

The Prayer of Jabez
by
Bruce Wilkinson

Lesson IV

“Go With Us God”

1 Chronicles 4:9-10
KJV

9) And Jabez was more honourable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow. 10) And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

Introduction:

1. Different Versions

- a. Kjv...That thine hand might be with me,
- b. Niv...Let your hand be with me
- c. Ce...Be with me
- d. Nlt...Please be with me in all that I do
- e. Amp...That your hand might be with me

2. We have asked God to bless us, and we have asked God to extend our borders

- a. We also want God to stay with us in all that we do
- b. O God, please do not leave me to my own wisdom, knowledge, discernment, and understanding
- c. Thank you Lord for blessing me and for extending my border, my influence, but please go with me, remain with me as I branch out into larger fields and areas because of Your blessings

3. Facts of Life

- a. The Blessings of God even the enlarging of our borders will not come without a battle

b. Satan will not give up easily.

i. He will oppose us

ii. If he can get us to be afraid, then we become paralyzed, unable to move in faith

iii. We need to remember that satan works through intimidation.

Note 1 Peter 5:8-9

i. Versions

1) Kjv

8) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9a) Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

2) Amp

8) Be well balanced (temperate, sober of mind), be vigilant *and* cautious at all times; for that enemy of yours, the devil, roams around like a lion roaring [in fierce hunger], seeking someone to seize upon *and* devour. 9) Withstand him; be firm in faith [against his onset—rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined], knowing that the same (identical) sufferings are appointed to your brotherhood (the whole body of Christians) throughout the world.

ii. 1 Corinthians 10:13

1) Kjv

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

2) Amp

For no temptation (no trial regarded as enticing to sin), [no matter how it comes or where it leads] has overtaken you *and* laid hold on you that is not common to man [that is, no temptation or trial has come to you that is beyond human resistance and that is not adjusted and adapted and belonging to human experience, and such as man can bear]. But God is faithful [to His Word and to His compassionate nature], and He [can be trusted] not to let you be tempted *and* tried *and* assayed beyond your ability *and* strength of resistance *and* power to endure, but with the temptation He will [always] also provide the way out (the means of escape to a landing place), that you may be capable *and* strong *and* powerful to bear up under it patiently.

- c. Let also understand this fact of life
 - i. God who blesses us will go with us
 - ii. As life happens, and satan tries to destroy what God is doing
 - 1) Remain Sober, well balanced, temperate, sober of mind
 - 2) Remain Vigilant *and* cautious at all times
 - 3) Actively resist satan through being Stedfast in the faith
 - a) Withstand satan
 - b) Be firm in faith against his onset
 - c) Be rooted, established, strong, immovable, and determined
 - 4) Understand that life happens to all that are in the world
 - a) Know that the same (identical) sufferings are appointed to all Christians throughout the world
 - b) 1 Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

- d. We need to always remember
 - i. That God has not blessed to drop us, and
 - ii. That God does not give us opportunity to advance so we will fail,
 - iii. That God is with us
 - iv. That if there is a setback, it does not mean God has left us, but only that God is fine-tuning you and I so we can advance without harm coming to us and without us harming others.
- 4. There are times that we move forward excitedly, but suddenly our world turns upside down.
 - a. It seems that everything goes wrong.

- b. Somebody gets sick, or we get sick
- c. The kids get worse
- d. All of a sudden, we are wrestling with sin that we thought we had overcome.

Note: It seems that instead of being blessed, we are being cursed. It seems that instead of us influencing others for God, others are influencing us and our family. We wonder: “God, where are you?” “We are doing the right things. Now God, why are you allowing this to happen to me?”

5. So, we come to another part of the prayer: “God go with us.” “God, be with me.”
“God, if you do not go with me, then I am not going to go anywhere.”

Note the conversation between God and Moses in Exodus 33:14-15

- i. God said in v14: “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”
- ii. Moses said in v15: “If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.”
- iii. This is how I feel. God, You have got to go with me! For If you do not go with me, then I just cannot do it.
- iv. I can do all things though, through Christ who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

6. Let us stand and pray

- a. Bless me Lord. Forgive me of all my sin and bless me.
- b. Thank You Lord for blessing me, for forgiving me of my sins, and now I ask that you bless me indeed. Bless me a whole lot. Deliver me from the habits and addictions I picked up while I was in sin, and Bless me a lot by giving me the Holy Spirit.
- c. Lord, while you are blessing me, I ask that you enlarge my coast. Give me more territory, more responsibility, more favor, greater influence, better job.
- d. Lord, while you are blessing me and enlarging my territory, I ask You to go with me. Keep Your hand upon me. Do not let me walk by myself. Oh Lord, I ask that Your hand be with me.

