Promised Land: Crossing the Jordan River

Lesson Aim: To know we can be strong, brave leaders.

**THE WORSHIP**

Who God is: The God Who Sends

**THE WORD**

Bible Story: Joshua 1:6-9; 3:15-17; 4:4-9, 17-18

What He has done: God sent His people across the Jordan River into the promised land.

**THE WAY**

Whisper Verse: “Be strong and brave.”

**BIBLE MEMORY VERSE**

“I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” Isaiah 6:8

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**TEACHER’S ENCOURAGEMENT**

This week, read Proverbs 29:25. Please join us in praying, “Thank You, Lord, for the brave leaders You give us. Embolden the children to answer Your call on their lives to be courageous leaders. Amen.”
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**RESOURCES:** Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.
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 sticker or stamp of a stone, river, water, or fish. **Let this sticker (or stamp) remind you of a river (or what’s found in a river).** Today, we will learn how brave Joshua led God’s people across the Jordan River. **Today’s Whisper Verse is “Be strong and brave.”** 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.**

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**SIGN LANGUAGE: “Be strong and brave.”**
(For visual demonstrations, see commtechlab.msu.edu/Sites/aslweb/browser.htm)

**Each time we say today’s Whisper Verse, let’s say it with two hand motions:**

“(Be) strong”  
With both hands in a fist, pull arms firmly away from the chest with elbows pointing outward.

“(and) brave.”  
Repeat motion above with hands open and then making fists as if drawing strength out of the body.

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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!

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Gather and seat children in Praise Time area.

**Today’s Whisper Verse: “Be strong and brave,” Joshua 1:6.** 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.
**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 “It’s Praise Time!” as children move to that designated area.

**It’s Praise Time**—our time to sing praise to the God who sends us where He wants us to go. He always makes a way for us to get there! I am so thankful God sent you here today! Giving our offering, singing, and praying to Him are great ways we can thank Him for all He has done for us. Let’s start by giving our offering now. Play: “Give Thanks” as background music while collecting the offering.

I am thankful for the friends God sends us. Let’s see how our friends Delbert and Lello are doing today. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 9, Lesson 46.

God sent Joshua to lead His people across the Jordan River. God helped him to be a strong and brave leader. That’s our Whisper Verse for today. Review the Whisper Verse together: “Be strong and brave.” Include sign language. **God will help you be strong and brave like Joshua. When God calls you to be a leader, you can say, “Here am I. Send me!”** Let’s march around the room and sing as we pretend to cross the Jordan River on dry land. Sing: “Here Am I.”

God wants us to remember the miracle He did at the Jordan River. He wants us to remember all of His miracles. Let’s sing a promise to God that says, “I will remember the deeds of the Lord. Yes, I will remember Your miracles!” Sing: “I Will Remember.”

God loves us and is always with us. We can be strong and brave to go wherever He sends us because we know He is with us. We can be good leaders like Joshua and good followers like God’s people. Wherever we go, He is watching over us. Sing: “I Am with You.”
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 sent twelve spies, including Joshua and Caleb, to spy on the land He had promised His people. Today, we will learn God made Joshua the new leader. He sent His people and the golden ark across the Jordan River and into the land He had promised. The golden ark was not a boat; it was a special golden box that held reminders of God’s miracles. Let’s open the Bible to the book of Joshua to find out how they got the golden ark across the river. Handle the Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Joshua 1:6.

**WATCH THE WORD: JOSHUA 1:6-9; 3:15-17; 4:4-9, 17-18**

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 a large stone as one of the stones in the Jordan River. Other visual options include the craft sample, Color This Story picture, or any related picture.

- The Lord told Joshua, “Be strong and brave.
- I am making you the leader of my people today.
- Lead them to the Jordan River and say,
- ’We are crossing over to the promised land today!’”
- The priest went first with the ark of gold;
- They put their feet in the water as they were told.
- Right away the Jordan River stopped its flow,
- Then the water piled up, and Joshua said, “Go!”
- All the people walked across as dry as ever,
- While the ark stayed in the middle of the dried-up river!
- Then the Lord told Joshua to choose 12 men.
- “Get stones from the middle of the river,” He said.
- They piled up stones by the river’s edge
- To remind us of this story so no one would forget
- How the Lord made Joshua strong and brave
- And He stopped the Jordan River from flowing that day.

