



Ezekiel and the River

Lesson Aim: To know life and growth come from God.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God Who Is Lord of All

THE WORD

Bible Story: Ezekiel 47:1-12

What He Has Done: God gave Ezekiel a vision of a river flowing out of the temple.

THE WAY

Whisper Verse: "God gives life."

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6

Unit 9: The Prophets and God's Sovereignty			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
43	Ezekiel and the Sheep, Ezekiel 34:6, 11-15, 31	God showed Ezekiel that we are like sheep and He is the shepherd.	To know God will care for us like a shepherd cares for his sheep.
44	Ezekiel and the River, Ezekiel 47:1-12	God gave Ezekiel a vision of a river flowing out of the temple.	To know life and growth come from God.
45	Daniel's Friends and the Fiery Furnace, Daniel 3:12-21, 24-28	God was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the furnace.	To know God is with you wherever you go.
46	Daniel and the Lions' Den, Daniel 6:14-23, 25-27	God kept Daniel safe from the lions.	To know God keeps us safe.
47	Daniel's Dream About Heaven, Daniel 7:1, 13-14	God gave Daniel a dream about Jesus' return.	To know we will see Jesus coming with the clouds one day.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Isaiah 43. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for choosing us to belong to You. Thank You for Your love that brings life and for being with us when we gather in Your name. Amen."

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**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of a fruit or a heart
		Whisper Verse	Sign language for "God gives life."
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org.	Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Let Everything That Has Breath" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Be Still and Know" "Do Not Let Your Hearts Be Troubled" "Give Thanks to the Lord" "He Is Mighty to Save" "I Am with You" "Love One Another" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" "The Lord Is Faithful" "We Love"
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	<i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 9, Lesson 44
THE WORD	Up to 10	Watch the Word: Ezekiel 47:1-12	Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Ezekiel 47:12 Visual: Any fruit
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: God's River of Life	Sturdy white paper, craft foam, glue, crayons (metallic crayons or crayons containing glitter are recommended)
		Game: River of Life	Large cross (cut from poster paper or bind two sticks with cord), large blue cloth or sheet
		Game: What's Growing?	Large blue cloth or sheet
		Snack: Fruit by the River	Any fruit
	Circle of Prayer	None	
Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 9, Lesson 44 Color This Story: "The River from the Temple Brings Life"	
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Ezekiel 47:1-12	None
	Up to 10	Game: Praise Balloon Bop	Balloon
	Up to 10	Game: Instrument Praise	Assorted children's musical instruments, Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song "Let Everything That Has Breath"
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about how God gives life to His creation

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



God gives life

THE WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____.** I'm glad you are here! **Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a stamp or sticker of fruit or a heart. **Let this stamp (or sticker) help you remember God gives life to everything and everyone. That reminds me of today's Whisper Verse: "God gives life."** Teach the Whisper Verse in spoken language and in sign language below. **We call it the Whisper Verse so you can whisper it to others.***

SIGN LANGUAGE: "God (who) gives life."

(For visual demonstrations, see www.signingsavvy.com.)

Each time we say today's Whisper Verse, let's say it with three hand motions:

"God"	Using a "b" hand with palm facing left, the right hand starts slightly above the forehead, then moves in a backward-downward arc, ending in front of the upper chest.
"(who) gives"	The hands move forward to represent giving something away.
"life."	Both hands form an "L" hand shape and move up the body, as if to draw attention to a living body.

Allow children to enjoy free play until everyone has arrived. **Let's sing the "Clean Up Song" as we put toys away before Praise Time.** Praise any child who helps. Allow several minutes for clean up.

**"Clean Up Song": Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

Gather and seat children in Praise Time area.

***Today's Whisper Verse:** "God (who) gives life," 1 Timothy 6:13. The Whisper Verse is a tool to help the children learn a major point in the lesson. It is coupled with sign language or hand motions as a memory aid. The verse is not necessarily chosen from today's Bible story.