Note: God’s hand is with you so that you can be enlarged in Him, so you can overcome that habit and addiction, so you can pay your bills, so you can have your own home, so you can be successful in your job, etc

- I. Descending to Power (we become less to become greater)

A. We feel inadequate to do what God has called us to do

1. We feel out of control and weak

2. Personal Experience

- a. At Pittsburg, the church began to move forward, and I had an opportunity to get an associate. Also, I had a council, and I had never had a council prior to this. On top of all this, I was drawing full salary, and I did not know how to pastor without doing public work. I had too much time on my hands.
- b. I went to the Overseer and had lunch with him, and asked him how to use people in my church in such a way so I would not be threatened. I felt inadequate.
- c. There have been times in dealing with Pastoral responsibilities that I have felt inadequate.

B. We are to be dependent on God

1. The problem with most of us is that we desire to be in control, but to be effective for God, we have to be dependent on God.

a. Zechariah 4:6

- i. KJV...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.
- ii. CE...So don't depend on your own power or strength, but on my Spirit.

b. Psalm 20:7-8

7) Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God. 8) They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and stand upright.

c. Jeremiah 17:5-8

5) Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. 6) For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. 7) Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is. 8) For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

2. The moment we become dependent on ourselves, instead of depending on God is the moment that we begin backing away from truly living by faith.

- a. Why is it that some run from dependence on God?
- b. We Want to be in control, but for us to do God's work effectively, we have to be out of control while He is in control.

Note John 3:30

- i. KJV...He must increase, but I must decrease.
- ii. NIV...He must become greater; I must become less.
- iii. CE...Jesus must become more important, while I become less important.
- iv. NLT...He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.

C. God calls us to do things we cannot do.

- 1. Blackaby says the reason we do not see God doing more things, is because we only do the things we can do, because we are afraid to do things that only God can do.
- 2. As God chosen people, we are expected to attempt something large enough that failure is guaranteed-----unless God steps in.
 - a. Abraham and Sarah having a child
 - b. Moses leading the Children of Israel
 - c. Gideon and the Midianites
 - d. Joshua leading Israel into the Promise Land
 - e. You and I rising above what you have always been
 - f. You and I quitting what we cannot quit
 - g. You and I rising above our S. A. P. Line

Note: What is it that God is asking you to do? If it is not bigger than you, then it may not be God asking you, but if it is larger than you, then God is asking you to depend upon Him and step out by faith.

Note: Fear of failure keeps us from trying.

- 3. This truth, that God calls us to do things that in which we will fail unless He steps

in goes against everything we would humanly choose.

- a. Humanly, I would not be doing what I am doing because it is larger than I
- b. Humanly, Judy and I would have never went to college because it appeared larger than us
- c. Humanly, I would have never attempted to preach or pastor, because it was way outside my comfort zone

Note: Are you with me?

- i. What is larger than you? That may be what God is calling you to do.
- ii. What is larger than this church? That may be what God is calling us to do.
- iii. We need to know what it is that God wants us to do, and step out by faith and do it with total dependence on God for He will not fail us, but if we begin to depend on ourselves then failure is certain.

Note: The reason most great revivals do not continue is because men begin to depend on themselves and flesh gets in the way. People begin to look at the cost, or look at who is in charge, or look at who is receiving the credit, and God is pushed aside. When this happens, God takes His Spirit with Him, and men are left with the remnant of revival trying to move in the Spirit, but God left when men began to depend on themselves.

- e. All of this dependence on God
 - i. Goes against common sense
 - ii. Contradicts our previous life experience
 - iii. Seems to disregard our feelings, training, and need for security
 - iv. Sets us up to look like a fool and a loser.
 - v. At times opposes what we want to do.

