

Joshua 07-11-16b

Let's pick up our study here in Joshua chapter 23. We're looking at the idea of turning to the right hand or to the left. Let me just quickly finish our little mini study on the right hand, which is in the Old Testament the word yamin.

I've already mentioned that it refers to the right hand. You remember the famous episode where Joseph is bringing his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, and he guided Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, his father Jacob's left hand. He pushed him up this way, facing his father.

And Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, but of course his father messed that all up by crossing his hands. I mentioned Ehud in Judges chapter 3. We'll be seeing this before long because I think when we finish Joshua we're just gonna plow right forward into Judges. There's some ripping good yarns in Judges, and they need studying.

They're crying out. I don't think I've ever done a verse-by-verse study of Judges, so we're gonna attack that with great verve. But it's also used in the figurative sense after these literal uses.

You have God taking your right hand. In Isaiah 41, I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee. Now think about that for a minute.

This is Isaiah 41, 13. God says, I, the Lord thy God, will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, fear not, I will help thee. Now picture this in physical terms.

If God is holding your right hand, and He is upholding you with the right hand of His righteousness, where is God situated? You know how in teaching your child, your son, for example, or your daughter, how to bat? How do you do that? You don't stand in front of them and say, okay, swing this way. That doesn't work. How do you get your right hand on their right hand? You stand behind them.

You sort of surround them. You envelop them. You reach around, and their right hand is guided by your right hand, and their left hand is guided by your left hand.

Same thing when you're teaching someone how to golf. And of course, it's more fun if you're dating, and you're teaching a girl how to do these things. That's great.

But the idea is that God, when He says, I will hold your right hand, God is not facing us, reaching across, or grabbing us with His left hand. This is God the Father surrounding us, reaching around us, and using His right hand to be our right hand. And it's a beautiful picture.

And if you think about the idea of Yamin in Isaiah 41, this is what it evokes. It would have been second nature for someone in Israel to picture that, but it's more difficult for us.

The Bible often speaks, and we call this anthropomorphism.

It's a fancy way of saying assigning to God physical characteristics. Anthro means man. Morphos is form, and we assign a form, a human form or human attribute to God, who is, of course, ineffable, and a spirit, and so on.

But Exodus chapter 15 and verse 6, when they are singing the song of victory after the Egyptians get sunk in the Reed Sea, the Yom Suf, Moses and the children of Israel, Exodus 15 is one of the earliest hymns that we have of the people of God. Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord. It's a great song.

One of these days we'll get to learn the tune, find out what tune they sang this to. Right now we just have the words. I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously.

The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise Him, my Father's God, and I will exalt Him.

The Lord is a man of war. The Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea.

His chosen captains also are drowned in the Yom Suf. The depths have covered them. They sank to the bottom like a stone.

This is a great song of exaltation. One of these days we ought to put it to a tune, and we'll sing it on Sunday. Talk about how God sank the enemy like a stone, dropped him in the water, and they sunk to the bottom.

You throw the enemies into the sea, and in the new heaven and the new earth there is no more sea. So where's the enemy? They went wherever the sea went. They're gone.

Then in verse 6 of Exodus 15, he says, Your right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power. Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed the enemy in pieces. And in the greatness of your excellence you have overthrown those who rose against you.

You sent forth your wrath. It consumed them like stubble, and so on. But it's a great statement, even though we know from other places in Scripture that God is not a man.

In Exodus chapter 20, you remember that's the law, Sinai, the Ten Commandments, and so on. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth, and so on, because you don't make physical representations of God. I, the Lord your God, am jealous, and so on.

In Deuteronomy chapter 4, take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the Lord your God spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act

corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, or the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the water beneath the earth. What do we have? We have crucifixes with a man on a cross, we have the fish that goes on a car, and you have to be careful with that. God says, look, He is not going to invest power in a symbol.

This whole thing of holding off the vampire with a cross is nonsense. God says, forget about that. He's not in an image.

You can't make a representation. He does not want idols made of Him. It's amazing, this whole Catholic Church thing really gets on my last nerve.

When you think about history and you think about all of the things that God said don't do. Jesus said to the disciples, let no man call you father. What do Catholic priests get called? Father.

Jesus said, let no man call you father, and here's the priest, Father so and so, reading the scripture where Jesus says, let no man call you father. Jesus said, don't make images. And look at all of the relics, finger bones and crosses and sepulchers and all of these different relics that they assign, you know, the face of Mary weeping on the side of a building or a cliff or a virgin appearance here and there and yonder, the Alma Gordo or whatever it is.

