

RCCG Agape House of Worship
Midweek Bible Study
Wednesday, October 7, 2020

Topic: The Prayer of Jabez -Part 1: **The Man Behind The Prayer** Facilitator: Deaconess (Dr.) Genevieve Kumapley
Text: 1 Chronicle 4:9-10

Introduction: The prayer of Jabez is a short prayer about a man whose name meant pain and grief to his mother and yet God changed his destiny because of his life and his request. The book of 1 Chronicles, is known as the book to genealogies, but there is more in 1 Chronicles 4 than just a genealogy. In the midst of the nine-chapter-long list of names, is a very short but remarkable story appears out of the blue about a man named Jabez (verses 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.” 1 Chronicles 4:9-10

What do we know about Jabez? The man behind this powerful prayer is described by the text as

- More honorable than his brothers. (Jabez was a descendant of the tribe of Judah and which was highly respected by society)
- His mother (not his father) named him Jabez
- His simple prayer is a blue print for how we ought to pray and live out our lives
- He called on the God of Israel
- He prayed a simple prayer
 - Prayer of provision
 - Prayer of enlargement (Ministry assignment)
 - Prayer of providence and Guidance
 - Prayer of protection
- He received his request.

1. The question is what made him more honorable? When you consider someone who is honorable what attributes comes to mind?

- Blessed? Favored? Anointed?

2. Why did his mother name him Jabez? What was his mother thinking? Where was his father?

It is postulated that Jabez's birth is difficult; for this reason, his mother named him Jabez (Hebrew יַעֲבֵז [ya'betz]), meaning "he makes sorrowful". What would have motivated a mother to give her newborn child such a name?

It must have been something more than the common physical pain of childbirth. Perhaps, her life must have been so difficult that she perceived the addition of this child would bring great hardship or difficulty. Was it because of a financial issue? As the account says that Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, it may be that she already had sons who had caused problems and feared Jabez would do the same. Whatever the case, Jabez probably did not have an easy life. Can you imagine growing up with a name like pain or sorrow? Worse, in Middle Eastern society of that day a name was thought to be a meaningful determiner of destiny. His life was "marked out," so to speak, by his name. He would have been expected to be a perpetual source of pain. And this is not to mention the difficult family situation of growing up with a mother who would give such a name to her child and the dreary circumstances that would have provoked it.

Interestingly, the name Jabez appears in only one other place in Scripture—two chapters earlier in 2:55 as the name of a place where the scribes lived. It could be that the Jabez of chapter 4 acquired this land as part of the answer to his prayer and then used it in God's service.

How does names reflect who we are?

As discussed earlier, in the Jewish culture, children, a name was taken as a prophecy of the person's temperament and destiny. For example, the name Solomon" means peace and he became the first king of Israel to rule without having to go to war. From childhood on, Jabez would be a prisoner of pain.

- Jacob (grabber) and Israel (persevere with God)(Genesis 28:20-22; Genesis 35:6-15)
- Sarai (noble woman) and Sarah (Princess) mother of many nations
- Abram (exalted father) and Abraham (father of multitude)
- Naomi named her sons= Mahlon= Puny; Chilion = pining

Can you name a time when your name or the name used to identify you had a negative effect on you? What labels or attitudes have you placed upon yourself that might be limiting what you see as God's purpose for life?

You shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord will name. Isaiah 62:2

Your Father's name for you isn't Pain or any such word! It is:

"CHOSEN"

¹⁹If you were to give your allegiance to the world, they would love and welcome you as one of their own. But because you won't align yourself with the values of this world, they will hate you. I have chosen you and taken you out of the world to be mine. John 15:19

"MINE"

for every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills.¹¹ I know every bird in the mountains, and the insects in the fields are mine.¹² If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it. Psalm 50:10-12

"BELOVED"

"Let the beloved of the LORD rest secure in him, for he shields him all day long, and the one the LORD loves rests between his shoulders." Deuteronomy 33:12

"SOUGHT AFTER" *They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted. Isaiah 62:12*

"FRIEND" –

²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,"^(a) and he was called God's friend. James 2:23

What lessons can we draw from the life of Jabez?

- He was a man of prayer- (he is forever remembered in the hall of fame as a man of prayer). **How would people describe you? What legacy will you be leaving behind?**
- Jabez called on the "God of Israel" – He knew his God and what his God can do for (Daniel 11:32; those who know their God shall do exploits)- not some unknown God; (in the old testament, he is referred to as the covenant keeping God of Abraham, Isaac and God; in the NT, he is referred to as the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is reminiscent of the story of Jacob wrestling with God, not letting go until God blessed him and thereby receiving the name Israel, "Prevailer With God." We should recognize that Jabez probably did not just call on God on one afternoon. His prayer was likely a regular one to God—pleading with Him to deliver him from his life's circumstances. And it was probably uttered in various sincere ways, not recited as some kind of mantra.

Why did God grant his request?

- Perhaps it is simply because he asked. The bible says, ask you will receive, knock and the door will be opened. Matthew 7:7
- He was persistent and desperate (the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much- James 5:16)

In conclusion, the man who was given a name that brought him pain and perhaps others pain had his destiny changed because of the way he lived and the fervency of the prayer he prayed. As children of God, we can that trust, our destiny is in the hands of God; and only he can determine the outcome; if we can call out to him and live out the purpose he designed for us.