

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.

Journey On!

Shalom children! Today we're joining the children of Yisra'el near the very end of their journey through the wilderness. Just think—40 long years of breaking camp, walking and more walking, then stopping to set up camp all over again. **(Place #40 on board.)** But now things were about to get just a little more exciting. You see, in order to get to Kena'an, they'd have to travel through countries that were NOT friendly. These foreign people had heard all about Yahweh's terrible plagues on Mitsrayim—miracles so frightening that Pharaoh finally had to let the Yisra'elites go. How would all those thousands of them make it through these lands where they were not welcome? Do you think maybe Yahweh helped them? Of course He did! Sometimes they passed through with no attacks, but in other places there were fierce battles. Let's find out what happened each time.

The first land they came to was Edom, which lay in the high country around a mountain called Se'ir. Let's say it together: "say-ear." Very good! The Edomites living there were actually Yisra'el's cousins, the descendants of Esaw. **(Place Esaw on board.)** And of course the Yisra'elites were sons of Esaw's younger brother Ya'aqob, who was later named Yisra'el. **(Place Ya'aqob on board.)** Now, the Edomites hated the Yisra'elites. Why? Well, do you like it when your brother or sister always grabs the biggest cookie or the chunkiest slice of cake? Hey, not fair, right? But what Ya'aqob had done to Esaw a very long time ago was way more serious than diving for a slice of cake! Ya'aqob had tricked their father Yitshaq into giving him the wealth, leadership and blessing that his older brother Esaw expected to get. **(Place older Yitshaq on board.)** And now, centuries later, Esaw's great-great-great-great grandchildren were still mad about it.

That's why Yahweh told Mosheh to take the people through the land of Edom very politely, **(place Yisra'elites walking through Edom on board)** because the Edomites didn't trust them and might look for ways to pick a fight. They weren't allowed to take even a tiny sip of Edom's water or to pick an apricot or a fig without paying for it in silver! **(Place Yisra'elite paying Edomite on board.)** And Yahweh would not be giving Yisra'el one inch of the Edomites' land, either, because Yahweh had already given Mount Se'ir to the family of Esaw. He reminded His people to think back over the 40 years they had spent wandering with no land of their own. He had taken complete care of them, as He'd promised. And He would protect the Edomites' land, too—just as He promised. Yahweh always keep His word!



It was the same with the countries of Mo'ab and Ammon. Both these peoples were descended from Lot. Remember him? **(Place Lot on board.)** He was Abraham's nephew. When Abraham left his home country to follow Yahweh to some unknown place, his nephew Lot had the faith to go with him. And who remembers how Yahweh sent messengers to rescue Lot and his family from the fire that He rained on wicked Sodom? We learned about that in the 'Great Balls of Fire' lesson for parsha Vayeira.

Later, when the Mo'abite descendants of Lot conquered Ar and got rid of the evil giants who lived there, **(place giants on board)** Yahweh gave them the land of Ar. Because of Yahweh's promise, Yisra'el was told to walk through their land and treat the Mo'abites peacefully **(place Yisra'elites walking through Mo'ab on board)**, as well as Mo'ab's relatives, the Ammonites, who lived just beyond Mo'ab's borders. **(Place Yisra'elites walking through Ammon on board.)**

Yay! Now Yisra'el had made it through 3 whole countries with no fighting. But wait—oh my! Now they were coming to the country of the Amorites, and it was ruled by two of the fiercest, most powerful kings around. **(Place 2 kings on board.)** No one in that region believed that any army could defeat Sihon, king of Heshbon, or Og, king of Bashan. But Yahweh told His people not to worry. They'd have to prepare for some heavy fighting, but if they were courageous, He promised to give them complete victory. Then all the nations around would stop to think twice before they messed with Yisra'el and their mighty God Yahweh!

At first, Mosheh was told to be nice and ask King Sihon if they could pass through his land peacefully, just as they'd done with Edom, Mo'ab and Ammon. But proud old King Sihon **(point to Sihon)** stiffened his heart and did not respect Yisra'el or their God. He said NO, absolutely NOT. He figured he'd show them! Stupid, stupid, stupid... Because guess what? Yahweh put His strength into the soldiers of Yisra'el and they totally wiped out Sihon, all his sons, and every one of his cities. **(Place Yisra'elites slaying Sihon and sons on board.)** Not a single person was left alive. **(Place dead people around Yisra'elites on board.)**

Let's talk about the amount of booty they took. **(Place Yisra'elites carrying spoils on board.)** Imagine all those houses full of things made of gold, silver and jewels, even closets holding expensive clothing. There were storerooms loaded with grain and oil and wine, and herds of livestock grazing in the green hills. Those poor, tired soldiers! After that big battle, they had to go and collect all that stuff and haul it back to their tents. But do you think anyone complained? Haha, I don't think so!

