

Living the Prayer of Jabez

Change Your Destiny...from Burdensome to *Great*



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The Prayer of Jabez is found in 1 Chron 4:9-10 NKJV and reads as follows: *Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." 10 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. In these two powerful, life-changing verses of Scripture seven principles are revealed which I call the **Seven Steps to Greatness**. These fundamental truths or standards of moral conduct have helped countless believers enjoy successful living for many centuries since the time of Jabez. These Seven Steps to Greatness are articulated below so that you can experience God's blessings too.

During the past decade two small books have been published entitled **The Prayer of Jabez**. The first one, entitled *The Prayer of Jabez, Breaking Through to the Blessed Life*, was written in 2000 by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson and was a #1 New York Times Bestseller. The second one was written by Dr. Dick Newman, who lives in the Denver Metro area and with whom I have discussed the research for that book. I have read and meditated on both of these books. They inspired me to probe deeper into the study of the Prayer of Jabez. The principles in that prayer form the basis for a way of life that consistently brings great rewards.

I have been in the computer field since 1961, while studying for my MBA at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University. About twenty-five years ago I began to use computer resources to study and teach the Word of God. At first that process was rather cumbersome. Seven years later, I started using PC Study Bible (with its many versions of the Bible, numerous commentaries, maps, extensive writings of Bible expositors, etc.) to research the text of Scripture. I studied the root meanings of the Hebrew words in the Prayer of Jabez, and used Strong's numbers and computer search techniques to discover the powerful truths contained in the Prayer of Jabez. A few years ago the Bible research tools had become so advanced, so I launched into a thorough in-depth study of *The Prayer of Jabez* late in 2007. All of my research was conducted with the aid of PC Study Bible, and all quotations of Scripture and commentaries are taken directly from it and are shown in italics.

As this study was being developed over the last two years, I taught the content in three different churches and counseled pastors and business leaders, in accordance with

the principles found in this study. My wife, Diane, and I have also been declaring the Prayer of Jabez on a regular basis, as I continued to work on this study. As the Word of God has been taught in churches or shared in private counseling sessions, dramatic results were noticed. With each passing month the excitement grew within me to dig deeper. These studies have helped me cope with the recent economic downturn. I have great appreciation for the Lord and the power of His Word. People have focused on the word BURDENSOME in the title of this book, as they reviewed my study materials and brochures. People are burdened and are seeking the right kind of change that can lift them up.

There are two men in Scripture who experienced dramatic changes in their lives for the better, and their destinys were enhanced permanently. In Job 14:14 NKJV, Job says, *"If a man dies, shall he live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait, Till my change comes."* Job waited on God, until he discovered the sovereignty of God and how God changes things. When Jacob wrestled through the night with God; his name, vision and destiny were all changed dramatically for the better. In Gen 32:27 Amp we read, *[The Man] asked him, What is your name? And [in shock of realization, whispering] he said, Jacob [supplanter, schemer, trickster, swindler]! 28 And He said, Your name shall be called no more Jacob [supplanter], but Israel [contender with God]; for you have contended and have power with God and with men and have prevailed.* You can have your own personal encounter with Jesus, like Job and Jacob. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. So if He met Jacob yesterday, He can meet with you today!

In Matthew Henry's Commentary we learn much about Jabez the man of God: *"The eminence of his character: He was more honourable than his brethren, qualified above them by the divine grace and dignified above them by the divine providence; they did virtuously, but he excelled them all. We have most reason to think it was upon the account of his learning and piety ... In learning, because we find that the families of the scribes dwelt at Jabez (1 Chron 2:55), a city which, it is likely, took its name from him. The Jews say that he was a famous doctor of the law and left many disciples behind him. In piety, because we find here that he was a praying man. His inclination to devotion made him truly honourable, and by prayer he obtained those blessings from God which added much to his honour. The way to be truly great is to be truly good and to pray much. He set himself to acknowledge God in all his ways, put himself under the divine blessing and protection, and prospered accordingly."* So we should follow his example of learning and piety and become people of prayer consistently throughout our lives!

