

The Prayer of Jabez
By
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Lesson V

“Keeping The Legacy Safe”

“O That You Would Keep Me From Evil”

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

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.

Introduction:

1. A caption read “Sometimes you can afford to come in second. Sometimes you cannot.”

- a. This was placed under a Roman Gladiator who was in trouble.
- b. Here is the picture
 - i. The Gladiator has dropped his sword
 - ii. The enraged lion is in mid lunge with his jaws wide
 - iii. The crowd is on their feet watching in horror as the panic-stricken gladiator tries to flee.

Note: This is a horrible time to come in second.

2. Jabez had asked for supernatural blessing, influence, and power.

- a. Many people think that they can jump into any arena with any lion, “and win.”
- b. Some people with the hand of God upon them might pray
“Lord, Keep me through evil,” but not Jabez.
 - i. Jabez prayed “Keep me from evil.”
 - ii. The best way to defeat a roaring lion is to stay out of the arena.

iii. Therefore Jabez prayed “Keep me from evil” which was a prayer that is saying:
“God, keep me out of the fight.”

3. This final request of Jabez is a brilliant strategy for sustaining (supporting) a blessed life, but it is a strategy that many people do not understand.

Note: My personal request to God when I first started preaching, and still is today is this:

Dear God, whatever happens in my life, please do not let me enter into any temptation where I might fall. I ask You O Lord to keep me from temptation that would cause me to slip. Also, Lord, do not let me be exalted with pride, but help me to always remember that my help comes from you. And God has granted me my request.

Note: Look at this portion of the Lord’s prayer in Matthew 6:13

i. KJV...

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

ii. NLT...And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

iii. Msg...

Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil. You’re in charge! You can do anything you want! You’re ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

- a. When our lives begin to transcend (rise above, go beyond) the ordinary, then we are invading satan’s territory, and we need God to sustain and support our blessed life.
- b. When we invade satan’s territory, he will fight back, and we need God,
 - i. Who has blessed us and
 - ii. Who has blessed us indeed,
 - iii. Who is enlarging our borders,
 - iv. Who is with us,
 - v. To remain with us so we can be kept from evil by His supporting and sustaining power.
- c. Look at these Scriptures
 - i. Isaiah 49:25

1) KJV

But thus saith the LORD, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children.

2) Nlt

But the Lord says, “The captives of warriors will be released, and the plunder of tyrants will be retrieved. For I will fight those who fight you, and I will save your children.

3) Msg (vs24-25)

Can plunder be retrieved from a giant, prisoners of war gotten back from a tyrant? But God says, “Even if a giant grips the plunder and a tyrant holds my people prisoner, I’m the one who’s on your side, defending your cause, rescuing your children.

ii. 1 Corinthians 10:11-14

1) KJV

11) Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. 12) Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 13) There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 14) Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. (sin)

2) Nlt

11) All these events happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us, who live at the time when this age is drawing to a close. 12) If you think you are standing strong, be careful, for you, too, may fall into the same sin. 13) But remember that the temptations that come into your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can’t stand up against it. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will not give in to it. 14) So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols.

3) Msg

11) These are all warning markers—danger!—in our history books, written down so that we don’t repeat their mistakes. 12) Our positions in the story are parallel—they at the beginning, we at the end—and we are just as capable of messing it up as they were. Don’t be so naive and self-confident. You’re not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone else. Forget about self-confidence; it’s useless. Cultivate God-confidence. 13) No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have

had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it. 14) So, my very dear friends, when you see people reducing God to something they can use or control, get out of their company as fast as you can.

Note: Here is the thought that we need to get:

- i. We need to ask God to keep us from evil.
 - ii. We need God to keep us from sin.
 - iii. We need God to keep us from Temptation.
 - iv. We need God to keep us from trial, especially from overcoming trials
4. So Jabez prayed, "Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!"
 - a. It is God who blesses us and it is God who continues to bless us
 - b. It is God who blesses us a whole bunch, and it is God who will continue to rain blessings upon us
 - c. It is God who has enlarged our borders and it is God who keeps them enlarged, even enlarging them more than what they are
 - d. It is God who goes with us and it is God Whom we need to continue to be with us
 - e. It is God who will keep us from evil and evil from us and it is God who will continue to stand as a hedge between us and evil
 - f. So, I pray oh God that You will keep me from evil and keep evil from me.
 - g. So, I pray oh God that You lead me not into temptation
 5. We have just Prayed for God to Go with us, or for God's supernatural power to help us in our weakness for we cannot do it ourselves for We need Him.
 6. Now we pray for supernatural help to protect us from Satan's proven ability to cause us to come in second, and Church, this is one race in which we cannot afford to come in second.
 7. The five areas that I desire for us to investigate are these:
 - a. The perils or dangers of Spiritual success;
 - b. Playing Keep Away;

- c. Dropping Our Weapons;
- d. Witness to freedom; and
- e. A Legacy of Triumph.