By now Yisra'el's faith was really pumped, so they pushed farther into Amorite territory to meet up with King Og of Bashan. **(Point to Og.)** There was no talk of peace this time, because Og had heard what they'd done to his neighbor King Sihon. He got so mad that he came out to attack them with his full army. But Yahweh told Yisra'el not to be afraid, and promised that He'd give them victory in this battle, too. Sure enough, not only did they slaughter King Og and his whole army **(place Og defeated on board)** but kept going and destroyed all of Og's 60 Amorite cities. **(Place 60 cities scene on board.)** Can you imagine taking 60 whole cities with high walls, strong gates and bars of defense? And Yisra'el didn't stop there; they kept going and wiped out many smaller towns as well. Why do you think they could do all this? That's right! Yahweh was giving them His mighty strength the whole time. Wow, even more booty... I wonder how long it took them to collect it all this time!

Here's something interesting. The Bible tells us that King Og was the last survivor of a nasty race of giants called Repha'ites. When they searched the king's palace, they found the bed that he slept in and measured it. **(Place Og's bed on board.)** Just imagine: Og's bed was made of iron and measured over 13 feet long and 6 feet wide. Now that's a big guy! He had been the most powerful of all the Kena'anite kings, and greatly feared everywhere. I think Yahweh wanted His people to conquer these two powerful kings first, so the word would get around. When His people crossed over the Yarden, He wanted the rest of the armies in Kena'an shaking in their boots!

I wonder if Mosheh had any idea what to do with all that conquered land? **(Place map of 2 kings on board.)** Well, there just happened to be $2\frac{1}{2}$ tribes who would help him figure it out. Has any of you ever spotted one thing you really liked, and before anyone else could grab it, you hollered something like, "Dibs on that!" Well, the 2 tribes of Re'uben and Gad, along with $\frac{1}{2}$ of Menashsheh, had their eye on the lush, green pastureland right all around them. **(Show children where these tribes would live.)** It was perfect for raising livestock, and these tribes had done that for many generations. But instead of hollering dibs, their leaders went quietly to Mosheh and asked him for the land, which was exactly the right thing to do. And Mosheh said yes! But there was one condition: the men from those tribes must promise to continue across the Yarden with the army and help conquer the rest of Kena'an. Their wives and children would stay behind, settling in the empty cities and tending the livestock. Only after Kena'an belonged completely to Yisra'el could they come back to join their families. I think those brave pioneer women deserve a big hand—let's clap!

Now the people were ready for their biggest adventure yet: marching in to take over a strange land full of enemies who worshiped idols. Mosheh told the people how sad he had felt when Yahweh told him he would not enter the new land. He would miss seeing all the miracles that would surely happen there. Have you ever begged and pleaded with your Mom or Dad not to discipline you for something bad? Parents may or may not change their mind, but the Scriptures say that Yahweh never does. Mosheh knew His will is always for the best. But still it hurt, after all those years, to know he would soon die without getting to set foot in the new country! Mosheh confessed to the people how he kept pleading, but soon learned that when Yahweh makes a decision, He does NOT put up with whining!

But because Mosheh was His precious servant, there was one thing Yahweh could give him. Remember what Yahweh promised Mosheh he'd get to do before he died? Have you ever hiked up to a place where you could see miles and miles into the distance? Mosheh would get to stand on top of the peak of Mt. Nebo and see the promised land all stretched out before him. Yahweh knew its beauty would take Mosheh's breath away. **(Place Mosheh standing on Mt. Nebo on board.)** I think maybe He planned to give Mosheh a pair of heavenly binoculars just for the occasion! Yahweh wanted him to be happy that his life had been a success. He had been Yahweh's chosen man and servant to deliver Yisra'el out of slavery and lead them all the way to the edge of the beautiful land where Yahweh planned to dwell with His chosen people. **(Place land of milk and honey on board.)**

Now there was just one thing left for Mosheh to do: he needed to encourage their new leader, Yehoshua, to be very strong and brave. **(Place Mosheh with hand on Yehoshua on board.)** He told Yehoshua that when he was leader, Yahweh would fight for Yisra'el, just as He'd helped them defeat the 2 Amorite kings.

So, what about us today? As the people of Yahweh, can we trust Him to guide us into all the good things He has promised, even when things look scary or uncertain? Who wants to be strong and courageous? **(Place words 'Be Strong and Courageous' on board.)** You do? Then let's let Him hear a big YES!

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!

