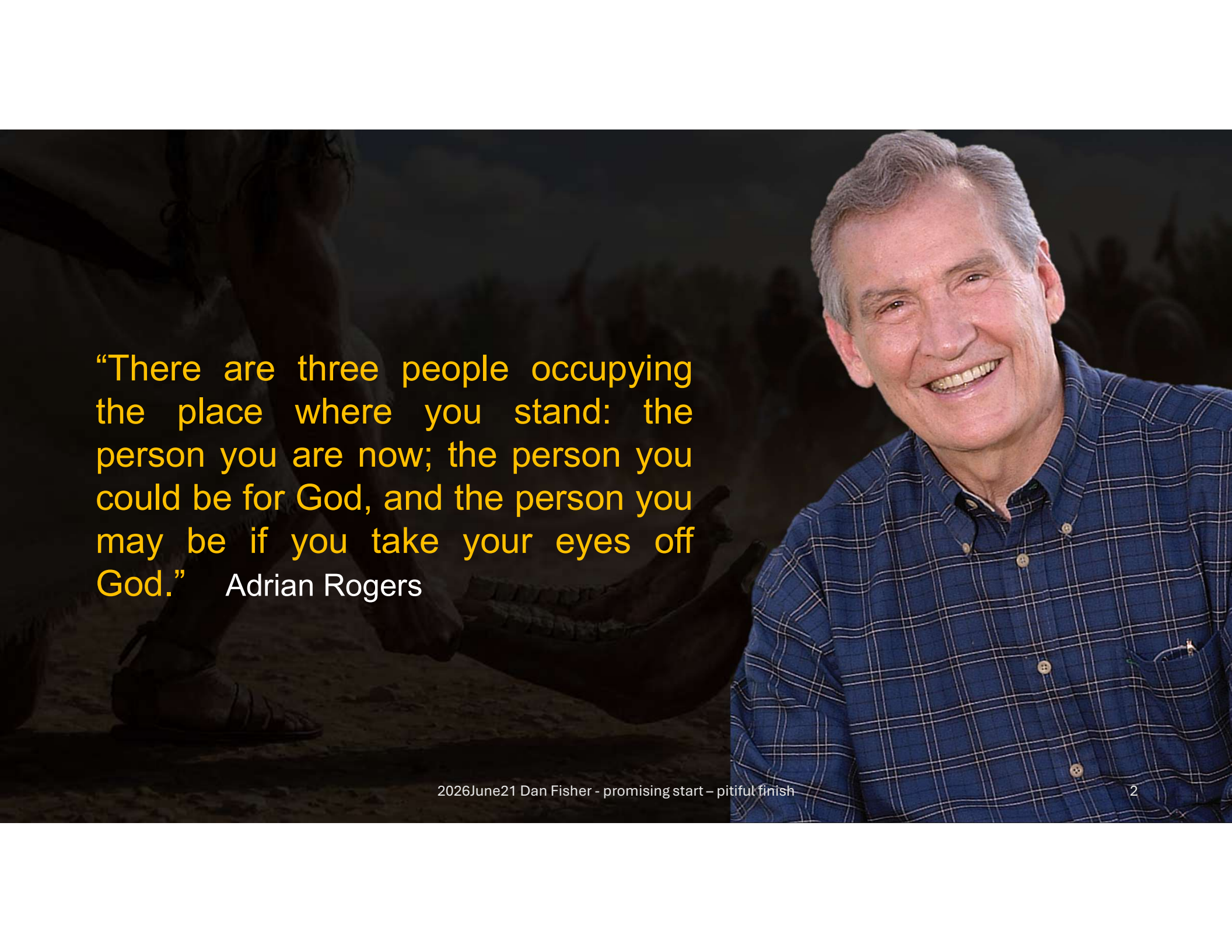




**promising start –
pitiful finish**

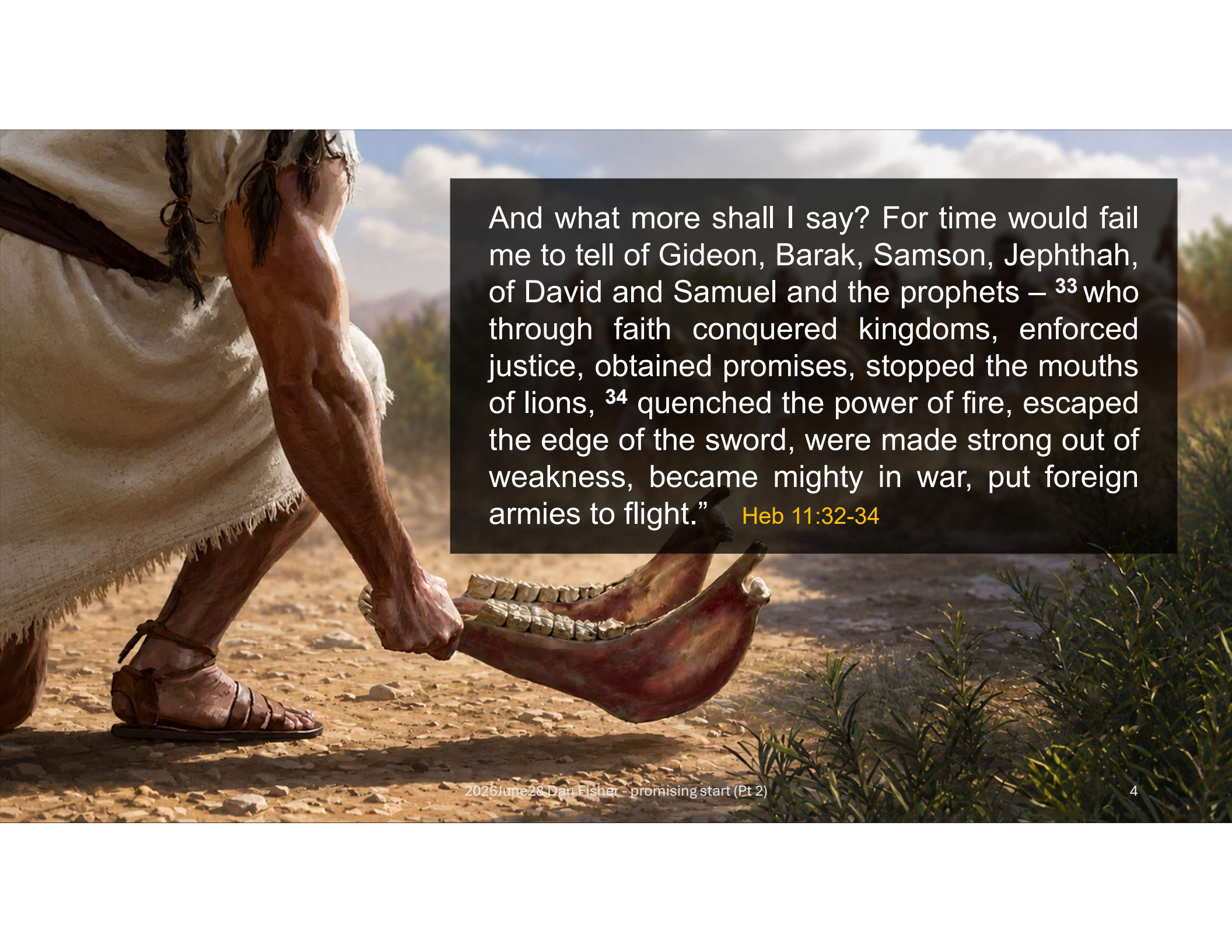
**what makes & breaks
spiritual champions
part 2**



“There are three people occupying the place where you stand: the person you are now; the person you could be for God, and the person you may be if you take your eyes off God.” Adrian Rogers

