

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.

Be Strong and Courageous!

Shalom, children! Before we begin, let's look at what we learned last week. The children of Yisra'el are getting ready to move to a super-exciting place. Can anyone tell me where? Yes, they're going to their new home in the beautiful land of Kena'an! **(Place land of Kena'an scene on board.)** Mosheh has told them that if they want to be happy there, they will have to be very, very careful to keep doing all Yahweh's commands.

And now everyone is suddenly very, very quiet. Hey, did you hear that? Mosheh has just told them that today is his 120th birthday! 120! **(Place 120 on board.)** I've never met anyone quite that old, have you? He'll have the best party ever! But Mosheh looks awfully serious. Oh my...This time he won't be eating any cake or ice cream **(place cake and ice cream on board)**, because Yahweh has told him that his life will soon be over. The children of Yisra'el will be crossing the Yarden River and going into the Land, but Mosheh won't be with them. His life's work is done. Wow. What will they do without him?

But today, someone very special will be given Mosheh's place. Do you know who? Right, it's Yehoshua! **(Place older Yehoshua on board.)** Think back 40 years; remember all those huge giants of Kena'an that the ten spies were so afraid of? **(Place giants on board.)** Yehoshua was young then, but he wasn't afraid, was he? And now he is 40 years older and wiser, and has become the strong general who commands Yisra'el's armies. Yehoshua will know just how to fight and take over Kena'an's cities, because he listens carefully to Yahweh.

Look! Mosheh is calling Yehoshua to get up and stand beside him, in front of the whole crowd! See, there's Yehoshua, walking slowly to the front. I think he knows what's about to happen: Mosheh will appoint him to be Yisra'el's new leader. **(Place Mosheh and Yehoshua in front of crowd scene on board.)** He's been learning from Mosheh for many years, and now the time has come to take charge of all those thousands and thousands of Yahweh's people. I wonder if Yehoshua might be shaking just a little. After all, the Yisra'elites didn't make things very easy for Mosheh, did they? Yehoshua will need lots of help from Yahweh in order to get them all safely settled in Kena'an.



Now Mosheh is turning and looking right into Yehoshua's eyes. He wants everyone to hear. In a loud voice, he says to Yehoshua, "Be strong and courageous! **(Place words on board.)** You know that Elohim promised Abraham that one day He would give us this land. For hundreds of years our people have waited, and now the time has come! It is you, Yehoshua, that Yahweh has picked to lead the people into the land. Remember, He is the Mighty One of Yisra'el; He won't turn away from you or leave you on your own." Oh my; now Mosheh's voice sounds like thunder. "Have NO FEAR! Do not doubt!" Mosheh wants the people to know for sure that Yehoshua is now Yahweh's chosen leader. They will need to do exactly everything he tells them. **(Place Mosheh transferring leadership to Yehoshua scene on board.)**

Today we don't worry about giants or angry kings with huge armies. But no matter what we have to do, Yahweh tells us the same thing: "Be strong and courageous, because I am with you!" **(Point to words.)** After all, who's the One who made the earth and everything in it? Can He help us do even the hardest things? Yes, He can! Even though the children of Yisra'el won't see Him with their eyes, He has promised to go into the land ahead of them. His mighty power will set things up ahead of time, so that when their armies march against a city, those Kena'anites won't have a chance! And the Yisra'elites will get to keep all the stuff the Kena'anites left behind, like nice houses instead of stuffy old tents. They'll have big yards to play in, and get to eat yummy things that are already growing there. **(Place happy kids scene on board.)**

Now, Yahweh has more to say, but first He wants to tell Mosheh and Yehoshua in private. He has told the two of them to come to the Tent of Appointment for an important meeting. When they get there, what do they see? Why, just over the doorway is a bright, shining cloud! And hidden in the cloud is Yahweh Himself, waiting to speak to just the two of them. Let's listen in. **(Place Mosheh and Yehoshua in Tent of Appointment on board.)**

First, Yahweh tells them that the people will love their new land. It will be beautiful and green. **(Point to land of Kena'an scene on board.)** They will get rich there, and have all the meat and grain and fruit they want. But wait... Suddenly Mosheh and Yehoshua are not looking very happy. Oh, no! Yahweh says that His people are going to get lazy and forget to do what He's told them. They will begin to pray to other gods—the false gods of the people around them instead of trusting in Elohim. **(Place pagan gods statues on board.)** Now, we know that the Kena'anite gods were not real gods at all—not anything like the great Mighty One of Yisra'el! But the people were going to get awfully curious about the way they worshiped these false gods.

Have you ever noticed someone else doing something that looked really fun, but then your mom or dad said no? Well, the children of Yisra'el knew what Yahweh's no-no's were. But the Kena'anites would show them ways to disobey Him anyway. Sure, the feasts of Yahweh were a blast, and Sabbaths were very nice. But they wanted to have the same fun that Kena'anites were having—things that Yisra'el had been commanded NOT to do! Yahweh wanted them safe and happy in their new land, if only they would obey His Word. But He was sad, because He could see the future. He knew that Yisra'el would keep on breaking the agreement they had made with Him, and do more and more things that He hates. Even though He had done many wonderful things to get them out of slavery in Mitsrayim, and even though He had given them all they needed in the wilderness, the Yisra'elites would turn their backs and no longer be friends to Him. Losing a friend is no fun, is it? Do you think Yahweh was sad to give this news to Mosheh and Yehoshua? **(Place sad emoji on board.)** I'm sure He was.

And Yahweh saw that when the things got bad enough, He would have to get their attention by allowing terrible things to happen, like losing battles and lots of them getting sick and dying. **(Place woman holding her hurting stomach on board.)** Their crops would wither away, and they'd end up going hungry. **(Place woman serving very little food to family on board.)** One day they would have to admit that these awful things came because they were behaving so badly that Yahweh could not be friends with them anymore.

But just so they'd always know what is right, Mosheh wrote down all Yahweh's instructions and gave them to the Lewites to place beside the ark of the Witness to keep them safe. **(Place Lewites placing book of the Torah besides ark on board.)** The priests would be in charge of this written Torah. Every seven years, during Sukkot, the people must gather together to hear Yahweh's Words being read out loud. All the adults, all the kids, and even all the strangers among them were commanded to show up and listen. **(Place Yehoshua reading the book of the Torah at Sukkot on board.)** Does that sound just a little boring? Remember, they had no TV or video games or cell phones. This was meant to be a very special day. They needed to learn how important it is to guard the words of Elohim, just like we do!

Hmm...What does that mean, to 'guard the words?' Should they put fierce soldiers all around the Torah scroll so no one could steal it? Of course not! It's all about wanting to please Him so much that you are very, very careful not to disobey Him. Does Yahweh know everything? Of course He does. He knew the thoughts that were already in the people's minds, before they even got to their new land. And those thoughts were NOT good. Only by paying strict attention to their Mighty One could they be happy, safe, and have all they needed for a wonderful life. **(Place happy people on board.)**

We're almost done, but here's something interesting. Yahweh told Mosheh to write a special song before his death, and have him teach it to all the Yisra'elites. **(Place Mosheh writing song on board.)** This song wasn't just any ordinary song. Because Yahweh is so caring and loving, this song was to be a reminder to the children of Yisra'el not to forget their Elohim when they cross over into the land of Kena'an and encounter people who do not know Yahweh. We will learn more about this song in the next parsha.

Well children, we will see you next week for another exciting Little Gems Story!