

A PUPPET PLAY IN ONE ACT

And the Walls Fall Down

Based on Joshua 6 · Written by Carrie Elderberry



SUITABLE FOR
Suitable for all ages

CAST SIZE
5 puppets

PERFORMANCE TIME
8-10 minutes

PROPS REQUIRED
None required

MAIN THEME
God's ways don't have to make sense to us for us to trust and obey them.

To print just the play on its own, print pages 5-9.

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Synopsis

BOY and GIRL set out to tell the story of Jericho's wall, but BOY is sure it must have taken dynamite. GENERAL JOSHUA and his none-too-bright soldiers CARMI and ZERAH act out the real story—seven days of silent marching and trusting God's unusual plan—before BOY and GIRL connect it to the walls God can break down in us today.

Spiritual Concept

God's ways don't have to make sense to us for us to trust them—the soldiers at Jericho had no idea how marching around a wall for a week could possibly bring it down, but obedience came before understanding. The same trust applies to the walls of anger, hate, or selfishness God wants to break down in us.

Age Suitability

Suitable for all ages.

Performance Time

8-10 minutes

CAST & TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Characters (in order of appearance)

BOY — About 8 years old, a little mischievous, and convinced the wall of Jericho must have come down with dynamite.

GIRL — A little older and more knowledgeable than BOY.

GENERAL JOSHUA — Leads Israel's army and trusts God's unusual battle plan.

CAPTAIN CARMI — Enthusiastic but not very bright.

SERGEANT ZERAH — Enthusiastic but not very bright.

Prop Options

- If you know a song about the battle of Jericho, or about any spiritual battle, or about soldiers, sing it with the audience before or after the play. Suggestions are provided.

PERFORMANCE NOTES FOR PUPPETEERS

New to puppets? General prep, technique, and voice tips live at gospelpuppets.org/getting-started.

Character Notes

CARMI and ZERAH aren't played as incompetent soldiers—they're eager and well-meaning, just consistently a step behind Joshua's point, guessing wrong (catapults, battering rams, a tunnel) before he corrects them each time.

JOSHUA's patience with his soldiers' guesses is part of the comedy—let each “no, we won't need that” land as a beat before he explains why.

Staging

Optional: instead of exiting when GENERAL JOSHUA enters, GIRL and BOY can step to one side of the stage and “watch” the soldiers' scene, then come back to center when JOSHUA exits.

CARMI and ZERAH's “Sir, yes, sir!” military bearing (standing at attention, nervous energy when Joshua tells them to be “at ease”) is a good runner throughout their scene.

A wonderful, fun (and totally optional) way to include more people, especially pre-readers desperate to help, is to have a hand-held “curtain” ready for any scene-changes. Have one of the puppets call out “Scene change!”—one whose character suits the interruption—and the helpers can run up and screen the center stage for a moment, while chimes are rung and while the puppets switch places.

Making a simple Bible-era tunic for a puppet: cut a rectangle of cloth about twice the puppet's height, fold it in half, cut a neck hole at the fold, and close the sides from the hem up, leaving gaps for the arms. Old pillowcases, dish towels and cotton scraps in undyed cream, brown or grey all work. A cord

belted at the waist, and a contrasting strip draped over one shoulder as a mantle, reads as "Bible times" straight away. Avoid bright modern prints.

Reading the Script

CAPS = volume/intensity or emphasis.

Ellipsis (...) = the author's pacing notation.

AND THE WALLS FALL DOWN

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(Enter BOY and GIRL. They greet the audience.)

BOY AND GIRL: Hi, everyone!

BOY: *(GIRL interrupts him mid-sentence)* Wow, have we got a great story for you today! All about dynamite and BOMBS and—

GIRL: Wherever did you get THAT idea?

BOY: You said we were going to tell about the destruction of JERICO today.

GIRL: Right.

BOY: You said the big wall that went all around the city came CRASHING down!

GIRL: Yes, it did.