A dark, atmospheric scene from a movie. In the foreground, a person's legs and feet are visible, wearing sandals. They are holding a large, dark, curved object, possibly a piece of animal skin or a large bowl. In the background, a large crowd of people is visible, some holding up objects, possibly in a celebratory or chaotic scene. The overall lighting is very low, creating a sense of mystery and drama.

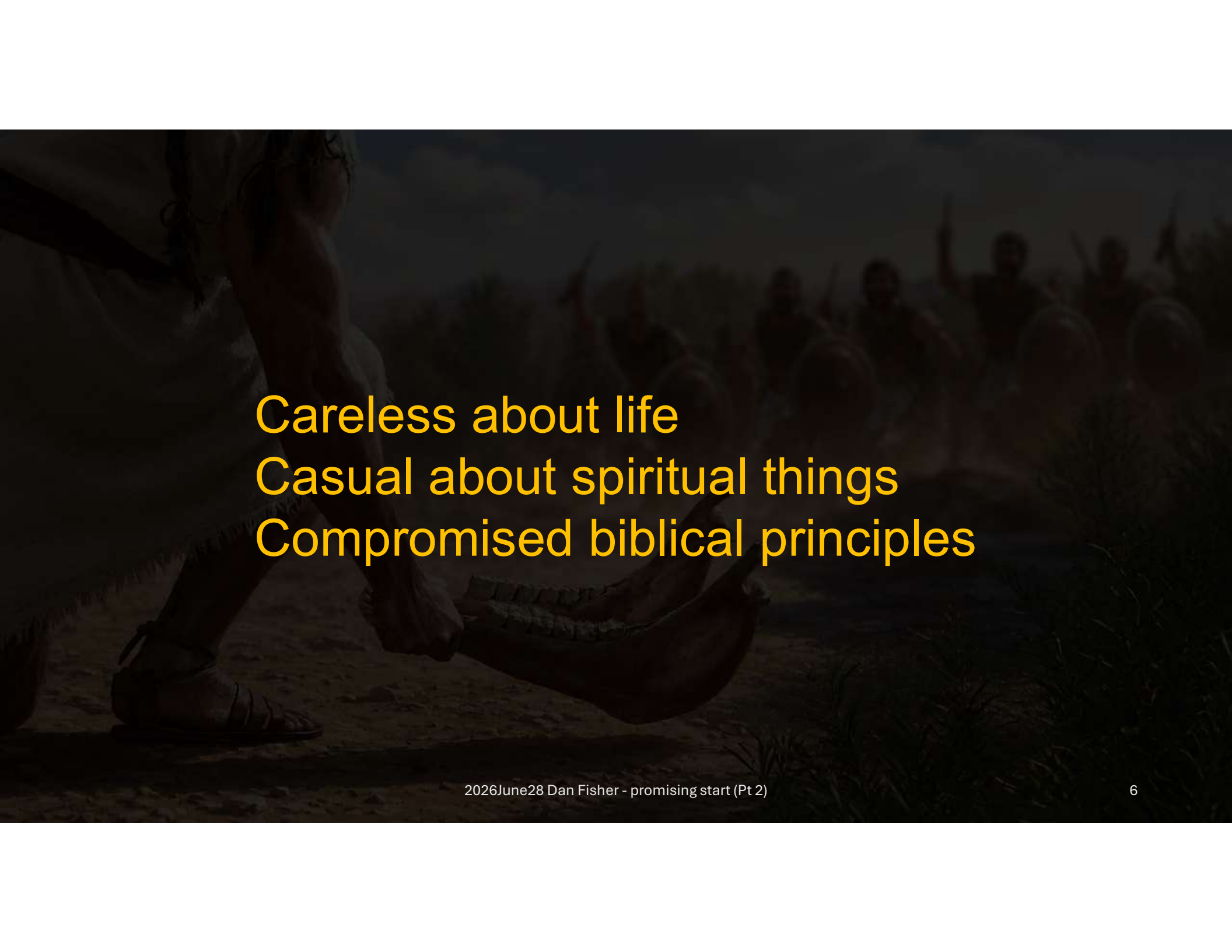
Judges “deliverers”