What did God say to Joshua when He made him leader of God’s people? (“Be strong and brave.”) Let’s find our answer in the Bible. Read Joshua 1:6 from the teacher’s Bible.

That reminds me of our Whisper Verse. Let’s say our Whisper Verse together: “Be strong and brave.” Include sign language or hand motions.
Be strong and brave
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: CROSSING ON DRY GROUND

Purpose: To remember how God stopped the river from flowing when the ark was carried across the Jordan River.

Supplies: Sturdy standard-size blue paper, sturdy brown and gray paper, shiny blue paper, two foot stickers or pictures of feet, label, glue or glue sticks

Prepare: Fold the standard-size sturdy blue paper into thirds as if folding a letter into an envelope. Then fold the two outer segments in half with the edges of the paper facing outward down the middle to create “sides” to the water. From shiny blue paper, cut two 2-inch x 9-inch strips. From sturdy brown paper, cut a 3-inch x 9-inch strip. From sturdy gray paper, create a cutout of a pile of twelve stones. On a label, print:

Crossing the Jordan River
Joshua 1:6-9; 3:15-17; 4:4-9, 17-18

What was the name of the strong and brave leader who led God’s people across the river? (Joshua.) What was the name of the river? (Jordan River.)

Directions:
1. For water, glue a shiny blue paper strip to the outside fold of each side of the sturdy blue paper.
2. For dry land, glue the strip of brown paper down the middle of the sturdy blue paper.
3. Attach the two foot stickers to the middle of the brown paper strip.
4. Attach the cutout of the twelve stones to the far end of the brown paper strip.
5. Attach the label to the close end of the brown paper strip.

Craft Discussion:
- Show children how to close the folds of paper so the water is touching and then open the sides so the water is parted and the dry land can be seen.
- How do you think seeing this miracle of the river stopping helped everyone be strong and brave as they entered the new land? (Children respond.)
- Take your craft home and tell everyone the story of strong and brave Joshua leading God’s people across the Jordan River. Don’t forget the part about the water stopping for the people to carry the ark across the river on dry ground!
- Remembering God’s miracle at the Jordan River can help you be a strong and brave leader like Joshua.
GAME: CROSSING THE JORDAN

Purpose: To act out the story to help the children visualize and remember the miracle of God parting the Jordan River.

Supplies: Six feet or more of blue banner paper (or a blue bed sheet or blanket) for the Jordan River, 12 small stones (or 12 chunks of foam or crumbled gray/brown paper), large box for the golden ark, optional: paint box gold or cover in gold paper

Directions:
1. Lay the blue banner paper on the floor to represent the Jordan River.
2. Set the twelve “stones” in the middle of the banner paper.
3. Assign the following roles:
   - Joshua (Can be a boy or a girl)
   - Stone Collectors
   - Priests to carry the ark
   - Remaining children to be God’s people
4. Retell the Bible Story pausing after each phrase to help the children act it out. May summarize the Bible Story or repeat the story poem located in THE WORD.

GAME: FOLLOW JOSHUA

Purpose: Children play “Follow the Leader” to help them identify with strong and brave leaders like Joshua.

Supplies: None, optional: Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song “Here Am I,” CD player

Teacher Tip: To create a fun atmosphere, play “Here Am I” as the children follow Joshua.

Directions:
1. Teacher chooses a child (boy or girl) to be Joshua.
2. The other children line up behind Joshua.
3. Joshua moves around the room as the children follow in line and imitate Joshua’s exact movements.
4. Give each child a turn being Joshua.
SNACK: SAFE ACROSS THE RIVER
Purpose: To know God will help us be strong and brave leaders.
Snack Suggestion: A stone-shaped (round) snack like vanilla wafers

What did Joshua pile on the shore to remember this miracle? (Stones.) Our snack reminds me of the stones Joshua piled on the shore.

