

The Prayer of Jabez
by
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Lesson II

“Oh that you would bless me”

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.

NIV...Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me

CE...One day he prayed to Israel's God, "Please bless me

NLT...He was the one who prayed to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me

Introduction:

1. Consider

- a. That you would like for your descendants to look back, and say,

“My dad, my mom, my grandfather, my grandmother asked for God to bless them and to bless them indeed, and God did.”

- b. That you would like for your descendants to look back, and say,

“I am what I am today, and I enjoy life as I enjoy it today, because my father, my mother, my grandfather, my grandmother asked God to bless them and to bless them indeed, and God did, and because God did, I am blessed today.”

2. Last week I talked about doing the little extra for God. “Be a gimper for God.”

- a. Don't you think that we ought to give God our all?

- b. Shouldn't we try a little harder, go a little farther, pray a little more, fast a little more, go to church a little more than the “average Joe” because we want God's blessings upon us.

- i. Consider where God brought us from
- ii. Consider how God has blessed our ancestors which was passed to us, enabling us to enjoy what some of us enjoy today
- iii. Consider how all of us have passed from “death to life” because God through Christ came to us to change us from the “pain” we were to the blessing we are and that we can be.
- c. When we consider the sacrifice Christ made for us, shouldn’t we give God a little more of ourselves, or perhaps shouldn’t we say Lord, Your will be done in me just like it is done in heaven.”
- d. Christ brought us from death to life, and we should demonstrate our appreciation by giving Him our lives

- i. Scriptures

- 1) John 5:24

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

- 2) 1 John 3:14

We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

- ii. Those who do not know Christ as their Savior are dead, and those who have went back into sin away from God, making it a practice to sin, have went back into death.
 - 1) Physical Death is when the soul and spirit leave the body, is separate from the body
 - 2) Second Death is when a person is eternally separated from God in the Lake of Fire
 - 3) Spiritual Death is when a person does not have, or is separated from the Spirit of Christ
 - a) Romans 3:23...For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
 - b) Romans 6:23...

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

c) Romans 8:6...

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

3. We were like Jabez,

- a. In the position of pain,
- b. Causing others pain,
- c. Looking forward to a dismal future because we had not received Christ as our Savior,
- d. We said "O God, Bless me."
 - i. God has heard our prayer, and
 - ii. God has pulled us up out of sin,
 - iii. We can now walk in the favor and blessings of God for the rest of our days here,
 - iv. We now have the hope of a great eternal future with Christ, because we recognized who we were, and asked God to change into what He has planned for us

Note: If you do not know Christ, or, if you have went back into sin after accepting Christ, then let us right now, invite Christ into our hearts and lives

- i. You must want to have Christ in your heart
- ii. You must want your life to be changed
- iii. You must recognize that Jesus is the only way to Salvation
- iv. Let us pray

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior.

In Your Name. Amen.

Note these Scriptures

i. Romans 10:9-10

9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10) For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

ii. Romans 10:13...

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

iii. 1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Note: Let us thank God for saving us.

Note: Now, let us consider that we should “Ask God to Bless us,” for as His children, we have the right to request bread from our Father’s table.

4. We should ask God to bless us

- a. State Administrator Higgens sent us a list of four area for prayer in our personal prayer time
 - i. The economy to be strengthened in my community and throughout my state
 - ii. The windows of Heaven to open in my church, my state, and my denomination
 - iii. Financial blessing to come to every member of my congregation, including myself
 - iv. A fresh anointing to lead my congregation to financial breakthrough
- b. I had always had a problem of asking God to bless me, for that seemed selfish
- c. Perhaps there are others who have difficulty in asking God to bless them, for it seem selfish and we want to be spiritual, not selfish
- d. Let us understand that we cannot bless others unless we are blessed, and from Jabez, we find that when a person prays for the blessing of God upon his life, God answers His prayers.

Note: Somebody praise the Lord.

5. This story was taken from the book The Prayer of Jabez by Bruce Wilkinson

A person attended a retreat for the purpose of experiencing a fuller Christian life. He and all the others were assigned to a mentor. His mentor was in his seventies, and had been touching lives for God longer he had been alive.

On the to the showers one morning, he walked past his mentor's room. The door was ajar, and the Mentor had just knelt to pray. Aaah! He could not resist. He had wondered "How does a Giant of the Faith begin his prayer?"