The God who is Lord of all

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play “Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God” as children move to that designated area.

It’s Praise Time—our time to sing praise to the God who is Lord of all. That means He is the one in control of everything in heaven and on earth. He gives us life. Let’s say today’s Whisper Verse together. Review the Whisper Verse: “God gives life.” Include sign language.



God gave Ezekiel a dream of a river that was flowing out of God’s temple. Just as a river brings life to the fish in its waters and the plant on its shores, God brings life to everyone. He has made us, given us life, and He has always loved us. Sing: “The Lord Is Faithful.”

Because God loved us, we know how to love one another. When we love one another, we are sharing His love. One way to share God’s love with others is to give our offering to the church. The church’s money goes to share God’s love with many people all over the world. Sing: “Love One Another” while collecting the offering.

Sing: “We Love.”



Let’s find out if Delbert and Lello know about Ezekiel’s dream. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 9, Lesson 44.



God gives life to everything. He wants everything that has breath to praise Him. Can you take a big deep breath in and out? Children inhale and exhale. **We all have breath, so we can all praise the Lord right now.** Sing: “Let Everything That Has Breath.” Add motions such as clapping, spinning, dancing, and jumping.



Ezekiel's vision: The river from the temple

THE WORD

Before we begin our Bible Time, let's say our **Classroom Promise with the motions.**

With my eyes on my teacher;

Point to eyes.

My mouth quiet as can be,

Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.

I will listen to hear,

Cup hand around ear.

How God loves you and me.

Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Last time, we learned God is our shepherd. He is always watching over us. Today, we will hear how Ezekiel's dream about a river showed him that God gives life to everyone. Handle the Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Ezekiel 47:12.

WATCH THE WORD: EZEKIEL 47:1-12

Read the points below or retell the passage in your own words using the points below as a general guide. To illustrate the story, display any fruit. Other visual options include the craft sample, Color This Story, or any related picture.

- **Ezekiel had a special dream,**
- **Where he saw a river flow.**
- **The river began at the temple,**
- **So it came from God, we know.**

- **It came up to Ezekiel's ankles.**
- **Then, it rose up to his knees.**
- **It grew so deep it filled with fish.**
- **On each side, grew many trees.**

- **Everywhere the river flowed,**
- **Plants and fruit trees grew.**
- **The river stands for the life God gives**
- **To the world, and me, and you.**



What was growing by the river? (Fruit trees.) Let's find our answer in the Bible.

Read Ezekiel 47:12 from the teacher's Bible.

In Ezekiel's dream, the river brought the trees and fruit to life. The river stands for the life given to everyone. Who gives life to everyone? (God.) Our Whisper Verse tells us the answer. Let's say it together: "God gives life." Include the sign language or hand motions.



Life flows from God

THE WAY

Teacher Tip: Craft and games can be presented at the same time in different areas or one at a time depending on class size and teaching style.

CRAFT: GOD'S RIVER OF LIFE

Purpose: To remind the children that God gave Ezekiel a vision of a river flowing from the temple.

Supplies: Sturdy white paper, craft foam, glue, crayons (metallic crayons or crayons containing glitter are recommended)

Prepare: On a sheet of sturdy white paper, print or draw a church building or temple on the left. Draw the outline of a river beginning inside the church or temple and flowing across to the right side of the page. On the banks of the river, add outlines of trees, flowers, and animals. Across the top of the paper, print: **The river from the temple brings life. Ezekiel 47:1-12.** From craft foam, cut out the shape of a fish and two different types of fruit.

Options: Use adhesive-backed craft foam. Glue blue glitter or paint blue glitter paint on the river. Instead of craft foam, use cardboard, sturdy paper, or stickers. Cut out a cross shape for children to glue on the church.

Directions:

1. **The temple stands for God.** Children color the temple yellow.
2. **The river stands for life.** Children color the river blue.
3. **God gives life to the plants.** Children color the trees.
4. **God makes the trees grow fruit.** Children glue the fruit to the trees.
5. **God gives life to the animals and people.** Children glue the fish in the river.

