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/2022-10-01T05_57_13-07_00

Chag HaSukkot Edition

Shalom children! Do you know the name of the festival we are observing this week? **(Allow children to answer.)** Yes, we are celebrating the festival of Sukkot. Today we are going to learn about Sukkot; it's the final pilgrimage festival that Yahweh commanded the children of Yisra'el to observe. Yahweh told Mosheh to teach the children of Yisra'el about all His special days that He wanted them to celebrate. Remember, we already celebrated the first pilgrimage feasts. Back in the spring and summer months, we had Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread, and then Shavuot. **(place spring feast scene on board)**. We also just finished observing Yom Teruah and Yom Kippur **(place fall feast scene on board)**. Our last festival in the fall is Sukkot, and it has a special closing day festival on the 8th day called Shemini Atzeret. **(Place Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret scene on board.)** Can you say that with me? She-mi-ni At-ze-ret. Great job!

Yahweh told the children of Yisra'el to observe the festival of Sukkot for 7 days during the 7th month. **(Place #7 on board.)** Then they were to close the festival by gathering for the 8th day festival—Shemini Atzeret. People also call it The Last Great Day. The Hebrew month for both these feasts is called Tishrei. Can you say that with me children? Tish-ray. Great job!

One thing Yahweh wanted them to do was to build sukkahs and live in them for 7 days. In English, a sukkah is called a booth. You might be asking, "What is a booth?" I'm glad you asked that. Well a booth or a sukkah looks like a very tiny house. **(Place sukkah on board.)** The walls are sometimes made from wood and the sides may have curtains, just like the tabernacle in the wilderness that we learned about. **(Place Dwelling Place on board.)** However, its roof is very different from the roof on the tabernacle. People will place branches from different trees on top of the wood beams, so that when it gets dark you can look up through the branches and see the stars in the sky. **(Point to roof.)** The reason Yahweh wanted them to live in booths was to make them always remember how He took care of them while they were in the wilderness, and to trust that Yahweh will take care of us, too.

Let's talk more about the branches. Yahweh asked the Yisra'elites to celebrate Sukkot by bringing specific branches to the feast. He wanted branches from a willow tree, a myrtle tree and a palm tree. **(Place trees on board.)** The people were to take these branches **(place 3 branches on board)** and rejoice before Yahweh. However, with these branches you were also to bring a citron fruit **(place etrog on board)** and wave all 4 of

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them before Yahweh. **(Place family rejoicing with 4 species on board.)** They are known as the 4 Species; in Hebrew we say, Arba'ah minim. Can you say it with me, children? Let's try. Ar-ba-ah Mi-nim. Great job, everyone! Yahweh told the children of Yisra'el that they were always to be happy and joyful during Sukkot—no tears or frowns were allowed. **(Point to family rejoicing with 4 species.)**

(Remove all characters from board.)

I can imagine the children of Yisra'el really enjoyed celebrating Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret. Yahweh was also happy because His children were obeying Him. **(Place happy emoji on board.)** But then there came a time when they stopped obeying Yahweh, and this made Him very sad. **(Place sad emoji on board.)**

Remember when we learned about the blessings and the curses? Well, because the children of Yisra'el chose to not obey, Yahweh had them go into captivity just like He said would happen if they didn't listen to Him. After many, many years, Yahweh allowed them to go back to Yerushalayim so that they could worship Him again. Nehemyah the prophet wrote about the first time they got to keep Sukkot after they returned from captivity. It says that Ezra the prophet stood in the open square and read the Torah every day to all the people. **(Place Ezra reading to people on board.)** You can imagine how deeply touched the people were to hear the Word being read to them again after all those years. Some of the people started crying, but Ezra told them to not be sad, but to rejoice, just as Yahweh had instructed Mosheh to tell the people back at Mount Sinai. Then all the people made booths. Some people put them on their roofs **(place sukkah on roof scene on board)** and decorated them with the same branches we talked about before. **(Place family decorating sukkah scene on board.)**