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Seven Steps to GREATNESS

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Resolve to Become More Honourable

In 1 Chron 4:9 KJV we read, “*And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.*” In the Amp Bible Jabez is called “Sorrow Maker.” So Jabez was born with a disadvantage or handicap that he overcame through prayer and learning. With the aid of Strong’s numbers and computer search techniques I was able to identify principles that cause us to become more honourable: (1) Honour your father and your mother; (2) Honour the Lord with your substance and all your increase; (3) Get wisdom, get understanding and follow Christ, who is the wisdom of God; (4) Love God, know God, and call upon Him; and (5) Learn to choose good, God-fearing associates who will be a beneficial influence in life.

Call on the God of Israel Consistently

A computer search for the phrase “*Inquired of the Lord*” in all of the Bible yielded the following results: ten references were found in the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel and the great majority of the time it refers to David, King of Israel. He’s our best example of calling upon God and seeking His counsel in the affairs of life. In Psalm 138:3 Amp, David said, “*In the day when I called, You answered me; and You strengthened me with strength (might and inflexibility to temptation) in my inner self.*” In Psalm 145:18 Amp, David said, “*The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him sincerely and in truth.*” Follow the example of the greatest king of Israel and learn to call upon God or “*Inquire of the Lord*” when you need direction.

*“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”
(Jer 33:3 NKJV)*

Pray That God Would Bless You Indeed

When God created Adam and Eve (See Gen 1:26-30) He blessed them and commanded that they be fruitful and multiply. When we comprehend God’s original intent and plan for His righteous creation, we are then better able to participate in the blessings and enlargement that God intended for us in the beginning. When Jacob wrestled all night with God and himself (See Gen 32:26 Amp) we read about the following exchange: “*Then He said, Let Me go, for day is breaking. But [Jacob] said, I will not let You go unless You declare a blessing upon me.*” During that wrestling match, Jesus changed the name and destiny of Jacob and prepared him for some great new experiences. Jabez also called upon God and prayed: “*Oh that You would bless me indeed ...*”

and Enlarge Your Coast or Territory

and enlarge my coast.” Jabez apparently understood that God blesses and enlarges and shares His dominion over the earth with His faithful followers. In Gen 1:28 we read, “*And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it [with all its vast resources – Amp]: and have dominion over the fish of*

the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” **Blessing & enlargement** have been with us since the beginning in God’s plan.

Believe the Hand of God Is With You

The most remarkable example of the hand of God being upon someone and how it produced miraculous results is found in the book of Nehemiah. The project to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem began with Nehemiah on his knees in fasting and prayer, while he was yet a prisoner of war in a foreign land. After returning to Jerusalem, Nehemiah motivated the people to build as we see in Nehemiah 2:18: “*Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.*” The phrase “Hand of my God” appears only two times in all of Scripture and is found in the book of Nehemiah alone. The testimony of Nehemiah is a powerful example of what happens when the Hand of God is upon His faithful people.

Experience the Keeping Power of God

Job sought God that He might be a safe retreat and a hiding place until his test passed over and he was restored. King David sought God in prayer (Psalm 17:8), “*Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings.*” On many occasions David was preserved by the keeping power of God as he was preparing to come to the throne and during his reign as King of Israel. In Psalm 91:9-11 we read, “*Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, 10 No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, (To keep you) in all your ways.*” So believers in Christ enjoy the keeping power of the Lord and his holy angels.

Expect God to Answer Your Requests

In this study we will see how God answered the prayers of His people in the most unusual of circumstances. A Concordance Search for the phrase “*He answered*” yielded the following results: Jonah 2:1-2 NKJV *Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the fish’s belly. 2 And he said: “I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice.”* God heard and answered Jonah’s prayer and delivered him out of the fish’s belly. The Lord called to Jeremiah in prison (Jer 33:3 NKJV) and said, “*Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.*” So you can call on God anytime and anywhere, He can and will answer you, and show you great things that you do not know! God, whose greatness is unsearchable, is just waiting for you to call so He can share His greatness with you. See pages 46 and 47 in this Guide issue, and participate in this study.