

Hermeneutic Study – 7th Session

Agenda: for tonight – August 23rd, 2009

- Exegete a Passage
 - The Book “The Prayer of Jabez”
 - Begin with Prayer
 - Reading and Mulling a Passage
 - Broad view
 - Book view
 - Near Passage View
 - Immediate Passage View
 - Putting it all together

Exegete a Passage

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore *him* with pain." Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep *me* from harm that *it* may not pain me!" And God granted him what he requested.

From this passage a book was written: "[The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life](#)" by Bruce Wilkerson

The book became an international bestseller, topping the [New York Times](#) bestseller list and selling nine million copies. It received the [Evangelical Christian Publishers Association Gold Medallion Book of the Year award](#) in [2001](#).

Its publisher, Multnomah, authorized a wide array of official "Prayer of Jabez" merchandise including key chains, mugs, backpacks, Christmas ornaments, scented candles, mouse pads, and a framed artist's conception of Jabez himself. A line of jewelry was introduced in [2002](#). (Source Wikipedia)

Exegete a Passage

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

From the book “The Prayer of Jabez – Breaking Through to the Blessed Life” by Bruce Wilkerson....

“I challenge you to make the Jabez prayer for blessing part of the daily fabric of your life. To do that, I encourage you to follow unwaveringly the plan outlined here for the next thirty days. By the end of that time, you'll be noticing significant changes in your life, and the prayer will be on its way to becoming a treasured, lifelong habit.” (source from Wikipedia quoted from the book)

- ❑ “I want to teach you how to pray a daring prayer that God always answers. It is brief—only one sentence with four parts—and tucked away in the Bible, but I believe it contains the key to a life of extraordinary favor with God” (p. 8).
- ❑ “Let me tell you a guaranteed byproduct of sincerely seeking his blessing: your life will become marked by miracles. How do I know? Because he promises it, and I’ve seen it happen in my own!” (pp. 24-25).
- ❑ “If Jabez had worked on Wall Street, he might have prayed, ‘Lord, increase the value of my investment portfolios’” (p. 31).

Exegete a Passage

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

From the book “The Prayer of Jabez – Breaking Through to the Blessed Life” by Bruce Wilkerson....

The first two of six steps of the Jabez daily prayer routine given in the book:

- ❑ Pray the Jabez prayer every morning, and keep a record of your daily prayer by marking off a calendar or a chart you make especially for the purpose.
- ❑ Write out the prayer and tape it in your Bible, in your day-timer, on your bathroom mirror, or some other place where you'll be reminded of your new vision.

Following on the heels of the initial best seller came:

- Three versions written for children, one each targeted at preschoolers, 8-12 year olds & teens
- *The Prayer of Jabez Journal*
- *The Prayer of Jabez Devotional* (one edition for children, one for adults)
- *The Prayer of Jabez Bible Study*
- *The Prayer of Jabez for Women* written by Wilkinson's wife, Darlene
- a musical companion, *The Prayer of Jabez Music ... A Worship Experience* (ForeFront Records)

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All of the items on the exegete list for consideration may not pertain, or be directly relevant, but we will not know their contribution unless we prayerfully go to the trouble of looking at all the facts.

Broad view:

Who is the writer?

Most likely Ezra the priest (he is listed as such in the Jewish Talmud, and the emphasis on the Temple, priesthood, and theocratic line make it likely).

When was it written?

It was written between 450 and 430 BC (at the time of the returned remnant). Ezra led some of the exiles to Jerusalem in 457 BC. However, the first 9 chapters of 1st Chronicles concerns the genealogies of the time from Adam to David.

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What type of writing is it (history, poetry, letter, narrative, law, etc.)? What ramifications does the type bring to the exegesis?

1st Chronicles is a religious history of the Davidic dynasty of Judah – in other words, it is a history of the line God used to give us the Messiah. It covers the same line of history provided in 2nd Samuel, but from a different perspective – Samuel is focused on the political history whereas Chronicles is on the religious line. The fact of the religious line focus brings with it covenant issues.

For what purpose was the book written?

It was written to provide a spiritual perspective on what God is doing in history from the beginning of human history to the end of the Babylonian captivity. In doing so it reveals the purpose of God in the history of Israel, and the line God will use to bring the Messiah.

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For whom is the book written – who were to be the original readers?

It was written for the returning remnant, to show God's faithfulness to His covenant promises, and as an encouragement to those returning.

Is there a key verse or verses for this writing?

1 Chronicles 17:11-14 "And it shall be, when your days are fulfilled, when you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up your seed after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build Me a house, and I will establish His throne forever. I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son; and I will not take My mercy away from Him, as I took it from him who was before you. And, I will establish Him in My house, and in My kingdom forever; and His throne shall be established forever."

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How does it fit into the general context of all Scripture (history, culture, circumstance)?

This book unlike Samuel and Kings focuses on the Southern Kingdom (Judah), and more specifically on the Davidic line. It emphasizes the priestly ministry and spiritual concerns, and provides a message of hope from the tragedy of apostasy.

How does it fit the timeline of history when it was written (in relation to other books)?

Ezra takes the spiritual line that God will use to bring forth Messiah all the way from the beginning through the Babylonian captivity. It coincides with the history of Israel provided from Genesis 30 to Nehemiah. We know from the relationship of Othniel (vs 13) who is the nephew of Caleb (Josh 15:17) that Jabez would then be living during the early years of the wars for land possession, or the time of partial possession found in the difficult days of the Judges (see Joshua 23:4-13; Judges 2:10-23).