I. The Perils (dangers) of Spiritual Success

Note: Everything is a spiritual battle, so any success for us is a spiritual success

Note: We are not successful until we learn how to handle success which is why Paul said in 1st Timothy 3:6

- i. KJV...

For a bishop to not be a "...novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

- ii. NIV...

"He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil."

A. Success brings greater opportunity for failure

1. Look at the Christian Leaders (Leaders) who have fallen into sin, cropped out of ministry, and left in their wake untold numbers of people shaken, disillusioned, and injured. (Or just leaders in general)
2. Why
 - a. When we are blessed, our sense of dependence on God becomes dulled
 - b. We are prone to presumption which means we are prone
 - i. To reason it out,
 - ii. To draw our own opinions and conclusions, and
 - iii. To fail to seek after God.
3. The further along in a life of success and victory, the more we need to pray the final plea of Jabez's, "Oh, God, Keep Me From Evil."
 - a. As we move more into supernatural service, we will experience

- i. More attacks on us personally
- ii. More attacks on our family
- b. We become more familiar with the enemy's unwelcome barbs (insults, digs, taunts, stings, pricks)
 - i. Barb of Distraction
 - ii. Barb of Opposition
 - iii. Barb of Oppression
 - iv. Barb of Impatience
 - v. Barb of Immorality
 - vi. Barb of self-reliance
 - vii. Barb of haughtiness
 - viii. Barb of Pride
 - ix. Barb of intolerance, etc

Note: When God blesses, then satan attacks. In the midst of blessing and revival, the enemy will try to infiltrate the camp. We have to

- i. Watch out for the Golden Calf (deceptive practices),
- ii. Watch out for the Dathans and Abirams (rebellion against the leader),
- iii. Watch out Adultery (satan will try to exploit sexual promiscuity in the middle of revival when emotions and feelings are running high).
- iv. Be careful and keep our passions harnessed.
- v. Exercise self-control
- vi. Watch out for the attack of Jezebel which brings
 - 1) Discouragement,
 - 2) Disheartenment, and
 - 3) Disparagement (belittling, mocking, criticism)

4) satan, who desires to beat us up every chance he gets),

vii. Watch out for distractions when God has given victory

- 1) Nehemiah rebuilt the walls, then Tobiah gains position and we need to understand that manipulators will come along to distract and confuse as Tobiah attempted to do
- 2) Gideon gained the victory, so they tried to make him king, and we must be careful for when God bless us there is a tendency to worship the ministry or victory of man, but we must remember that God must get the glory, not man, for it is His kingdom, His power, and His glory.
- 3) Naaman was healed miraculously through Elisha's word, and Elisha's servant covets the worldly prize of silver and possessions which was offered, so we must be careful to not become distracted by our blessings),
- 4) Passivity like Gedaliah's passivity (tamelessness, compliance) allowed him to become unaware of Ishmael's connivance, so Ishmael murdered Gedaliah, which shows us that we cannot get comfortable just because the Lord is blessing, because "our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, is walking about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8). Gedaliah had been warned by Jeremiah, but he chose to comply, or be passive, and he was murdered.

Kilpatrick: Feast of Fire

B. Comment of Professor Howard Hendricks

1. A student told Professor Hendricks how well his life was going.

- a. When I first started here at school, I was so tempted and tested I could barely keep my head above water
- b. Now, Praise God, my life at seminary has smoothed out, and I am not being tempted hardly at all.

2. Professor Hendricks looked alarmed, and said:

"That is about the worst thing I could have heard. That shows me that you are no longer in the battle! Satan is not worried about you anymore."

Note: We are redeemed and commissioned for the front lines. That is why praying that God will keep us from evil is a vital part of our blessed life.

Note: We are in more need of this part of Jabez's prayer after we have experienced a great spiritual success.

C. Words of author Wilkinson

1. He had just closed a very successful meeting

2. On the way to the airport, he prayed:

“O Lord! I have no resistance left. I am completely worn out in Your service. I cannot cope with temptation. Please keep evil far from me today.”