Craft Discussion:

- **In Ezekiel's dream, the river flowed from the temple. The temple stands for God and the river stands for life. Where does all life come from? (God.)**
- **That's like our Whisper Verse! Let's say it with our motions right now! Say the Whisper Verse together with the hand motions.**
- **Who helps you grow? (God.)**
- **Let's look at our crafts and see how everything comes to life and grows when the river touches it. In Ezekiel's dream, the temple stands for God and the river stands for life. Ezekiel's dream reminds us that just as God's river of life started at the temple, all life starts with God.**

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: RIVER OF LIFE

Purpose: Children will act out the Bible story and see how God makes everything grow.

Supplies: Large cross (cut from poster paper or bind two sticks with cord), large blue cloth or sheet

Prepare: Place the cross on one side of the play area to represent the church or temple. Lay the blue cloth on the floor as a river flowing out from the church or temple.

Ezekiel dreamed about the river of life flowing from the temple. In his dream, the river brought life to everything it touched. In the same way, God gives life to everything and everyone. God helps us all live and grow.

Directions:

1. Choose one child to represent God's river of life and stand in front of the cross.
2. The other children are seeds. The seeds crouch on either side of river.
3. Children say and sign the Whisper Verse, **"God gives life."**
4. God's river of life walks along the blue cloth and gently touches each seed on the head.
5. When touched, the seeds "sprout" by standing up and spreading their arms to become trees.
6. Play again. Each time you play, choose another child to be God's river of life. Let children think of other growing things they can act out such as flowers, favorite animals, or people.

GAME: WHAT'S GROWING?

Purpose: Children will consider living things to which God gives life.

Supplies: Large blue cloth or sheet

Directions:

1. Children hold the edges of the sheet.
2. On your signal, the children make waves by moving the sheet up and down. **Look at the river flow!**
3. **In Ezekiel's dream, God's river of life makes everything grow. Let's jump in God's river of life.** Children sit on the edges of the sheet.
4. Call out one child's name. Child stands in the center of the sheet.
5. Child's name, **can you name a living thing God helps to live and grow?** Child calls out a living thing, such as a person's name, a pet's name, an animal, or a plant.
6. Child returns to the edge of the sheet.
7. Repeat steps 4-6 until each child has a turn answering the question.

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: FRUIT BY THE RIVER

Purpose: Children will eat a snack while discussing how God gives life.

Snack Suggestion: Any fruit

Optional: Spread a blue cloth or sheet as a river by which children can sit while eating their snack.

Directions:

1. Serve the snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or other familiar tune.
**God our Father, God our Father. Once again, once again.
Thank You for our blessings. Thank You for our blessings. Amen. Amen.**
3. Lead discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
 - **Who remembers our Whisper Verse?** Choose a child to demonstrate the motions to the Whisper Verse.
 - **In Ezekiel's dream, God's river of life flows everywhere and makes things live and grow!**
 - **We are eating fruit. What is your favorite fruit?** (Children respond.)
 - **The river of life helped everything it touched live and grow. Who helps us grow and love others?** (God.)



CIRCLE OF PRAYER

God made you and He cares for you. He loves to hear you pray with private words or words you say out loud. Let's fold our hands and close our eyes. As I lift up your name to God in heaven, I will lay my hand on your shoulder. Let's pray together.

Dear God, thank You for making us and loving us. We lift up to You a special prayer for ____, ____, ____ (say each name). We pray for our families and friends. Thank You for teaching us how to love one another. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

COMPLETED CRAFT: Take home your "God's River of Life" craft. Tell someone God gives life and makes things grow all over the world.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY: Distribute Ponder, Pray & Play cards, if available. **Show this card to your family. Talk about how the river of life flowing from the temple in Ezekiel's dream stands for the way God gives us all life.**

COLOR THIS STORY: "The River from the Temple Brings Life." Discuss the Bible story and play the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Let Everything That Has Breath," as the children color.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SAY & DO: EZEKIEL 47:1-12

Purpose: This pantomime version of the Bible Story helps children remember the story details.

