

From Impossible to Possible – Pt. 5

We're in the series called "From Impossible to Possible" for a fifth session. The intention here is to take us beyond barriers of unbelief, where perhaps we're stuck in frustration, discouragement or even despair. The basis for this expected outcome I'm talking about is the Word of God of course. It is the source of our life & the foundation of our "house" which God is building through our faithful obedience to His Word of grace and the leading of His Spirit. As the famous Dutch pastor and theologian Andrew Murray said that, when we surrender to Lord, "God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him." That is where the impossible becomes possible. It doesn't mean that He does everything and we do nothing, but it is a partnership where our effort aligns with God's will and spiritual strength.

Sometimes it helps to see where somebody failed in order not to repeat the same mistake. One such case is found in **Psalm 78:11 AMP**, "*And they forgot His [incredible] works and His miraculous wonders that He had shown them.*" Whom is the author, Asaph, talking about? Well, **Selwyn Hughes** explains it this way in his devotional page called "**The Original Quitters**":

"The psalm before us today begins by commanding us to listen: "*My people, hear my instruction; listen to what I say*" (**Ps. 78:1**). You have only to read a few verses of this psalm to see that the psalmist Asaph is recalling the disobedience that characterized the Jews during their forty years' wandering in the wilderness. Then a strange verse appears: "*The Ephraimite archers turned back on the day of battle*" (**v. 9 HCSB**).

"These Ephraimites were equipped with all they needed for warfare, but on the day of battle – that is, the first day of the fray – they "*turned back.*" Although well-armed, in the moment of

testing they were overcome by fear. Doubtless they paraded well and looked fine as they marched out to battle, but when they came face to face with the enemy, the only weapon they used was a cloud of dust as they retreated *en masse* – and in a hurry.

“A preacher I once heard referred to the Ephraimites in this verse as “the original quitters.” What an indictment. The Ephraimites live on, you know; they are to be found in the rank and file of many a modern-day congregation. They look fine in church on Sunday mornings with a hymn book and a Bible in their hands, but let the hot rays of temptation beat upon them – and they run. They surrender to temptation because they have never learned how to surrender to God. When we surrender to God, then we need not surrender to anything else.”

Two particular sentences really made an impact on me when I first read this: **“These Ephraimites were equipped with all they needed for warfare,** but on the day of battle – that is, the first day of the fray – they “*turned back.*” **Although well-armed, in the moment of testing they were overcome by fear.**

Scripture tells us in **1 Pet. 1:2-3 TPT**, “*May grace and perfect peace cascade over you as you live in the rich knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3. Everything we could ever need for life and godliness has already been deposited in us by His divine power.* For all this was lavished upon us *through the rich experience of knowing Him who has called us by name and invited us to come to Him through a glorious manifestation of His goodness.*” **NKJV v. 3a** “*as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness....*”

Eph. 1:3 NKJV “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.*” **V. 3 TPT** “*Every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm has already been lavished upon us as a love gift from our wonderful heavenly Father, the Father of our Lord Jesus – all because He sees us wrapped into Christ. This is why*

we celebrate Him with all our hearts! TPT puts the first "blessed" last.

We are blessed more than the Ephraimites ever were, however, if we forget the Word of the Lord or we don't mix it with faith, we could end up turning tail and running at the first sign of battle like Ephraim did, even with all their training & weapons!

Last week we ended with **Heb. 12:22 TPT**. Let's use that verse as a springboard to go further on in this powerful passage. *"By contrast, we have already come near to God in a totally different realm, the Zion-realm, for we have entered the city of the living God, which is the New Jerusalem in heaven! We have joined the festal gathering of myriads of angels in their joyous celebration."* Mental shifts are required here from law to grace.

- It speaks of present access to God vs. fearful warnings to stay away.
- The totally different realm, Mt. Zion, is God's presence, & contrasts with Mt. Sinai, where the Law was handed down.

This is another dramatic contrast of Christianity vs Judaism.

SFLB note: "The Old Covenant of the Law brought fear and separation (Ex. 19:12-13; 20:18-19), but the New Covenant brings overwhelming blessings."

