board.)**

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!

