

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.

To OBEY or NOT to OBEY, Your Choice

Shalom, children! Today's lesson is about all the blessings Yahweh promised to give the people when they did what He commanded them. **(Place the word BLESSINGS on board.)** But it's also about the serious warnings He gave if they disobeyed Him. **(Place Mosheh on board.)** These were Mosheh's last words, because he knew he was about to die. I'm sure it was his strongest preaching ever. He wasn't fooling around!

So, tell me, who likes to get blessings; raise your hand. Wow, I see lots of hands! We love to get all the good things Father has for us, don't we? We live in nice, dry houses, we eat yummy food, and we get to wear cool clothes, too. **(Place children playing outside on board.)** And isn't it a blessing to sit together in this fun class every Sabbath and learn about the One who made us? **(Place boy and girl reading on board.)** By learning how to please God and do everything He says, we can someday live with Him forever in His beautiful Kingdom. There is no blessing any better than that!

Now, does anyone recall who Yahweh picked to take Mosheh's place? Right—it was Yehoshua! **(Place Yehoshua on board.)** He'd be the one to lead the children of Yisra'el across the Yarden River into their exciting new land. Mosheh said that when they got there, Yahweh wanted them to pile up a great big stone marker, using natural stones, just the way they were found. Then they were to plaster them together so the monument would last a very, very long time. **(Place men plastering stone on board.)** On these stones they were to carve all Yahweh's commandments very clearly, so everyone would read and remember them. **(Place men carving on stone on board.)** I'll bet that took a while!

Next, Mosheh said that Yehoshua was to collect more natural stones and build an altar close by, where he and the people would bring offerings of repentance and thanksgiving to Yahweh. They would sing and dance and enjoy their first celebration in the land Yahweh had promised them. **(Place dancing women on board.)** If you'd spent all your life wandering in a dry wilderness, wouldn't you want to party? I bet your parents would even let you stay up past midnight and dance until you lay down and fell asleep right there on the ground!

Now you might think that Yehoshua was going to put up this monument and altar right there on the other side of the Yarden. But Yahweh told Mosheh that they'd still have to walk for a little while longer, until they came to a flat valley that lay between two small mountains. **(Place 2 mountains with Yisra'elites walking on board.)** It would be near one of these mountains that Yehoshua must set up the rock memorial and the stone altar. And soon after the big party, Yahweh wanted the whole nation to put on a special program—something they'd never forget. It would be so awesome that whenever anyone thought of it, they'd remember their promise to obey all His commands. Maybe you took part in one of our children's programs on the last day of Pesach or Sukkot. Exciting, wasn't it?

But don't you wonder what kind of program thousands of people could put on with no stage, no spotlights and no sound system? Only Yahweh would ever do it using two mountains!

The first mountain was Mount Gerizim. Let's say it together: "Gehr-eh-zeem." Very good! Gerizim would be the mountain of 'Blessing.' Across the valley from Mount Gerizim was Mount Eybal, the Hill of Cursing. Can we say, "Ay-ball?" Great, you're on the ball today, children! Mosheh explained that half the 12 tribes were to stand on Gerizim, the hill of blessings, while the other 6 tribes would have to stand on Eybal, the hill of curses. **(Place tribes standing on both mountains on board.)**

The program would begin on Gerizim, with the 6 tribes Shim'on, Lěwi, Yehudah, Yissaskar, Yosěph, and Binyamin calling out Yahweh's blessings for obedience, one by one. **(Place 6 tribes on Mt. Gerizim on board.)** After each blessing, all the people on both sides would have to answer with a loud, "AMEIN!" **(Place the word AMEIN on board.)** Let's try shouting a big "AMEIN!" Very good! Just imagine how that flat valley would echo with thousands of voices. No sound system needed!

After the blessings on Gerizim, the 6 tribes over on Mount Eybal, Re'uběn, Gad, Ashěr, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali were to speak all the curses that would happen if they disobeyed Yahweh. **(Place 6 tribes on Mt. Eybal on board.)** When Mosheh got done listing all the curses, I think the people must have gotten very, very quiet. After all, those curses were pretty awful. When they arrived in the promised land, they would have to shout AMEIN to every single curse! I'd be very careful not to disobey Yahweh, wouldn't you?