I don't think it was Alma Gordo. What was it? Well, you remember, you know, the virgin of whatever it is. Guadalupe, but there's another one that's got parts of Alma Gordo in it, but I don't remember now.

But God says, no, He is spiritual and these are metaphors, they are anthropomorphisms, they are representations, even as anthropopathisms, pathos, your feelings, your passions, an anthropopathism is assigning to God wrath or other human emotions. God is way above that. God doesn't, you know, have an emotional adrenaline rush when He is quote-unquote angry, but it is an anthropopathism, it is a way of understanding God, just as we see Him taking our right hand with His own.

But this all relates to the idea of the right hand. The right hand is strength. The right hand is power.

In the Hebrew scriptures, you find the word yamin almost a hundred and forty times in the Old Testament. This is not something to take lightly or just gloss over. The weakness is generally associated with the left side or the left hand, and you know, apologies to anybody who's left-handed, but in Scripture, the right hand is the side of strength.

Even the psalmist in Psalm 77.10, he says, this is my anguish, this is a psalm of individual lament, 77, but he says, in my anguish, I will remember the years of the right

hand of the Most High. When I am in trial and testing and discouragement and going through the valley, I will remember the years when I was at that favored place, the place of blessing and strength and might and so on. Now, all of this, I think you pretty well understand and you have a grasp of, but what's less well known is that yamin, some of those hundred and thirty-seven uses in the Old Testament, are directional.

And many times when your English translation says south, the word behind it is yamin, because in the same way that I, at least, I have found that some of my family members don't think this way, but I think in terms of a map. I imagine myself, maybe when I was in the first grade, that they used to pull the map down and north is up, south is down, west is left, east is right. Which coast is the left coast? People always use that saying, say the left coast.

Which coast is that? California, the land of fruits and nuts. It's the left coast. We think of it in terms of left, you know, that west is left, east is right.

Ancient people didn't think that way. They faced the direction of hope. They faced the rising sun.

And for them, left is north and right is south. Yamin is south. Does this bring to mind any particular country in the Middle East today? Yemen.

Why does it have that name? Look it up. It is south of something bigger than itself. Yamin.

It means to the right, to the south. And this is particularly interesting in Exodus 14. We just read Exodus 15.

What was that? Moses and the children of Israel sing the song of deliverance. A horse and rider cast into the sea, sank like a stone. God defeated them with his right hand.

His right hand is glorious. So what does that tell you happened in 14? 14, Israel is delivered through the water. Egypt is judged by the water.

This is a theme. Noah delivered through the water. The wicked generation judged by the water.

It's another flood. It's another new start. And so in 14 and verse 29, the children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.

We are surrounded by the chaotic, dark forces of evil. It's in our culture. It's in our nature.

It's in the air above us. It is in the earth beneath us. It's all over the place.

But as the people of God, we can stand on solid, dry ground and walk right through the

middle of it and be delivered. The children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. The waters were a wall.

What's going to happen if you turn to the right hand? Where are you going to be? You are going to be in there with Behemoth and Leviathan and the chaotic, shark-infested waters. In that early phase where they have been freshly delivered, there is a wall, and they can't go any way but forward, just as we do with little toddlers. What do you do? You can't watch them and hold them by the hand.

You stick them in a playpen. They can't get into trouble in the playpen, generally speaking. Not much trouble.

But we hem them in. You wall everything off. You put latches on your cabinets so they can't drink the pine saw.

You put deals in your plugs so they can't stick their fingers or other objects into the wall socket. It becomes a wall when you are young. When you are older, you are supposed to be able to take all that stuff off.

Some people don't. Some people shield and corral in, and you never get past that early phase. But the children of Israel walked through the waters, and the waters were a wall.

In that early day, they could not turn to the right hand. They could not turn to the left hand, because the waters of the sea, God made it. Why didn't God do what He did at the Jordan? Why didn't He do the same thing at the Jordan, when Joshua and the second generation, full of faith and victory and conquest, go into the land? Why didn't the Jordan stand up with walls on both sides? Well, for one thing, it's a river, and the physics would have been strange, because the river would have had to stop flowing on the downstream side to not drain away, right? But secondly, it's a different principle.

You don't need walls to prevent you from turning to the right hand or the left. Now they have the word and the exhortation of Joshua, seven years later. You are responsible not to turn to the right hand or to the left.

When they first left Egypt, people in the back, you know, pushing ahead. You know, you can't turn. You've got to go forward.

