

What We Can Learn From Joshua's Battle Plan

There wasn't an election held, and **Joshua** didn't campaign for the job. But God chose him.

What was there about Joshua that God saw? He had the spirit of **wisdom** (Deut. 34:9). After Moses died, God turned immediately to Joshua and chose him to be the next leader of the children of Israel with the assurance that God would not fail or abandon him (Josh. 1:5).

God said: "'This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go'" (Josh. 1:9, NLT). When God owns a man, things that might normally be terrifying aren't. Whatever might stop him from going into battle doesn't.

Joshua was both a good soldier and wise servant of God. He shouldn't have been able to **conquer** Jericho, but he did. Why? Because he didn't go forward on his own. The commander of the Lord's army was there beside him (Josh. 5:13-15). Joshua moved out not in his own strength, but in the strength of God.

Joshua could have taken credit for the fall of Ai but he didn't. When Ai fell, Joshua built an altar to the Lord (Josh. 8:30-33). He didn't swagger in a victory parade. Instead, he read the entire Book of the Law to the people (vv. 34-35). Joshua knew who made his **victories** possible and so does any man who understands what it means to follow God.

The great **battle** of Gibeon was still ahead for Joshua—there is always another battle a man has to face. Sometimes we think that if God was really on our side, we wouldn't have to fight any battles. God didn't make the battle of Gibeon easier for Joshua and his soldiers. Instead, He gave the army more daylight to get the job done by making the sun stand still

(Josh. 10:13-14).

Joshua called on God that day (Josh. 10:12). So does any man who understands life's challenges and knows where his strength and ability come from. God's men learn to look to Him and see what He is doing. God listens to men who obey Him.

Before Joshua died, he took a large stone and set it up so all the people could see it. Then he gave them his final charge: "Destroy the idols among you, and turn your hearts to the Lord, the God of Israel" (Josh. 24:23).

Then pointing to the stone, he said: "This stone has heard everything the Lord said to us. It will be a witness to testify against you if you go back on your word to God" (Josh. 24:27). Joshua must have been anticipating the future after he was gone.

He must have known that in spite of all that God had done for them some men would still turn away from God. Joshua's warning is just as necessary today for every man.

Roger C. Palms *is former editor of Billy Graham's Decision magazine and author of 15 books and hundreds of magazine and newspaper articles.*