

# When you reached “the point of no return”

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Every year ends with no point of return or the possibility to undo anything of the past. As we look forward to a new year, knowingly that there would be new opportunities and challenges we have to face or overcome we eagerly await for those last minutes or seconds count-down to celebrate a brand new year ahead. Many people would make resolutions for the new –year and wishing each other wonderful blessings, while others would make each second be countable, dedicating it in prayer.

Looking at the meaning of “The point of no return” could mean that it is either beyond the point of return, no other option than to continue on their current course of action, either because turning back is physically impossible, or because to do so would be prohibited or dangerous. It is also possible that the distance or effort required to get back would be greater than the remainder of the journey or task as yet undertaken. Going forward might be the only solution to arrive at the destiny planned.

Sometimes in life we get to a point of no return or something that can never be undone. Just like those last seconds, you will be held accountable for everything. You either have to go forward, face the consequences or challenge the unknown ahead, trusting in God that He will fulfill His purpose. If it is not part of God’s plan, it will not succeed. Going against the plan of God is pointless. *“No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD.” Proverbs 21:30.* For that very same reason the Tower of Babel was never completed (Genesis 11:1-9) and why we get in trouble when we sin. *“Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD” Psalm 32:10*

No matter who, when or where in the world we are destined, we all have to go on a quest or journey with various trials and obstacles to overcome. God’s plan includes a reward for those who trust in Him, and He promises to glorify His children. As it is written: ‘No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him’” 1 Corinthians 2:7-9.

“But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor. Therefore if anyone purges himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honor, sanctified and useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.” 2 Timothy 2:20-21

*“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith...Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” Romans 12:3, 6-8*

## **Hardened Heart**

What would possess a man to deny the sovereignty of God in the face of overwhelming indications of His power? The very same affliction that millions suffers today is because of hardened hearts.

Pharaoh is the typical example today of the heart of many that had hardened against hearing of the love of God, and His free gift of salvation. The harden heart reasons of unwillingness to acknowledge the supreme sovereignty of God, and to recognize own sinful state. Pride is often the cement that hardens the heart of people. *"They are darkened in their understanding, and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more."* Ephesians 4:18,19

We are powerless to soften people's hearts by ourselves, or to change them in any way. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, *"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."* We must never forget to pray for the lost or give up planting the seeds God provide to us through the Holy Spirit.

Exodus 5:1–6:1 we read how Moses and Aaron faced a strong test of their mission. Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, was unwilling to release Israel from his control. Pharaoh's stubborn refusal brought Moses and Aaron into open conflict with the power and authority of Egypt. This text declares that God's authority must take precedence over all competing sources of authority.

Pharaoh categorically rejected God's demand and denied the authority of God. Pharaoh also did not recognize any claim by God on Israel. In Pharaoh's eyes, Israel was not God's people but merely Israel, conquered people in his service for the glory of Egypt. Exodus 5:1 records the Lord's demands to Pharaoh. Pharaoh was to release the Israelites from his authority so they could celebrate a Jewish festival in the wilderness. In particular, the Lord called the Israelites "my people." This was important. It denied Pharaoh's authority over or ownership of Israel. God's people belong to God. God demanded Pharaoh to release the Jews or face great famine upon the land and the people.

Thus, Moses and Aaron presented a direct challenge to Pharaoh's authority and power. Pharaoh responded with an arrogant "No" to God's demands. His question, *"Who is the LORD . . . ?"* Exodus 5:2 was no mere statement of ignorance but a denial of God's authority. Pharaoh steadfastly refused to release Israel into the hands of God. Trying a second time, Moses and Aaron reiterated that God had appeared to them and that the people of Israel were to travel into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the Lord. If they did not, said Moses and Aaron, God would bring pestilence and violence upon them.

## **Willingness to change:**

If your faith won't be developed, you will not reach your destiny. According to the Word of God your future depends on faith. Although Moses was correct in concluding he was the one God had selected to deliver the Israelites from bondage, he had to learn to trust God implicitly before he could lead the people out of Egypt. By doing so he would no longer look to his own plans while seeking to serve God. This was a hard lesson for a man like Moses to learn. He was highly educated and accustomed to using the authority his position in the royal family afforded him. Before God could use him, Moses had to be humbled. Though our temptation is to substitute words for actions, we need to learn to be the first to serve and the last to speak. This does not mean that we should not share the content of our faith.

