

The Prayer of Jabez
by
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Lesson I

“Be A Gimper”

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

KJV

9) And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. 10) And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

NLT

9) There was a man named Jabez who was more distinguished than any of his brothers. His mother named him Jabez because his birth had been so painful. 10) He was the one who prayed to the God of Israel, “Oh, that you would bless me and extend my lands! Please be with me in all that I do, and keep me from all trouble and pain!” And God granted him his request.

Amplified

9) Jabez was honorable above his brothers: but his mother named him Jabez (sorrow maker), saying, Because I bore him in pain. 10) Jabez cried to the God of Israel, saying, Oh, that You would bless me and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and You would keep me from evil so it might not hurt me! And God granted his request.

Introduction:

1. Dr. Richard Seume was quoted as saying
 - a. “Want a bigger vision for your life?”
 - b. “Sign up to be a gimper for God..”
2. How about it. Is there anyone here who desires a larger vision for their lives.
 - a. Are we going to settle for what is offered in our little protected lives.
 - b. Or are we going to take a chance and dream.
 - i. Judy and I dreamed, and that is why we have our college degrees.

ii. Greg York begin to dare to dream, and that is why he was able to get a degree from PSU in Art.

iii. Someone would say, well they had a better opportunity. They live in a larger town. They had more money. They had better support, etc. There is always an excuse for not achieving.

1) The pessimist complains about the wind.

The optimist expects it to change.

The Leader adjusts the sails.

2) A study of three hundred highly successful people, people like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Helen Keller, Winston Churchill, Albert Schweitzer, Mahatma Gandhi, and Albert Einstein, reveals that one-fourth (25%) had handicaps, such as blindness, deafness, or cripple limbs. Three-fourths (75%) had either been born in poverty, came from broken homes, or at least came from exceedingly tense or disturbed situations.

Why did they overcome their problems while thousands of others were overwhelmed by theirs? The difference is attitude, and the ability to dream. We cannot determine every circumstance in life, but we can determine our attitude toward those circumstances.

3. If we desire a larger vision, then let us be a “gimper” for God.

a. This is a new term, coined by Bruce Wilkinson, and I will give you his definition of a “gimper” for it is not in Webster’s dictionary

b. A gimper is someone who always does a little more than what is required, or expected

i. A gimper is the person who puts the finishing touches on the upholstery in furniture, patiently applying the ornamental extras that are a mark of quality and value.

ii. Jabez was a “gimper.”

1) 1 Chronicles 4:9.

a) “Jabez was more honorable than his brothers” (KJV and NIV)

b) “But he (Jabez) was still the most respected son in his family” (CE)

c) “There was a man named Jabez who was more distinguished than any of his brothers” (NLT)

- 2) Jabez wanted to be more and do more (for God)
 - a) And God granted him that which he requested. (v10 KJV)
 - b) And God granted his request (NIV)
 - c) And God did just what Jabez had asked. (CE)
 - d) And God granted him his request. (NLT)

4. We are going to examine Jabez through this prayer in the next few weeks

- a. What exactly did Jabez do to rise above the rest?
- b. Why did God answer his prayer?
- c. Jabez is remembered not for what he did, but for what he prayed, and for what happened next which is “God granted him his request.”

5. Let me encourage you to make this prayer your prayer. Try it for 30 days and see what happens. Malachi says “Prove God.” Maybe we ought to “Prove God” in a lot of different areas, and I believe that we will see that God is up to the test.

I. Jabez is the Prodigy of the Genealogy

A. Definition of Prodigy

1. Genius
2. Sensation
3. Wonder
4. Phenomenon

Note: Jabez is the _____ of the Genealogy

B. Jabez does not stand out like Moses or David or a Paul. He is not accused of turning the world upside down, but yet here he is, in the genealogies, sticking out like a sore thumb.

1. Jabez is found in the least-read section of one of the least-read books of the Bible.
2. The first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles are taken up with the official family tree of the Hebrew tribes.

- a. They begin with Adam and proceed through thousands of years to Israel's return from captivity.
- b. There are more than 500 names listed in these 9 chapters.
- c. 1st and 2nd Chronicles is written after the Captivity to record the lineage and history of David and the country of Judah for the returning captives.
- d. The recorder advances through the lineage of Judah until he gets to Jabez, and then he gives us a little insight into this man Jabez who is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible.

3. Let us look at chapter 4 verses 1-8 of 1 Chronicles

1) The sons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, and Carmi, and Hur, and Shobal. 2) And Reaiah the son of Shobal begat Jahath; and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. These are the families of the Zorathites. 3) And these were of the father of Etam; Jezreel, and Ishma, and Idbash: and the name of their sister was Hazeleponi: 4) And Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah, the father of Bethlehem. 5) And Ashur the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah. 6) And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hephher, and Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah. 7) And the sons of Helah were, Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan. 8) And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel the son of Harum.

