



Prayer of Jabez - Pastor Greg

1 Chronicles 4:9-10 – a man who rose to great things in God.

1. **His mum named him 'pain'**. Imagine growing up with that, especially in the school yard. How could this have affected his view of his himself? A) Jabez refused to be limited to what others said about his life. He chose to have and seek a grander vision for his life.
2. **Where did he turn?** God! He was a man who sought God. He was a worshiper of God (unlike others who commonly worshiped idols). A) He did not look to man, or even himself – his own abilities etc: he looked to God (v9)
3. **He believed God could bless his life, and expand his territory.** He was a man of faith. A) He believed in the blessing of God. My! How we need the blessing and grace of God. He believed God was gracious! GRACE!
4. **He had a vision beyond his own needs.** A) He could have stopped at 'bless ME!' ** Some say, 'well, I don't want for much in life; just my basic needs; I'll just look after my patch and not be a trouble to anyone; no grand vision for me'. I think this is incredibly selfish. B) Jabez was not like that. Why?? I believe he was a covenant man. He knew God had made a covenant with Israel – to inherit the land that God had taken this small nation insignificant in the eyes of the world, and determined to bless it and make it a blessing and witness of his love to the whole world. C) I think God is looking for people with a vision like Jabez – of expanding territory. How does that work for us who follow Christ?
 - Evangelism, making disciples, world missions, church planting, developing the local church, using your work/ business for God's glory and the extension of His Kingdom, having a vision for your family to be a blessing to the nations (children: my vision for my kids is not that they have a successful career and build a retirement income. It's for them to become world changers for Christ) 'nothing else worth living for!
5. **'Let your hand be upon me'**. He knew it could only happen by God's power upon his life. God dependence!



6. **‘Keep me from evil (echoes the Lord’s prayer)**. His heart was turned away from evil. He wanted to honour God. ‘He was more honourable than his brethren’.

7. **‘That I may not cause pain’**. **People had assumed that his life would be marked by pain, even causing others pain (think of the significance of names in ancient culture). He would have none of that. A) His heart was to love others, to be a blessing to others. You see, I think he had observed how people hurt each other and cause pain. It grieved him. He was a covenant man: he knew God had decreed that he would be a blessing and never a curse upon others!

8. **‘And God granted his request’**. Nothing will attract the favour of God more than a favourable life; and honorable life. ‘Honourable’ meant his testimony was worthy of great respect and to be emulated. A) Build an honourable vision for your life, one that honours God and is worthy of Him! That was Jabez, a man like us, one who had every reason to allow his impediment to limit his life. But, He looked to the one who could bless and expand his territory and give him a noble testimony. He looked to the one who could make him a blessing causing healing and life and not pain! Blessed to be a blessing!