Supplies: None

Directions: With each phrase, the teacher says the phrase and acts it out with hand motions; then repeats the same phrase and motions with the children.

- **Ezekiel had a special dream,** (Rest cheek on folded hands, as if sleeping.)
- **Where he saw a river flow.** (Move hands like a flowing river.)
- **The river began at God's temple,** (Point to heaven.)
- **So it came from God, we know.** (Point to head and nod yes.)

- **It came up to Ezekiel's ankles.** (Point to ankles.)
- **Then, it rose up to his knees.** (Point to knees.)
- **It grew so deep it filled with fish,** (Wiggle hands like a swimming fish.)
- **On each side, grew many trees.** (Raise arms like tree branches.)

- **Everywhere the river flowed,** (Move hands like a flowing river.)
- **Plants and fruit trees grew.** (Raise hands up from floor to show growth.)
- **The river stands for the life God gives** (Point to heaven.)
- **To the world, and me, and you.** (Point to one another.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6

GAME: PRAISE BALLOON BOP

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Balloon

The Lord wants everything that breathes to praise Him. Every animal has breath. Let's see how many animals we can name. Children name several animals. **Let's play a game with this balloon. Each time you bop the balloon, say the name of an animal who can praise the Lord!**

Directions:

1. Have children stand in a circle.
2. **We can use our breath to put air into balloons.** Inflate the balloon with your breath. Knot the end as a seal. The children can pretend to blow up imaginary balloons as they watch you.
3. As you toss the balloon into the air, say the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse.
4. Children take turns bopping the balloon as they say the name of an animal that has breath to praise the Lord.
5. Play as long as you like.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: INSTRUMENT PRAISE

Purpose: Children learn and practice the meaning of the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Assorted children's musical instruments, Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song "Let Everything That Has Breath"

Teacher Tips: Create your own instruments by using two metal pot lids for cymbals, a wooden spoon and metal pot for a drum, or fill a container with a lid with dried beans or rice for a shaker. Children can also hit two sticks together and keep the rhythm. **No Instruments Option:** Instead of using instruments, assign each child a different animal. Lead children in praising the Lord with the sound of each animal: **Let every name of an animal that has breath praise the Lord.** Children respond by making the sound of that animal.

The Lord wants everyone in the world to praise Him. Can you praise the Lord? (Children respond.) **When you hear the name of your instrument, play it to praise the Lord.**

Directions:

1. Children repeat the Bible Memory Verse after you, one word at a time.
2. Give an instrument to each child. Be sure children know the name of the instruments.
3. **All that have name of an instrument praise the Lord.** Children with that instrument play.
4. Repeat step 3 until each child has played an instrument to praise the Lord.
5. Play the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song. Have the children praise the Lord together by marching and playing their instruments while they sing along.



STORY TIME

Gather the children and read a favorite story. This can be a Bible story, a chapter from *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello*, or a story about how God gives life to His creation.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 9, Lesson 44: Ezekiel and the River

PONDER! Read Ezekiel 47:1-12. What flowed from the temple? How deep did the water get? What grew by the river? What lived in the river? In Ezekiel's dream, the river brought life to everything it touched. In the same way, God gives life to everything and everyone. He helps us live and grow.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, thank You for giving me life and helping me grow. Thank You for loving me everywhere I go. Amen."

PLAY! "God's Growing Album!" Collect leaves and flowers. Draw or cut out pictures of ducks, fish, and other animals you would find in a river. Glue or tape your collection onto pieces of blue paper. Gather the pages, punch holes along one side, and tie them together with yarn to create a picture album. Talk about how God gives life to everything and everyone.

Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse:

"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." Psalm 150:6