He stopped and listened. Will he pray for revival, or pray for the hungry around the world? Maybe, he will pray for the one he is mentoring, but this is what was heard. "O Lord, I beg you first and most this morning, please bless....me!"

Such a selfish prayer startles you he thought. So he moved on toward the shower in shock, and then, it occurred him as he adjusted the water temperature. "Great men of the faith think differently than the rest of us."

6. That is right, Great men of faith think differently than the rest of us.
- a. The reason some men and women of faith rise above the rest of us is that they think and pray differently than those around them.
 - b. What do you think? Is it possible that God wants us to be selfish in our prayers?
 - i. Maybe God wants us to ask for more, and more again, and more again for the Bible says that "God granted unto Jabez his request." What request?
 - 1) To bless him
 - 2) Enlarge his coast,
 - 3) That God's hand might be with me,
 - 4) That God would keep him from evil
 - ii. There are some Christians who fill that it is a sign of immaturity, a lack of spirituality, a sign of being in the flesh to ask God to bless them. They feel that they are being greedy.
7. It is alright for us to pray a prayer like Jabez for in God blessing us, enlarging our borders, in His hand being with us, and by keeping us from evil, we then can bless others and teach them how to receive the benefits of God.

I. Jabez requests gain.

A. Jabez did not have a promising start to life

1. His name meant pain
2. A literal meaning of his name could read, “He causes (or will cause) pain.”

B. Jabez’s name defined his future

1. In Bible times, a man and his name were intimately related to such an extent that “to cut off the name” of an individual amounted to the same thing as killing him.
2. Names where a prophetic statement
 - a. Jacob means heel grabber, one who defrauds or cheats. Jacob lived up to his name, and it was only after a night spent with God that he got a name change. His nature was not all that was changed, but God gave him a name change that signified the change of nature.

Note: It does not matter what our name is, or what our reputation has been, for when we spend time with God, there is a change for we move from death to life.

b. Naomi and her husband named their two sons

1. Mahlon-----puny
2. Chilion-----pining

Note: They died in early adulthood, so evidently they were sickly.

c. Solomon means peace, and he was the first king of Israel to reign without going to war.

C. Jabez’s future did not look bright because of his name

1. Jabez found a way out of his dilemma.
2. Let us consider
 - a. Jabez grew up hearing about how God had delivered Israel from slavery
 - b. Jabez grew up hearing how God rescued Israel from their powerful enemies
 - c. Jabez grew up hearing how God had given Israel the land of Canaan
3. Jabez is now an adult,

- a. He believed in this God of miracles
- b. He believed in this God of new beginnings
- c. Therefore, he asked for a miracle and a new beginning. and said “Oh, that You would bless me indeed...!” and “God granted him his request.”

Note: Wow! Amazing! This same thing can happen to you and I, because

- i. 2 Chronicles 19:7... for there is...no...respect of persons...with our Lord
- ii. Acts 10:34...Peter said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:
- iii. Romans 2:11... For there is no respect of persons with God.
- iv. Ephesians 6:9...Neither is there respect of persons with Him.
- v. Colossians 3:25...There is no respect of persons

Note: With God, we all have the same opportunity. There is no respect of persons with God whether

- i. To bless those who request, or
- ii. To forgive those who ask, or
- iii. To reward those who have done well, or
- iv. To judge with eternal punishment those who ignore or forsake Him.

Note: I am reminded of James 4:2...yet ye have not, because ye ask not

Note: I wonder, surely not, well maybe. Is it possible that the reason more of us are not blessed is because we do not say “O, God, Bless me!”

D. Jabez got serious with God

- 1. Oh that you would bless me indeed
- 2. This is an urgent prayer
- 3. Adding the word “Indeed” to the prayer, in the Hebrew, was like adding five exclamation points, or writing the request in capital letters and underlining it.

Note: Jabez is serious.