Note: Matthew 6:33 is about depending on God

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

D. Dependence on God is for His most-honored servants

1. Big screen heroes do not seem to put much stock in dependence
2. But Dependence upon God makes heroes of ordinary people like Jabez and you and me.
 - a. How?
 - b. By forcing us to cry out with Jabez's third desperate plea
"Oh, that Your hand would be with me!"
 - c. When we pray this prayer, we release God's power to accomplish His will and bring Him glory through all the seeming impossibilities

Note: Live so those around you will see you being blessed and God will receive Glory

3. Let us notice when Jabez prayed for God to be with Him
 - a. He first prayed, God bless me
 - b. Then he prayed, God enlarge my borders
 - c. Now he needs God to be with him.
 - i. At first, he could handle things, but
 - ii. As God blessed him, and as God began to enlarge his borders, Jabez saw that he had to be dependent upon God, so he prayed, "Lord, be with me"
4. So it is with us
 - a. When we get our boundaries moved out and God begins bringing us the Kingdom-sized jobs, we see that we need God's help
 - b. The larger the God-sized job, the more dependence on God
 - c. The more we depend on God, the larger the job He brings us.

Note: This applies to every area of life, from the moment we receive Christ as our Savior and we begin to make changes in our lives, we must be dependent on God for His help and guidance in every area of life.

Note: God receives glory when we do what we cannot do, and people around us see the miraculous work of God changing, cleaning, and blessing our lives

Note: As we seek God's blessings, and as we ask to do more for Him, then we must ask for God's hand to be upon us to sustain us and keep us so we can continue to do the

great things that God has begun in our lives.

Note: The hand of God upon us is “the touch of greatness.” We do not become great, but we become dependent on the strong hand of God. Our surrendered need turns into His unlimited opportunity, and he becomes great through us.

II. Illustration

Note: God’s Math.

My willingness and weakness + God’s will and supernatural power = Enlarging Territory

A. Family in the Park, and they had a five year old boy

B. There were Three slides

1. Five year old boy climbed the little slide and slid down without hesitation
2. Started up the middle size slide and got half way up and backed down, but watched others and decided he could do it, and did it.
3. Time for the Bigggggg slide.
 - a. Climbed up a ways and froze
 - b. Teenager behind him was getting impatient with him
 - c. Dad walks over and asks his son if he is okay
 - i. The 5 year old was shaken but held to the slide with determination
 - ii. Dad, will you come down the slide with me?”
 - iii. Dad says, “Why son?” “I cannot do it without you Dad, it is to big for me.”

Note: This is what God wants to hear from us. Father, will you go with me? Why child? I cannot do it without you God, because it is to big for me.

III. God’s Hand, God’s Spirit

A. It is His hands under us and not ours

1. Father, please do this in me because I cannot do it alone! It is too big for me”
2. You step out by faith and do it, and later we are crying out excitedly, “God did that, nobody else! God carried me, gave me the words, gave me the

power---and it is a wonderful life!”

B. We turn dependence into unforgettable experiences of completeness

1. As God’s power is under us, and in us surging through us
2. See what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

5) Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; 6) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit:...”

C. Many Christians seldom experience the “hand of the Lord”

1. Even mature Christian have seldom experienced the real “hand of Lord”
2. Christians do not miss it and they do not ask for it

Note: In 1995, I begin to tap into something in God that has made me look for the face of God, and I am not going to be satisfied with just feeling God once in a while, or seeing God do something in the lives of others. I want the hand of the Lord in my life.

3. Many feel that the “hand of the Lord” is for the prophets or preachers or others, but not for them
 - a. When we begin to branch out and cry to God extend our boundaries, and He does, and we come to the place where it looks like failure, then we think we have gone too far
 - b. When we reach the point where failure appears to be certain, we cry out oh no, I have gone to far: I have ended up in the wrong place, and since I already have all the resources I am going to get, then I need to exit fast.

D. Jabez did not exit, instead, he cried out for God’s hand to be upon him

1. The “hand of the Lord” is a Biblical term for God’s power and presence in the lives of His people

Note In Joshua 4:24, Joshua said the following (Niv)

He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful and so that you might always fear the LORD your God."
(Referring to them passing over Jordan)

2. The success of the early church in the book of Acts was attributed to one thing

and that is “The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord” according to Acts 11:21

3. The hand of the Lord goes along with the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and when we walk in the Spirit, then there is a dependence upon God, and God is glorified in our lives.
 - a. The early church’s growth bears powerful witness to the fact that
 - b. God’s hand being with us is necessary to accomplish the business of God.
 - c. God’s hand is available for our lives so we can do the business of God.
4. Now, let us look at the natural progression from more Blessing to more Territory to the need for Supernatural power or as Jabez put it, “...that your hand would be with me...”
 - a. Jesus Commissioned His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20, and it can be summed like this:

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...and lo, I am with you always”

- i. He gave them an incredible blessing and an impossible task.
- ii. He was speaking to His disciples, and He was saying:

“Hey, You guys. Go into all the world and preach.”

