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CHRONICLES 4:9-10

PRAYER OF JABEZ

ormally all parents will name their new-born baby with a name that has a good meaning. They are hoping that the name will reflect the baby's future. But this is not the case for Jabez. When his mother gave birth to him, his mother was in so much pain thus he was named Jabez. Jabez means "he causes pain or sorrow".

However, Jabez defied the meaning of his name and believed that his name won't be his future. Jabez prayed for God's blessing, prosperity and victory. He humbly asked for God's guidance and protection from any harm. The purpose of his prayer was to live free from sorrow. God granted his prayer!

As a result, he was more respected than his brothers because he sought God to change his situation of life. He did not let his name define his characters. He did not let his surroundings determine his life. He let his faith in God designate his life.

Just like Jabez, you can turn a sorrowful situation into a favourable one just by praying humbly with faith to the all-powerful God.

Key verse:

1 Chronicles 4:10 You would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let Your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain

Prayer

Dear God, I know You have so many great purposes in store for my life. Bless me and help me to do Your will in my life. Amen.



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MINISTRY TO SERVE

The Levites had the privilege to minister in the temple of God. Some of them were priests. They were in charge of the priesthood duties. Others would be responsible for other duties such as opening the gates of the house of God, preparing the bread for offering, setting out the table of offering, playing the musical instruments, singing, etc. They had different responsibilities but each of them had a significant role. They served God and the people in the temple of God.

You may see different ministers in your church too. There are ushers, musicians, worship leaders, singers, Sunday school teachers, dancers and many other ministers. Just like the Levites, they are involved in the church ministry to serve God and His people in the church.

When you know that your gift or talent is from God and then you use it to serve God to glorify Him, it will give you such great joy. Ministering God and His people is the most fulfilling achievement in life.

When you are involved in the ministry, you will grow in the way God wants you to grow because you use your talent, time and energy to bless others. It teaches you to be more selfless and to build up your faith in God.

Key verse:

2 Corinthians 4:1 Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.

Prayer

Dear God, help me to find my calling to get involved in the ministry to serve You. I want to experience an adventure of faith, blessing and grace through ministry. Amen.





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DEVOTED TO GOD

avid had mighty warriors called 'the Thirty'. They served an important role in protecting the king and fighting for the freedom of their nation, Israel. Amongst 'the Thirty', there were three warriors called 'the Three'. They were Josheb-Basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah (2 Samuel 23:8-11).

When David was at the cave of Adullam hiding from the Philistines, he was so thirsty and he wished that someone would fetch him some water from the well of Bethlehem. He did not specifically instruct his warriors to do it for him but the three warriors heard his wish and they broke through the Philistine lines, went to Bethlehem and took some water for David

David was so touched by their sacrifice that he could not bring himself to drink the water. In the end, he poured the water out to God. He acknowledged the devotion of his warriors and had deep appreciation for their commitment. They listened to David's small wish because they were devoted to David and they were committed to pleasing David.

Let us also have the same devotion and commitment to God. It means, we follow God faithfully and always try to please God in whatever we do.

Key verse:

1 Kings 8:61
And may your
hearts be fully
committed to
the Lord our
God, to live by
His decrees
and obey His
commands, as at
this time.

Prayer

Dear God, open my eyes, ears and hearts to see, listen and understand Your heart. Amen.





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CHRONICLES 13:12-14

GOD'S PRESENCE

avid wanted to move the ark of God to Jerusalem. However, due to an incident along the way, David was afraid and then he decided to place it in Obed-Edom's house temporarily. It stayed at his house for three whole months.

During those three months, not only did Obed-Edom welcome the presence of God in his house, he also took really good care of the ark of God. He understood that this ark represented the holy presence of God. He honoured and respected the presence of God and had a devoted relationship with God. The Bible says that God blessed his family and everything he owned.

Always pray that God's presence fill your heart and life. The presence of God is like heaven on earth. It brings the true blessings of joy, peace, happiness and assurance into your life. You will be assured that you have Someone who will never leave you alone.

Key verse:

Psalm 16:11
Being with You
will fill me with
joy. At Your right
hand I will find
pleasure forever.

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the privilege of Your presence in my life. I want to always feel Your presence in my heart. Amen.





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1 CHRONICLES 14:8-17

ORA ET LABORA

David was not an ordinary warrior. David had many experiences as a soldier, warrior, and leader. He had been through many battles and God had given so many victories over his enemies. But David didn't depend on his own experience and success to face the Philistines. The first thing he did was asking for God's guidance.

Ora et Labora is a Latin phrase that means "pray and work". This is what David did. He prayed to God and asked for His guidance before going to the battle, and at the same time, he worked on his battle strategies according to God's guidance.

You must set some time aside to focus on your relationship with God through prayer. Hard work is necessary too but it is not supposed to take away your prayer time. Pray should become part of work and vice versa.

When you have an upcoming test or exam, as much as you need to study to prepare for it, you also ought to pray to ask for God's wisdom and guidance. God's guidance and your hard work will result in a remarkable success. May Ora et Labora become your way of life.

Key verse:

Psalm 90:17 Lord our God, be pleased with us. Give us success in what we do.

Prayer

Dear God, may I always depend on You as much as I do my responsibilities with full willingness. Amen.





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1 CHRONICLES 17:3-4; 11-12 & 16-25

NOT MY WAYS BUT YOURS, GOD

Although David had a desire and plan to build a temple for God, God didn't choose him to build it. Instead, God chose David's son. David's reaction to God's way is so priceless. Instead of feeling disappointed and complaining, David praised God for all His love and blessings. David knew that everything was going to be done according to God's way, not his own way. David did not insist to do what he wanted; he did what God wanted.

When you want something desperately, choosing God's way is not easy. Pray honestly to God because He understands. He will give you the strength to let go of your way and turn to His way.

When things do not go as you plan, do not complain but praise God. Place your trust in God and tell Him "not my way but Yours, God." God's way has a greater purpose. It is greater than what you can see because God sees the future. When you show willingness to trust Him in every situation, you become a part of that greater purpose.

Key verse:

Isaiah 55:8
The Lord says,
"Your thoughts
are not like My
thoughts. Your
ways are not like
My ways.

Prayer

Dear God, I surrender all my plans, desires and dreams into Your hands. May all happen according to Your ways, not mine. I trust in You. Amen.





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BE TRUTHFUL

avid asked Joab to number Israel. Israel did not belong to David. Instead, Israel belonged to God. Rightfully, David could only number Israel upon God's command. David did not receive such command from God but he still insisted on doing it.

Joab knew that numbering Israel would bring God's anger on Israel. He was clearly concerned about this and he tried to warn David to cancel his plan. However, his wise advice was ignored.

Joab knew the truth and tried to speak out the truth. Be a friend who speaks the truth, no matter how hard the circumstances and situations are.

Pointing out wrongdoing might be difficult, but it is a true act of sincere friendship. As long as you speak the truth in a gentle way and don't confront your friends in a hurtful way, it can strengthen your friendship.

In the same way, when your friends try to remind you about your wrongdoing, be thankful for having such wise friends. Treasure them!

Key verse:

Proverbs 27:5 A truly good friend will openly correct you.

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the friends you have put into my life. Help me to be truthful to them. Amen.

