

The Prayer of Jabez
by
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Lesson III

“Lord....Enlarge my coast”

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.

Introduction:

1. One writer calls this “Living Large For God.”
2. Let us notice how this reads in verse 10
 - a. KJV “O that thou wouldest...enlarge my coast,...”
 - b. NIV “O that you would...enlarge my territory...”
 - c. CE “Please...give me a lot of land...”
 - d. NLT “Oh, that you would...extend my lands!...”
 - e. Amplified “Oh, that you would...enlarge my border...”
3. The word says that “God granted him that which he requested.”
4. The plea for more territory is where we ask God to enlarge our lives so we can make a greater impact for Him.
5. The context and the result of Jabez’s prayer shows that there was more to his request than a simple desire for more real estate.
 - a. He wanted more influence
 - b. He wanted more responsibility
 - c. He wanted more opportunity to make a mark for the God of Israel.

6. The word territory can be translated coast or borders
 - a. For Jabez and his contemporaries this word carries the same emotional power as the word homestead or frontier did for the generations of American pioneers.
 - b. Jabez is asking for his own place with plenty of room to grow.
7. The land under Joshua had been divided into areas of real estate for each tribe, and
 - a. When Jabez made his request, he was looking at his present circumstances and concluded
 - b. “Surely I was born for more than this.”
 - i. He very probably looked over the land that his family had handed down to him
 - ii. He examined the fence lines
 - iii. He visited the boundary markers
 - iv. He calculated the potential
 - v. He made a decision.
8. His decision was to request God for help, so he prayed:
 - a. Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast
 - b. He is saying:
 “Everything you have put under my care, O Lord---take it, and enlarge it.”
9. Today, some of us may pray like this
 - 1st. The sinner’s prayer because we have been living in a lost condition, spiritually dead, separated from God
 - a. This prayer is for those who have never known the Lord
 - b. This prayer is for those who have known the Lord, and then turned to go back into their sin as it is recorded in 2 Peter 2:22

“...like a “dog to his own vomit” and “a sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire”

 - c. Recognizing our lost condition, we 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.

- d. When we invite Christ into our hearts, we are saying “Lord bless me,” for I am lost.
- 2nd. We realize now that God has forgiven us of our sins, and we can pray “Lord bless me, and bless me indeed.”
- a. If you are saved and you know you are saved, then
 - i. Lift your hands and give God praise for giving your Salvation
 - ii. Lift your hands and praise God for taking your feet out of the miry clay and setting them on the solid rock to remain in Christ
 - b. Cry out, “Lord bless me and bless me indeed.”
 - c. We see where we are
 - i. Sin has ravaged our lives
 - ii. Sin has taken our dignity
 - iii. Sin has robbed us of our homes
 - iv. Sin has left us without any means of survival
- 3rd. We are no longer in sin, since we have accepted Christ, so we cry out after asking the Lord to bless us and bless us indeed, Lord, “Enlarge my borders.”
- a. Lord, I have accepted You, and now I am asking for an income
 - b. Lord, I have given my life to You, and now I am asking for a home and the things that I need for my daily survival
 - c. Lord, I have given my life to You, and now I am asking for a better job
 - d. Lord, I have given my life to You, and now I am asking You to enlarge my business so I can bless others
 - e. Lord, I have given my life to You, and now I am asking You to work in my life so that I can influence others for Your glory
 - f. Lord, I have given my life to You, and I receive Matthew 6:33 as mine

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Note: I give God praise for given me His righteousness and His kingdom and adding all the things I need

- i. To be blessed,
- ii. To be blessed indeed, and
- iii. To enlarge my borders.

Note: When we do business God's way, it is right to ask for more, and also, He is waiting for you to ask.

10. Your business is the territory God has entrusted to you

Note Deuteronomy 28:8:

The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Therefore:

- a. God wants you to accept this as an opportunity to touch individual lives.
- b. God wants you to accept this as an opportunity to touch the business community for Him.
- c. God wants you to accept this as an opportunity to touch the world for His Glory.
- d. God wants to bless you so others can see what God is doing in your life

Note: Asking God to enlarge our opportunity brings God delight.

