

Your hand would be with me

Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez saying, "Because I bore *him* in pain." (1Chr. 4:9). Amongst the many names mentioned in this chapter, we find that the Bible describes Jabez as the more honorable of his brothers. The word "honorable" implies more spiritual strength than his brothers. This is in contrast with the Cretans "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." (Titus 1: 12) who were spiritually weak as they succumbed to the sin of lying. The Lord wants us to have a strong spiritual impact. "Joseph of Arimathea, a prominent council member, who was himself waiting for the kingdom of God, coming and taking courage, went in to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus." (Mark 15:43). Joseph was influential because he was concerned with spiritual matters. Putting spiritual matters first in our lives causes us to become influential.

Jabez was spiritually influential because he was a man of prayer. His mother named him Jabez because she delivered him in pain; however, he brought about great joy even more than his brothers. The Lord blessed him in a very special way which is why he is mentioned in scriptures. Many things that are brought through difficulty and labor in prayer produce Jabez, who brings joy! "Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Colossians 4:12). He labors in prayer that the believers might stand perfect and be fruitful in the kingdom of God.

"And Jabez called on the God of Israel" (1Chronicles 4:10). Change came about in his life as he was a man of prayer. During that time, the nation lived a loose life giving in to sin, but he lived differently calling on the God of Israel whom he knew was a strong God; faithful in his promises, for he is the God of victories and the God of healing. He brought his people out of Egypt, the land of slavery, with a mighty hand and with great plagues on the Egyptians. Therefore Jabez can trust the Lord, as he is the one who delivers on all his promises.

"Oh, that You would bless me indeed" (1Chronicles 4:10). He expects great unceasing blessings from his great God.

"And enlarge my territory" (1Chronicles 4:10) Enlarging his territory means taking over the land from the enemy through battle. He requested the Lord's support in this matter. Truth is: there is no gain in spiritual or material matters without going into warfare. This means standing against the old nature and the influence of the world. Also, resisting the attacks of evil spirits using the name of the Lord Jesus, proclaiming the power of the precious blood of Jesus, and using the Word of God which is the sword of the Spirit. "How long will you neglect to go and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers has given you?" (Joshua 18:3)

"That Your hand would be with me" (1Chronicles 4:10) longing to always enjoy the presence of the Lord. "Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from Him the right way for us and our little ones and all our possessions ... The hand of our God is upon all those for good who seek Him" (Ezra 8:21, 22). We need to pray so as the Lord can give us straight paths, send his fear before us, and have His hand upon us to save us from

the enemy and from ambush along the road. A New Testament example of people who were spiritually influential were the ones who were scattered after the persecution, “Now those who were scattered after the persecution ... And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:19, 21). Prayer was the key to their strength in the ministry.

“And You would keep me from evil so that it does not hurt me!” (1Chronicles 4:9 [AMP]) His prayer was for protection from not prevention of evil, that he might not be destroyed. That’s exactly what happened with Paul and Silas in prison! Evil was conquered before them as they prayed and praised the Lord, and the prison became a place for the enlargement of the Kingdom of God!!

Prayer: I want to thank you Lord because you are good to me. Your love for me is tied to the covenant built on your blood sacrifice on my behalf. I also want to thank you for the great blessings that never fade. I thank you that you want me to conquer and enlarge my territory and for protecting me from evil!!

