

1 Chronicles 4 – One Name That Stands Out

This chapter continues with the genealogies of the tribe of Judah, listing names that, quite honestly, many people might skim over. But suddenly, in the middle of all the names, one man's life breaks through the list like a spotlight—and that man is **Jabez**.

"And 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)

A Painful Start Doesn't Have to Define You

Jabez's name literally means "pain." His mother must've gone through something difficult when he was born—maybe physical hardship, emotional turmoil, or even some kind of tragedy. Whatever it was, it marked him from day one. But here's what makes him stand out: he didn't let the pain of his past define the purpose of his future. Instead of living under the label he was given, he turned to the only One who could rewrite his story—he prayed.

Just because your story starts with pain doesn't mean it has to end in sorrow. Your background doesn't have to become your identity.

Jabez: A Man of Prayer in a World of Names

In a long list of people, Jabez is remembered not for what he accomplished outwardly but for the heart he had toward God. He prayed a bold, honest, four-part prayer—and God answered it.

Let's take a moment to apply his prayer to our own lives:

"Oh, that You would bless me indeed..."

This wasn't just a request for stuff—it was a deep cry for God's favor.

Application: Do I really want God's hand on my life, or am I just content with what I can do in my own strength? Ask Him for His favor—not because you've earned it, but because He's generous.

"...and enlarge my territory..."

He wanted his influence and opportunities to grow—not just physically, but spiritually.

Application: Are my prayers too small? Am I willing to let God stretch my life beyond my comfort zone? Pray for bigger vision, wider influence, and open doors to be used for His glory.

"...that Your hand would be with me..."

Jabez knew he couldn't do life without God's help.

Application: Whose hand am I holding onto—God's or my own? Surrender your plans and ask for His presence every step of the way.

"...and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!"

He didn't just want to avoid pain for himself—he didn't want to inflict it on others.

Application: Are my choices helping others or hurting them? Ask God to guard your heart, your habits, and your decisions—because sin always brings grief.

"And God granted him what he requested."

That's powerful. God listens to the prayers of those who humbly seek Him.

Lessons from the Rest of the Chapter

The genealogy continues, including details about the tribe of Simeon, some of whom eventually moved into the region of Edom and settled there. It reminds us that God not only records names—He remembers lives, locations, and legacies. Some believe these scattered tribes may even be connected to modern-day groups around the world. Whether or not that's the case, the point is clear: God never forgets His people.

Application: You might feel like just another name in a crowd, but not to God. He sees your story. He knows your struggles. And like Jabez, you can choose to stand out—not by striving for status but by being someone who leans into prayer, trusts God's plan, and walks in humility.

Final Thought

If there's one takeaway from this chapter, it's this: you don't need a perfect past to have a powerful prayer life and a fruitful life. Start where you are, with whatever's broken, and ask God to bless you, grow you, lead you, and protect you.

Because He still answers those kinds of prayers.