So we grow up, we mature, and we ought to direct ourselves. We ought to know enough not to turn to the right hand or the left. We shouldn't have to be put in the corral chute like cattle.

But that is the direction toward which they are going to go. You remember, way back in Genesis, with Abraham and Lot. Remember what Abraham said to Lot? Our flocks and herdsman are fighting, and this country ain't big enough for the both of us.

We've got to separate. We've got to divide. And so Abraham says to Lot, look, the whole land is before you.

Separate yourself, I pray thee, from me. If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right. If you depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

This is in Genesis 13, and it's the first appearance of this right hand, left hand motif. It's in the mouth of Abraham. And he says, we've got to separate, so if you go left, I'll go right.

If you go right, I'll go left. But this implies division. You're departing away from some common place.

Now this was a good thing in the case of Abraham and Lot. They needed to separate. And I think there was probably more to it than just flocks and herds.

I think there was a spiritual parting of the ways, and Abraham needed some space from his nephew. You go over there, I'm going over here type of thing. But the idea of do not depart from the right hand or the left, if none of the Israelites depart to the right hand or the left, what does that mean? They are unified.

Remember our memory verse? Be of one mind. Let this mind be in you, which also is in Christ Jesus. Be of the same mind.

Be of like mind. Be of one mind. If everybody's on the narrow road, we're all going to be together.

There will not be divisions. Paul says to the Corinthians, I hear that there are wars and divisions among you. Some of you have gone to the right.

Some of you have gone to the left. Some of you are of Paul. Some of you are of Apollos.

Some of you are of Cephas. Some of you say you're of Christ. Look, you shouldn't be divided.

If you are not straight to the right hand or the left, you'll all be on the same road, going in the same direction. That's how you started out, leaving Egypt. That's how you ought to end up.

Do not stray. Do not turn. And so it is not turning aside to the right hand or left.

It's unity. And ideally, we are growing believers in our fellowship. The reason our group has been so durable is that we are of like mind.

Many times there are groups that get large and have great diversity. You know, oh, I'm not going to get started on diversity. They're preaching diversity.

Diversity in the school. Diversity is great. Celebrate diversity.

There's bumper stickers, signs, posters. It's in all the school curriculum. Celebrate diversity.

This is not a biblical concept. We are not to be diverse. We are to be alike.

We are to be the same. We are to concentrate on the essentials that unite us, not on the distinctives that divide us. Be of one mind.

Let this mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus. Here is where we have common ground. Now, we can have different interests, different hobbies, different likes and dislikes, a lot of things.

But there are certain things that ought to unite believers. Common understanding of Scripture in the essentials of the faith is critical. What fellowship hath light with darkness, righteousness with unrighteousness? Touch not the unclean thing.

People that screw up and defile and pervert Scripture say that homosexuality is okay. That is an abomination in the Old Testament and in the New. And if you get next to believers who honestly think that homosexuality is a perfectly acceptable lifestyle, look, you go to the right, I'll go to the left.

Or if you go to the left, I'm going to the right. But I am not going to dwell with you. That is grounds for separation because it is a perversion.

It is not only representative, but it is a symptom of a deeper problem. In Israel, a leprous spot might break out. And you read in Leviticus chapter 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, long in there, talking about leprosy breaking out and different kinds of spots.

And is there funny hairs in it? And the priest has to examine it and figure out, can this thing be saved and cleansed or does it have to be destroyed? And there are certain things. Now, the spot itself is not the problem. The spot is a symptom of something deeper and defiling, something that is going to spread and something that is going to infect and something that is going to corrupt and pervert and distort and ruin.

And there were some times when they had to burn a house down because it got a certain kind of defiling spot. That is what this perversion is. It manifests.

It is a soul kink. It is a set of bad choices that manifests itself in this particular behavior. The behavior in and of itself is not the problem.

It is the soul damage behind it. And people who say, oh, well, what I do behind closed doors should not make a difference. I should be able to teach school.

I should be able to, you know, go into the men's shower with you in the squad bay in the

military. I should be able to be a scout master. No.

And it isn't just because, oh, well, I promise I won't lead your little kids astray. That's not the issue. And it's a false argument to say, well, as long as homosexuals just keep their behavior behind closed doors, who cares what they do in the rest of life? Scripture is very clear.

That is not the problem. Read Romans chapter 1. There is a spiritual issue there that manifests itself in rebellion against the divine order. And it is not just going to manifest itself there.