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.
3. Lead the discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
   - Why did God stop the Jordan River from flowing? (So everyone could cross the river on dry land.) Who remembers the miracle God did at the Red Sea? (Children respond.)
   - How are these two miracles alike? (In both miracles, God parted the water to make a dry path for His people to go where He was sending them.)
   - Who remembers the Whisper Verse? (“Be strong and brave.”) Let’s say it together with the hand motions.
   - How do you think seeing this miracle of the river stopping helped everyone be strong and brave as they entered the new land? (Children respond.)
   - Whenever you see a stone, remember God’s miracle at the Jordan River. Remember God can help you be a strong and brave leader like Joshua.

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 ____, ____, ____ (read every 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 “Crossing on Dry Ground” craft. Tell someone how Joshua led God’s people across the dry land of the Jordan River.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY: Distribute Ponder, Pray & Play cards if available. Show this card to your family. Talk about being strong and brave leaders.

COLOR THIS STORY: “Crossing the Jordan River.” Discuss the Bible Story and play the Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse Song, “Here Am I,” as children color.
If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

**GOT TIME?**

### SAY & DO: JOSHUA 1:6-9; 3:15-17; 4:4-9, 17-18

**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.

- The Lord told Joshua, “Be strong and brave.” (Show muscles.)
- I am making you the leader of my people today. (Point to someone.)
- Lead them to the Jordan River and say, (March in place.)
- ‘We are crossing over to the promised land today!’” (Point to land in the distance.)
- The priest went first with the ark of gold; (Raise index finger for number one.)
- They put their feet in the water as they were told. (Pretend to dip foot in water.)
- Right away the Jordan River stopped its flow (Make stop signal with palm.)
- Then the water piled up, and Joshua said, “Go!” (Point to land in the distance.)

- All the people walked across as dry as ever, (March in place.)
- While the ark stayed in the middle of the dried-up river! (Palms up holding box.)
- Then the Lord told Joshua to choose 12 men. (Point, as if choosing.)
- “Get stones from the middle of the river,” He said. (Make river waves with hand.)
- They piled up stones by the river’s edge (Move fist over fist, as if piling stones.)
- To remind us of this story so no one would forget (Point to mind.)
- How the Lord made Joshua strong and brave (Show muscles.)
- And He stopped the Jordan River from flowing that day. (Make stop signal with palm.)

### BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

“I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?’
And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’” Isaiah 6:8

### GAME: STEPPING STONES

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

**Supplies:** Five paper plates, crayons or markers

**Prepare:** Write the words “Here am I. Send me!” on paper plates with one word on each plate.

**Directions:**
1. Place the paper plates word side up and in order on the floor.
2. Say to one of the children, “I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for Us?’”
3. The child steps on the plates in order as all the children say, “Here am I. Send me.”
4. Repeat with each child.
GOT TIME continued...

CRAFT: MEDAL OF BRAVERY

Purpose: To know we can be strong, brave leaders.

Supplies: 2-inch thick ribbon, sturdy paper, foil, label, glue, masking tape

Prepare: Cut a 12-inch piece of ribbon. From sturdy paper, cut a 2½-inch circle. On a label, print:

God makes me brave.

Optional: Instead of using masking tape to attach the medal to the child’s shirt, punch a hole in the foil-covered circle and string a piece of yarn through it long enough to hang the medal around the child’s neck.

Directions:
1. Wrap the paper circle in foil.
2. Attach the label to the circle.
3. Fold the ribbon in half, ends pointing down.
4. Glue the circle to the center fold of the ribbon so the two ends of the ribbon are hanging down from the circle.
5. Use masking tape to attach the medal to the child’s shirt.

Craft Discussion:
- Who made Joshua a brave and strong leader? (God.)
- Would you like to be a strong and brave leader like Joshua? (Children respond.) Who is always with you and will help you? (God.)

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 being strong and brave.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 9, Lesson 46: Promised Land: Crossing the Jordan River

PONDER! Read Joshua 1:6-9; 3:15-17; 4:4-9, 17-18. Talk about how this miracle may have reminded the people of the parting of the Red Sea. Discuss why the leaders needed to be strong and brave.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: “Thank You, Lord, for sending Your miracles. Help us to be strong and brave leaders like Joshua. Amen.”

PLAY! Enjoy a family game of “Follow The Leader” to practice being a strong and brave leader.

Unit 9 Bible Memory Verse: Isaiah 6:8
“I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”