After 7 days Sukkot ended, and it was time to keep the 8th day festival, called Shemini Atzeret. Nowadays, our brother Yehudah will celebrate this with an extra day called Simchat Torah. On this day, the Torah scroll gets rolled back to the beginning and the parsha cycle is started all over again with Bereishit. **(Place Torah scroll on board.)** Then everyone dances and makes a joyful noise, because we get to learn from Yahweh's Torah all over again. **(Place happy children scene on board.)**

Okay, we know that Sukkot gives us 7 days of rejoicing. Why do you think we are commanded to be happy for the whole week? Well, that's because the 7 days stand for the future reign of Messiah Yeshua. Those of us who obey His commandments and love Him with all our hearts will be counted as His own people Yisra'el, and will rule the earth with Him for a thousand years.

We'll get to help Him to take away all the bad and dangerous things in the earth and make it peaceful. For a thousand years, there will be no more killing or wars. No more hunger or thirst. No more tears or accidents or sickness. **(Place crying emoji on board.)** No more bullies to scare us. **(Place scared emoji on board.)** No more people worshiping false gods and horrible idols, or making fun of us because we serve Yahweh. **(Place idol on board.)** All the nations on the earth will come to Yerushalayim to worship Yahweh, and all over the world everyone will fear and obey King Yeshua. **(Place Yerushalayim scene on board.)** Why, even wild animals will become completely tame. You don't believe me?

(Remove all characters from board.)

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Okay, let's imagine you're walking in the woods and meet up with a huge grizzly bear. But you wouldn't have to run, because he'll just sniff your face, give you a furry bear hug and go on his way! He may even hang out with a cow. **(Place bear and cow scene on board.)** Maybe you see a wolf near a little lamb. **(Place wolf and lamb scene on board.)** Will he snatch and eat a poor little lamb? No way! That wolf will lick the lamb, then they'll lie down and take a nap together. A leopard will even hang out with a goat. **(Place leopard and goat scene on board.)** Scripture says that a child will play near a snake's hole and not get hurt. **(Place child near snake scene on board.)** A child will even lead a bunch of cool animals when he plays. **(Place child leading animals scene on board.)** Isn't that a happy thought? **(Place happy emoji on board.)**

Now, who remembers what feast comes right after Sukkot? That's right; it's the Last Great Day—the 8th Day. The 8th Day stands for the time when Yeshua is done ruling the world. We read that at the end of the thousand years, the devil will be allowed to test everyone on the earth, to see who really loves Yahweh and who doesn't. Everyone who ever lived will then stand before Him, so He can decide who can live forever in the Eternal Kingdom of the Father. Anyone who would rather sin than obey Him is not going to get in. But if we follow His Torah and love to serve Him, we'll be alive with Him, forever and ever!

After the 8th Day, there will be a completely new world—more amazing than we can ever imagine. Every single thing on earth will be beautiful, loving, good, and obedient to Father Yahweh. We can read about that in the very last chapter of the Bible. This is the greatest moment in all of history, when our Father in heaven will move His throne from heaven to earth, and live with us here. We'll all be together—brothers and sisters, doing all kinds of exciting things to serve Father Yahweh and His Son Yeshua—for all time.

Has your dad or mom ever promised that if you picked up your room and got it all sparkling clean, they'd take you out for ice cream? **(Place 3 ice cream flavors on board.)** Well, on the Last Great Day, Yahweh wants us to think about what a great reward is waiting for us—way better than ice cream. The more we get to know Him, the more eager we will be to pick the junk out of our messy hearts and get our lives all sparkling clean for Him. Who would like to live with Him on the renewed earth? **(Place New Yerushalayim scene on board.)** I sure would!

Before we say good-bye, let's take a moment to wish each other a happy Sukkot in Hebrew. Moadim L'Simcha! Can you say it with me children? Moh-ah-deem Le-sim-cha! Happy Feast! Great job everyone!

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!

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