

NO WAY TO FIGHT A WAR!

Joshua 6

“What?” “HOW did He say He wants you to do it?”

“That’ll never work!”

“That’s not how you’re supposed to do it!”

“No one does it that way!”

*“We’ve never done it **THAT WAY** before!”*

DOES GOD’S WAY OF DOING THINGS EVER SEEM STRANGE TO YOU?

Does it sometimes seem that God’s plans aren’t really in touch with reality?

Illustrations: “Turn the other cheek?” Surely that’s not a good idea for dealing with your enemy!

“Give up my rights, in order not to be an obstacle for somebody else?”

“Submit to your husband’s authority?”

“Stay as you are, whether married or single?”

His **war strategy** certainly seemed strange to Israel when they came to the fortified city of Jericho.

There’s no way this strategy would bring about the fall of the city!

You know what? The critics were right! The **STRATEGY** would NEVER bring down the city!

If you’re going to go fight a war against a fortress, DON’T imitate their pattern!

Television ad: “Don’t try this at home!”

That strategy won’t bring down a wall!

DOMINATION OF THE LAND 6-12 CONQUEST

After Joshua leads Israel into Canaan, the hardest task is yet ahead!

They still have to take the land away from the Canaanites.

God is going to use Israel to wipe out these perverted pagan peoples.

CONQUEST OF CENTRAL CANAAN 6-8

They first conquer central Canaan—makes cooperation of southern Canaan with northern Canaan impossible.

Defeat of Jericho 6

First objective in central Canaan is Jericho.

Israel’s reputation arrived in Jericho years before.

JERICHO WAS AFRAID 6:1

They locked up the city out of fear Israel would get in!

They heard about what God did at the Red Sea and at the Jordan.

They heard about Israel’s victories over pagan nations: Egypt and the Amorites.

Yet they imagine they can keep the Israelites and their God away by their man-made walls!

If I can allegorize a bit, in our day, people try to do the same thing.

They build elaborate arguments and defense systems to keep God out of their lives.

It doesn’t work! You can’t keep God away by building walls to keep Him out!

No one went outside the city gates.

No one got in.

GOD HAS A PLAN 6:2-5

Fundamental premise for the instructions:

God is delivering the city into Joshua's hands.

He will give them Jericho.

They must trust God and follow His plan. 6:2-5

They are to quietly walk around the city for seven days.

God will take care of the rest.

This was a *strange* set of orders. This is NO WAY TO FIGHT A WAR!

Experienced fighters would complain that they lack essential equipment to conquer the fortress.

They had no battering rams,

They had no scaling ladders,

How would they ever get into this locked up city?!!

How could the walls fall, from seven days of just marching around it?

I remember as a child, we used to sing "**Joshua fit the battle of Jericho**"

It's a nice song; but it's really not true.

Joshua DIDN'T fight the battle!

God fought the battle!

Israel just marched around the city.

Israel trusted God and watched God work.

ISRAEL'S MARCHES 6:6-19

Neither Joshua nor the people of Israel question God's instructions.

In spite of the strange instructions, **they trust God and do what He tells them to do.**

It was a strange configuration.

"Armed men" went at the front. 7, 9

When they crossed Jordan, 40,000 armed men passed "before the Lord" to Gilgal.
4:13

We're not told how many went ahead of the ark, but it's probably the same group.

Seven musicians blowing their trumpets as they marched around the city. 6, 8

These aren't *war* trumpets.

They're *priestly* trumpets—used to call God's people to worship and celebrate His presence.

Use of the trumpets announced their awareness that God is with them.

The ark followed. 6, 8

Then came the **"rear guard"** 9

The people march in silence—except the trumpets. **10**

They're to save their voices for the final shout of triumph.

Each day for six days they repeat the same activity—marching once around the city, and returning to camp. **11-14**

Can you imagine the dialogue?

... **around the campfire** at night?

This is the nation known for murmuring.

They're exposing themselves daily to ridicule and danger.

The enemy undoubtedly laughed at them—this was *WEIRD!*

Whoever heard of fighting a war this way?!!

The enemy could throw something, or even attack their ranks.

There was plenty to question—yet Israel **trusts God and doesn't complain**.

That was a new response for Israel—a genuine response of faith!

Can you imagine the dialogue back in Jericho?

This was certainly a strange way to wage war!

NO ONE had ever done it like this before!

The Pentagon Armed Services Committee had some late night meetings, trying to figure out what the enemy was up to and what they should do about it!

The seventh day is different.

They don't go back to camp after one march around. **15-16**

They march around the city again and again—7 times around!

At end of seventh round, the trumpet sounds,
and the people are commanded to Shout!

The readers are given a final reminder: all the spoils belong to God.

They are to keep their hands off! **17-19**

This is an acknowledgment that **GOD defeated the enemy**.

They are entitled to nothing!

God gets everything! –it's all His!

The conquering power always got the spoils!

They weren't the conquerers!

They should keep nothing for themselves.

Living things should be sacrificed to Him.

Inanimate precious treasure ought to go to the temple.

They were not to keep any of it for themselves—they didn't earn it!

They had nothing to do with it!

This is GOD's victory!

JERICHO'S DESTRUCTION 6:20-27

When the trumpet sounds and the people shout, they're undoubtedly a bit surprised when **the walls of the city collapse**, just as God said! **20**

The people invade and kill every living thing, man and animal alike. **21**

This isn't the cruel slaughter of innocent women and children.

The Canaanites were characterized by exaggerated pagan living and immorality.

Their religious worship was filled with prostitution and infant sacrifices.

There was no room for passive tolerance and coexistence.

Their influence would lead to assimilation and corruption of God's people.

They must be eliminated!

God protects Rahab and her family, as He promised. 22-23, 25

God is faithful to His word and she is delivered.

Then **the city is burned**.

The Lord's treasury is enriched.

The precious objects are taken to His treasury. 24

So serious is God's judgment that a curse is pronounced on anyone who ever tries to rebuild it! 26

As a result of this conquest,

Joshua's reputation spreads quickly throughout the region. 27

They aren't victorious because of their great military genius and strategy.

It isn't due to the superiority of their mighty army.

Victory came because God is with them; they follow Him in trust and obedience.

God is with him!

In addition to impact on his **reputation**, this is also an affirmation of his **leadership**.

The people promised to follow him, if the Lord is with him as He was with Moses (1:17).

The evidence is in . . . ***God IS with him!***

WHAT DOES THEIR STORY HAVE TO DO WITH MY LIFE?

Success is NOT the result of MY efforts.

Successful ministry today isn't the result of our superior skills and programs either.

Success (in serving God) is always the result of God's work in us.

Our role is to trust God and obey Him!

God's way of doing things may seem strange to people around us.

We can trust Him to bless us, when we follow His instructions.

As in Joshua's day, **God still knows exactly what He's doing.**

God's way leads to blessing.

God can handle the opposition!

He knows what tomorrow will bring and He is able to care for us.

God is big enough and strong enough to defeat any enemy that seeks to destroy His people.

The way of the wicked ultimately leads to destruction.

God may not intervene and destroy them on our schedule but He *will* act justly.

***Knowing that God is with us
gives us confidence when we face
hard times or opposition.***

What "battles are WE fighting?

How do *people* expect us to fight?

How does *GOD* want us to fight the battle?

His way of fighting may be different; it may seem strange to people who are watching.

Will it be obvious to those watching that He's in charge—that this is about HIM? It's not about US!

The battle *still* belongs to the Lord!