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How does it fit into the timeline relationship of progressive revelation?

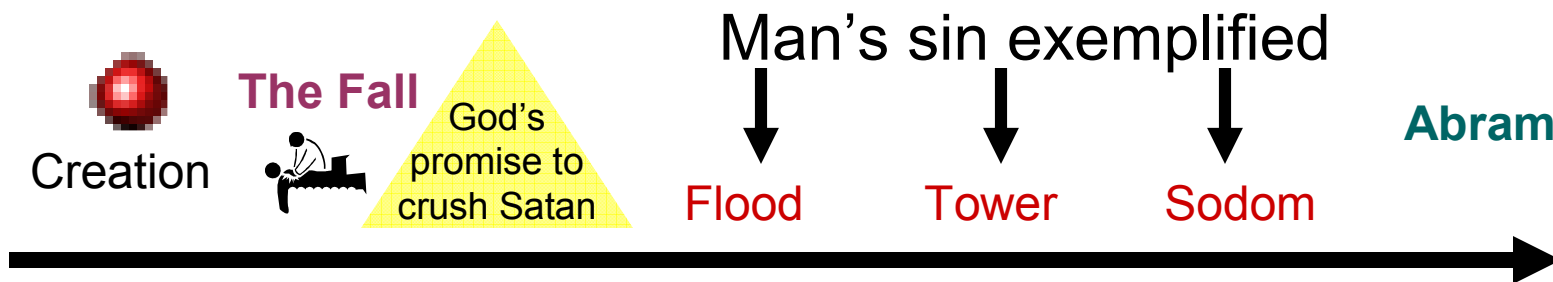
To understand what is written we must correlate events along the historical timeline with the circumstances of the spiritual line, and place ourselves back at that point in time to understand their culture and perspective. What did Jabez (as part of the spiritual line) understand as the revealed will of God for his time? For practical purposes then, we must understand 1 Chronicles 4 in light of spiritual revelation at that time – ie: what revelation were the people accountable for as God's will and purpose at that point in history?

- ❑ These Jews are under the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Palestinian Covenants
- ❑ Genesis 49:10 – the Messiah will come through the descendants of Judah
- ❑ Deut 32:23 – Joshua is commissioned to fulfill possession of the land
- ❑ Joshua 13:1 – the land is still not possessed – this is disobedience
- ❑ Joshua 15:35; 23:4-6; 23:12-13; 15:63 – all Israel commanded to possess land

The Covenants – Overview:

Timeline:

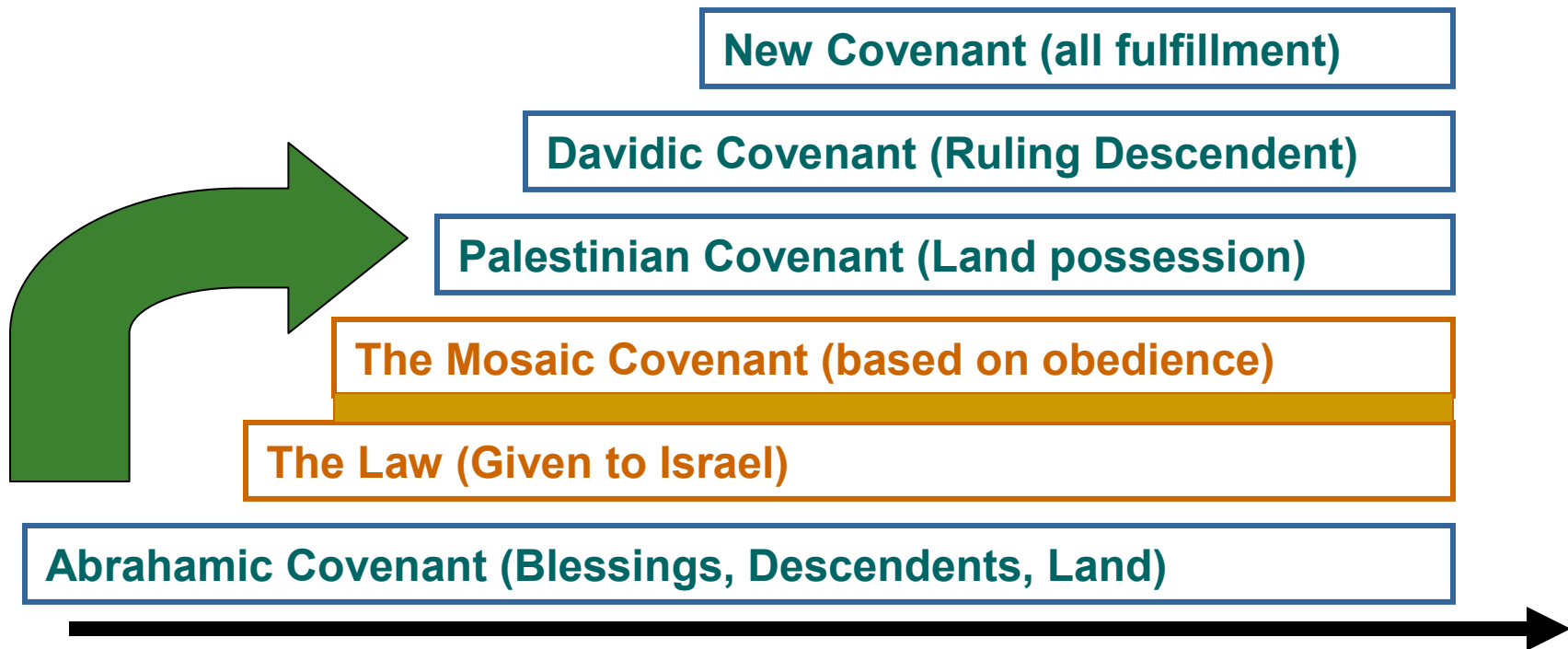
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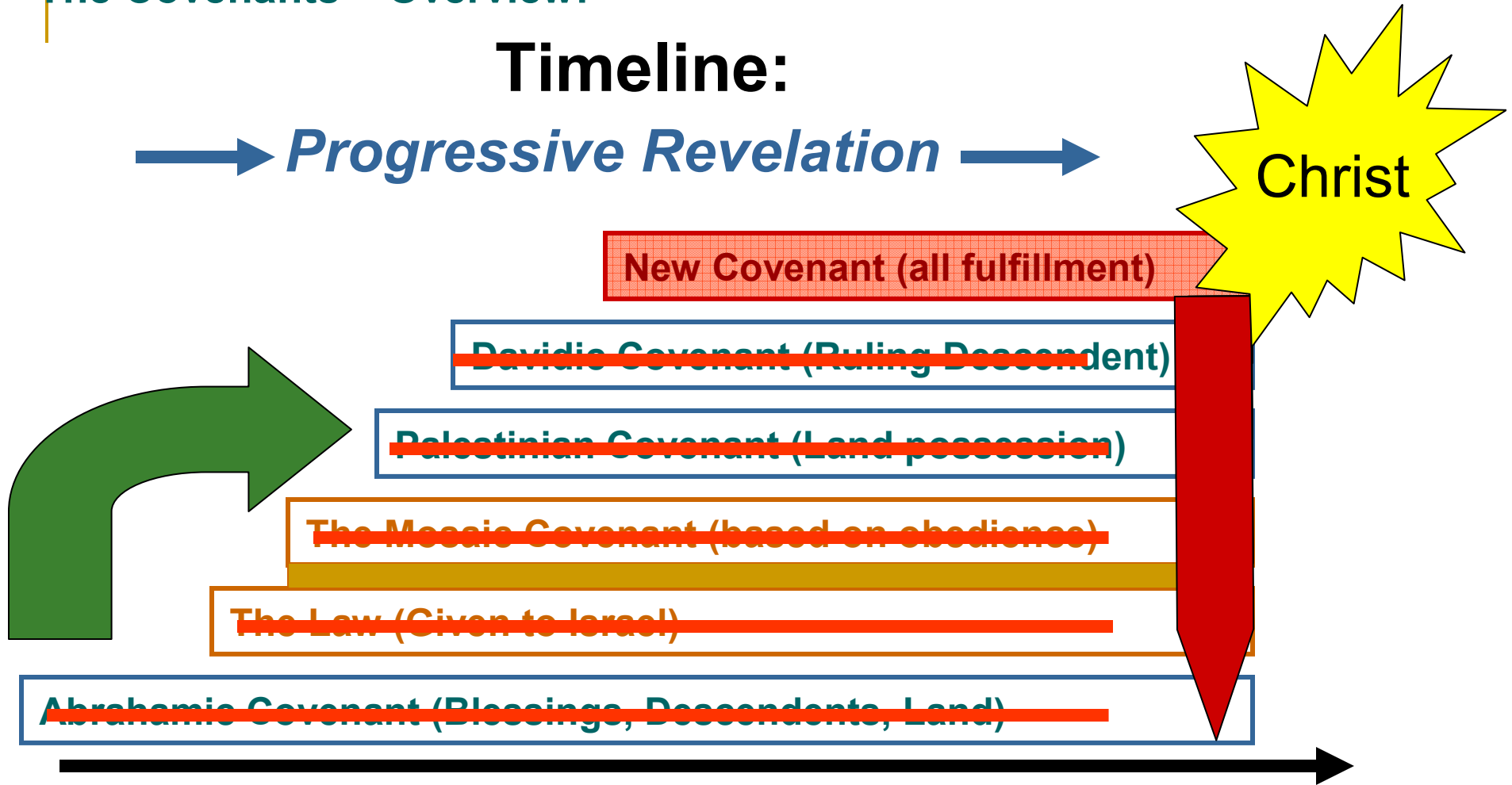
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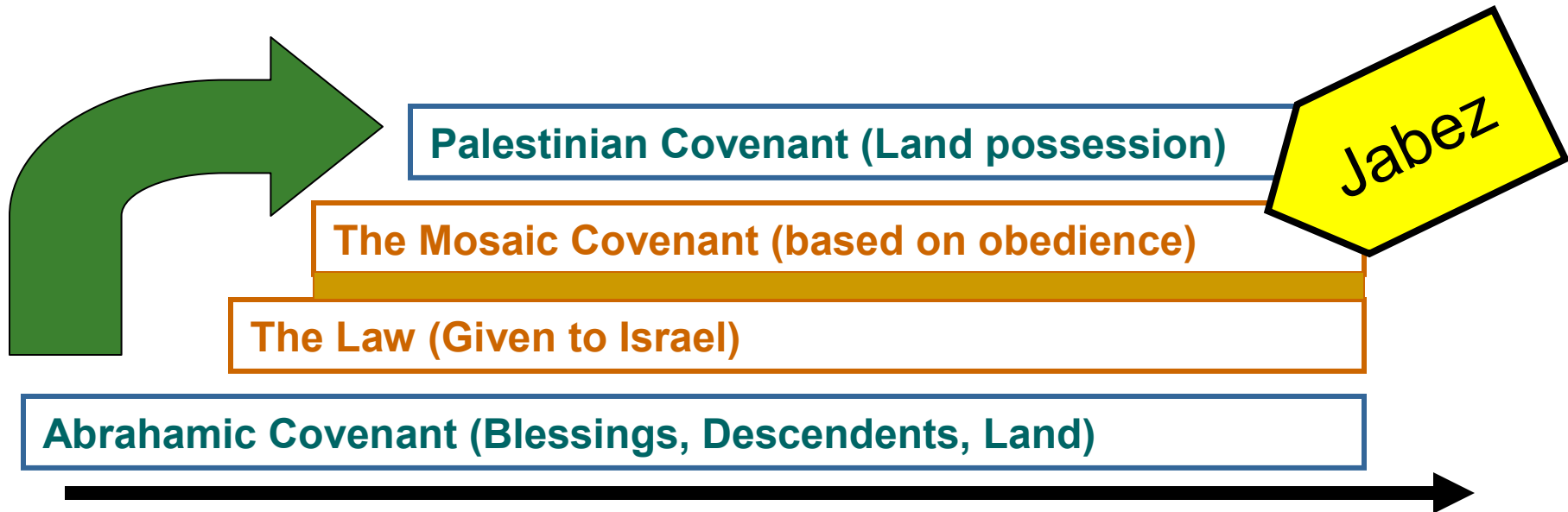
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Book view:

Complete a broad by chapter outline of the writing.

Part One – The Royal Line from Adam to the Remnant	Chapter 1-9
I. The Genealogy from Adam to Jacob	Chapter 1
II. The Genealogy from Jacob to David	Chapter 2
III. The Genealogy from David to the Captivity	Chapter 3
IV. The Genealogies of the Twelve Tribes	Chapter 4 - 8
V. The Genealogy of the Remnant & Saul	Chapter 9
Part Two – The Rule of King David	Chapter 10-28

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How does the chapter of the passage fit into the rest of the writing, and what is its purpose in relation to the whole writing?

The chapters from 1 – 9 are comprehensive genealogical tables. They trace the family tree of Israel as a whole, with special emphasis on the line of Judah through David. The genealogies place a disproportionate emphasis on the southern kingdom of Judah and the Davidic dynasty. It shows the sovereign purpose and working of God in selecting and preserving a people for Himself from the beginning of human history through the Babylonian captivity. God is keeping the Abrahamic Covenant by establishing the descendants of Abraham, giving them a specific land, and will ultimately bless all the nations of the earth through them.

Chapter 4 has relevance in showing God's faithfulness specifically in preserving a line of people through the tribe of Judah. In the process of writing the genealogies the writer makes specific narrative about Jabez as a standout individual in his day.

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What would be missing if the chapter containing the passage were left out of the writing?

Were chapter 4 left out, we would not have the record of the specific faithfulness of God in maintaining the descendent line through Judah, nor the special reference to Jabez, who is singularly distinguished as faithful in obedience to God during his time.

Near Passage View:

Look for the paragraph breaks

What is written about or happening in the chapter before, and paragraph's before?

The chapter before gives the specific genealogy of the sons of David.

The first 10 verses of chapter 4 constitute one paragraph, which means that verses 9 & 10 are associated with the new and same theme which began in chapter 4:1.

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What is written about or happening in the chapter after, and paragraph's after?

In the immediate next paragraph, which is only two verses (11 & 12) the genealogy of the men of Rechah. The name Shuhah is likely connected with the family of the "Shua," whose daughter Judah took to wife [1Ch 2:3](#); [Gen 38:2](#), and whose family thus became related to the tribe of Judah. In the remainder of the chapter we have a continuation of the genealogies. In vs 13 Othniel is nephew of Caleb (Josh 15:17). The importance of this is that it places the context time of Jabez from the time during the wars for possession of the land into the time of partial possession in Judges.

Is there a connecting word at the beginning of this paragraph or passage?

The word "and" is used by many of the translations. Whether the "and" is placed at the beginning or not the wording of the sentence shows it belongs "along with" the genealogical explanation of the family of Koz (vs 8), through the descendents of Hur (vs 4) and Asher (vs 5-8), as descendents of Judah. The phrase "more honorable than his brothers" shows the connectivity back to the previous verse that lists them.

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What is this passage or paragraphs relation to those immediately before and after?

By relation to all the passages before and after Jabez is another in the line of Judah. However, it is obvious the writer is providing detail that he provides with none of the others of one of the line of sons who exercised particular faith that was pleasing to God, and as a result God blessed the individual. The detail here is out of the norm of all the genealogies, and is reflective of how God records standout individuals of faith throughout Old Testament history.

What would be missing if the passage or paragraph were left out of the chapter?

The record of a man of obedience and faith that stood apart from the rest of the persons listed. It shows the work of God continuing, and that God always has His faithful.

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Immediate Passage View:

What type of writing is this passage (narrative, explanation, quote, etc.)?

The passage, verses 9 -10, is a narrative history. It is surrounded by a narrative genealogical history of the descendants of Judah.