- i. Without God's blessing his future is bleak,
- ii. Jabez stands before a massive gate in a sky-high wall with no way of advancing.
- iii. Jabez is weighed down by
 - 1) The sorrow of his past and
 - 2) The dreariness of his present, and
 - 3) The impossibility of the future because his future is shut off.
- iv. Here he is,
 - 1) Jabez, a pain,
 - 2) Jabez, one who has caused pain, and
 - 3) Jabez, one who will probably cause pain,
 - 4) Jabez, standing in hopelessness, but then he cries from the depth of his hopelessness,
 - a) "Father, oh, Father!
 - b) Please bless me!
 - c) And what I really mean is...bless me a lot!"
- v. With the last word of his prayer, the transformation begins.
 - 1) He hears a tremendous crack.
 - 2) Then he hears a groan.
 - 3) Then he hears a rumble as the huge gate swing away from him in a wide arc.
 - 4) There, stretching to the horizon, are fields of blessings, and Jabez steps forward into another life for "...God granted him his request!"

Note: This can be me, or you, both you and I, my children, or your children, etc

- i. "O Lord, Bless me, and Bless me indeed."
- ii. I mean Lord, Bless, and Bless me a whole bunch."

II. Blessing is more than saying “God bless you when someone sneezes.”

A. We hear bless or blessing all the time.

1. Bless the missionaries
2. Bless the kids
3. Bless the food
4. Bless that person that sneezed

Note: Almost like saying “Have a nice day.”

B. To bless in the Biblical sense means to ask for or to impart supernatural favor.

1. When we ask God to bless us, it is not more of what we can do ourselves
2. We are asking for the wonderful, unlimited goodness that only God has the power to know about or give to us.
3. The writer in Proverbs 10:22 refers to this kind of richness of blessing from God
 - a. KJV...
The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.
 - b. NIV...The blessing of the LORD brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it.
 - c. CE...When the LORD blesses you with riches, you have nothing to regret.
 - d. NLT...
The blessing of the LORD makes a person rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.

C. Let us notice a radical aspect of Jabez’s request for blessing

1. Jabez
 - a. He left it entirely up to God to decide what the blessings would be
 - b. He left it entirely up to God to decide where God would bless him
 - c. He left it entirely up to God to decide when the blessing would come
 - d. He left it entirely up to God to decide how to bless him
2. Jabez displayed a radical trust in God’s good intentions toward him

- a. This is different than asking for a Cadillac
 - b. This is different than asking for a six figure income
 - c. This is different than asking for a material sign that we have found a way to cash in on our connection with Him.
- D. The Jabez blessing focuses like a laser on our wanting for ourselves nothing more and nothing less than what God wants for us.
- 1. God has a purpose for me, for you
 - 2. God desires to fulfill that purpose in me, in you, and if we desire for God's purpose to be fulfilled, then God will do what it takes to fulfill His purpose He has for us.
 - 3. When we see God's blessing as the Ultimate Value in life
 - a. We are throwing ourselves entirely into the river of His Will for us
 - b. We are throwing ourselves entirely into the river of His Power for us
 - c. We are throwing ourselves entirely into the river of His purposes for us.
 - d. All our other needs become secondary to what we really want which is to become wholly immersed in what God is trying to do in us, through us, and around us for His glory.

Note: Forget the old saying, God helps or bless those who helps themselves. God wants us to trust Him.

- E. When we begin to sincerely seek God's blessing, then our lives will become marked by miracles.
- 1. God's power to accomplish great things suddenly finds no obstruction in us.
 - 2. We are moving in His direction
 - 3. We are praying for exactly what God desires
 - 4. Suddenly the unhindered forces of heaven can begin to accomplish God's perfect will-----Through us.

Note: There is a Catch.

III. You have to ask for the blessing

A. What if you found out that God had it in mind to send you twenty-three specific blessings today, but you received only one.

1. Story of cartoon that James Eubanks drew.

A man was praying, and an angel poured out a water bucket full of blessings on the man. The angel went to get a tub full of blessings to pour out on the man, but before the angel could get back with the blessings, the man had quit asking and left.

2. Story of Mr. Jones going to heaven

Mr. Jones dies and goes to heaven. Peter meets him at the gates and gives him a tour of heaven. In the middle of all the beautiful things of heaven, Mr. Jones notices an odd-looking building. It looked like an enormous warehouse with no windows and only one door, and he asks to see inside. Peter hesitates, and declares to Mr. Jones: "You really do not want to see what is in there."