- a. Some 30 plus names in these first 8 verses, and then we come to verse 9
- b. Verse 9 and 10

9) And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. 10) And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

- c. In verse 11, the roll call of Judah starts up just like nothing had happened.

11) And Chelub the brother of Shuah begat Mehir, which was the father of Eshton.

C. Why did the historian stop his list of names, and write a few more lines about Jabez? What about Jabez? What did he do?

1. There was something different about Jabez
2. He was head and shoulders above everyone else
3. Yet, this is all the information we get about Jabez.

- a. There is no more information about Jabez anywhere in the Bible
- b. In 1 Chronicles 2:55, we see a city with the name of Jabez.
- c. Otherwise, this is it, so let us look at what we know,

II. Information concerning Jabez

A. Things started badly for this person that no one had ever heard of

1. Jabez was a pain

- a. His mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.
(KJV)
- b. His mother had named him Jabez, saying, "I gave birth to him in pain." (NIV)
- c. Jabez was a man who got his name because of the pain he caused his mother during birth. (CE)
- d. His mother named him Jabez because his birth had been so painful.

2. We do not know anything else about Jabez's mother or the circumstances concerning his birth.

- a. It Could have been a difficult pregnancy
- b. He Could have been without a father
- c. All we know is that the experience was so painful that she named him Jabez which means "to grieve" or "sorrowful"

Note: Remember that the names of Hebrew children were given to them for a reason.

- a. Their names had special meanings
 - b. Their names could be part of a prophecy
 - c. Their names could indicate a memorable occasion
- #### 3. Jabez got a start in life by being called a pain, but he did not settle for that. He rose above the circumstances surrounding his birth, and called upon the name of the Lord who heard and answered his prayer.
- a. Many of us have circumstances of life that we have to rise above

b. If we will look up to God, then we can rise above our circumstances because

- i. We have “been born again,” and
- ii. We are no longer under the curse of sin.
- iii. We have been given a name change like Abraham, Jacob, Simon Peter because it is recorded in

1) Revelations 2:17

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

2) Isaiah 62 is talking about Jerusalem

- a) Isaiah says that Jerusalem will be so glorious in righteousness that foreign countries and world leaders will be in wonder and amazement
- b) Jerusalem, or Zion will receive a new name from God
- c) We are the bride of Christ, and because we have faith in Christ, we have the blessings of Abraham upon us. Therefore, I am going to apply Isaiah 62 to you and I as the children of God. Therefore, let me say that when we receive Jesus as our Savior that Isaiah 62:2b happens to us

2b) ...thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.

Note: God gives us a new name, and we do not have to live under the shadow of our past life, or of the name we used to have, for God has declared a new and different life that will last for eternity for we are now His children, with a new name signifying that change, or new birth which has taken place in our lives.

- c. God who heard Jabez’s prayer will surely hear our prayer, and we can rise and be considered more honorable because of our prayer life

B. Jabez prayed an unusual, one-sentence prayer.

1. Oh that you would bless me indeed
2. And enlarge my territory
3. That Your hand would be with me

4. And that You would keep me from evil

C. Things ended extraordinarily well for Jabez.

1. The outcome of Jabez's life can be traced to his prayer. A simple, direct request to God changed his life and left a permanent mark on the history books of Israel.
2. Things ended well for Jabez because he prayed with faith and confidence that God would answer his prayer, for he is remembered for his prayer and not for some large accomplishment.
 - a. We must believe when we pray according to Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

b. We do not have to let our past dictate our present and our future. We can pray and dream and dream and pray.

i. Jabez's name indicated a bleak future, but he prayed.

ii. Samson had great potential, but he failed miserably

1) Ate honey from a lion's carcass in violation of God's law

2) Married a Philistine woman in violation of God's law

3) Dated a harlot at Gaza in violation of God's law

4) Visited Delilah a Philistine woman in violation of God's law

5) Because of he continue to violate God's law, we see Samson Blind, in bonds, and Grinding at the mill,

6) But he prayed in Judges 16:28,

28) O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once,

7) God responded to Samson's prayer

Note: Maybe you have been rebellious. Perhaps you have tried to do it your way. Perhaps you have said no to God many times. Let me say to you. Pray, and God will respond to your prayer; as you seek forgiveness; as you seek for His will to be done in your life as it is done in heaven; and as you ask God to bless you, to bless you indeed, to enlarge your borders, to be with you, to keep you from evil so it will not harm you, and God will respond to your prayer.