A man in ancient, rugged clothing is shown from the waist down, walking on a dirt path. He is holding a large, reddish-brown animal jawbone with his right hand. The background is a bright, outdoor setting with a blue sky and some greenery.

And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets – ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.” **Heb 11:32-34**



- Consecrated man (Jud 13:5,24-25)
- Courageous man (Jud 14:6; 15:14-15)
- Conquering man (Jud 15:15)
- Compromising man (Jud 14:1-2,5; 16:1,4)
- Credulous man (Jud 16:7,11,13,17,20)
- Conquered man (Jud 16:21)
- Crippled man (Jud 16:21,25-26)



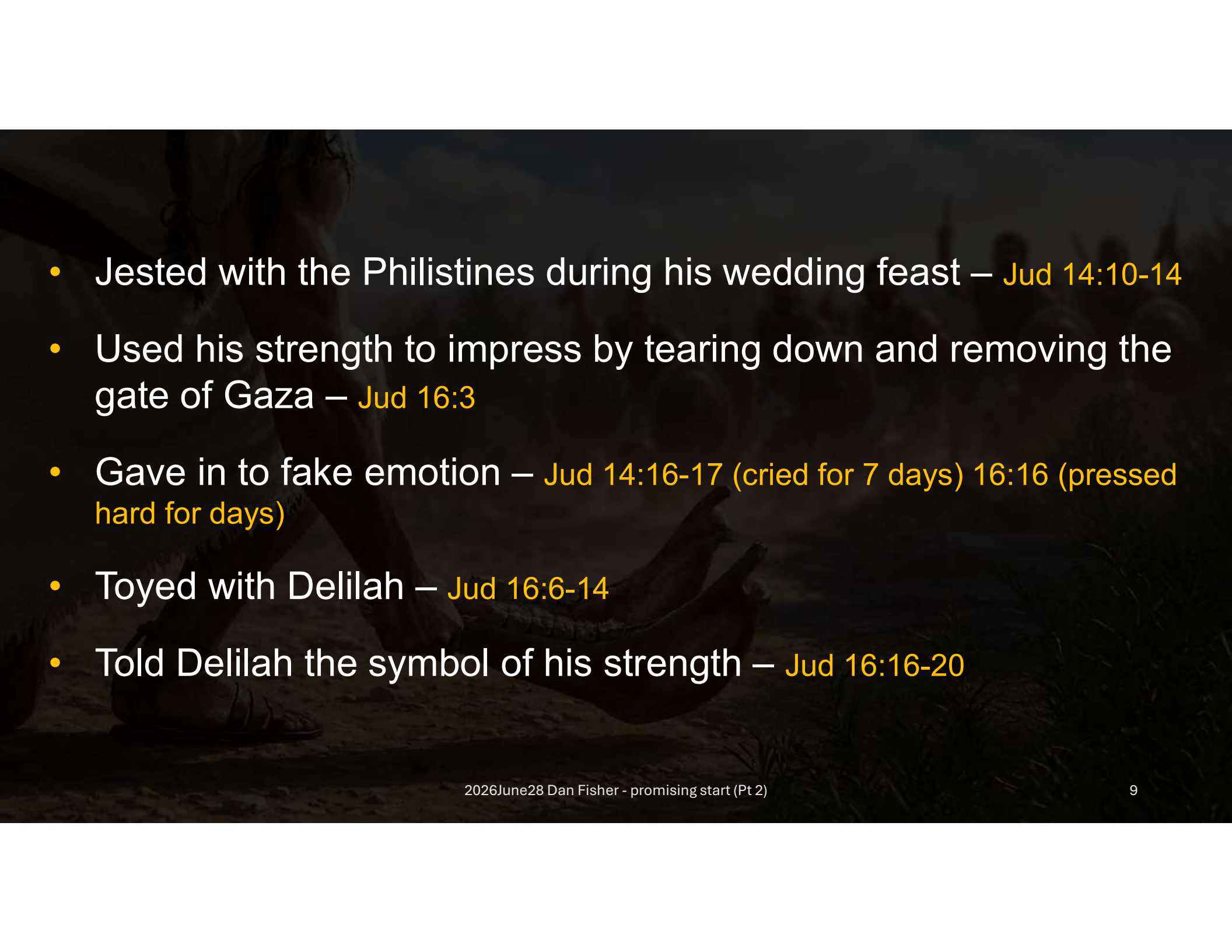
Careless about life
Casual about spiritual things
Compromised biblical principles

