

# Jabez & His Prayer

## 1 Chronicles 4:9-10

### INTRODUCTION:

- A. Of the some 650 prayers recorded in the Bible, in more recent years it has arguably become known as one of the most famous prayers in the Bible.
1. The prayer is brief . . . Only 32 words in the NKJV
  2. **1 Chronicles 4:9-10** – “Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, ‘Because I bore him in pain.’”
 

And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, **“Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain”**” So God granted him what he requested.”

    - a. All that we know about Jabez is contained in these two verses.
    - b. These two verses are contained within the context of genealogical tables.
    - c. Finding this prayer in the midst of the genealogical tables is much akin to:
      1. Finding a beautiful flower in the desert.
      2. A treasure hidden in the sand.
      3. A star peeping through the dark storm clouds of the night.
- B. What do we know about Jabez?
1. We do not know who Jabez was except for what we read in 1 Chronicles 4:1 wherein we see him listed among the descendants of Judah.
  2. Some have assumed that Jabez was the founder of the schools or colleges of the scribes. 1 Chronicles 2:55
  3. We know about his name . . . Jabez.
    - a. Biblical meaning of a name is significant.
    - b. **1 Chronicles 4:9** “. . . his mother called his name Jabez, saying, ‘Because I bore him in pain.’”
    - c. Just what the circumstances were surround his birth, we are not told.
      1. His father may have passed away before he was born, leaving his widowed mother lonely and sad as she thought of the cares and responsibilities which would come upon her as she attempted to rear her fatherless child.
      2. It may have been that her family was in deep poverty, and she saw no way to provide for an additional child.
      3. Or, it may have been that the mother of Jabez was subject to unusual suffering and peril in giving birth to him. Remember Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin in Genesis 35:16-18.

- d. 4. She may have thought she might have to leave the baby in cold and stormy world and for that reason she called him “. . . Jabez, saying, ‘Because I bore him in pain.’”

C. Jabez, a man of prayer.

1. From this brief account of two verses, Jabez is known only by his prayer to God.
2. And yet, the prayer reveals to us an amazing revelation about his character.
3. We see a man who believes in and practices prayer . . . And we are impressed by the determined and earnest directness of the thirty-two word prayer.
4. When we examine the tone of the prayer, we see a humble Jabez with a deep sense of personal helplessness and a trembling fear of responsibility.
5. We observe from the prayer that Jabez was both intelligent and thoughtful.
  - a. He had formed a sensible estimate of life. To him life was:
    1. Work
    2. Duty
    3. Responsibility
    4. Care
    5. Trust
  - b. And for it all, he recognized the need of a guiding and upholding hand . . . And we should as well.

D. We see his prayer was addressed to the God of Israel.

1. The God of Israel was the God of his father . . . And the God of the covenant.
2. Though not in the actual thirty-two words of the prayer itself, we are told that Jabez call on the God of Israel.
3. As Jesus directed us, our prayer are to be direct to God Himself. “Our Father in Heaven.” **Matthew 6:9**

## FIVE SIGNIFICANT THINGS ABOUT THE PRAYER OF JABEZ

### A. It was a Prayer with a **PURPOSE**.

1. It was a prayer for blessings . . . “Oh that you would bless me indeed.” (7 words)
2. This is a request for spiritual benefits . . . “Bless me indeed.”
  - a. The real blessings of greater importance are spiritual.
  - b. He beseeches the favor and mercy of God . . . An indication of religious character on his part.
  - c. Before he prayed for material things, He prayed for spiritual things.

**B. It was a Prayer for PROSPERITY.**

1. “And enlarge my territory.” (4 words) Some translate it, “And enlarge my border.”
2. Jabez was ambitious, but in the right attitude.
  - a. Some think that perhaps he had not conquered all his inheritance from the enemy.
  - b. Some think this means the area or scope of his work and service for the Lord. “God, help me to do a greater work for You.”
  - c. I do not sense, nor do I believe, that his ambition was covetous.
3. Oh how we need to ask God to enlarge our field of activities and opportunities . . . . .
  - a. To those in spiritual darkness. Matthew 5:14-16; Acts 13:47; 26:18
  - b. To those in need. James 1:27
  - c. To the weak. Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 8:13
  - d. To all people, especially those who are members of the church. Galatians 6:10
4. Instead in shrinking our territory for service, we need to enlarge it.

**C. It was a Prayer for POWER or Strength.**

1. “That Your hand would be with me.” (7 words)
  - a. Jabez knew that on his own he could not succeed.
  - b. His humility raised this petition.
  - c. Whether it be the enlargement of his territory/border, or a struggle against the evil one, Jabez knew that he needed God with him.
2. The same principle applies to us. We need God with us in whatever we do. Song: “Be With Me Lord.”

**D. It was a Prayer for PROTECTION.**

1. “And that You would keep me from evil.” (8 words)
  - a. Jabez need then what we continue to need today . . . Victory over evil.
  - b. Jesus, in the model prayer, taught us to pray: “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Matthew 6:13
2. Hear God’s Word:
  - a. **Romans 12:21** – “not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”
  - b. **1 Corinthians 10:13** – “temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”

**E. It was a Prayer for a PAINLESS life.**

1. “That may not cause pain.” (5 words)

2. Should Jabez be overcome with sin, that would cause him grief, sorrow, and pain. God can help us to avoid these things in our lives.

### PLEASE NOTE THE ANSWER TO THE PRAYER OF JABEZ

- A. “So God granted him what he requested.” (7 words tell of God’s response)
  1. How pleasing God must have been with Jabez and his prayer.
  2. God honors those who honor Him.
  3. Hear God’s Word.
    - a. **1 John 5:14-15** – “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.  
And if we know that he hears us-whatever we ask-we know that we have what we asked of him. ”
    - b. **Psalm 84:11** – “For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.”
- B. Faithfulness and prayer are well pleasing to our God.

### CONCLUSION:

- A. The Prayer of Jabez was a prayer:
  1. With a **PURPOSE**.
  2. For **PROSPERITY**.
  3. For **POWER**/strength.
  4. For **PROTECTION**.
  5. For a **PAINLESS** life.
- B. **James 5:16** – “. . . The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”
- C. May we ever be a people of prayer!
- D. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**