Note: It may not happen in a day, or a week, or a year, etc, for God is preparing you for the enlargement of your borders, so you can handle the blessing He is bring your way.

iii. Let us look at David

- 1) He Committed adultery
- 2) He Stole his neighbor's wife
- 3) He Had her husband killed, who was one of his mighty men
- 4) Then we read David's prayer in Psalm 51
 - a) Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness:
 - b) Blot out my transgressions according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies
 - c) Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and
 - d) Cleanse me from my sin.
 - e) I acknowledge my transgressions: and

Note: We must acknowledge that we have sinned. We are not acknowledging an error in judgment, or a mental or moral lapse, but we are acknowledging "sin."

f) My sin is ever before me.

Note: We will never forget the sin we committed, but God forgives us. Therefore, we do not allow the sin that is now in the past to paralyze us with regret, or to keep us from moving forward, For it is in the past. We must remember to not fall into the same type of traps, but let us refuse to allow yesterday to hold us back from our today and tomorrow.

- g) Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:
- h) Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- i) Hide thy face from my sins, and
- j) Blot out all mine iniquities.
- k) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and
- l) Renew a right spirit within me.

- m) Cast me not away from thy presence; and
- n) Take not thy holy spirit from me.
- o) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and
- p) Uphold me with thy free spirit.
- q) Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Note: Out of our pain and experience, we can teach and demonstrate unto others the love of God, the grace of God, the mercy of God, and the complete forgiveness of God.

Note: We do not glory, or revel in our past, for it is shameful, and neither do we wallow in self-pity because of our past, but we stand as forgiven individuals demonstrating the blessings of God Who is willing to forgive and bless others regardless of their past.

- r) Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.
- s) Open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
- t) Note verses 16 and 17.
 - i) For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it:
 - ii) Thou delightest not in burnt offering.
 - iii) The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit:
 - iv) A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Note: We are not changed by the works we do, but a broken and contrite heart brings about a sorrow that brings real repentance.

iv. Peter

- 1) Walked then got his eyes off Jesus, and he began to sink
- 2) Cursed instead of testifying because he stood by the enemies' fire
- 3) But, we seem him praying in Matthew 26:75

Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.

v. What about us

- 1) Have we made promises in the heat of the moment, but failed to keep those promises. We intended too, but we just did not do it.
- 2) The besetting sin of Hebrews 12:1 caught up with us. We did not mean for it to happen, but it happened again.
- 3) We Messed up big time this time, and we do not know if husband, wife, children, church, relatives friends will ever trust me again.
- 4) Here is our answer, our direction: Pray
 - a) Oh God, Bless me one more time
 - b) On God enlarge my borders, my influence
 - c) Oh God, Go with me
 - d) God, Keep me from evil. Help me to avoid evil, those things that displease you. The rebellious heart, the stubbornness, the besetting sin, my lust for things that pull me away from you.

Note: These four requests seem sincere, sensible, noble, but not terribly remarkable. Yet the life of Jabez was changed because of this prayer from a sincere heart, and I believe your life and my life can be changed as we pray this type of prayer from a heart which really desires for God will to be done here in my heart as it is done in heaven.

III. Let us live beyond the Limits

- A. When was the last time God worked through you in such a way that you knew beyond doubt that God had done it.
 1. When was the last time you saw miracles happen on a regular basis in your life?
 2. Most believers do not know how to ask for that kind of experience, or even if they should ask for it.
 - a. We still wonder if we ought to ask God to provide finances
 - b. Maybe I should not keep asking God to heal me, etc
- B. God really does have unclaimed blessings waiting for you and I
 1. God's plenty is His loving will for your life from eternity pass.

a. Matthew 7:7, 11

7) Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:...11) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

b. Matthew 18:19

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

c. Matthew 21:22

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

d. John 14:13-14

13) And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14) If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

e. John 15:7

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

f. John 15:16

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

g. John 16:23

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

h. John 16:24

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

2. All that is required is for us to make a handful of core commitments, and we can proceed from this day forward with the confidence and expectation that our heavenly Father will bring it to pass.

a. Deuteronomy 28:1-14. If we obey God then God blesses us.

- b. Isaiah 44. If we thirst for God, then God will pour His Spirit on us.
- c. Isaiah 49. God will contend with those who contend with us.

Conclusion:

1. Many times we stand at the river's edge asking for a cup of water to get us through each day.
2. Instead of standing by the river asking for a cup of water for the day, let us jump into the river.
 - a. Using this little prayer is like jumping into the river
 - b. We allow the River of God's grace and power to carry us along.
 - c. God's great plan for us will surround us and sweep us forward into the profoundly important and satisfying life He has waiting for us.
 - i. God has a plan for you
 - ii. God's plan is great.
 - iii. Take courage and move forward letting God's plan be fulfilled in us.