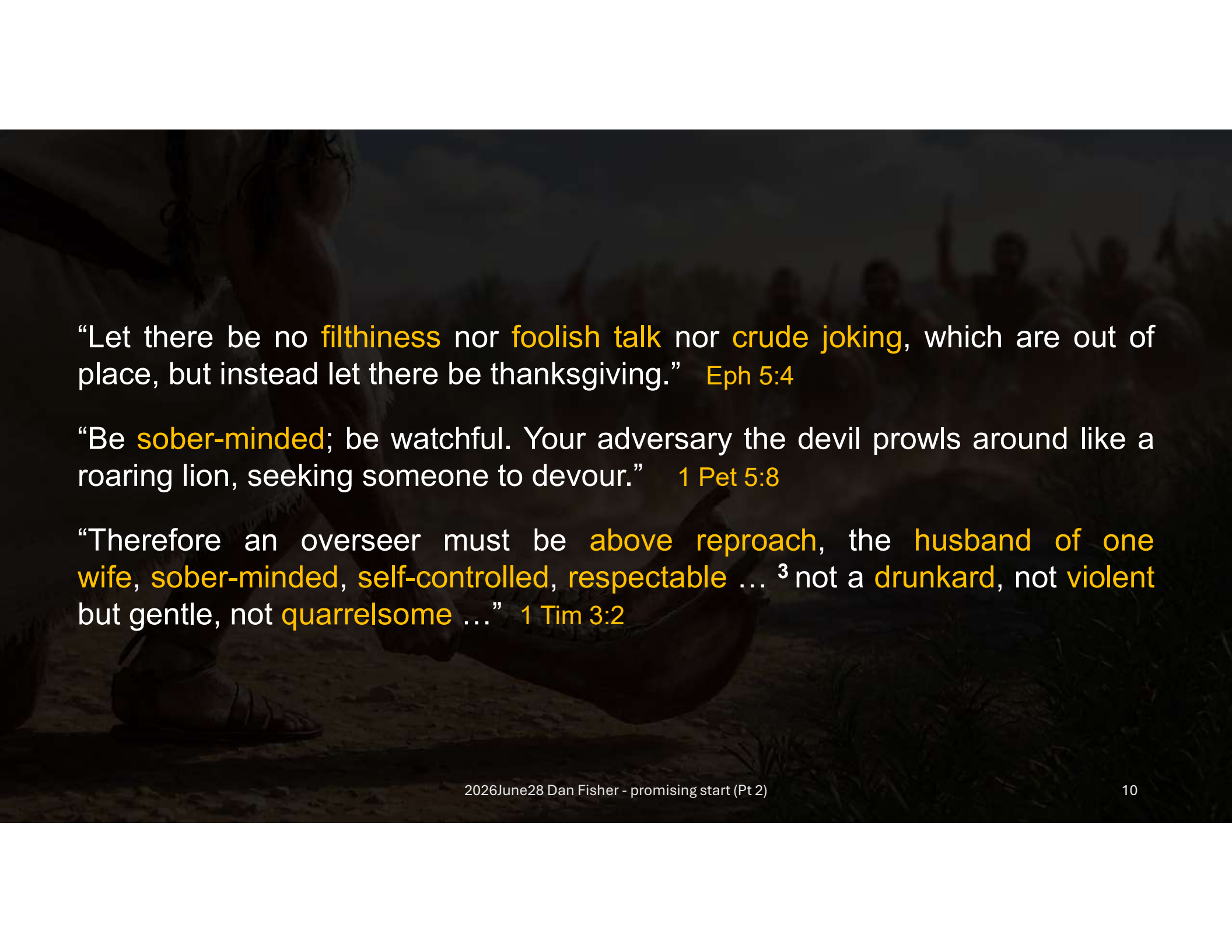


God used Samson's failures to
accomplish His will

A dark, atmospheric scene from a movie. In the foreground, a person's legs and feet are visible, wearing sandals. They are holding a large, dark, curved object, possibly a piece of animal skin or a skull. In the background, a large crowd of people is visible, some holding up objects, possibly in a celebratory or chaotic scene. The overall lighting is very low, creating a somber and intense mood.

1. Discounted the seriousness of his circumstances

- 
- Jested with the Philistines during his wedding feast – **Jud 14:10-14**
 - Used his strength to impress by tearing down and removing the gate of Gaza – **Jud 16:3**
 - Gave in to fake emotion – **Jud 14:16-17** (cried for 7 days) **16:16** (pressed hard for days)
 - Toyed with Delilah – **Jud 16:6-14**
 - Told Delilah the symbol of his strength – **Jud 16:16-20**