Now, back to Gerizim. Let's take a peek at the blessings that would be their reward for obedience in their new land. Now, the land of Kena'an was not dry like Mitsrayim or the wilderness. Plenty of dew and rain would water the land, just at the right times of year. **(Place wet crops on board.)** They would have lots of healthy crops to eat, more to share, and even more to store away for later. Remember those huge grapes that the spies brought back on a pole? They'd get to eat those and many other sweet fruits. **(Place healthy crops on board.)** The women would bake delicious bread, and their husbands would raise fat cows and sheep for meat. They would always have food on their table. **(Place Yisra'elite family eating abundance on board.)** Husbands and wives would have lots of healthy babies, who would grow up and give them strong, healthy grandchildren and great-grandchildren to help them in the fields and in their kitchens. **(Place pregnant women with children on board.)**

As long as they were very careful to do all Yahweh's commands, and not worship the idol-gods of the nations around them, they would keep getting richer until all the surrounding nations would come to buy food and borrow from them. **(Place Yisra'elite man loaning money to foreigner on board.)** Yisra'el would become famous far and wide for their great wealth, their wise leaders, and their strong, fierce armies. They would enjoy victory over all their enemies who would come at them one way and flee 7 ways. **(Place man fleeing from Yisra'elite on board.)** Any nation that tried to mess with them would soon learn their lesson and tremble in fear of Yisra'el's mighty God Yahweh!

But Mosheh also had to warn them about the curses to be spoken from Mount Eybal. If they copied the people around them and did wrong things like making statues of fake gods, the curses would begin to come. And if they secretly prayed to one of those fake gods to give them what they needed instead of trusting Yahweh for their needs, there would definitely be trouble! **(Place man bowing to idol on board.)** Why would they do such bad things? Mosheh said it would begin whenever they started ignoring the words of the Torah Yahweh had given them! **(Place man walking away from Torah on board.)**

So, exactly what does it mean to be cursed by Yahweh? It's simple, He will just undo His blessings and make everything go backwards. No more rain, no more good crops. **(Place unhealthy crops on board.)** Their wheat crops would dry up and the ground would crack. **(Place dry wheat crop on board.)** Their grapes would shrivel and die from lack of rain and too much sun. **(Place dried up vineyard on board.)** Their flocks would starve **(place skinny sheep on board)** and their animals would get sick. **(Place unhealthy animals on board.)** The women would be unable to have children **(place crying and sad woman looking at pregnant woman on board)**. How terribly sad!

Have you ever been sick in bed? Not fun! But after your mom took care of you, in a while you ended up getting better, right? It feels great to go run outside again, doesn't it? But what if you never got well? **(Place woman holding stomach on board.)** If Yisra'el kept disobeying their Elohim, they'd get awful sicknesses that could not be cured.

If this weren't bad enough, Mosheh said that enemies near and far would begin to attack and defeat their armies. **(Place Yisra'elite man running from enemy on board.)** Their brave soldiers would lose courage and be shaking in their boots. Raiders would take over their houses, their crops and their livestock, and family members would end up as slaves to foreign people who didn't know Yahweh. **(Place abandoned town on board.)**

Finally, if they still refused to obey Yahweh, Mosheh said He would send a mighty nation to surround their cities and carry them far away from the good land He had promised them. They would be slaves and servants to foreign kings in strange, distant places, surrounded by idol worshipers. **(Place slave ship on board.)** All those good blessings, down the drain! Wouldn't their hearts be broken?

When we keep on ignoring Yahweh's instructions, He will allow curses to come. **(Place word CURSES on board.)** He knows that hard and upsetting things might wake us up so we'll get back on the right track where He can bless us again.

Who wants to live a life that's obedient to Father Yahweh, so we can enjoy His blessings?

You do? Then on the count of 3 let's all say a big, loud amein. One, two, three, "A--MEIN!" **(Point to word AMEIN 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!