BOY: *(addresses the audience)* How could that happen without some DYNAMITE? Girls...they don't know ANYTHING...

GIRL: The battle of Jericho was about three THOUSAND years ago! They didn't HAVE dynamite back then.

BOY: *(disappointed)* Oh. Then what DID they use? EVERYBODY knows that you need DYNAMITE to bring down a wall!

GIRL: Well... maybe we should let the OTHER puppets come out and explain it. How about that?

BOY: Ok, but you'll see that I am right. Scene change!

(Helpers can hold up a curtain while chimes are rung)

(Exit GIRL and BOY. Enter GENERAL JOSHUA. He looks up and around as if at a high wall.)

JOSHUA: What a GREAT DAY for a battle! I can hardly wait. (He turns and calls CARMi and ZERAH to come up on stage) Captain Carmi! Sgt. Zerah!

(Enter Carmi and Zerah)

ZERAH: Sergeant Zerah reporting for duty, SIR!

CARMi: Captain Carmi reporting for duty, SIR!

JOSHUA: Men, today is a VERY GREAT DAY in the history of Israel.

CARMI AND ZERAH: Sir, yes, sir!

JOSHUA: At ease, men. You're making me nervous.

CARMI AND ZERAH: (*nervously*) Yes, sir! Thank you sir! I mean, SORRY, sir!

JOSHUA: As I was saying, today is a VERY GREAT DAY in the history of Israel.

ZERAH: Um...General Joshua, may I ask WHY, sir?

JOSHUA: Sergeant Zerah, the LORD has spoken to me.

CARMI AND ZERAH: Congratulations, sir!

JOSHUA: He has told me that TODAY, the wall of Jericho WILL come down!

ZERAH: Uh, permission to speak, sir?

JOSHUA: What is it, Sergeant?

ZERAH: Well, sir, the soldiers are all kind of wondering, how the wall will come down, without US HELPING.

JOSHUA: Sergeant, I'm sure you have noticed that every day, for the past SIX DAYS, we have marched around the wall of Jericho.

ZERAH: Yes, we certainly have, sir! All the way around the wall, every single day, marching, marching, and MORE marching.

JOSHUA: Without saying a single word!

CARMI: No sir! We gave our men strict orders to keep their lips ZIPPED, sir.

JOSHUA: Well done, men.

CARMI: But if I may say so, sir, they do have a lot to say... back in CAMP.

JOSHUA: Oh? Like what?

ZERAH: Um...well...It's just such a very unusual way to prepare for a battle, sir.

JOSHUA: Hold it right there! It sounds like the soldiers are having trouble trusting GOD.

CARMI AND ZERAH: (*looking for a way out but finding none*) Oh, NO, sir! Well, actually, yes, sir.

JOSHUA: God's ways are not our ways, men.

CARMI AND ZERAH: Yes, sir! Sorry sir!

JOSHUA: The Lord's ways may not make SENSE to us, but He has NEVER let us down.

CARMI: (*cheering up a little*) That is very true, sir!

JOSHUA: The battle belongs to the LORD, and He will give us VICTORY! In fact, today is the day.

ZERAH: Really sir? Today we get to use our CATAPULTS?

JOSHUA: Catapults? WHAT catapults?

ZERAH: Sir, all week long we have been building CATAPULTS, to throw big rocks against the wall! Because WE thought—

CARMI: Yes, WE thought—

JOSHUA: Men, we are not going to NEED catapults. Our God has a DIFFERENT plan, to bring down the wall.

CARMI: Oh, I bet I know, sir! Our BATTERING rams!

JOSHUA: Battering rams? WHAT battering rams?

CARMI: Our soldiers have built SEVERAL of them, because WE thought, um...

JOSHUA: Captain Carmi, we will NOT need any battering rams.

CARMI: Let me guess...Because God has a DIFFERENT plan, sir?

JOSHUA: That's RIGHT, Captain.