11. For those of you Jabez that are wives and mothers, your prayers may go like this:

- a. Lord,
 - i. Add to my family
 - ii. Favor my key relationships
 - iii. Multiply for Your glory the influence of my household

- iv. Enlarge my spiritual relationship with You and my communication ability so my home will be spiritual home where my family grows with You
- b. Hey folks, your home is the single most powerful place on earth to change a life for God. Why wouldn't God want you to be mighty for Him?

12. Our prayer for more territory may sound something like this:

“O God, my Lord and King, please expand my opportunities and my impact in such a way that I touch more lives for Your glory. Let me do more for You!”

Note: When we begin praying like Jabez, look out, because things will get exciting in our lives, and we will begin to see opportunities to influence others for Christ.

I. Move the Boundary Lines

A. A College was challenged

1. Pray the Jabez prayer for more blessing and greater influence
2. Set a ministry goal worthy of a college of its stature
 - a. Look at a globe of the world and pick out an island
 - i. After you pick out the island, then put together a team of students
 - ii. Charter an airliner
 - iii. Take over the island for God
 - b. Some laughed, and some questioned the sanity of the speaker.
 - i. The speaker suggested they ask God for the island of Trinidad
 - ii. Furthermore, he suggested that they ask God for a DC-10
 - iii. No one immediately responded, instead they listed their deficiencies in skill, in money, in courage, and in opportunity.

Note: This sounds like many people who are challenged, who then list all the excuses why it cannot be done.

- iv. Final thought the speaker left with the college
 - 1) Question

- a) If the God of heaven loves you infinitely and
- b) If the God of heaven wants you in His presence every moment, and
- c) If the God of heaven knows that heaven is a much better place for you,
- d) Then, why on earth has the God of heave left you here?

2) Answer

- a) The God of Heaven wants you to be moving out your boundary lines
- b) The God of Heaven wants you to be taking in new territory for Him, maybe an island, and
- c) The God of Heaven wants you to be reaching people in His name.

Note: Perhaps, it has been said

- i. We are just a small church, and we cannot do much.
- ii. We do not have the finances to move into our own place.
- iii. I do not have the education to do anymore than what I am doing

Note: It is time that we say

- i. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
- ii. With God all things are possible
- iii. Here I am Lord, Your servant, Your handmaid, do with me as You will
- iv. So, let us

- 1) Rise up and believe God
- 2) In faith begin to ask God for a miracle in our lives.
- 3) Truly believe that God is no respecter of persons, so what God did for Jabez, He will do for you and I,
 - a) If we will be honorable,
 - b) If we will serve Him

- c) If we will believe and dare to pray
O God, Bless me, Bless me indeed and Enlarge my borders

Note these Scriptures

i. Luke 11:9-13

9) And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. 11) If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? 12) Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

ii. James 4:2b... ye have not, because ye ask not.

iii. Now, let us look at the context of James 4:2b

1) Kjv

1) From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2) 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. 3) Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

2) Nlt

1) What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? 2) You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. 3) And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

3) Amp

1) What leads to strife (discord and feuds) *and* how do conflicts (quarrels and fightings) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members? 2) You are jealous *and* covet [what others have] and your desires go unfulfilled; [so] you become murderers. [To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.] You burn with envy *and* anger and are not able to obtain [the gratification, the contentment, and the happiness that you seek], so you fight and war. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3) [Or] you do ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is [when you get what you desire] to spend it in sensual pleasures.

iv. Comments on James 4

- 1) Conflict, anger, strife, feuds arise from our evil, sensual, fleshly desires
- 2) We scheme, plan, become jealous, covet and our desires go unfulfilled
- 3) Instead of trying in ourselves, blaming others, finding fault, why don't we "ask God for what we need." Just ask Him.
- 4) When we ask God, make sure that our motives and purpose are pure. Do not ask amiss, just to satisfy our own sensual, fleshly pleasures

Note: Let me use the words the speaker left with the college to give you a thought

- i. The God of heaven loves you infinitely and
- ii. The God of heaven wants you in His presence every moment, and
- iii. The God of heaven knows that heaven is a much better place for you,
- iv. The God of heaven has left you here to represent Him in this world,
- v. Therefore
 - a) The God of Heaven wants you to move out your boundary lines
 - b) The God of Heaven wants you to take in new territory for Him, maybe an island, maybe a home, maybe a job
 - c) The God of Heaven wants you to reach people in His name.