### **Destined journey:**

Your destiny is your ultimate appointment. Your purpose is what God choose you to do ultimately on this earth and were elected to do so even before you were born. Your purpose is whatever you are called by God to do, to fulfill His plan. Only God is sovereign and His sovereign control is called "divine intervention." God has chosen people to succeed His purpose. Even when Man's intent is purely evil, God can still bring about His will. Everything that happens in the world is made to work out according to God's purpose. Evil exists, but it is not allowed to spoil God's providence. God uses even sinful men for His purposes. *"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD; he directs it like a watercourse wherever he pleases" Proverbs 21:1.*

Egypt was a land of toil, oppression and misery (Exodus 1:8-14). God had called them out of this land (Exodus 3:7-10; Hosea 11:1). He had destined something better for them. Moses spoke directly with his Lord and was given specific instructions on what to do and how to do it. He didn't choose to lead the Jews out of Egypt; his God chose him be their savior. While being reluctant at first, Moses soon rose to the challenge following each instruction given by God. Moses fought Pharaoh, took his own people and himself through the desert during this long journey home. Moses ultimately had faith that the journey and plan would be successful, regardless of all the obstacles that awaited them ahead. Today this is a true measure of a hero and example that is to never give up even when you reach that end of the road and no point of return?

### **Beyond the point of return:**

Turning back impossible, prohibited and dangerous as God's plan succeeded and always will.

In Exodus, Pharaoh refused to let the Hebrew people leave Egypt. The 10 plagues were a divine demonstration of power and displeasure designed to persuade Pharaoh to "**let my people go**",. God purely broken Pharaoh and got him to believe when these 10 plagues were prescribed to cause famine upon Egypt.

#### **1. Water to Blood**

7:19 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and stretch out your hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone.

#### **2. Frogs**

8:2 And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs:

8:3 And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading troughs:

8:4 And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

### **3. Gnats or Lice**

8:16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

### **4. Flies**

8:21 Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are.

### **5. Livestock Diseased**

9:3 Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field, upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep: there shall be a very grievous murrain.

### **6. Boils**

9:8 And the LORD said unto Moses and unto Aaron, Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh.

9:9 And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt.

### **7. Thunder and Hail**

9:18 Behold, to morrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now.

### **8. Locusts**

10:4 Else, if thou refuse to let my people go, behold, to morrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast:

10:5 And they shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field.

### **9. Darkness**

10:21 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.

10:22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days

### **10. Death of the Firstborn**

11:4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:

11:5 And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

### **The distance forward less-greater than the point of return:**

Israel was facing a situation which their way from Egypt to Canaan they had come to a point of no return. They were standing at the edge of the Promised Land, just across the Jordan river, and they could not go back into the howling wilderness behind them. Before them stretched a land of promise, unexplored.

I am perfectly aware that the Bible uses this land of Canaan as a symbolic description for us of the Spirit-filled life, the land of promise in which God expects his people to live. But to the degree that every passing year is a mirror of our whole life, this land is also symbolic of the new that lay ahead for us. It is a land of promise, with possibilities of victory. It is an unknown land, yet to be explored, but there are certain great features of it that can be known to us in advance, just as Moses reminded Israel in the eleventh chapter of Deuteronomy, beginning with verse ten:

*"For the land which you are entering to take possession of is not like the land of Egypt, from which you have come, where you sowed your seed and watered it with your feet, like a garden of vegetables; but the land which you are going over to possess is a land of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven, a land which the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." Deuteronomy 11:10-12*

### **Continue the course of action:**

In my mind I can barely imagine what it would be like to have seen this Promised Land for the first time, to explore a land which had never been seen before. In my imagination I picture an extraordinary view they must have seen as they crossed the broad plains and saw the shining mountains in the distance with the green pastures in the valley. They were continually expecting unknown threat that lay in their pathway. An unknown country ahead of them with no idea of what danger lies ahead but with a joy in their hearts that they reached their destiny. Such is this time to us, as we are also approaching the unknown era ahead of us. The Scriptures help us here so that we are not taken by surprise but fulfilled with the word and guidance through the Holy Spirit.

The first noteworthy thing about this land is that it is a land that needs to be possessed. There are many blessings but they need to be laid hold of, they need to be captured and nurtured. Israel could have walked through the land of promise and seen it from end to end, but never once lived in it, never taken up residence there. And it is possible to drift through an entire year and never live in it. Life is built like that in so many ways. Time is not the only factor in living, but the joys of knowing God fill our empty spaces. There must also be an intelligent application of knowledge before the passing of time can be called living. Living is not by being captivated as a prison or being enslaved by a Pharaoh with a cruel and hardened heart making God's people his possessions. Living is by exploring the goodness of life and enjoys every blessing God provides daily. Walk in a close relationship with our Lord.

There are many people who are living in marriage, but they do not possess the joys of partnership because they are unwilling to put forth the effort in terms of courtesy, love, and thoughtfulness. There is many who simply passing through the Promised Land enjoying only the richness of the land, and not applying appreciation or love for it, because they are unwilling to possess them through dedication and purpose. There are many who live near the land of health but who are unable to possess it because they will not accept certain forms of discipline or give up certain habits.

God blesses the obedient, and He is patient with those who disobey, even to the point of seeming laxity. He has a plan for our lives, which includes our happiness and His glory both in this world and in the world to come. *Those who accept Christ as Savior have accepted God's plan* John 14:6.

