

# LITTLE GEMS

## Vayechi

Shalom children! Well, today our story about Ya'aqob and Yoseph's lives is coming to an end. Wasn't it exciting that Ya'aqob finally got to see his son Yoseph? And that his brothers were able to all be together again and be forgiven by Yoseph? It sure is good that after both Ya'aqob and Yoseph went through so much, our story ends on a good note. Yoseph's whole family had settled in their new home, and some time had passed. Ya'aqob was very, very, very old. He was also not able to see well anymore. One day he got very sick, and Yoseph was told about it. So Yoseph took his 2 sons, Menashsheh and Ephrayim, to see their grandfather.

**(Place older Ya'aqob on board. Place Yoseph and his 2 sons on board.)**

Even though Ya'aqob was not feeling well, when he heard that Yoseph and his grandsons were coming, he got excited and sat up in his bed. When Yoseph and the boys arrived, Ya'aqob told them about how Yahweh had made promises to him like He had to his father Yitshaq and grandfather Abraham. He told them how Yahweh had promised the land of Kena'an to him and his descendants—that's all his children, his children's children, and so on. He also said that he would have so many children and grandchildren and great grandchildren that they would be a HUGE group of people. Man, talk about a big family reunion!

Ya'aqob also told Yoseph that he was going to adopt his 2 sons as his own. They would be counted as brothers to Re'uben and Shim'on and the other brothers. After that, any other children that Yoseph had would be his own children. Do you know what that means? Yoseph's sons were now his brothers too. That seems a little crazy, but that's what happened.

Then, as it was the custom of that time before the father died, he laid hands on his sons and gave them some words about what could be their future. First, before any of the other brothers got there, Ya'aqob blessed his 2 grandsons. Since he could not see, Yoseph brought the oldest son, Menashsheh, to Ya'aqob's right hand and his younger son, Ephrayim, to Ya'aqob's left hand. Ya'aqob crossed his hands so that his right hand was on Ephrayim and his left hand was on Menashsheh. **(Place Ya'aqob blessing Yoseph's 2 sons on board.)** Yoseph was not happy about this. He tried to switch his dad's hands, but his dad told him no. He knew he was not doing it the way things were normally done.

Ya'aqob said they would become great nations, but the youngest one would become greater than the oldest one.

Then Ya'aqob called all 12 of his sons to come and hear what would become of them. He said something different to each one, starting with the oldest one.

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**(Place Re'uben on board.)** To Re'uben, he reminded him that he had been the beginning of his children, and he was his strength. He also said he was like boiling water. Hmm, interesting. Does that make him a hot head? I don't know. **(Place boiling water pot on board.)**

**(Place Lewi and Shim'on on board.)** To his next 2 sons, Lewi and Shim'on, he said they tended to like using their swords a little too much. They hurt others for no reason, and he did not like this about them. I don't think I would like that either. **(Place 2 swords on board.)**

**(Place Yehudah on board.)** Don't worry, it does get better with Yehudah. He said he would be praised by his brothers and that his offspring would be kings, and it would be so in the end. **(Place king on board.)**

**(Place Zebulun on board.)** Zebulun would be like a place that ships came to and would feel safe. **(Place scene of ships on board.)**

**(Place Yissaskar on board.)** Yissaskar would be like a donkey. He didn't mind doing hard work. **(Place donkey on board.)**

**(Place Dan on board.)** Dan would be a good judge for his people. **(Place scales on board.)**

**(Place Gad on board.)** Gad would be able to conquer his enemies when they attacked. **(Place person chasing enemies on board.)**

**(Place Asher on board.)** Asher would have bread that was the best kind. Mmm, I think I like this one the best. **(Place bread on board.)**

**(Place Naphtali on board.)** Naphtali would be free like a deer that had been let free. **(Place deer on board.)**

**(Place Yoseph on board.)** Yoseph would get so many blessings, they would be more than the blessings he and his father ever had. **(Place blessings on board.)**

**(Place Binyamin on board.)** Binyamin was like a wolf that would catch what he was going to eat and eat some, but then he would share. **(Place wolf on board.)**

After giving them their blessings, Ya'aqob told them to promise to bury him where his grandfather was buried. Then he lay back down on his bed and took one last breath.

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!