ZERAH: And let me guess. His ways are ABOVE our ways?

JOSHUA: Right again.

ZERAH: It must be the TUNNEL, then. It's not QUITE finished, but I'm sure we could have it ready by tomorrow, sir!

JOSHUA: Tunnel? WHAT tunnel?

ZERAH: We've been digging a tunnel UNDER the wall! It's almost done, sir! Because WE thought—

JOSHUA: Sergeant Zerah, you need to get your men OUT of that tunnel, RIGHT AWAY.

ZERAH: Sir?

JOSHUA: That wall is going to collapse... today, and anyone in a TUNNEL is going to be SQUASHED, like a BUG!

ZERAH: Really, sir?

JOSHUA: *(sighing)* Really.

ZERAH: Well! I'm sorry sir, but I just don't get it. Walls don't just COLLAPSE all on their own. Especially THAT wall!

JOSHUA: Sergeant, it's not JUST going to collapse. The Lord God HIMSELF is going to knock the wall down.

CARMI: *(finally understanding and excited)* Oh General Joshua! Sir, that is so AWESOME! Just WAIT until we tell the men!

JOSHUA: You go do that, now. And get them ready for battle.

CARMI: And we will tell them, let me get this right... that our God will MAKE the wall fall down?

JOSHUA: Yes. Is THAT understood?

CARMI AND ZERAH: Sir, yes sir!

JOSHUA: Men, you are dismissed.

CARMI AND ZERAH: Thank you, sir!

(Exit CARMI and ZERAH.)

JOSHUA: *(sighs)* Yes, this is a VERY great day in the history of Israel. I had better go make sure they get all the men out of that TUNNEL...Oh! Scene change!

(Helpers can hold up a curtain while chimes are rung)

(Exit JOSHUA. Enter BOY and GIRL.)

BOY: That must have been some sight, huh?

GIRL: Can you imagine all the DUST?

BOY: Just as good as dynamite! BETTER, in some ways!

GIRL: Oh, you and your DYNAMITE.

BOY: You know, there are walls, even TODAY, that only GOD can knock down.

GIRL: What kind of walls do you mean?

BOY: Well, walls in our HEARTS, walls against God, and against each OTHER.

GIRL: Right, like walls of ANGER, or hate, or selfishness, or OTHER bad things.

BOY: Right. But GOD can break those walls down if we LET Him.

GIRL: We just have to let Him be in CONTROL of our lives.

BOY: And learn to follow His orders, like a good soldier!

GIRL: THAT'S why we need God to fill us, with His Holy Spirit.

BOY: And He's KIND of like spiritual DYNAMITE, right?

GIRL: Ha! You are finally absolutely right!

(Enter JOSHUA, CARMI, and ZERAH.)

ALL: You can read the WHOLE story, about Jericho, in the Bible, in Joshua Chapter Six! Goodbye!

THE END

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Discussion Questions

1. Where is the story of Jericho found?
2. What did the BOY think they would use to destroy the wall?
3. What did Carmi and Zerah think they would use to destroy the wall?
4. Is there anything that is too difficult for God?
5. What kinds of walls do we have against God now? How are those walls destroyed?

Related Bible Passages

Primary Text: Joshua 6 – God gives Israel an unusual battle plan: march silently around Jericho for six days, then seven times on the seventh, and the walls fall down without a single weapon.

Song Suggestions

- “The Battle Belongs To The Lord” – Terry Clark – <https://open.spotify.com/track/3NQeR8RBiIGC3hrgTJdc6k>
- “Joshua Fit The Battle Of Jerico” – Dailey & Vincent – <https://open.spotify.com/track/3PfkW6gQMFL1G32jhX7jxk>

Ministry Context

This play works well for a series on trust and obedience, or on spiritual warfare that doesn't look like warfare at all. It pairs naturally with a reading of Joshua 6, and gives kids a vivid, funny picture of soldiers who trust God's plan even when it makes no earthly sense.