

THE STORY OF JABEZ

1 CHRON 4:9-10 (ONLY TWO VERSES, YET SO POWERFUL)

Before verse 9 we have genealogy and then verses 9 and 10 we have only two verses, like an advert, then the genealogy continues after verse 10. What was it about the man, Jabez, that he should be mentioned?

There is no genealogy given about him, no sons or children mentioned, yet there are two verses dedicated to him. Almost as if the Holy Spirit stopped the writer and said, "Wait, you need to mention Jabez!" read 1Chron 4:9-10

V9 - "And Jabez was more honourable than his brothers" – HONOURABLE –

- Worthy of honour; in any degree, from simple respectability to eminence
- Credible; estimable and illustrious
- Conferring honour
- Act in accordance with principles of honour
- Conforming to a code of honour – INTEGRITY
- Testimonials of honour \ Respect and Regard
- A sense of what is right
- Its a prefix to the name of persons holding important offices – a judge or mayor
SYNONYMS: GOOD; HONEST; ILLUSTRIOUS; JUST AND MORAL

V9 – "His mother called him Jabez (SORROW) saying I gave birth to him in pain"

- What could have caused this lady, whose name we do not know, to call her son "SORROW"?
- The birth of a child is usually a joyful occasion, not just because the pain of delivery is over, but it means the emergence of new life; a perfectly formed miniature person, full of potential; it also means that the family is perpetuated and the birth evokes a passing sense of wonder and tenderness. HOW WAS YOUR BIRTH RECEIVED OR CELEBRATED?
- A woman grew in status in the community especially at the birth of a Son! Yet, Jabez was called "SORROW" while they were supposed to celebrate his birth.
- Childless or barren woman were scorned by others:
 1. Hannah and Penninah - 1Sam 1V2
 2. Rachel and Leah - Gen. 30
- One gets the sense that Jabez's mom may have preferred being barren, she called her son "Sorrow"
- We do not know what caused that, nor do we know the circumstances surrounding his conception, or the pregnancy nor his actual birth. One could think of modern day problems which were also part of that society: RAPE; ADULTERY; INCEST; A DIFFICULT BIRTH; ABANDONED BY THE FATHER WHEN HE FOUND THAT THE LADY WAS PREGNANT; the problems are endless. Each of us has our own unique, individual birth-story, you may find your own name may not be "SORROW" but you have your own Sorrows.
- Children's names – these were chosen carefully as they were held to represent their characters.

- Often names had some reference to the circumstances of the birth (Jabez); a national event; the parent's response to God's goodness.
 1. Abram – exalted father
 2. Abraham – Father of Many
 3. Isaac – He laughs (Sarah laughed)
 4. Jacob – grasps the heel, deceiver
 5. Israel – Struggles with God
 6. Ishmael – God hears
 7. Esau – because he was hairy | red
 8. Ichabod – there is no glory
 9. Eliezer - God is Helper
 10. King Hezekiah – God is strength
 11. Isaiah – God is Salvation

OTHERS:

 12. Jonah – dove
 13. Deborah - Bee
 14. Caleb - Dog
 15. Susannah - Lily
 16. Leah – Wild Cow
 17. Obed – Servant

Can you imagine being called “DOG” or “SORROW”? being teased by the other boys of the village?
- Yet in spite of ALL this, Jabez became MORE honourable than his brothers. What made him more honourable? What did he do to be more honourable? The Bible does not tell.
- What we do know is that he prayed and we know to whom he prayed.

V 10: He cried (called) out to the God of Israel – the Same God who said, “I AM THAT I AM” Gen 3:14 & He also said: Is 43:11

- His prayer: “Oh that you would bless me” TO BLESS:
 - To consecrate; to make holy with blood
 - To honour or exalt
 - To glorify
 - To sanctify or protect
 - To invoke God's favour upon a person
 - To bestow happiness or prosperity upon
 - To make happy
 - To endow a special gift upon a person
 - To guard or protect with exclamation
- These are the meanings of to BLESS, would that we should ALL desire to be blessed of God.**

V10 “And enlarge my territory” – to ENLARGE

- To make greater; increase the amount of land or area of influence
- To widen; express in greater detail
- To amplify

How serious or desperate are we to have greater area of influence?

V10 “Let your hand be with me” – God’s righteous Right Hand

- God’s hand – Is 41:10 Speaks of strength and authority

V10 “and keep me from harm – so that I will be free from pain.”

- PAIN: Emotional; Physical; Spiritual
- God’s protection is ABSOLUTE – Nothing can snatch you from His grasp
- Jabez did not have Jesus – you and I do!

AND GOD GRANTED HIM HIS REQUEST – WOW!!!!

GOD ANSWERED JABEZ’S PRAYER REQUEST – the Chronicler simply continues with the genealogy as before v 9 and 10 but Jabez was NEVER the same again.

You and I could also have had a questionable or difficult past – be it your conception or birth or early childhood. God is no respecter of persons; he wants to bless you and enlarge your territory; to keep His hand of protection over you and keep you from pain.

Be part of this prayer – pray out aloud with me . . . The Prayer of Jabez.