

The Prayers of Scripture

Jabez Prayer for Favor (1 Chronicles 4:9-10)

Based on the book by Bruce Wilkinson, and Sermon by C. H. Spurgeon

“The Prayer of Jabez”

Introduction:

This is a prayer that has, no doubt, gone unnoticed for many years, until Bruce Wilkinson brought much attention to it by his best selling book that shines light on these two wonderful verses that are impactful on the lives of those who both read it and who apply its truths to their lives. While I will highlight the breakdown of these two (2) verses, I encourage you to buy the book and put it in your personal library. Spurgeon’s sermon focuses primarily on the first part of the prayer.

The Prayer of Jabez

“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 NKJV

What do we know about Jabez?

He was a man who knew sorrow and pain. Think of Jacob’s name changed to Israel. He was MORE honorable than his brothers.
His name was given to him by his mother.
His name was based on the PAIN she experienced at his birth. (Hard birth? Bad Economic times? Father died leaving her a widow?)
Jabez was a man of prayer. Could this further suggest that he was more prayerful than his brothers as well?

“The best honor is that which a man gains in communion with the Most High.”
(C. H. Spurgeon)

What is the meaning of “blessings” as it is used here?

1. It is NOT simply asking God to do something that we can do for ourselves.
2. It is NOT “asking God for a Cadillac, a six-figure income, or some other material sign that you have found a way to cash in on your connection with Him. (Bruce Wilkinson)

3. It is, however, to ask God for or for God to impart upon us His supernatural FAVOR from His unlimited supply of goodness and grace.
4. It is leaving it up to God to decide what the blessings would be and where, when, and how Jabez would receive them.” (Bruce Wilkinson)
 - a. WHY DON'T WE RECEIVE MORE? We just don't ask! (Matthew 7:7; James 4:2)
5. It is God's nature to want to bless. (Exodus 33:18, 34:6)

What is the content of his prayer?

“Oh, that **You** (the Source of blessing from the One whose WORD brought all that is, into existence) (1 Peter 1:4; Hebrews 12:28; 2 Samuel 7:29) would bless me indeed.”

Let the grace of God prompt it, let the choice of God appoint it, let the bounty of God confer it, and then the endowment shall be something godlike indeed; something worthy of the lips that pronounce the benediction, and verily to be craved by every one who seeks honor that is substantial and enduring. “Oh that you would bless me indeed!” Think it over, and you will see that there is a depth of meaning in the expression. (C. H. Spurgeon)

A. Compare man's blessings vs. God's blessings?

- a. God's final verdict is key to our blessings. (Matthew 25:23)
- b. Men are prone to flattery and we tend to soak it up, don't we? (Luke 6:26)

B. Compare God's blessings with Temporal Blessings.

- a. WEALTH (both on a spiritual, faith level and on a monetary level. But the question that must be asked, is, “Does monetary wealth, in and of itself bring happiness? It is the natural instinct of mankind to desire to do well, but often to the neglect of our souls! It is in the USE of one's wealth that produces the blessings, not in its accumulation itself. (Luke 12:19)

- b. FAME without the reputation of being a Christ follower may give a temporary sense of satisfaction, but end up with becoming a “no-name” in hell! (Compare Luke 16:22) ... “and the rich man also died and was buried.”

“If you have honor and fame, accept it; but let this prayer go up, ‘My God, you bless me indeed, for what profit were it, if my name were in a thousand mouths, if you should spue it out of your mouth?’” (C. H. Spurgeon)

- c. HEALTH (temporal blessing, legitimate but to have the healthiest of bodies, fit as a fiddle, but a SOUL that is diseased by sin will be but another temporal blessing.). Oh, I want to be healthy, but sometimes, God has taken our infirmities and used them to bring us closer to Him, has He not?
- d. HOME Family is of great importance. Having a home where your spouse, children, grand children, brothers and sisters are able to enjoy each other’s time together is wonderful. RELATIONSHIPS are what makes life so enjoyable. But, have we forgotten about our relationship with God? Our relationship with our spiritual family, the church of the living God?
 - i. Bless me indeed with all of these things, but let them not distract me from a far more reaching blessing from God Himself. Bless me with those eternal blessings granted by God that are far more reliable, eternal and worth seeking.

C. Compare God’s blessings with the Imaginary blessings.

To the Lost:

- a. The Pharisees were known for their “**self righteousness**.” Notice the “imaginary” blessings noted by the Pharisee in Luke 18:9-12. He WAS NOT blessed ‘indeed.’ We must seek the righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ alone. (Philippians 3:7-9)
- b. **False Assurance**, saying “I believe in Jesus, that He died on the cross for me” yet never anchored our soul to Christ, is but an illusion of reality.
 - i. Presumption vs. Full Assurance based on a solid basis or grounds for truth).

- ii. To merely say your saved without full trusting in Jesus with your whole heart, does not mean that you are saved. Evidence of life change WILL BE apparent.

To the SAVED:

- a. Answered Prayer, but not in the spirit of, “Thy will be done.”

Think of Balaam. We need to understand God’s Sovereign knowledge.

- b. Exhilaration of spirit, but not when sin rules the roost. “Let your laughter be turned into mourning”
- c. Calmness, but not when its root cause is found in our callousness of heart. “Conscience seared over with a hot iron.” There is a danger of saying, “Peace, peace,” where there is no peace.” Jeremiah 6:14. Sometimes, Calmness dupes us into thinking all is good, when it is not. “Woe unto those who are at ease in Zion” (Amos 6:1)
- d. Our work and service. Houses built with wood, hay and stubble can go up in flame by one little spark. Yet, houses built with Gold, Silver and precious stones can stand in the storm, because its founded upon the Rock ... Jesus Christ!

D. God’s True Spiritual Blessings.

- a. These are the blessings that will have eternal ramifications ... blessings indeed.
- b. It must always be about:
 - i. What leads us to God through Jesus Christ.
 - ii. What results in the Holy Spirit working within our soul.
 - iii. What causes us to become prepared for eternity.
 - iv. Anything that help me to glorify God.

THREE WORDS OF APPLICATION:

SEARCH: to see whether these are blessings indeed..

WEIGH: your blessings in accord with Scripture and ascertain if this blessing will cause you to abound in love, and in every good world and work.

PRAY: that whatever God grants to you or whatever He withholds, you are blessed indeed. READ Exodus 33:15.

“Enlarge my territory.”

“Your hand would be with me.”

A. Favor

“You would keep me from evil.”

“That I may not cause pain.”

RESULT?

“God granted him what he requested.”