



# Breaking Camp

**Date: June 23, 2024**

**Text: Joshua 3:1-4:3**

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## BIG IDEA

Israel was rescued from Egypt and spent the next 40 years wandering in the wilderness. Their constant rhythm was that of nomads, repeatedly packing up and moving from one camp to another. They were without a home, without stability, without roots. But now the command has come—it's time to break camp. The people are told that when they see the ark of the covenant moving out, they are to “move out and follow it...” The ark, the place where God dwelled, is to be what they fix their eyes on. They didn't know which way they would be going, they only knew they would be following Him.

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## *Conversation Starter*

- Share some seasons of instability in your own life. Did you move a lot or struggle to plant roots?

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## COMMENTARY #1

**(Chapter 3:1-13)** This chapter holds the final steps for Joshua and the Israelites before they would be entering the Promised

Land. They had sat for three days facing the surging waters of the Jordan River; three days of seeing only what seemed like an impassable obstacle. Then, they were told to follow the Ark (which symbolized the presence of God) and to move when it moved.

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### ***Discussion Questions***

1. Have you ever faced seasons where all you could see were the things that seemed impassable? Explain.
  2. Why do you think they were to move after the Ark?
  3. What is significant about their focus before they broke camp versus after (when they were following the Ark)? How does this apply to your life?
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### **COMMENTARY #2**

**(Chapter 3:14-17/ 4:1)** As the priests moved out with the Ark, they came to the surging waves and had to make a choice. Would they remain planted in the camp they had always known, or would they be obedient to the voice of God and step onto the waves? Because of their obedience before the miracle, the waters were halted and all the people walked across on dry ground.

Throughout this whole passage, the Ark is central; just as the Israelites could not cross their Jordan without the power of God, we cannot reach our Promised Land without following His lead.

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### ***Discussion Questions***

1. Have you ever experienced times where you had to “step into the waters” before it made sense? Share.

2. What does it mean that the Ark was central in this passage?  
Why is that significant?

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## GOING DEEPER

The Jordan River (along with the crossing of other rivers in the Bible) always symbolize transition. We've talked about crossing our own rivers in life, have you had those pivotal transition moments?

The Israelites had the Ark to look to and focus on the presence of God. What are the "Arks" in our lives? What can we look to to focus on God's presence in our lives?

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[How God's Presence Came to Dwell with All His People \(bibleproject.com\)](https://www.bibleproject.com/ark-of-the-covenant)- Ark of the Covenant

[Sermon: Crossing Our Jordan - Joshua 3 | Lifeway](#)- Sermon

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## Group Activity

The Ark was central in all that the Israelites did; it was where God dwelled among them and served as a tangible reminder of Who was leading them. Now, because of the work of Calvary, God's Spirit dwells in us—but we can often forget that it is Him and His presence that is leading the way.

This week, everyone make an “Ark.” This is something that will serve as a tangible reminder of Who is leading the way for you. Maybe it is a sticky note on your mirror or something to hang from your rearview mirror in your car. Whatever it is, make it personal for you and share with the group how it reminds you of God’s presence.