It is going to manifest itself in other ways, and it is going to infect, and it is going to corrupt. It's very politically incorrect to say so, but I am unapologetic. This is what Scripture teaches, and believers need to understand that there are certain things from which we must separate.

Abraham detected in Lot a greed and a spiritual malaise that he had to separate from. And he said, look, you go that way, I'll go this way. You're my nephew.

Love you to death. I'll send you a card. Go.

And they did. And this was a spiritual issue. It doesn't mean every time people separate.

You know, there's other reasons. But this is a reason. And the idea of right hand, left hand, is an idea of separation.

So if you do not depart to the right hand or the left, what is the flip side of that coin? We are one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. One destiny, one view of what the spiritual life means. One view of our hope and our faith and our love.

We are united. We have in common the things of Christ. That's what it means to not depart to the right hand or to the left.

We want to keep the group together. Let's stay with. Forsake not the assembling of ourselves together.

All of that is wrapped up in staying on the straight road. We're all going to advance forward. Nobody gets left behind.

Let's all go. Let's go together. Let everybody that departed is going to arrive.

Let's encourage one another while it is called today. Encourage one another with songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

Speaking the truth to one another in love. Let's all get there. We don't want to lose anyone.

Sometimes we're going to. If the Lord Jesus Christ lost one out of twelve, we're going to lose some along the way, right? He's the son of loss. He's the son of perdition.

Jesus says, Father, you gave me twelve. I got eleven. I lost one.

The son of perdition. And that's how he's universally identified in the New Testament. All through the Gospels.

Judas, who betrayed him. The son of loss. But the idea is stay together.

So yamin is used of sticking together. As I said before, it can also be used of other things that are on the right hand side. The right eye, the right thigh.

And it also means south. In 1 Samuel chapter 23, when the, you remember the Ziph? David and the Ziphites. I don't know if, maybe a while.

It's been a few years since we went through 1 Samuel. But in chapter 23, the Ziphites came to Saul when he was at Gibeah. And they said, David is hiding with us in strongholds in the woods, in the hills of Hakela, which is on the south of Yeshiman.

Well, on the south of is yamin. It's yamini. It's to the right of, to the south of.

Well, unfortunately, we have a term in English where we say, well, you know, everything was going good. Then something bad happened and it all went south. And we do not want to use this term because its origins are in the Civil War.

And it's a Yankee term. To go south means, well, you've gone confederate. That's not good.

But if you insist on using that term, go way back. Where if something goes south, it goes to Egypt. It goes way south.

Egypt. Egypt is the bad south. Our south is not the bad south.

So I choose to look at it anyway. So when you hear somebody saying, well, it all went south, just think they went back to Egypt. Leeks and garlicks, wayside dwellers, you know, nefarious no-goodniks.

There is a related term, yamani, which you just put the e on the end. And it's an adjective, the right hand, the right side. In Exodus 29.20, you shall kill the ram, take some of its blood, and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of the right hand, and on the big toe of the right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.

You remember that? You remember the significance? Why is it the ear? Why is it the thumb? Why is it the toe? We've studied all that. We've reviewed it several times. But

that's all yamani.

It's the right side. It's the strong side. This is what you do.

This is where you look in your strength. This is what you do with your strong right hand. This is where you walk, stepping out with your right foot.

I don't know how the military got to stepping out on the left foot. But that's what the priests were to do. In Ezekiel 4.6, remember Ezekiel had to lie on his right side and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days, a day for each year.

He laid on his right side, yamani. So the whole idea here is there's a lot going on when Joshua speaks. You think about this man.

He has followed the instruction. You remember back at the very beginning of Joshua, back in Joshua chapter 1, he was commissioned by the Lord. The Lord spoke to Joshua saying, Moses, my servant, is dead.

So arise, go over the Jordan to you and the people, to the land which I give them. Every place the sole of your foot that you tread, I give you the Euphrates land of Hittites. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life as I was with Moses.

So I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and of good courage.

You will divide this land to the people as an inheritance, just as I swore to their fathers. And verse 7, Joshua 1.7, Only be strong and very courageous that you, Joshua, may observe to do according to all the law which Moses, my servant, commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

This is the same man, 7, 10, 15, 20 years later, at the end of his life, who is passing on what he has lived. That was his commission from God. He's leaving and he says, Look, do what I did.

It's worth it. Do not turn to the right hand or to the left. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it.

For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

I memorized that as a child in the King James. Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.

And that's the beginning of the book of Joshua. Now we're at the end, and he's passing along that same thing. Jesus Christ does the same thing.