Is the passage answering a question or is it connected in any manner to the passages before and after, and if so how?

The passage is pointing out one of the individuals among the descendants of Judah who demonstrated obedience and faith to God – so much so that the writer under inspiration used him as an example for encouragement to the readers. It is connected only through the genealogy being presented.

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Are there other books, parallel passages, or passages dealing with the same event, subject, command, theme, concept, or word expressions? List them.

Numbers 34:1-19; Deut 11:24-28; 12:20; Joshua 15:1-63; 2 Kings 14:25-28. The account of Enoch as a standout of faith in Genesis 5:24 is similar in nature.

Are there cultural terms or cultural settings that require explanation?

Ancient and Hebrew children were named by their mother according to the circumstances of their birth – Gen 4:25; 29:32-35; 30:6, 8 etc.. This sometimes had prophetic meaning, but more often than not only showed the disposition of circumstances at birth. By God's grace his life became a contradiction of his name; the son of sorrow having been successful through his obedience to God, and having been blessed by God for his determination is rewarded with significant recognition in God's Word.

It was also a tradition for Ancient and Hebrew children to make vows or declarations contingent on God's blessing – Gen 28:20. Some have made Jabez a vow.

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Are there cultural terms or cultural settings that require explanation?

What is their purpose in this passage?

The presentation of information regarding his name must have significance or it would not have been included. It appears the significance arises from the negative beginning of life for Jabez. His mother set the expectation of his life from the start as something painful or troublesome but by God's grace his life turned out the opposite. It is a reminder that "God has chosen the foolish things to confound the wise."

The prayer with the vow in the ancient context was a declaration of commitment and faith. The focus of the desire was enlargement of the the border. This enlargement was related to the very command of God for Israel to possess the land. This was therefore not something selfish, but based on the promise of God to give them the land, and bless them in the process.

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Are there cultural terms or cultural settings that require explanation?

What meaning do they bring to this passage? (the vow & name)

The framework of them provides a foundation to take the accomplishment and glory away from man, and center it upon God. The lesson here is obedience and faith in God is the catalyst of true blessing.

Is there a special or specific literary genre associated with the passage?

No.

Are there figures of speech found in the passage (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, allegory, etc.)?

Hand - Anthropomorphism: attributing physical characteristics to God

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Are there concepts, commands, or doctrines found in this passage that seem to be contrary to other concepts, commands, or doctrines found elsewhere in Scripture?

When interpreted as if it is a selfish prayer in conjunction with the teaching of the "prosperity gospel" movement it is contrary to true faith which makes Christ Lord, and includes submission of personal will to God's will "as a living sacrifice." Thus it runs in direct opposition to all of Scripture.

When correctly interpreted in its context as a Jewish man seeking to faithfully fulfill his responsibilities under specific covenants and commands – No!

What is the key verse of the immediate passage?

"Jabez was more honorable than his brothers" – the first portion of vs. 9

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- **What are the key words or phrases in the passage? Study the meaning of the key words and phrases from the original language.**

What is their definition?

- Honorable – literally “to be weighty” with idea of being distinguished
- Jabez – means to grieve or be sorrowful
- Pain – (two different words) – vs 9 – physical hurt, vs 10 – the hurt of grief
- Bless me – abundantly bless in reality
- Enlarge my border – increase my territory
- Your hand might be with me – “hand” – figuratively “power, means, and direction”

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How are those words or phrases used elsewhere in the writing?

- Honorable – 1 Chronicles 10:3; 11:21; 11:25; 19:3
- Jabez – only place used
- Pain – not in this writing
- Bless me – “bless” – 1 Chronicles 13:14; 16:2; 16:36; 16:43 (11 times)
- Enlarge my border – “border” – 1 Chronicles 6:54; 6:66; 21:12
- Your hand might be with me – “hand” – 1 Chronicles 5:10; 5:20; 6:31; 7:29 (34 times)

How are those words or phrases used in parallel writings? There are no actual parallel writings. However, in Genesis 5 where the genealogy of the descendents of Adam are given there is one standout that receives narration concerning his faith among the facts of genealogy, that person is Enoch (5:24). This is similar.

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- **How are those words or phrases used elsewhere in the Bible?**
- Honorable – Genesis 34:19; Ex 5:9; Ex 8:15; Ex 14:4 (many others)
- Jabez – only place used
- Pain – Ps 139:24; Is 14:3
- Bless me – “bless” – Gen 1:22; 9:1; Numbers 22:6 (289 times)
- Enlarge my border – “border” – Gen 10:19; Ex 8:2 (189 times)
- Your hand might be with me – “hand” – used as both literally as a physical hand or member of the body, and figuratively (1,385 times) – the context defines whether it is a physical hand or figurative.

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What do these words and phrases tell us is being communicated in the immediate passage?

Initially we are told that Jabez is more distinguished (idea is in relation to God's will) than his brothers even though he is the most unlikely, as he was named by his mother after her sorrow from his birth. The use of the term "enlarge my border" fits with the commands of God for Israel to possess the land, driving out the pagan inhabitants. That fact that he turned to God and ask his help is a demonstration of his faith being rewarded by the statement of him being more honorable. He further recognizes his success is contingent on whether God in his power (hand) is with him. The second idea of pain from verse 10 is related to grief – this grief would be profound if he committed his all in obedience and effort, and God was not with him to do as He promised.

