

DID YOU ASK?



A S H A K E T H E N A T I O N S D E V O T I O N A L

Now 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**

I hope that you take the time to slow down and ponder the reality that the God we serve cares about the details. Yes, the details about YOUR life.

We see that in the mention of this man named Jabez from the tribe of Judah. Hidden in the recording of the descendants of the tribe, we find 2 verses that radiate God's attention to detail — He sees you!

We know that Jabez was a man of honor, at least in comparison to his brothers. We see that his mother named him. Details are limited, but I wonder if his mother gave the name because something happened to his father before he was born, therefore, she had to name him alone and chose the name because of the pain of losing his father. For some reason, I don't think it was physical pain, but deep pain in her heart.

We see that Jabez was a man that called upon the God of Israel; he followed the God of his forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I wonder if when Jabez was pleading – **'Oh, that you would bless me indeed'** – that he was longing for a future that was different from his past of pain. I wonder if the blessing he was after was joy and peace versus a bigger house and a fancy camel.

I wonder if the request – **'and enlarge my territory'** – had to do with the lineage he wanted to bring forth in order to honor the remembrance of his earthly father and his God? I wonder if there was something about the way that he was raised that made him feel isolated and set aside because of the pain that he had caused his mother?

'Let your hand be with me' – He knew from where his strength came. He saw and believed in the way that God had moved in the lives of his ancestors and knew that the God of Israel needed to be with him – for life, for peace, for strength and safety.

There are different translations of the final request, above is the NKJV translation – **'and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!'** I wonder if he lived with a constant reminder of his birth story of pain. Maybe, in his honorable character, he wanted to request that he maintain a humble heart so that he would keep right standing with those around him. My heart feels as though Jabez had a very heavy burden that he carried from his childhood, yet, he knew to call upon the God of Israel for blessing, prosperity, protection, and purity.

The last sentence of this verse should make you stop and realize the goodness of our God – **'So, God granted him what he requested.'** God hears your cries! He hears your requests. The weight of the request and the freedom of the answer – that is our God! He wants to carry your burdens, lighten your load, expand your territory, keep you from evil. Ask! He is faithful to answer.