B. The Response of the College students

1. Warren and Dave decided to put God to the test and challenge His power and ask Him to bless them and enlarge their borders.
 - a. They prayed that God would give them the opportunity to witness to the governor of the state that weekend.
 - b. They put their sleeping bags in their car and drove to the capital city of their state to knock on doors for God.
 - c. Their letter said that by Sunday night when they arrived back at the college, they had witnessed to (told people about Jesus)
 - i. Two gas station attendants.

- ii. Four security guards
- iii. The head of the U. S. National Guard
- iv. The director of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for the state of California.
- v. The governor's secretary
- vi. The governor of the state of California.

2. Warren and Dave decided to minister to the island of Trinidad

a. Their objective was to

- i. Assemble a team of self-supported student workers
- ii. Charter a jet
- iii. Fly to the island of Trinidad for a summer of ministry

b. They did it

- i. 126 students and faculty signed up for a summer of ministry in Trinidad
- ii. When the jet left for Trinidad fully loaded, Operation Jabez boasted trained teams ready to minister through drama, construction, vacation Bible school, music, and home visitation.
- iii. The president of that college said that Operation Jabez was the single most significant student ministry venture in the college's history.
 - 1) Accomplished because two Students asked God to enlarge their territory, and He did.
 - 2) One little prayer had remapped boundary lines and impacted the lives of thousands of people.

II. I Think This Is My Appointment

A. The Jabez prayer is a revolutionary (radical, groundbreaking, new) request

- 1. It is rare to hear people pray
 - a. "God bless me"

- b. It is rare to hear anyone ask “Give me more ministry”
2. Amazing things occur when we begin to pray for more ministry.
 - a. Most of us think we are too busy and our lives too full to begin with
 - b. But when we begin to pray for more ministry then
 - i. God expands our opportunities and He increases our abilities and resources supernaturally
 - ii. We begin to sense the pleasure God feels in your request and His urgency to accomplish great things through you.
 - iii. People show up on our doorstep or at the table next to you
 - 1) They ask for something, and
 - 2) They are not sure what,
 - 3) Then they wait for your reply

B. Jabez appointments

1. The writer remembers the first Jabez appointment he requested
 - a. He was aboard a ship off the coast of Turkey
 - b. He was traveling alone
 - c. He had enjoyed beautiful days, but was getting lonelier by the day
2. They were at a port, and he said:

“Lord, I feel so homesick and weak, but I want to be your servant. Even now, enlarge my borders. Send somebody who needs me.

 - a. He took a table at an outdoor cafe and ordered coffee.
 - b. He heard a man’s voice behind him saying, “Are You on the cruise ship?”
 - c. He responded, “Yes I am, How about you?”
3. The man was an American who lived on the island, and asked if he could sit and visit for a few minutes.

a. He poured out his story of a marriage on the rocks, and that day was the end of his marriage for his wife had said she would be gone by evening.

b. This is the Jabez Appointment

i. Do you want your wife to leave?

ii. How about if I give you a couple of ideas

iii. For an hour he talked with him about several key biblical principles for a happy marriage, and the young man had never heard of any of them

4. The rest of the story

a. The young man jumped up and ran to find his wife

b. Late that evening as the ship was preparing to pull out of port the young couple came running along the shore yelling: It worked! It worked! We are together!

5. The minister rejoiced the rest of the trip for God had made an appointment for that young man and him, and God had been bringing them toward each other from the moment that he had asked God for a larger life in His service.

C. Personal Jabez Appointments

1. At McDonald's in Pittsburg, Ks. A man wanted to accept Jesus.

2. Gene Humble at a bowling alley

III. Living By God's Math

A. What is our assigned territory

1. Our calling is to do God's work on earth

a. It does not matter what our gifts, education, or vocation is, our calling is to do God's work on earth.

b. You can call it living out your faith, or your ministry, the every Christian's day job, or whatever else you may call it, but God is still looking for people to do more of it.