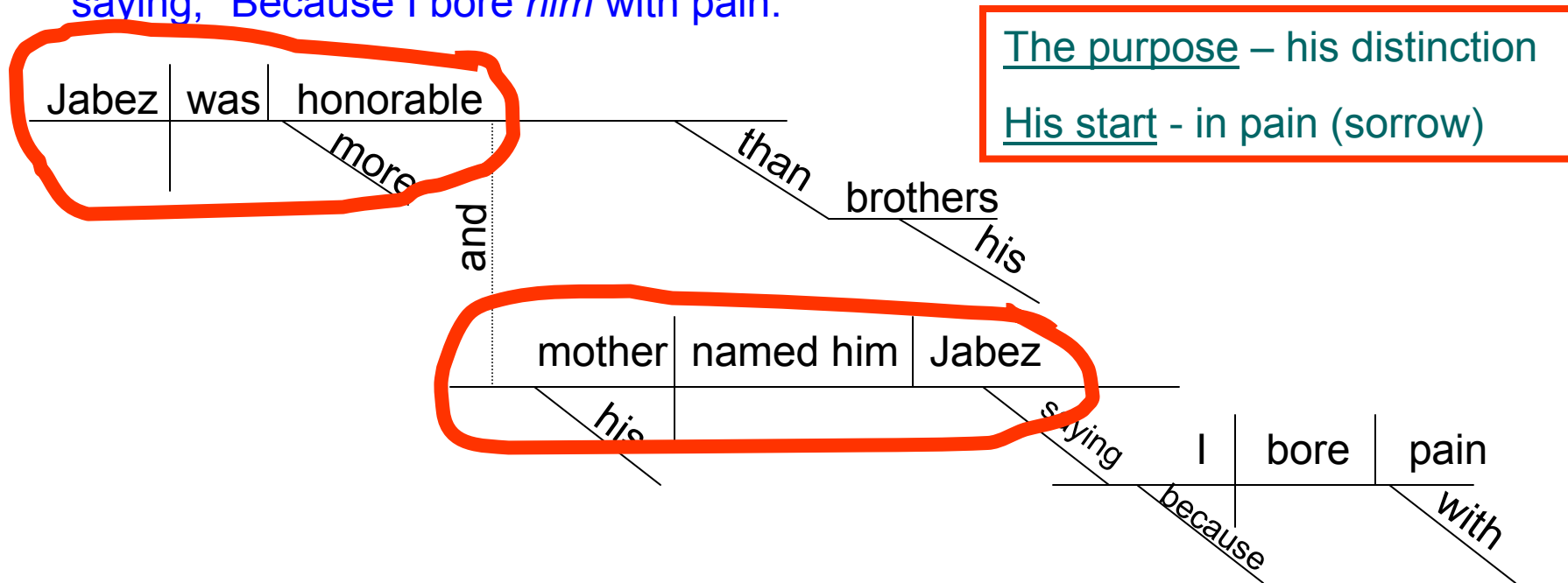
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Do basic sentence structure diagramming.

Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore *him* with pain."



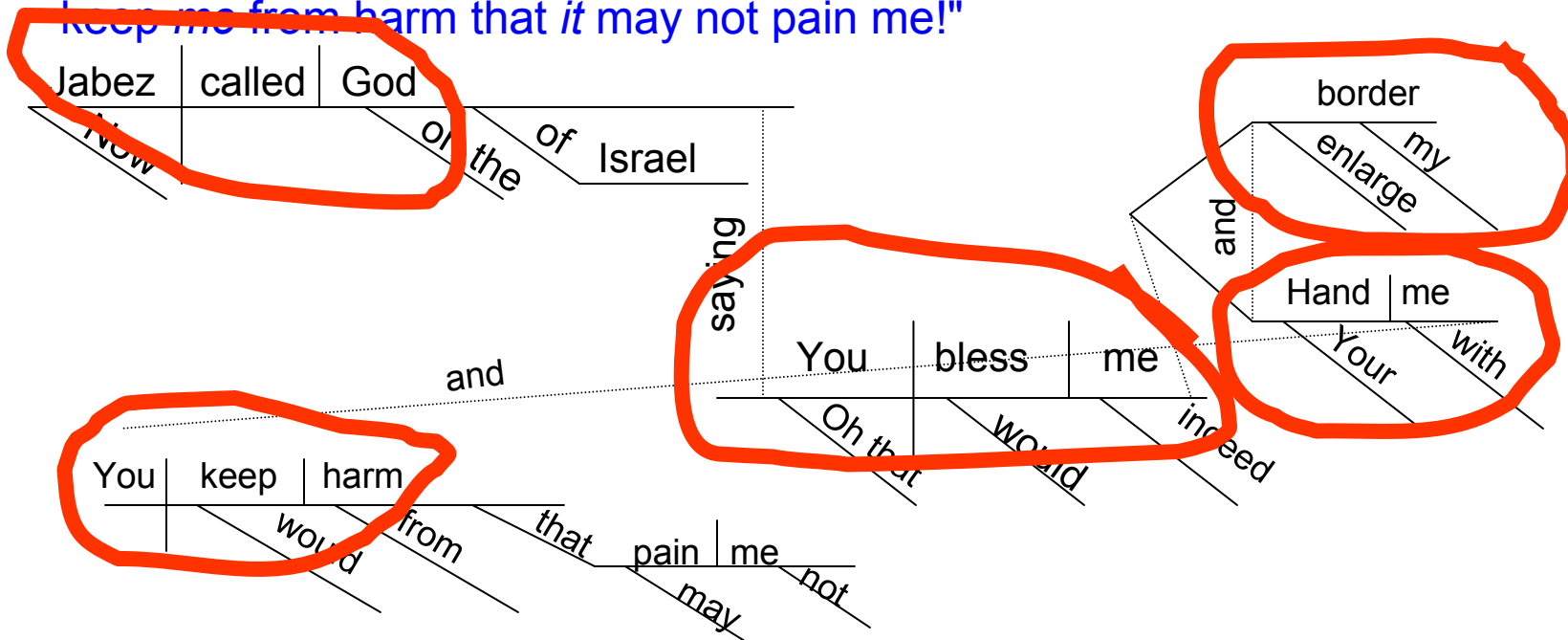
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Do basic sentence structure diagramming.

Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep me from harm that *it* may not pain me!"



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What do we have from the diagramming and other work?

- The reason this narrative is included: Jabez was distinguished by his faith
- He was distinguished by God even though his life was begun in sorrow & as he was so named, he was therefore humanly speaking the least likely to succeed
- Jabez was a man (unlike his brothers) who communed with and was determined to do God's will
- He asked God for help (a demonstration of faith) to do those things consistent with God's commands, and revealed will for his generation (the times of the Judges)
 - He asked for God's help to expand his borders (take the promised land)
 - He asked for God's hand (power) knowing unless He was present he would fail
 - He asked for God's blessing and God's protection
 - God demonstrated His faithfulness as He was pleased to honor his request

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Putting it all together:

- **Is there a concept, command, or doctrine that does not agree with or is contrary to other Scripture? What explanation can be given? No!**
- **How is this connected to the previous verse or verses? Is there a connecting word? Phrase: "more honorable than his brothers" in context of genealogy – whereas his brothers are merely names in the line, Jabez is noted by God for his faith and faithfulness in his generation.**
- **Are the clauses in the sentences dependent, or independent?**
 - Jabez was more honorable than his brothers – independent
 - His mother named him Jabez - independent

Exegete a Passage

1 Chronicles 4:9-10

Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother named him Jabez saying, "Because I bore *him* with pain." Now Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border, and that Your hand might be with me, and that You would keep *me* from harm that *it* may not pain me!" And God granted him what he requested.

Putting it all together - continued:

- "Now Jabez called on the God of Israel – independent (with connecting “now”)
- “saying, Oh that You would bless me indeed and enlarge my border” – dependent
- “and that Your hand might be with me” – dependent
- “and that You would keep me from harm” – dependent
- “that it may not pain me!” – dependent
- And God granted him what he requested – independent with connecting “and”

These sentences are interlaced so that independent thoughts cannot be drawn from them!

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Putting it all together - continued:

Are there synonyms and antonyms? How are they used?

- o Jabez is a synonym for pain"

Look at various other translations of the same passage.

1Ch 4:9-10 And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren: and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bore him with sorrow. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep *me* from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested. (NKJV)

1Ch 4:9-10 Jabez was more respected than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, for she said, "I experienced pain when I gave birth to him." Jabez called out to the God of Israel, "If only you would greatly bless me and expand my territory! May your hand be with me! Keep me from harm so I might not endure pain!" God answered his prayer. (NET)

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Putting it all together - continued:

Is this passage related to one of the covenants of God? Which one, and how?

Because Jabez is a Jew in the line of Judah (the line that gives us Christ) this narrative is related to the Abrahamic, Mosaic, and Palestinian covenants.

- Abrahamic – related to land blessings, promised descendants, and ultimate blessing – this was unconditional
- Mosaic – related to keeping God's law and commands, including the command to take possession of the promised land while depending on God – conditional on obedience
- Palestinian – was related to the land, and stated that even though Israel would be disobedient and lose the land that God would still ultimately give it to them - unconditional

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Putting it all together - continued:

Connect the dots – that is determine the relationship of the passage to the Bible, the book, the chapters before and after, and the immediate context.

- o **What is the writer communicating and why?**
- o **Why is this passage in this context?**
- o **How does this passage fit with the overall theme?**

Read commentaries on this passage.

Write a theme description for this passage – what is the purpose and what is being communicated by this passage.

Theme: God blesses Jabez, and uses him as an extraordinary example of faithfulness in his generation despite his poor beginnings.

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Outline this passage – make yourself commit to what each verse has as its intended meaning.

Part One – The Royal Line from Adam to the Remnant	Chapter 1-9
I. The Genealogy from Adam to Jacob	Chapter 1
II. The Genealogy from Jacob to David	Chapter 2
III. The Genealogy from David to the Captivity	Chapter 3
IV. The Genealogies of the Twelve Tribes	Chapter 4 – 8
A. The descendents of Judah	4:1-23
1. The descendents of Shobal	4:2-3
2. The descendents of Hur, Ashhur, Helah & Koz	4:4-10

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Outline this passage – make yourself commit to what each verse has as its intended meaning – continued.

- 2. The descendents of Hur, Ashhur, Helah & Koz 4:4-10
 - a. The sons of Hur 4:4
 - b. The sons of Ashhur, Helah, & Koz 4:5-8
 - c. The special narrative about Jabez 4:9-10
 - 1) Jabez distinguished by his faith 4:9a
 - 2) Jabez difficult beginning 4:9b
 - 3) Jabez delights in God 4:10
 - o Seeks God in prayer 4:10a
 - o Seeks fulfillment of the land promise 4:10b
 - o Seeks God's power & sovereign protection 4:10c

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Are there any unanswered issues or questions concerning the passage?