There are great possibilities in store for each of us, without question. For everyone who is a believer of Christ, God has said,

*Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man the things that God has prepared for them who love Him. 1 Corinthians 2:9*

Possession must begin first with a desire to love what you possess. Nothing can be possessed without you earning it. If you are content with what you are today, then you will never be any better than you are now; you may become worse. Contentment with what you are has a way of deteriorating ultimately into being very distressed with what you are. If you have no urgent desire to make God part of your life, I pray that God will awaken in you a hunger and a thirst. Yeshua said, "He that hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be filled," Matthew 5:6.

You must understand the principles involved in possessing the great heritage of promise. Possessing what God has to give never comes by uncrucified self effort, religious activity, or moral deeds. Possession comes by learning to act on the basis of a fact already true! The possession of God's blessing is not something God does when we ask for it, but, rather, faith lays hold of what is already in Christ. There will be no truth you will ever learn that will be more

Moses said, "It is a land, of hills and valleys, which drinks water by the rain from heaven." A land of hills and valleys, the ups and downs of life. The hills are those high places of courage and understanding and fellowship, places of far vision, places of invigorating atmosphere. Life has its hills (thank God for them), but it also has its valleys, the low places, sometimes very dark and forbidding. Or, even if they are pleasant, life tends to be monotonous in a valley. Our vision is limited, our outlook is circumscribed, and it is the "same old thing" day after day.

Now the promise for this land of the coming year is for both hills and valleys, but with each there is the promise of an abundant supply of water, glorious springs of water fed by rain from heaven. Notice that Moses contrasts this to the way Israel lived in Egypt. He says, "In Egypt you sowed your seed and watered it with your feet." That may be a rather strange expression, but if you have ever watched a farmer out in his field tending to his irrigation, you know what he means.

Farmers build dams of little piles of earth in the small ditches running out through the fields, and kick them into place. If they want to open up another ditch they simply kick the dam out of the way. So the Egyptians watered their fields from the Nile river and its overflow, by the little dams they built and kicked aside with their feet.

This is an excellent picture of life without Christ, for Egypt is always a picture of that. It was a strange land, half desert, dependent upon the flow of a single river through it and the overflow of that river each spring.

Life without Christ is like that. All the resources of a non-Christian life are artificially arranged. But in the land of promise, the land under the blessing of God, you will find, if you look for them, springs of water

in both the hills and the valleys. Water is always a picture of the Holy Spirit. Moses describes this land further. He says,

*"For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills." Deuteronomy 8:7*

In both the valleys and the hills! What a picture this is of the supply of the Holy Spirit that is available in the high places where we need God's guidance, God's correction of our vision, God's focus, and in the low places where we need his refreshment, his comfort and his vigor. Yeshua said, *"If anyone thirst let him come unto me. Out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water," John 7:37-38*. The rivers are not only for you but for those around you, whether in the hills or in the valleys. You will be a blessing to those around. Those are the possibilities of the land. That this is a land of divine concern: *"... a land which the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year." Deuteronomy 11:12*

The greatest truth of all is a land to be possessed, by intelligent obedience to approach. Each year is a land of hills and valleys with hidden springs of water available. But beyond, beneath, and above all these truths is this greater one. God is deeply concerned about your life.

Corinthians 12 reads about the wonderful picture of the Body, and Paul's teaching that every part of the Body is indispensable to the Body as a whole. We need each other. If you feel discouraged, defeated, or insignificant, I suggest that you remind yourself, "I am myself and I am meant to be myself. I am not meant to be anyone else; God does not expect me to be anyone else. Therefore, I must not despise myself, or be constantly comparing myself with someone else. Instead, I am going to live the life that God gave me to live, in the circumstances in which he has placed me, knowing that it is as necessary to the total plan of God that his life be manifest in me as much as in the life of the greatest saint who ever lived."

A smile may seem an insignificant thing, but it is not. I have found the cure of a smile reach right into the heart. Your life counts, whether or not you think it does. You may not see anything that is taking place, but God sees and God knows. Read Hebrews 11. May the wonderful truth that God is deeply concerned about your life hold you steadfast in His care.

*Our Father, thank you for this simple picture and of how mighty Your truths are, how easily grasped, yet how we resist putting them into practice, and thus discovering how real they are. As we looking out to the land to be possessed, we pray, our heavenly Father, that You will teach us to live in the present and not in the past, nor in the future, but remembering that everything that happens, whether it be failure or success, is under Your divine plan. Father guide us today as we read and reflect on each Lesson in life. Help us to be undivided in our loyalty and commitment to your mission despite the many competing claims and threats upon our lives. Take Your word and impress them upon our hearts and minds so that we may live as the people you need us to be in the world of today. In Yeshua's name we pray. Amen.*