 - 1) This appears to be a disaster in the making for He is commissioning such unreliable men like Peter who allowed a girl by a campfire to cause him to deny Jesus.
 - 2) Yet, these men, who had been unreliable, were filled with the Holy Spirit in Acts chapter 2, and they proclaimed the Word with boldness and turned the world upside down for Jesus.

Note: As God blesses us, and As He enlarges our borders, We need Him to go with us. We need the anointing of the Holy Spirit in our lives to handle the Blessings of God and to handle Enlarged borders.

- b. Now remember, I said that the phrase “The Hand Of The Lord” goes along with the “Infilling of the Holy Spirit,” and being “Filled With The Spirit” is often linked to a consequence. (meaning something happens)
 - i. First, They “Spoke with Boldness” according to Acts 4:13

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were

unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

- 1) In Acts 5:29, we read these words from Peter and the others as they stood before the court

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

- 2) We see the boldness of Stephen in Acts 7:51 as he Preached

Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

- 3) In Acts 9:27, we read that Paul boldly preached after his conversion

But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Note: This boldness comes from the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Maybe some of us need a refresher course from the Holy Ghost. Maybe we need a re-filling, and there may be some who need to be filled with the Spirit. God will bless us, and He will Enlarge our borders, and He will give us His Spirit so we can have boldness to speak for Him.

- ii. Second, Only God at work through the early church could account for the Miracles and Mass Conversions that followed, and Only God at work in us is going to bring about His Revival and deliverance in our lives and the lives of others.

Note: When we ask for God's mighty presence like Jabez did, and like the early church did, we will also see tremendous results that can be explained only as from the hand of God.

5. The Believers in the Early Church continually sought to be filled by God

- a. They asked for more boldness in Acts 4:23-31

23) And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24) And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:...29) And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30) By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31) And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled

together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

b. They were known as people who spent time together in prayer Acts 2:42-47

42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43) And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44) And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45) And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46) And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Note: This early church longed to receive more of God's hand; They longed for a fresh spiritual in-filling of God's power that would turn impending, certain failure into a miracle and make their extraordinary assignment possible, for without God the assignment is impossible, but With God's Hand, or the In-filling of the Spirit, All Things Are Possible.

c. Church, we need to have the same desire that the early church had, and the same desire that Jabez had which is The Hand Of God upon us.

i. Paul told the church at Ephesus in Ephesians 3:

1) v16--"...to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;..."

b. v19--"...that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

ii. And Paul told the church at Ephesus in Ephesians 5:18

"...be filled with the Spirit;"

iii. And Jesus told the Apostles in John 20:22 ...Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

Note: Church, Are we pleading for the filling of the Spirit? Are we petitioning God regularly and fervently with this prayer: "O, put Your hand upon me! Fill me with Your Spirit!?" Church, We need to begin to seek God for more, and allow God to give us more for As He blesses us, and Enlarges our Borders, We are going to need The Hand Of God.

IV. A Father's Touch

A. As any loving dad would watch his child, and wait for the child to ask for help, God watches us and waits for us to ask for the Supernatural Power He offers.

B. 2 Chronicles 16:9 says that

“...the eyes of the Lord run to and from throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him”

C. God is not looking for spiritual giants or seminary standouts, but He eagerly seeks those who are sincerely loyal to Him.

1. God provides everything needed, except Your Loyal Heart.
2. You must provide the Loyalty.

D. We are always only one plea away from incomprehensible, Spirit-enabled exploits, and by His touch we can experience supernatural enthusiasm, boldness, and power.

E. As always, it is our choice. We need to Ask every day for the Father’s touch for dependence is just another word for Power when we are relying on God.

Note Luke 11:9-10, 13

9) ...Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. 10) For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened... 13) If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Conclude with 1 Chronicles 4:10

And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.