3. He boarded the plane

a. He was placed in a middle seat

b. Two gentlemen were on each side, and they took out of their briefcases of pornographic magazines.

c. He said, that he did not have the strength to ask them to change their reading material, but he closed his eyes and prayed:

“Lord, I cannot cope with this today, please chase evil far away.”

d. Suddenly the man on his right swore and put his magazine away for no reason that Wilkinson could see.

e. Then the man on the left looked over at the man on the right and swore loudly, and he closed up his magazine and put it away for no apparent reason.

Note: There are more of us that need to recognize that we need to cry out to God that He keep us from evil, especially after a time of success.

II. Playing Keep Away

A. The Lord’s Prayer

1. Most Christians pray for strength to endure temptations

2. Most Christians pray for Victory over the attacks of our raging adversary

3. Most of us forget to ask God to simply keep us away from temptation and to keep the devil at bay in our lives.

4. Jesus used about 1/4th of his prayer to request for deliverance from temptation in Matthew 6:13

a. Versions

- i. KJV...And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:
- ii. NIV...And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

b. Comments

- i. Jesus did not tell us to pray for spiritual insight, but to pray for deliverance from the evil one, and to pray that we be not led into temptation.
- ii. Jesus did not tell us to pray for special powers, but to pray that we be not led into temptation and for deliverance from the evil one.

Note: Jabez had an insight into the spiritual long before Jesus came to this earth, and Jesus' model prayer for us also supports Jabez's cry which was "O God keep me from evil."

B. The most effective war against sin is to pray that we will not have to fight.

1. When was the last time you asked God to keep you away from temptation?
2. God desires for you to ask
 - a. For more blessing
 - b. For more territory
 - c. For more power (that He go with us)
 - d. And He desires for us to ask or plead with Him that He keep us safe from evil.
3. Without temptation, we would not sin.
4. Most of us face to many temptations and sin too often, because we do not ask God to lead us away from temptation.
5. We make a huge leap forward when we begin to focus less on beating temptation and focus more on avoiding temptation.
6. Jesus prayed for deliverance from temptation
 - a. In the wilderness, even with His divine insight, He did not discuss with satan the enticing offers that he brought to Jesus.

Note: As we move deeper into the realm of the miraculous, the most effective war against sin is that

- i. We pray that we will not have to fight unnecessary temptation.
- ii. We pray that God offer us His supernatural power to keep us from temptation, or to keep us from evil.

III. Dropping Our Weapons

A. The Arena of Temptation is usually enemy territory

- 1. Being tempted is not the same as sinning--satan wants us to think so, but it is not
- 2. The arena of temptation is where we are asked to fight it out with evil in the area of our subjective (slanted, biased, personal, one-sided, prejudiced) experiences.
- 3. The arena of temptation is not neutral ground
 - a. We are fallen creatures with limited understandings, and satan knows that well
 - b. Therefore, our human weapons very quickly become our undoing.

B. Let us look at these human weapons

1. Wisdom

- a. Works sporadically (once in a while, occasionally, irregularly) at best because the nature of evil is to deceive us with a little bit of the truth---not all of it.

Note: Let me use Praise as an example. Man's wisdom pulls out the message on praise, and begins to praise God looking for victory, but we forget that God also requires sanctification. Praise without right living and obedience to God is just empty sound and a lot of noise.

b. Adam and Eve yielded to temptation

- i. They were perfect in every way
- ii. All of their needs were met
- iii. The human race was at its peak of promise and performance, but in one friendly conversation with the devil, man was crushed.
- iv. Therefore like Jabez, we pray for protection from deception.

Note: Prayer

Lord, Keep me from making the mistakes I am most prone to make when temptation

comes. I confess that what I think is necessary, smart, or personally beneficial is so often only the beautiful wrapping on sin. So please, keep evil far from me.

2. Experience

- a. The further we move into new territory for God, the less protected are our flanks
- b. Someone said, the danger is not being on the edge of a cliff, but being unwatchful while there.
- c. Just a little bit of pride or self-confidence can spell disaster

Note: One of the deepest regrets of the people of God is to have experienced extraordinary blessings, territory, and power and then slip into serious sin.

Note: Rick Joyner in [The Final Quest](#) talks about seeing in his vision great men of God who did not receive as great a reward as some who were not as recognized on earth, and they told him in his vision, that it was because they became exalted in themselves.

Note: Like Jabez, we should ask to be spared dangerous misjudgments.

