

THE IMPOSSIBLE

¹ *“Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn; 2 look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah, who gave you birth. When I called him he was only one man, and I blessed him and made him many.”*

Isaiah 51:1,2

¹¹ *And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise.* ¹² *And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.*

Hebrews 11:11,12

¹⁸ *Against all odds, when it looked hopeless, Abraham believed the promise and expected God to fulfill it. He took God at his word, and as a result he became the father of many nations. God’s declaration over him came to pass:*

“Your descendants will be so many that they will be impossible to count!”

Romans 4:18 (TPT)

²⁷ *Jesus replied, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”*

Luke 18:27

I. The rock and the pit

- A. In the midst of complete burnout and unyielding depression, when it seems impossible to believe, God seeks to stir the faith of his people.
- B. The rock is a complementary term suggesting endurance, usefulness, strength, and dependability.
- C. They were to recall the small beginnings of Israel’s apparently hopeless start, when God called one man against a generation
- D. From “one” as good as dead had arisen a multitude “as sand upon the seashore”.
- E. Just one man became a family, a clan, a nation, and a race. As with solitary Abraham, so it would be with their tiny remnant now returning from exile. What God has done, he still can do.

F. Abraham was the one small quarry from which Israel had been hewn.

G. The pit recalls the potter's art and man's helplessness in the potter's hand. It represented the pit God had delivered them from.

II. From one as good as dead

A. God only raises dead things.

B. When the odds are against you, unbelief and burnout is understandable.

III. Laughing at angels -- Two kinds of laughter

A. Abraham's laughter of astonishment. (Genesis 17:17)

¹⁷ Abraham fell facedown; he laughed and said to himself, "Will a son be born to a man a hundred years old? Will Sarah bear a child at the age of ninety?"

B. Sarah's laughter of astonishment. (Genesis 18:9-15,18)

⁹ "Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There, in the tent," he said.

¹⁰ Then one of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife will have a son." Now Sarah was listening at the entrance to the tent, which was behind him. ¹¹ Abraham and Sarah were already very old, and Sarah was past the age of childbearing. ¹² So Sarah laughed to herself as she thought, "After I am worn out and my lord is old, will I now have this pleasure?" ¹³ Then the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh and say, 'Will I really have a child, now that I am old?'" ¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the LORD? I will return to you at the appointed time next year, and Sarah will have a son." ¹⁵ Sarah was afraid, so she lied and said, "I did not laugh." But he said, "Yes, you did laugh." ... ¹⁸ Abraham will surely become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will be blessed through him.

C. The laughter of blessing. (Genesis 21:1-7)

¹ Now the LORD was gracious to Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did for Sarah what he had promised. ² Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him. ³ Abraham gave the name Isaac to the son Sarah bore him. ⁴ When his son Isaac was eight days old, Abraham circumcised him, as God commanded him. ⁵ Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. ⁶ Sarah said, "God has brought me laughter, and everyone who hears about this will laugh with me." ⁷ And she added, "Who would have said to

Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.”

IV. God is about to turn the captivity of the impossible. (Psalm 126)

¹ A song of ascents. When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. ² Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The LORD has done great things for them.” ³ The LORD has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. ⁴ Restore our fortunes, LORD, like streams in the Negev. ⁵ Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. ⁶ Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.

A. He will lift despair.

B. He will restore true laughter.