

# Prayer's Practicality

*Ray Stedman*

## I. Introduction.

- A. Text: I Chronicles 4:9-10.
- B. Subject: the impact of prayer on a troubled life.
- C. Theme: Jabez was a man who believed in prayer.

## II. There is something wrong in the life of Jabez.

- A. The clue is that his brothers were dishonorable—his family had a bad reputation, and he was the exception.
- B. Jabez's mother named him "pain." The mother saw nothing ahead but hopelessness.
- C. No father is mentioned.
- D. Jabez's prayer for a larger border is indicative of poverty.
- E. Jabez prays that God would keep him from the evil in him to keep him from "pain."
- F. This is a picture of a person who has all the cards stacked against him.

## III. Jabez learned that there was a God and He answered prayer.

- A. Jabez is not being selfish in his prayer because he is praying for something God wanted him to have.
- B. Asking for a blessing is a request to be close to God.
  - 1. Jabez understood that the key to life is to be loved, understood and appreciated.
  - 2. Jabez above all else requests for a consciousness that he belongs to God and God to him.
- C. Jabez's request for larger borders is a request for opportunity.
- D. Jabez's request for God's hand is for a guide in the unexpected future.
- E. Jabez's request to be kept from the evil is recognition of the evil within him.

## IV. God granted what Jabez asked.

- A. Everything was restored to Jabez, probably over time.
- B. Answers to prayers often come in quiet, subtle ways.

C. Jabez's name became associated with an important place for scribes perhaps suggesting that he was a man of the Word.

D. God adequately and fully answered Jabez's prayer showing how practical prayer is.

**Application questions:**

1. Have you ever felt like all the cards were stacked against you? Explain.

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2. How is Jabez's prayer a model for you in hard times?

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3. Which part of Jabez's prayer stands out to you? Explain what it means to you personally.

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