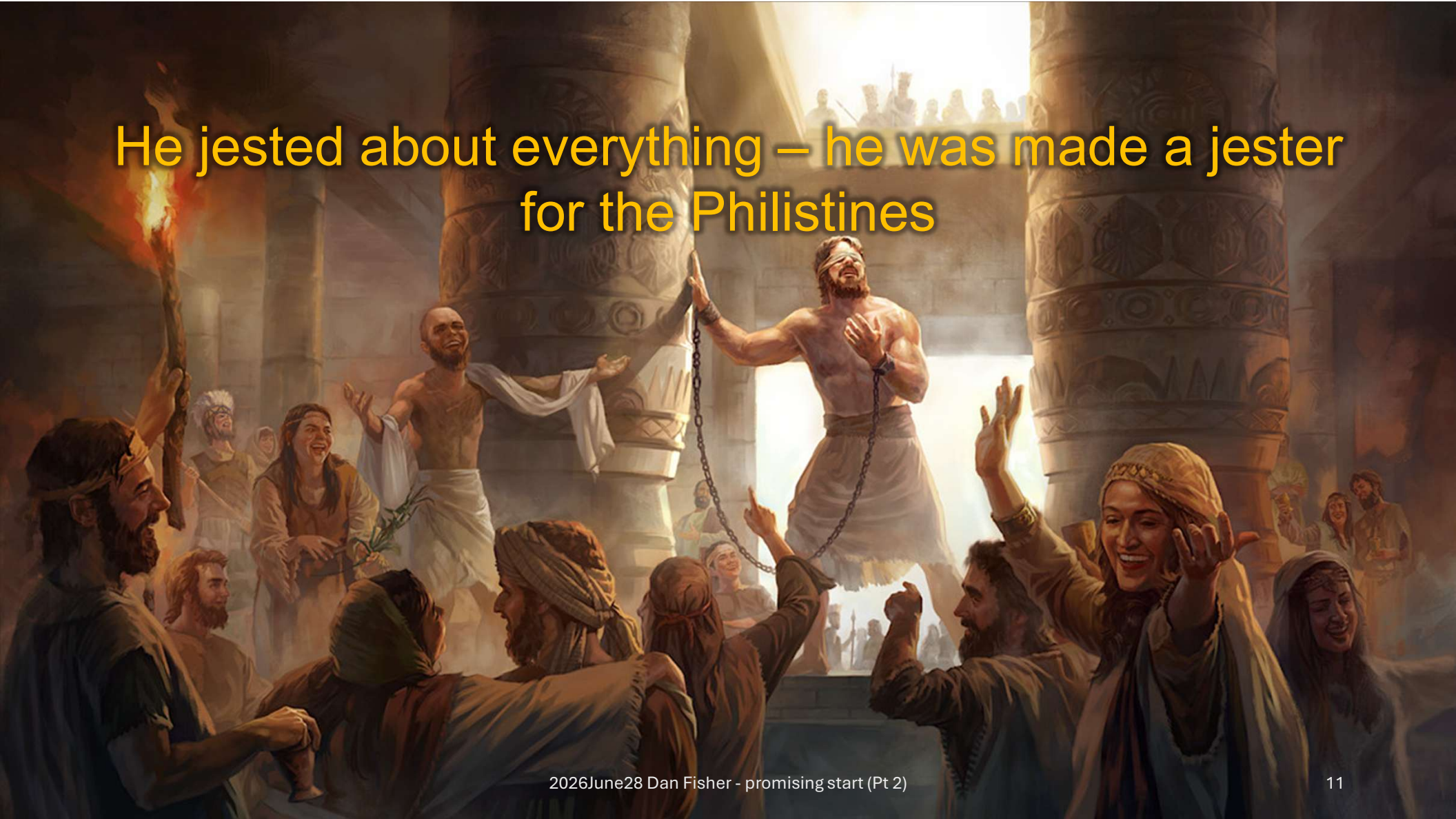


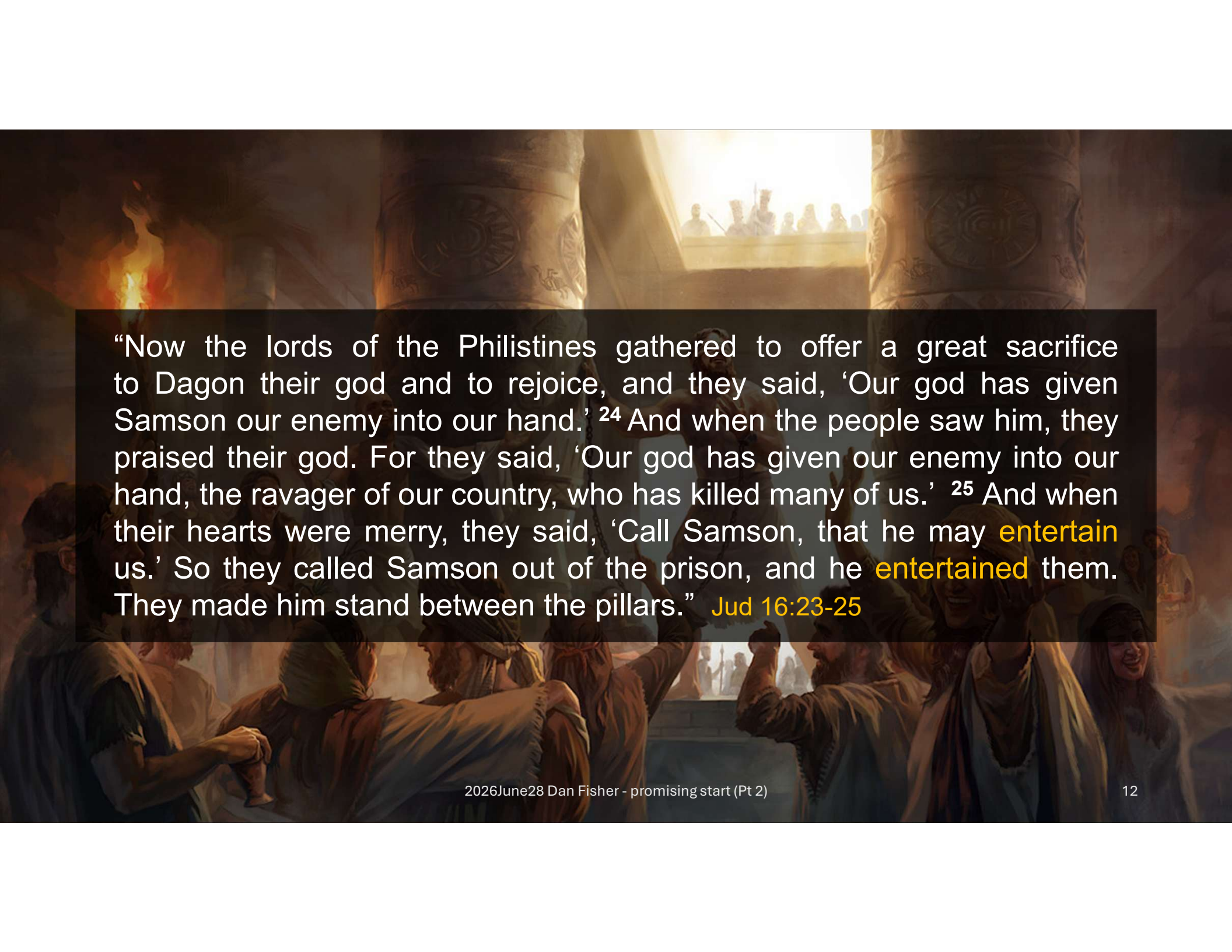
“Let there be no **filthiness** nor **foolish talk** nor **crude joking**, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.” Eph 5:4