2. God is looking for people who want to enlarge their border and do His ministry.

a. Most believers seem to back away from living at the level of blessing and influence where they share with others what Jesus has done for them.

b. Our reluctance comes from the way we do math which determines by our thinking the size of our assigned territory.

i. We add it like this:

My abilities + Experience + Training + My personality and appearance + My past + The expectations of others = My assigned Territory

ii. So we say: I cannot do that. I cannot teach a class. I could never witness to someone about Jesus. What? Me? Go door to door? No!

B. God wants to work through us.

1. The emphasis is on the word, “through,” but we seem to think it means in association with us.
2. No, God really desires to work through us.
 - a. He wants to use our feet, our mouth, our hands, our bodies and work Through us.
 - b. God’s Words to Israel found in Zechariah 4:6 is for us also:
Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.
3. Our God specializes in working through normal people who believe in a supernatural God who will do His work through them.
 - a. Blackaby said that God wanted their association to minister at the World’s Fair
 - i. They had about 2000 members in their association.
 - ii. How could 2000 people have a great impact on a mass of tourists from all over the world?
 - iii. Two years before the fair they began to set their plans in motion.
 - 1) The total income for their whole association had been \$9,000.00
 - 2) The next year their total income was \$16,000.00.
 - 3) The year of the World’s Fair they had set their budget at \$202,000.00
 - a) 65% of the budget was dependent on prayer.
 - b) God brought in \$264,000.00, and they won 20,000 people to the Lord.

- i. Listen, God will never send someone to you whom you cannot help with His Leading and Strength.
- ii. We will nearly always be nervous and feel some fear when we begin to take new territory for Him, but we will experience the tremendous thrill of God carrying us along as we are doing it.
- iii. God will do for us what He did for the early Christians. He will give us the right words to say as we need them.

b. Examples

- i. A lady prayed for an enlarged ministry and a neighbor whom she hardly knew came to her saying:

“Ma’am, My husband is dying, and I have nobody to talk to. Can you help me?”

- ii. A man on a cross country train trip prayed “Lord, enlarge my ministry” and a lady sat down at his table and asked him a question concerning the antichrist while expressing her fears. He ministered to her.

- iii. We had just moved to Mountain Home, and our neighbor asked me to visit her father in law who was in the hospital.

- 1) He got saved
- 2) His son got saved
- 3) His grandson got saved.

IV. Your Front-Row Seat

A. To pray for larger borders is to ask for a miracle.

- 1. A miracle is an intervention by God to make something happen that would not normally happen.

- 2. Jabez had to have a miracle to transcend his name and transform his circumstances

- a. The Amplified in 1 Chronicles 4:9 says that
“...his mother named him Jabez (sorrow maker)...”

- b. Jabez had to have a miracle

B. I guess the question is this: “Do we believe that miracles still happen today?”

1. Many Christians do not believe that miracles still happen.
2. We need to understand that miracles do not have to break natural law to be a supernatural miracle.
 - a. Christ stilled the storm, but he did not set aside any universal law for the storm would have eventually stopped anyway. He just directed the weather pattern, and it stopped at His words.
 - b. There was not a universal law broken when Elijah prayed for it to stop raining, but God just directed the natural cycle of drought and rain, and directed it again when Elijah prayed for rain.
 - c. God's miracle working power is still working the same today.
 1. A miracle for two people to be brought together on an island so a man's marital need could be met.
 2. A miracle for God to put us at Mountain Home just when this man needed prayer plus we were only there for nine months.

Conclusion:

1. God wants to work more miracles in our lives
2. If we will begin to pray "Lord use me, Give me more ministry for You." Then we will begin to see miracles happen
3. This type of praying will release miracles. When we pray believing, then heaven sends angels, resources, strength, and thee people we need.
4. This is radical, but God is looking for people who will be radical for Him and believe that Nothing is Impossible. Miracles will happen for those
5. Let us pray

Lord, Bless me, and while you are at it, Bless me a whole bunch so I can bless others. Now Lord, Enlarge my borders that I may be of greater influence for You, and let me see the miracles as you work through me enlarging my ministry.