

Fresh Fire Ministries
The Expository Teaching Ministry of Jay Duane Driver

“Pain Management”

“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. I Chron. 4:10 (NKJV)

The subject of our devotional passage Jabez was named as result of the painful childbirth of his mother that ushered him into the world. She named him in a manner that would clearly describe what she had to endure. The pain was so debilitating that she names her son pain. Can you imagine that each time your name was uttered or mentioned it reminded everyone who heard it of the pain that you caused someone to experience? Why in this historical account of the first book of Chronicles the writer would pause parenthetically to insert this brief narrative into the oracles of the nation of Israel’s history is not clearly understood. But we can be confident that it is not there by accident or happenstance. Jabez birthed in pain, causing pain, named pain, and now he is determined to not cause pain any longer.

Pain that is imposed on us by others either by circumstance, name, or even self-inflicted is generally the result of unresolved issues that we have failed to confront or address. Should those issues remain intact they have the potential to impact those who are in our most immediate sphere of influence. **“Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled.” Hebrews 12:15 (NKJV)** Here the idea is that of the root of bitterness, but by application it can also be a root of pain that would bear the same results. Pain that is unaddressed or that is improperly managed can cause trouble and many can be defiled by our failure to seek healing and resolution. Jabez would not allow pain to be his legacy.

The nature of Jabez’s request is one that should draw us closer to resolving the episodes of pain that we have had to endure in our life regardless of its origin. He desires the Lord to keep His hands upon his life. The picture is that of the potter and the clay, the Creator and the creature. In the hands of the Father is the opportunity to be made all over again in spite of the pain and the scars that may yet remain. **“And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.” Jeremiah 18:4 (NKJV)** Jesus perhaps said it best in John 10:28, that no one can snatch us out of the Father’s hand. It is place of power, provision, protection, and peace. Secondly, Jabez prays that the Lord would keep Him from evil. Certainly this would be something that God could do, but impossible for Jabez to do on his own. With his life surrounded by pain it would be easy for him to project that pain on others who perhaps had nothing to do with his painful circumstances. We’ve heard it said before. “Hurting people hurt people.” This was not Jabez’s desire.

Far and above the previous requests is the desire that Jabez would not cause pain. This is clear and conclusive evidence that Jabez, apart from everything else was on his way to healing and wholeness. He does not want to be the catalysis for anyone else’s pain. He knew it too well. He would still be intimately acquainted with it just by the mention of his name, but that would not be his lasting legacy. He chooses peace over pain, healing and wholeness over the status quo of pain. Oh how wonderful it would be if we as a nation, a culture, and society, and a people would desire the same.