“Be **sober-minded**; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” 1 Pet 5:8

“Therefore an overseer must be **above reproach**, the **husband of one wife**, **sober-minded**, **self-controlled**, **respectable** ... ³ not a **drunkard**, not **violent** but gentle, not **quarrelsome** ...” 1 Tim 3:2

He jested about everything – he was made a jester
for the Philistines





“Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice, and they said, ‘Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand.’ ²⁴ And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, ‘Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us.’ ²⁵ And when their hearts were merry, they said, ‘Call Samson, that he may entertain us.’ So they called Samson out of the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars.” **Jud 16:23-25**

A dark, atmospheric scene from a movie. In the foreground, a person is shown from the waist down, wearing a loincloth and sandals, holding a large animal skull. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, some holding spears or staffs, suggesting a tribal or ancient setting. The overall mood is somber and dramatic.

2. Discounted the sacredness of his call



Samson had taken a Nazarite vow:

- No drinking wine — Jud 14:5,10
- No touching anything dead — Jud 14:9; 15:16
- No cutting his hair — Jud 16:19



“And when she pressed him for days, he told her [Delilah] all his heart” **Jud 16:16-17**

“who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, [before times eternal]” **2 Tim 1:9**

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” **1 Pet 2:9**

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” **Eph 4:1-3**

“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” **Phil 3:14**

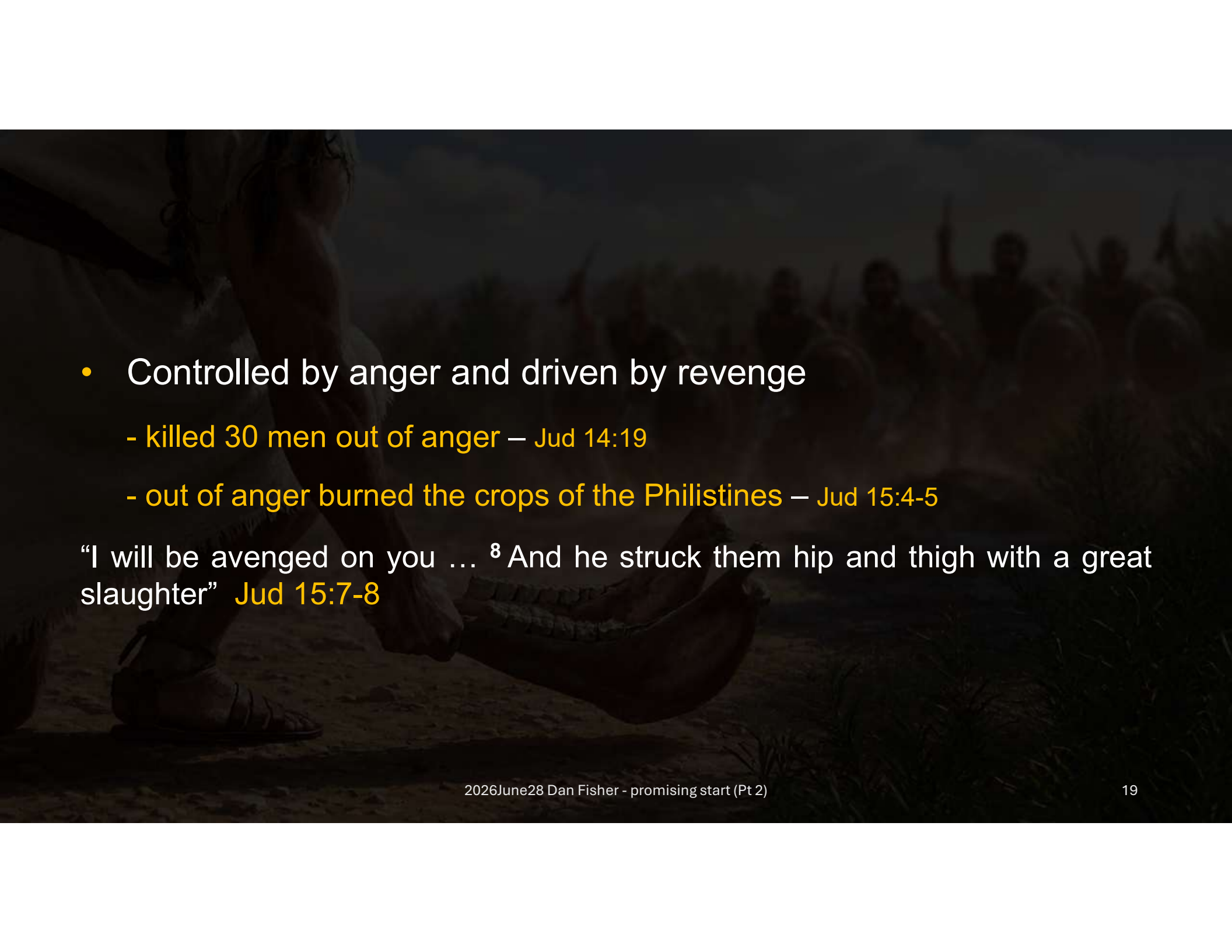


3. Discounted the severity of his compromise

- Married an unbelieving, pagan woman – **Jud 14:1-3**
- Made impulsive decisions: divorced wife out of anger – **Jud 14:20**
- Cavorted with prostitutes – **Jud 16:1**
- Lived with another unbelieving woman (Delilah) – **Jud 16**

“Samson was a he-man with a she-weakness.” Chuck Swindoll



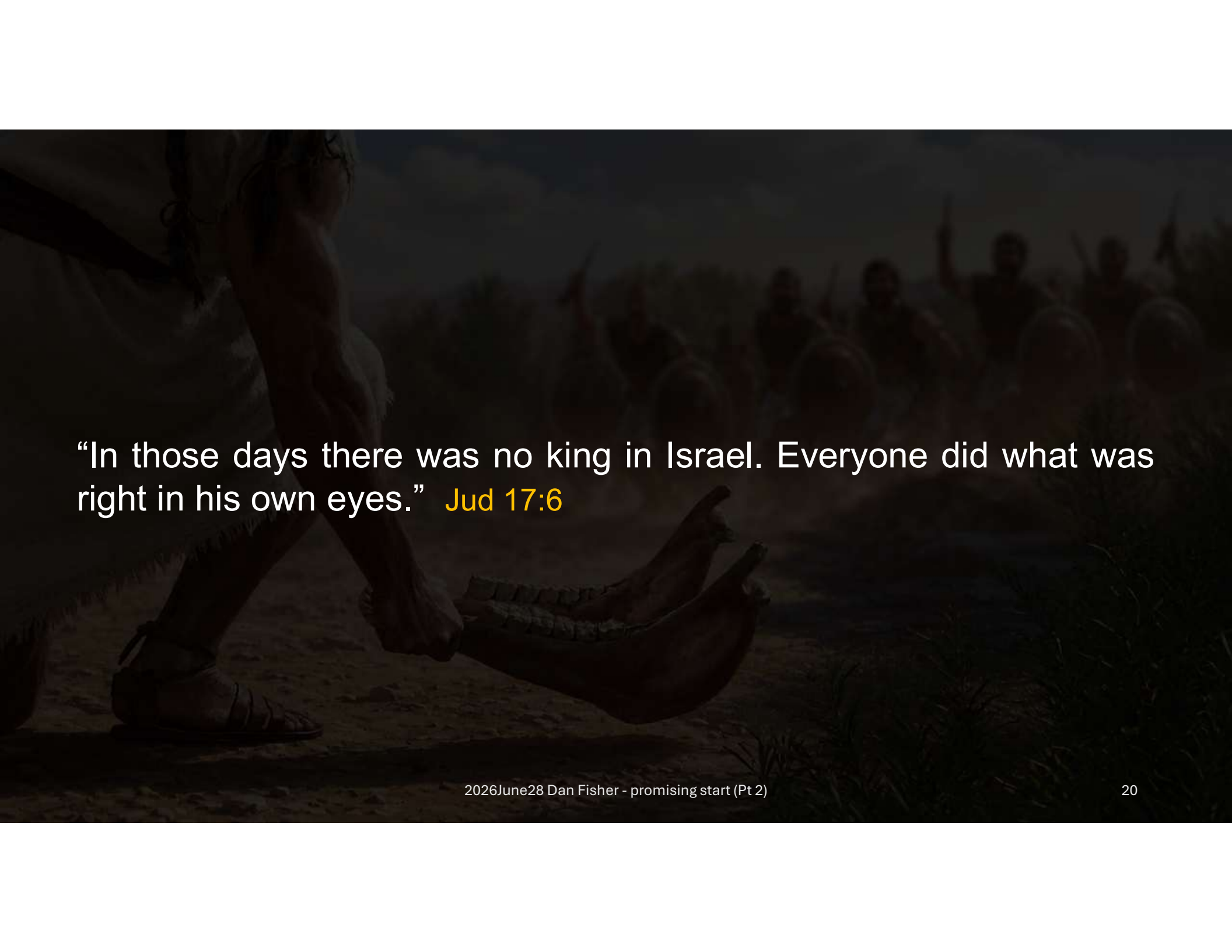


- Controlled by anger and driven by revenge

- killed 30 men out of anger – Jud 14:19

- out of anger burned the crops of the Philistines – Jud 15:4-5

“I will be avenged on you ... ⁸ And he struck them hip and thigh with a great slaughter” Jud 15:7-8