- Abraham *"waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker was God (Heb. 11:10 NKJV)*. We have access to the heavenly City of God now!
- While the Israelites wandered in the wilderness awaiting redemption, we are joining with *an innumerable company of angels* gathered around the throne (**Rev. 5:11 TPT** *"Then I looked, and I heard the voices of myriads of angels in circles around the throne, as well as the voices of the living creatures*

and the elders – myriads and myriads.)” TPT note on v. 11: “Or “ten thousands of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands.” If taken literally, this would exceed 110 million angels.”

More Present Realities

Heb. 12:23 TPT *“And as members of the church* of the Firstborn** all our names have been legally registered as citizens of heaven! And we have come before God who judges all, and who lives among the spirits of the righteousness who have been made perfect in His eyes (Aramaic can be translated: “and to the Spirit who has perfected the righteous ones.”)!”*

***TPT notes:** “This is the Greek word *ekklesia*, which is commonly used for church. However, *ekklesia* means more than a church meeting, for it signified in Greek culture the governing assembly which had the authority to make decisions for the entire city. See **Matt. 16:18 TPT:** *“I give you the name Peter, a stone. And this rock will be the bedrock foundation on which I will build my church – my legislative assembly, and the power of death will not be able to overpower it!”.*”

****** “This is Jesus who is God’s uniquely Firstborn (**Heb. 1:6 NKJV** *“But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: “Let all the angels of God worship Him.”*). **In Christ** we are all the firstborn & have all the rights & blessings that Jesus has.”

Heb. 12:24 TPT *“And we have come to Jesus who established a new covenant with His blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat; blood that continues to speak from heaven, “forgiveness,” a better message than Abel’s blood that cries from the earth, “justice.” (Gen. 4:10).”*

So Hear the Heavenly Voice

SFLB note on Heb. 12:25-29: “The author issues a final warning to those who contemplate turning away from Christ. If severe

punishment fell upon those who rejected the revelation of Sinai, **much more** severe will be the penalty upon those who disregard the fuller revelation they have in Christ. The return of the Lord will signal the removal of all that is earthly and temporal, in order that only heavenly and spiritual realities **may remain** (v. 27). **Therefore...let us have grace to serve God acceptably.**"

V. 25 TPT *"Make very sure that you never refuse to listen to God when He speaks! (TPT: Or 'don't turn your back on the speaker.'). For the God who spoke on earth from Sinai is the same God who now speaks from heaven. Those who heard Him speak His living Word on earth found nowhere else to hide, so what chance is there for us to escape if we turn our backs on God and refuse to hear His warnings as He speaks from heaven?"*

V. 26 *"The earth was rocked at the sound of His voice from the mountain, but now He has promised,*

"Once and for all I will not only shake the systems of the world, but also the unseen powers in the heavenly realm!"*

***TPT note:** "It is not God's power or throne being shaken, but invisible forces of darkness in the heavenly realm. See **Hag.**

2:6 TPT: *"For I declare to you: Very soon, I, YAHWEH, Commander of Angel Armies, will once again shake the heavens and earth, the land and sea.";*

Eph. 6:12 TPT *"Your hand-to-hand combat is not with human beings, but with the highest principalities and authorities operating in rebellion under the heavenly realms. For they are a powerful class of demon-gods* and evil spirits that hold this dark world in bondage."*

***TPT note:** "The classical Gk. word used here is often used to refer to conjuring up pagan deities – supreme powers of darkness mentioned in occult rituals."

V. 27 TPT *"Now this phrase "once and for all" clearly indicates the final removal of things that are shaking, that is, the old*

order (or “things that have been made”), so only what is unshakable will remain.” 28. Since we are receiving our rights to an unshakable kingdom [Dan. 7:18] we should be extremely thankful and offer God the purest worship that delights His heart as we lay down our lives in absolute surrender, filled with awe (The Aramaic can be translated “We have received grace to serve and we please God in awe and tender devotion” [submission].).”*

***TPT note:** “The Gk. word *paralambo* is often used in classical Greek literature for heirs who have the “rights of succession” (to a throne).”

29 TPT “*For our God is a holy, devouring fire!*” “The Aramaic can be translated “*consuming light.*” See also Deut. 4:24; 9:3.”