

JOSHUA (11) – Joshua 4
Covenant Fellowship Church
Wednesday, May 20, 2026
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Resource:



Joshua 4:1–10, 21–24: Remembering the LORD’s Goodness

- In the Bible, “to remember” and “memory” are not psychological functions. To remember is not to retain a mental image, nor is it limited to things of the past.
- **KEY THOUGHT:** In Scripture, *memory typically forms/constitutes/builds identity and determines conduct.*

WHAT is remembered?

- *Things of the present:*

Col. 4:18: “I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.”

- *Things of the future:*

Eccl. 11:8: “So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all; but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity.”

Heb. 11:22: “By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones.”

- *Things of the past:*

Events

Relationships

Experiences

WHO remembers?

- *God* remembers. This means that because He remembers His covenant, His promises, His mercies, therefore He ACTS on our behalf, for our sake. Many of the Psalms are hymns that celebrate that God remembers: Ps. 105:1–11. Ps. 115:12. Many of the Psalms are laments that plead for God to remember: Ps. 25:6–7. Ps. 74:1–2, 18–19, 22–23.
- *People* remember. The most frequent object of human remembering is God and His mighty works.

HOW is memory cultivated?

- Through *worship*: festivals, rituals, songs.
- Through *objects*: phylacteries (= *tefillin*, small leather boxes containing parchment containing the Decalog) – Deut 6:8, 11:18; Exod. 13:9) and tassels (Num. 15:39) served as a memory of God’s works and God’s law.
- Through *parental teaching*: Deut. 6:20–25; **Josh. 4:4–7**.
- Through *remembered personal experience*: Eph. 2:11, 13: “Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called ‘the uncircumcision’ by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

- **KEY THOUGHT:** In the Bible, *forgetfulness was equivalent to apostasy*: Ps. 106:7: “Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of your steadfast love, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.”

(over, please)



The Ark of the Covenant

Joshua 3–4

- Central role of the Ark of the Covenant: mentioned 17x in Josh. 3–4.
- Background: Exodus 25, 35, 37: instructions for building the Ark, and the building of the Ark

Made of acacia wood
 Overlaid with gold
 Cover = mercy seat
 Two cherubim

3.75 feet long x 2.25 feet wide x 2.25 feet high

- What were its functions?

Exod. 25:10–22: (1) God’s throne, from where **God spoke**; (2) **contained** the tablets of the Ten Commandments, Aaron’s rod (Num. 17:10), and a bowl of manna (Heb. 9:4); (3) and the Ark (= the LORD) **led Israel into battle** (1 Sam. 4; Josh. 6). It **symbolized and mediated the LORD’s presence**.

On the Day of Atonement the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a bull on the ark to atone for his own sins and then sprinkle the blood of a goat on the ark to atone for the people’s sins. That blood foreshadowed the sacrifice of Jesus and His grace. And on the side of the ark was stored the first five books of the Bible (Deut. 31:26).

So it was a beautiful symbol of Christ and His kingdom. The wood represents the humanity of Jesus and the gold that covered the wood represents His deity. The throne represents His sovereign rule. The bowl of manna represents Christ’s provision for us (John 6:32–35) and the closeness of fellowship we can have with God through Jesus (Revelation 2:17 draws that imagery out beautifully). The Ten Commandments represent the holiness of Christ’s kingdom and the law of His kingdom. There is no kingdom without law. Jesus said, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.” (Matt. 5:17). So even though the ten commandments on Mt. Sinai brought fear and condemnation, when the same law was placed inside the ark and under the sprinkling of the blood, it shows the Gospel. The Gospel is not anti-law. It is the good news that through Christ’s blood we are at peace with the law and can live out the law. The rod represents Christ’s leadership.

All of this teaches us that *the ark symbolized the entirety of Christ’s provisions as what enabled His people to be faithful*. Without God’s great faithfulness, we could not be faithful. Philippians 2:11–12 says that we can only work out what God has already worked in. Faithfulness flows from faith In Jesus. We grow from faith to faith; from strength to strength, and from glory to glory.