He lived the life of a human being, enabled by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, and the Holy Spirit. The Spirit and the Word. That is how the power of God comes into the life of a believer, into the life of a human being.

That's how he was commissioned. That's how he lived his life. And as he left, that's what he left behind for us.

That is the message we get from him and from the apostles. Be strong. Be of good courage.

Don't be afraid. God is with us. This is Jesus' name, Emmanuel, as we're about to enter into the Christmas season.

So all of this is Joshua chapter 23. And as we continue in Joshua's exhortation to the people, look at verse 6. Be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, lest you turn aside from it to the right hand or to... It's almost identical to what God spoke to him years earlier. The Lord has driven out all of these people.

One shall chase a thousand in verse 10. For the Lord your God is he who fights for you. Now, this is another phrase that we find quite often.

One of you shall put to flight a thousand. This was spoken back in Leviticus chapter 26 verse 8 in slightly different words. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight.

That's interesting in Leviticus, because do the math. Five of you shall chase a hundred. So if five of you chase a hundred, how many should a hundred of you put to flight? Well, there's 20 times five, so it'd be 20 times a hundred.

It would be 2,000. Yeah, 2,000 would be put to flight by a hundred Israelites, each of whom can put... Every five of them can put a hundred to flight. So one Israelite can put 20 guys to flight, right? So a hundred Israelites ought to put 2,000 to flight, but a hundred of you will put 10,000 to flight, 10 elephs, 10 battalion units.

Why? There is strength in fellowship. There is strength in unity. If none of us depart to the right hand or to the left, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, literally.

In fellowship, united together, we do greater than we can do individually. Five guys, that's a hundred. A hundred together, 10,000 are put to flight.

Your enemies will fall by the sword before you. And it's a wonderful promise. In Deuteronomy 28, verse 7, The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face.

They shall come out against you one way, and they shall flee seven ways. It's a great

picture. They come marching boldly out, and when you engage, they scatter seven different directions.

Seven is the number of every which way. They are completely diffused, scattered. Deuteronomy 32, verse 30, How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, unless their rock had sold them, and the Lord had surrendered them? This is the reverse.

If you are not courageous, if you do not meditate in the law of the Lord, if you do not make a point of meditating on the word. We've talked about this, and it sounds great. Everybody's, hooray, yes.

But I think about this past week. Remember last week, I was saying, you know, can't we schedule some time? Can't we make an appointment with God, spend a little bit of time in meditation? And I thought, you know, I'm going to do that this coming week. I think I'll get up early.

I didn't. I didn't do it. I did not put my application where my knowledge is.

And I'm going to have to make another attempt. It's one thing to say it. It's one thing to believe it.

It's one thing to communicate it to others. And it's another thing to do it and to make it happen. It is a promise of God.

I am going to be one of these 10,000 that gets put to flight if I do not make a priority and a habit out of meditating. Now, I got my study time in and so on, but I wanted to make a special extra appointment, beyond preparing for class, beyond the stuff I do late at night. I wanted to start the day.

And I didn't do it. I failed, fell on my sword. And that is just unsatisfactory.

That can't happen. We will be defeated. We will be deflected.

We will be stopped if we cannot understand a thing, commit to a thing, and then accomplish a thing. It has to happen. It has to be made to happen.

And we have to make it happen. And I look around and all of you are people that I have observed making things happen. Every single one of you in this room, some of you more so than others, I know you can make things happen.

I have actually made things happen in the past. I did not make this thing happen yet. But all of us have to think about it.

It's one thing to say it. It's one thing to hear it from scripture. It rolls trippingly off the tongue.

It flows wondrously over the ears. But this is a real deal. We have to meditate in the things of God, or we are going to be defeated.

We are going to be deflected. We are going to turn to the right. We are going to turn to the left.

You cannot advance if you are not sustained daily through meditating on God's word. Not hearing it in Bible class, not remembering that you heard it in Bible class, not thinking about all the years that you heard it in Bible class, but getting the substance of it, the principles and the promises and the doctrines, and actually digesting and perceiving and applying those things in the moment. I used to send lieutenants through the basic school at Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps lieutenants were supposed to be able to go and be platoon commanders. Okay, here's your guys. Go take the hill.

You've been in class. You've studied the theory. You know the tactics.

Here's your interlocking fields of fire. And here's your fire team advances. And here's how you do it.

All makes perfect sense. Sounds great. Looks good in the diagrams.