Write commentary (exegete) this passage.

The narrative concerning Jabez is found in the midst of detailed genealogy concerning the sons of Judah. The purpose of the genealogy is to show the faithfulness of God in sustaining a descendent line in fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham. The detail and order demonstrate the sovereign care of God to fulfill all He promises (1 Chron 9:1). As with Enoch in Genesis 5:22, who was being recorded in the midst of detailed genealogy, the writer unusually commented on him in reference to his relation with God. So here, the writer breaks with the mundane listing of names to comment on an unusual man of faith in his day. Jabez is singled out from his kin and brothers Anub, Zobeah, and Aharhel as being more honorable. The idea of honorable here is to be set apart by being distinguished or noble. This idea of nobility is contrasted with a background comment about his miserable beginnings and name. He was named by

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

his mother as a person of poor expectation. She was troubled by the pain he caused her in birth. So his notoriety did not come from his name or heritage. How was he then more noble? The passage tells us he was noble because of his relationship with God. Jabez called on the God of Israel. The title "God of Israel" is given to clearly show that he wasn't just a religious man, but a man in communion with the only true God.

We deduct from the position of his genealogy in accordance with others in the same general time frame, and find Othniel in verse 4:13 who is the nephew of Caleb (Josh 15:17). The importance of this is that it places the context time of Jabez from the time during the wars for possession of the land into the time of partial possession in Judges. The spiritual condition of Israel in the time of Judges is given in Judges 2:10 that after

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

the death of Joshua "there arose a generation who did not know the Lord." It is further reiterated in Judges 5:11 (the next verse) "the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord." It is into this generation and culture that we find the meaning of honorable or noble when speaking of Jabez. He was different than his brothers. He was different than his generation in general. Like Enoch in his day (Gen 5:22) he obviously knew the Lord.

There was one other cultural issue to understand regarding Jabez and his time. As a Jew he was responsible in his relationship and worship of the true God to be obedient unto all that God had commanded. His forefathers had wandered in the desert 40 years for elimination of an entire generation for their disobedience in not entering the promise land because of their lack of faith. By the time Jabez came along the Jews

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

were in the promised land, but had not completed what God commanded. They had become content and compromising, and had not driven out all the inhabitants as God commanded, nor had they taken possession of all the land. The history of this takes much of the history related to his time (Numbers 34:1-19; Duet 11:24-28; 12:20; Joshua 15:1-63; 2 Kings 14:25-28). In Deuteronomy 11:22-28 in relation to the Mosaic Covenant of which all Israel was familiar Moses says the following: "For if you are careful to keep all this commandment which I am commanding you to do, to love the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and hold fast to Him, then the Lord will drive out all these nations from before you, and you will dispossess nations greater and mightier than you. Every place on which the sole of your foot treads shall be yours, your border will be from the wilderness to Lebanon, and from the river, the river Euphrates, as far as the western sea. No man will be able to stand before you; the Lord your God will

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

be the dread of you and the fear of you on all the land on which you set foot, as He has spoken to you. See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse; the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God..." This is the foundational explanation then of why Jabez is honorable, and why Jabez is calling on God with a specific type of prayer. He was seeking God's help so that he might be obedient to God as stated by Moses in his generation.

The text just read, and many others answers the statement in Jabez prayer "oh that you would bless me indeed." This is clearly derived from the Mosaic Covenant just included – Moses statement: "see, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse." Jabez was desirous of pleasing God, and in that sense seeking His favor as

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

a blessing. This was far from a self-centered prayer, as it was the will of God that His people function in obedience and thereby be blessed. Not only that but Jabez recognized the necessity of the supernatural power to accomplish the task of "enlarging my border" and the protection of God "you would keep me from harm that it may not pain me." The idea of "enlarging my border" was also far from a personal ambition. This is shown clearly by the lack of faith of his brothers, and their contentment to co-exist with the pagans that God had commanded be destroyed (see Joshua 23:4-13). In addition, there is a listing of all the places and people Israel failed to conquer in Judges 1:27-36. This is followed with the statement from the angel of the Lord "you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars. But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? Therefore I also said, I will not drive them out before you; but they will become as thorns in your sides

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

and their gods will be a snare unto you" (Judges 2:2-3). Jabez was a man concerned to honor the Lord in his time, and the "enlargement" of his border had to do with the conquering of Israel's enemies who would ultimately turn the heads of Israel to foreign gods.

"God granted Jabez his request." We take from this that Jabez filled the role of cleansing his portion of the land and possessing the portion allotted to him in his time. He was able to do this as he stated because "Your hand might be with me."

By application – we see that Jabez was a faithful man in his time. He stood out from all the rest because of his commitment to God, and his desire to do the will of the Lord. God blessed Jabez in sovereignty by allowing Jabez to complete his righteous and committed task. This is similar to the statement made in the context of ministry by

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Write commentary (exegete) this passage - continued.

our Lord "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." Jabez was desirous of doing God's will, and asked for strength and protection to complete it. He knew from whence his ability would come. Today, as we seek to live faithfully according to God's revealed will in our generation, as living sacrifices, and seek to be a blessing in our generation, and the ability to perform it, we are in the same situation. We look to and call upon God.

Questions and Discussion – followed by
fellowship continuing at the restaurant.....