

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.

Yoseph The Jailbird

Shalom, children! Let's see...Where did we leave poor Yoseph? **(Place younger Yoseph on board.)** Oh yes, that's right! His brothers have sold him to the slave traders who were passing by, and now he is being dragged to the land of Mitsrayim, where people worship the sun, a bull, and many other strange gods. How sad he must have been! **(Place sad emoji on board.)** How would you feel if you were being carted off to a strange place and wondering if you'd ever see your family again? Maybe a little afraid as well? **(Place scared emoji on board.)**

In Mitsrayim a king ruled by the name of Pharaoh **(place Pharaoh on board)**. Now, Pharaoh had a man who was in charge of all the soldiers who guarded the ruler's great palace. This officer's name was Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard. **(Place Potiphar on board next to Pharaoh.)** Potiphar bought Yoseph from the slave traders and took him to his house to work for him. **(Remove Pharaoh from board.)**

Soon Potiphar began to notice what a hard worker young Yoseph was. He was super smart, too. In fact, Yoseph was so good at everything he did that Potiphar decided to put him in charge of running his whole household and all his property. **(Remove younger Yoseph and Potiphar from board and place Yoseph as Mitsrite on board.)**

Everything seemed to be going well for Yoseph - at least as well as it can be if you're a slave in a strange country! But something was going on behind the scenes that made Yoseph quite nervous. You see, Potiphar had a wife, who had noticed how smart and handsome Yoseph was. **(Place Potiphar's wife next to Yoseph on board.)** Her husband wasn't home much, and a lot of the time she felt lonely and totally bored. But along came Yoseph, who was always right there taking care of the household, so she decided to act unfaithful to her husband and run after his handsome slave.

Day after day she tried to convince him to pay her special attention. Now what do you think Yoseph said, yes or no? That's right - he kept telling her a great big NO. Yoseph kept turning her away, telling her how Potiphar trusted him completely, and because she was Potiphar's wife, it would be a very evil thing to go behind Potiphar's back. And more than anything, Yoseph said no because it would be wrong in the eyes of Yahweh his Elohim!



One day her patience ran out. When Yoseph said no and ran away from her, she pulled off his outer clothing and held on to it (**place hand with clothing on board**) until her husband came home so that she could show it to him. Now, we know she had made it all up, but just imagine how shocked and angry Potiphar was, to think that Yoseph had done the bad things that his wife said he did! (**Remove hand with clothing and Potiphar's wife from board.**) So, he had his servants take Yoseph to Pharaoh's palace prison house. (**Remove Yoseph as Mitsrite from board and place older Yoseph and prison on board.**)

There Yoseph sat, in a dark, filthy jail cell, worse off than ever. Do you think he might have cried himself to sleep at night? I know I would! But after a little while, Yoseph remembered that Yahweh was with him. He cheered himself up and decided to make the best of it, hoping to see what Yahweh would do to rescue him. The prison warden soon saw how helpful and useful Yoseph was, not like the other prisoners. (**Place warden on board next to Yoseph.**) So, once again, Yoseph was placed in charge of something big - this time it was the whole prison. Yahweh was with him and blessed him and took care of him.

Well, some years went by, and the day came when 2 of Pharaoh's most important servants were arrested and thrown into the palace prison where Yoseph was. The first prisoner was Pharaoh's baker. (**Place baker on board.**) You all know what a baker does, right? (**Let children answer.**) Yum, yum - just think of all the delicious breads and cakes and pies and cookies this man made for the Pharaoh! The other new prisoner was Pharaoh's cupbearer, which was a very important position. (**Place cupbearer next to baker.**) Whenever Pharaoh asked for wine to drink, his cupbearer had to taste it first, to make sure there was no poison in it. (**Place Pharaoh's cup on board.**) If there was, then it would be the cupbearer who got sick and died instead of the Pharaoh. Do you think a cupbearer would want to be extra careful about guarding the wine? You bet he would! Happily, the king's wine usually had no poison in it, so the cupbearer would then pour the wine into a goblet, and bow to the king as he offered it to him on a shiny tray.

Even though Pharaoh had become angry with these 2 men, the warden was clever enough to put Yoseph in charge of caring for his special prisoners. After all, one or both of them might one day be released, and Pharaoh would surely hear about it if they hadn't been treated well in the warden's prison! So, day after day Yoseph provided the 2 men with everything they might need or ask for. Even though they were both awfully worried about what Pharaoh might decide to do with them, Yoseph tried to make them as comfortable as he could.

(Remove all characters from board except for Yoseph.)

One morning, Yoseph entered their cell to see what they might want for breakfast. But there they both sat, sad as can be - and not at all hungry. (**Place prisoners on board.**) They explained that they had each had very clear dreams - the kind that usually mean something. But try as they might, they could not figure out the meaning of their dreams. Well, Yoseph knew that Yahweh could show what dreams meant, so he asked them to share with him exactly what they had dreamed. The cupbearer went first. He spoke of seeing a grapevine with 3 branches, which blossomed and bore grapes. (**Place cupbearer dream bubble above cupbearer on board.**) In the dream, he squeezed the grapes so that the juice ran into Pharaoh's cup, and then he presented the cup to Pharaoh. (**Point to wine cup.**) Yoseph was happy to give the meaning of this dream, because it meant that in 3 days Pharaoh would restore him to his place as cupbearer. (**Place number 3 on board.**)



As the cupbearer rejoiced at this news, Yoseph took the opportunity to make a special request. "When you are restored to Pharaoh's service," he begged, "please remember me and show kindness. For if you mention me to Pharaoh, maybe he will let me out of this jail, because I've done nothing wrong!"

Now came the baker's turn to share his dream. He was hopeful that his dream would also have a happy meaning. In his dream he had seen 3 white baskets balanced on his head. **(Place baker dream bubble above baker on board.)** The top one contained all kinds of delicious baked goods for Pharaoh, and birds were coming down to feed themselves out of the basket. But Yoseph was frowning. Unlike the cupbearer's dream, this one predicted that Pharaoh would not pardon the baker, but in 3 days he'd have him hanged instead. And that is exactly what happened: in 3 days the baker was put to death, while the cupbearer was lifted up and restored to his place. **(Remove sitting prisoners and place cupbearer restored scene on board.)**

Back in the prison **(place prison on board)**, Yoseph went about his work, whistling and humming softly to himself. Surely the cupbearer would tell Pharaoh about him. Maybe soon he would be released! Surely the cupbearer had seen how Yoseph's words had all come true, and that Yahweh was with him. If only the man would be kind enough to mention him to Pharaoh!

But sadly, the weeks dragged by, turning into months and months and more months on top of that. There was no sign that the cupbearer had even given Yoseph a second thought. I'm sure Yoseph had a lot of time to think about the dreams he had about his brothers bowing down to him as well and wondering how they would ever come to be. **(Place thinking emoji on board.)**

Also picture how Yoseph felt, being locked up all those years for things he had never done! He had to fight off feelings of despair all the time. **(Place sad emoji on board.)** There was only one thing to do: keep on trusting Yahweh to fulfill the dreams that were given to him so long ago - **(place praying emoji on board)** dreams of receiving great honor and responsibility, not prison and slavery. So Yoseph waited, faithfully serving others, choosing to do the right things and trying hard to think the right thoughts. There in the prison, he couldn't imagine the great plans that Yahweh had in store for him, but he could trust his wonderful, patient Elohim to bring about the good ending that he could not yet see. And do you know what? When we're in a hard place, we can trust Him, too! **(Place deliverance emoji 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!