And then you put your 782 gear on, and you go to the field, and they say, okay, Lieutenant Hall, you are the platoon commander. Here are your squads, and here are the fire teams. Go take the hill.

And it doesn't happen so smoothly and easily, because now you have to actually dredge this stuff up. And, well, you mean this hill doesn't look like the one in the picture. There's a tree line and a creek here.

And you have to adapt, and you have to adjust, and you have to think and say, well, now, how do I adjust? I was hearing about mathematical formulas and how you can get the formula in one form. You know how they used to do? Here's the formula. V equals IR .

Voltage equals current times resistance. And they say, okay, so solve for voltage. And your first three problems are all voltage.

Oh, no problem. Multiply the current times resistance. There's your voltage.

Well, then they give you the voltage, and they give you the current, and they say, what's the resistance? Well, I don't have a formula for resistance. I've only got a formula for voltage. And you have to think, and you have to say, well, I suppose if I divided both sides by current, I could, then I would have an R over here, and I'd have V over I . Oh, but, you know, you have to grind through.

You have to make this happen. And it doesn't happen when somebody says, well, you know, you can rearrange these terms. Oh, yeah, well, I'm sure you can.

It happens when you actually do it. And I'll tell you what's really exciting is when you're working on something, and you have to get a certain voltage out of a cord adapter that doesn't provide that voltage. And you say, well, how can I split this? Because I've only got the one adapter, and this thing calls for six volts, and I've got 12.

How can I do this VIR thing? And it's really great when you can dredge it up out of your past and make it work, and you don't burn up the thing you're trying to power. Or you do, and that's exciting, although not helpful. But here's the thing.

If you don't remember anything else about the entire book of Joshua, remember the point of it. We are headed for the promised land. Like it or not, we're between the walls.

We're out of Egypt. We are going across, and we're either going to die in the desert, or we're going to make it into the land like Caleb and Joshua. And hopefully we are of that second-generation quality, and we're going to go in.

We are learning now how to fight this battle, and it is one thing to hear about it. It's one thing to read about it. It's one thing to look at others fighting the great fight of faith, and it is something else again to make it happen in our lives.

The key is the key that was given to Joshua at the beginning, and what he gives to the people of Israel at the end. Hold fast to the Lord your God. It has to be a reality.

Take careful heed to yourselves that you love the Lord your God. If you go back and cling to the remnant of these nations, these that remain among you, and make marriages with them, and go into them, and they to you, know for certain that the Lord your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. They shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides, and thorns in your eyes." Ouch.

What's the problem with thorns in your eyes? You can't see anymore. You lose the ability to perceive. If you do not concentrate on the things of God, you're going to lose the ability to understand and perceive them.

You're not going to be able to see where the path is anymore. It's going to be confusing. You're going to be full of bleary, teary, thorny, scratchy eyes, and you just can't see.

I was riding my motorcycle one time, doing the whole, I don't need a helmet thing. And on a hot day in the summertime when the humidity is about 4%, your eyes can just turn to scales. And if you hit a little sand, as you typically do in Lawton, Oklahoma, first thing you know, you're blind.

And if you're smart, you pull over and stop. You do not ride a motorcycle when you are

blind. And this is the problem.

If we compromise, if we go along, if we blend and become like those that we're supposed to be separate from, we go blind. Thorns in your eyes, scourges in your side. You will perish from the good land which the Lord your God has given you.

That's the theme of the book of Joshua. Conquest, possession, and inheritance are possible. Not only possible, but very doable.

And here's how. There is a how component in the book of Joshua. It's not just pie in the sky, buy and buy an OG, I wish, and it's probably for those other faithful, you know, Billy Graham types.

Not at all. It's a doable thing. And these are the concrete steps.

But we have to make it happen. We have got to put on the armor. We have got to tread down the road and not turn to the right hand and not turn to the left.

And the way to do it is to make it a priority to focus on the things of God. It has to be a daily priority, a daily goal, a daily value that we establish. And we have to make it happen.

Nobody else is going to make it happen. Nobody else can do it for us. I can't do it for you.

You can't do it for me. We have to decide that this is what we want. And this is what our life is going to mean and count for in the eternal future.

Well, we will pick up and finish chapter 23 next time and see what Joshua is talking about when he says, I am going the way of all the earth next time. But let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the graphic way that you communicate the truth to us through these great Old Testament scriptures.

We ask that God, the Holy Spirit, will remind us and impress us with the reality of these things and that we will be reminded day by day and moment by moment of our opportunity and our responsibility as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask it in his name. Amen.