Note: Prayer

Lord, keep me safe from the pain and grief that sin brings. For the dangers that I cannot see, or the ones that I think I can risk because of my experience, my pride and carelessness put up a supernatural barrier. Protect me, Father, by your power!

3. Feelings

- a. Do we understand how far the American dream is from God's dream for us?
- b. Our culture worships freedom, independence, personal rights, and the pursuit of pleasure.
- c. We respect people who sacrifice to get what they want.
- d. God calls us
 - i. To be a living sacrifice
 - ii. To be crucified to self

Note: Therefore, like Jabez, we should plead to be kept from the powerful pull of what feels right to us but is actually harmful to us, even wrong for us.

Note: Prayer

Lord, keep me safe from temptations that pull at my emotions and my physical needs, that call out to my sense of what I deserve, what I have the “right” to feel and enjoy. Because You are the true source of all that is really life, direct my steps away from all that is not of You.

Note: The prayers that we have been praying this morning are petitions for deliverance that our Father loves to hear---and answer.

IV. Witness To Freedom

A. There are times that we have to approach evil

1. Satan most opposes those who are becoming the greatest threat to him and his kingdom.
2. The more God answers your Jabez prayers, the more you should be prepared to confront spiritual attack.
3. There are times that God’s power is leading us to launch a D-Day offensive against the spiritual darkness that surrounds us.
 - a. At these times, we stand confidently against the enemy with what Paul calls our “weapons of warfare” (2 Corinthians 10:4)

i. KJV

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

ii. NLT

We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.

B. Example of a prayer meeting in preparation for a Promise Keepers meeting

1. No one could pray
2. 25 members were in prayer as 10s of thousands entered the stadium, and they could not pray
3. Satan’s oppression was strong, and unless they could obtain victory, no one would be blessed

- a. One man said “Victory is already ours, and determinedly he began praying the truth of God’s will.”
- b. His prayer went like this

Lord, it is Your will that we seek this blessing for countless men and their families! We know that it is Your deepest desire to take more ground for the kingdom in this generation, on this day in history, in this stadium! And we thank You for what You are going to do.

- 3) Everyone else struggled under the heaviness of oppression but the prayer leader kept on praying these words

Further, it is Your profound and immovable purpose that Your Holy Spirit be here--is here now in our midst--moving already through the rows of gathering men. You have come here to work in a supernatural dimension that even we can barely comprehend, but which we earnestly anticipate. And at Your name, Lord Jesus, every other power on earth must bow or flee.

Note: Somewhere they had a breakthrough. Church, you and I can have a breakthrough, but listen. Let us pray that God will keep us from temptation, but when we have to confront the enemy, do not be afraid for God will keep us safe through the temptation.

V. A Legacy of Triumph

1. Jabez wanted to live free from the bondage of evil because God’s trustworthy character and steadfast Word had showed him something unimaginably better.
2. Church, stay out of the arena of temptation whenever possible, but never live in fear or defeat for by God’s power, we can keep our legacy of blessing safe.
3. Will a supernatural God show up to keep us from evil? Jabez believed He would, and the Bible says that “God granted him his request.”
4. Jabez believed and acted on his belief.

Note: Our problem is not so much that we disbelieve, but we do not figure that it is really necessary to ask God to keep us from evil. Therefore, we are constantly falling into sin, and the besetting sin that follows us around has a heyday.

Conclusion

Note Colossians 2:13-15

- i. KJV

13) And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14) Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15) And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

ii. Niv

13) When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14) having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15) And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

iii. Nlt

13) You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. 14) He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. 15) In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross.

iv. Msg

11) When you were stuck in your old sin-dead life, you were incapable of responding to God. God brought you alive—right along with Christ! 14) Think of it! All sins forgiven, the slate wiped clean, that old arrest warrant canceled and nailed to Christ’s cross. 15) He stripped all the spiritual tyrants in the universe of their sham authority at the Cross and marched them naked through the streets.

1. Here is a declaration of victory in v15...

Through Christ we can live in triumph not in temptation or defeat

2. With the fourth plea of Jabez’s prayer as a part of our life, we are now ready to move to a higher level of honor and exponentially expanding blessings.

Note: Like the Jefferson song says. “Moving on up”

Well, we're movin' on up (movin' on up)

To the east side (movin' on up) (Jesus comes from the east to take us beyond the North star)

To a deluxe apartment in the sky

3. In God’s kingdom, the safest investment also shows the most remarkable growth, and the safest investment is “God keep us from evil,” and we can be assured of moving on up in God’s kingdom for eternity.