A dark, atmospheric scene from a movie. In the foreground, a person's legs and feet are visible, wearing sandals. They are holding a severed head by the neck. In the background, a crowd of people is visible, some holding up objects, possibly in a state of celebration or chaos. The overall tone is somber and dramatic.

“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” **Jud 17:6**



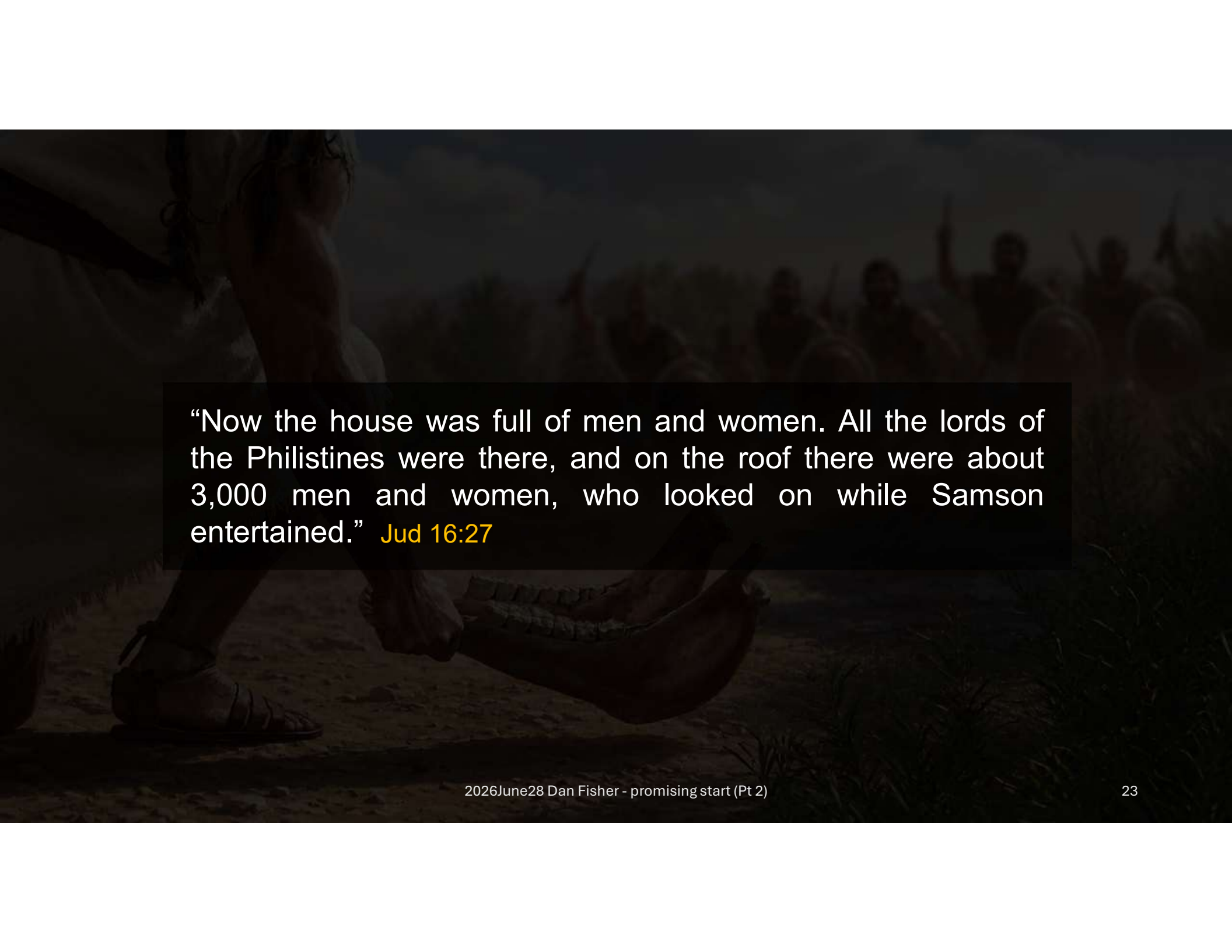
Samson was clearly driven by his lust – he was tempted by his eyes

Jud 14:3 “she is right in my eyes.”


“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.” **Mt 5:29**

- **Samson’s eyes were gouged out**
- **Only when his eyes were gone did he begin to see spiritually**
- **It took being blinded to bring him to the place he could fulfill his calling**





“Now the house was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about 3,000 men and women, who looked on while Samson entertained.” **Jud 16:27**



“So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he had killed during his life.” **Jud 16:30**

The Philistines worshipped their god because of Samson's failure

And when the people saw him, they praised their god. For they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has killed many of us." **Jud 16:24**

