

PARSHA POINTS

LITTLE GEMS

Parent/Teacher Preparation:

Please see the instructions for the Little Gems story on the YMTOI website. We recommend that you print out the characters and familiarize yourself with each story so that you can implement the visual representations of your choice (felt, laminated or stand-ups) at the appropriate time.

Choose Life

Shalom children! Welcome back to another Little Gems story! Last week, we talked about the first-fruits and the 3rd year tithe that the Yisra'elites are to bring before the priest and before Yahweh. **(Place first-fruits on board.)** In this week's story, Mosheh is still talking to the people about everything that Yahweh is commanding them. **(Place Mosheh on board.)** He is getting really close to the end of his speech now, and soon the people will get to cross over into the land of Kena'an to start a new chapter of their lives. Mosheh is getting near the end of his life and will not be going with them, so Yehoshua will become their leader when it is time for them to go into the land. **(Place Yehoshua on board.)** But right now, they are listening to Mosheh while they are still camped in the land of Mo'ab.

Okay, so let's see what else Yahweh wants the Yisra'elites to know about their covenant with Him. Mosheh tells them that they are to *guard* the words of Yahweh's covenant and to *do* them. And he says that if they do this, they will prosper and will have a good quality of life. Mosheh tells them that these instructions are not just for some of them, but for all of them: the leaders, all the tribes, the old people, the young people, the men, the women, and even the people who are journeying and working with them. And that includes people who were not actually standing there at that moment. **(Place leaders, 12 tribes, older couple, group of Yisra'elites, and non-Yisra'elites on board.)**

Mosheh warns the people that if they do not listen to Yahweh and instead decide to serve other mighty ones, things won't go very well for them. He tells them that being stubborn and rebellious leads to bad things happening, like being separated from Yisra'el, suffering sickness and famine, and even their land being cursed. **(Place the word 'curses' on board and scatter people all over the board.)** Yikes! I'm sure that made them very sad. **(Place sad Yisra'elites on board.)**



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But wait! There is good news coming! Mosheh tells them that when they turn away from Yahweh and all this bad stuff happens to them, they can still make a choice to come back and follow Yahweh. And when they start listening to Him and return to Him with all their heart and with all their being, then Yahweh will gather them back together as His people again! **(Place the word 'blessings' on board, and regather people on board into a group.)** And then many, many good things will come. Yay! **(Replace sad Yisra'elites with happy Yisra'elites, and place land of Kena'an scene and baskets of food on board.)**

The people are reminded that these mitzvot are not too hard to do. Nobody has to go up to the heavens and bring something down for them so that they can do it. They can make the choice themselves. They can choose life and blessing if they listen and obey.

Here is an example that many of us can understand. Your parents, or the other adults who look after you, would not tell you that you needed to do something if they knew you wouldn't be able to do it. When they tell you that you need to clean your room, brush your teeth, eat your vegetables, or do your schoolwork, they know that if you really work hard and give it your best effort, then you will be able to do these things. **(Place sock, toothbrushes, vegetables, and schoolbooks on board.)** And when we are obedient and listen to the people who are teaching us these things, it helps us have a better quality of life. If we don't do these things, what could happen? **(We may get sick, get bad grades in our classes, lose our toys, etc.)**

Here's another example. Have you ever seen very small children learning how to walk, talk, eat, or dress? **(Place walking toddler on board.)** You might not remember being that small, but learning the skills that are needed takes effort on their part. They might not get it right the first time, and so they have to practice. But eventually, if they follow the instructions of their parents and caretakers, they get it and they are able to do these things on their own.

The message here is that *we can do it!* Mosheh is telling the Yisra'elites that if they will listen and obey and love Yahweh by doing the things in the Torah **(place Torah scroll on board)** that we have spent so many weeks learning about, then Yahweh will bless them and give them life. How wonderful that is for them and for us!

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!