Aaa, thought Mr. Jones. Secrets in heaven! What an incredible surprise could be waiting for me inside the building, so he insisted to see inside this odd-looking building. Peter hesitated, but finally relented. When he opened the door, Mr. Jones almost knocks him down to see what is inside. It is an enormous building filled with row after row of shelves from floor to ceiling, and each one is stacked neatly with white boxes tied in red ribbons.

All the boxes have names on them, Mr. Jones stated, and he asked Peter if one of the boxes was his. Peter said it was, and Mr. Jones dashed down the "J" aisle looking for his box. Peter follows and catches up with Mr. Jones just as he took the ribbon off his box. Mr. Jones looked inside the box and let out a keep sigh for inside the box was all the blessings that God wanted to give to him while he was on earth, but Mr. Jones had never asked.

Note: My dad used to tell me that we live below our privileges. Why? Because we do not ask, or somehow we have never believed that God has much more for us.

B. Let us notice what the Scripture says

1. Matthew 7:7

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

2. James 4:2 (Kjv)

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

Note: If I do not ask God for a blessing, then I do not get all that I was supposed to have.

C. Here is the catch-----If we do not ask for God's blessing, then we forfeit the blessings that will only come to us when we ask

Note: Fathers and their children. Do we just go around handing them money. Maybe their allowance, but they got other moneys because they asked for it.

Note: The elder brother of the Prodigal had it all the time, but he never asked.

Note Luke 15:31...

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine..

IV. God's Nature Is To Bless

A. We get caught up in "Stinking Thinking"

1. We think that we have to live with the legacy that has been handed down to us
2. We feel that we are not a candidate for blessing
3. Maybe we feel that since we have been saved, God will trickle some blessings our way at a predetermined time and we should not ask or have to ask for them for it really will not make any difference.
4. Perhaps we are keeping a ledger and feel that God has been extra kind to us lately, and we should not really expect him to credit our account with more, much less ask for more.

Note: This kind of thinking is a trap. It keeps us from receiving all God has for us.

B. The very nature of God is to have goodness in so much abundance that it overflows into our unworthy lives.

1. Moses said to God on Mount Sinai, "Show me Your Glory." (Exodus 33:18)
 - a. Moses was asking for a more intimate understanding of God.
 - b. God described Himself in Exodus 34:6-7

6) And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, 7) Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, ...

2. We see here the nature of God

- a. Lord, Lord----The Self-Existent One
- b. Merciful---Compassionate
- c. Gracious---
- d. Longsuffering---slow to anger
- e. Abundant in goodness---He abound in kindness and mercy
- f. Abundant in truth---He abounds in stability, trustworthiness, and faithfulness
- g. Keeping mercy for thousands----maintaining love to thousands
- h. Forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin---forgiving all sin

Conclusion

1. Let us make it a lifelong commitment to ask God every day to bless us, and to bless us a lot.
2. God's bounty is limited only by us.
3. God's resources, power, or willingness to give is not limited, but
 - i. Our ability to believe, receive, and to ask is limited.
 - ii. We limit God because we do not step forward and take what is ours.
4. Jabez was blessed simply because he refused to let any obstacle, person, or opinion be larger than God's nature, and remember, it is God's Nature To Bless.
5. God's kindness to Jabez is proof that it is not who you are, or what your parents decided for you, or what you were "fated" to be that counts, but what counts is knowing who you want to be and asking for it.
6. You can change your future, and you can change what happens one minute from now by praying a simple believing prayer of

"Oh God, Bless me, and while you are doing it, Bless me a lot."

Insert in Message

Lord bless me with

1. Knowledge and understanding
2. Wisdom to use that Knowledge and understanding
3. Discernment to sense what is happening in the spirit realm, so I can follow Your direction
4. The Power gifts of miracles, faith, and healing so I can minister deliverance into the lives of others
5. The Speaking gifts of
 - a. Tongues, so I can pray in the Spirit in accordance with Your will
 - b. Interpretation, so I can share with others what You are saying
 - c. Prophecy, so I can declare the blessings of Your will and Your word to others, so they will be blessed
6. Knowledge, wisdom, and discernment to handle finances, so I will be blessed financially being able to meet all my obligations, even those I should not have made, and so I can bless other by being able to give unto every good work.
7. Your Spirit and Your Presence so my family and friends can see your working in my life, so they will desire to have what I have.