

“The Prayer of Jabez” is a short and beautiful portion of Holy Writ, which was expounded magnificently by John Brine (1703-1765), Baptist preacher and close personal friend of John Gill. The prayer itself is found at **1 Chron. 4:10**; to wit:

“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 him.”
(1 Chron. 4:10)

Slightly more of biographical material on Jabez is given us, is found at **1 Chron. 4:9**; to wit: *“And Jabez was more honorable than his brethren; and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, Because I bare him with sorrow.”* And Jabez called on the God of Israel, all whose glorious attributes were well known to Jabez and were claimed by Jabez as his own. Jabez gave evidence of knowing God in such a sense as He is not known by mere professors of religion. God gave Himself and all His attributes to each of His elect, which is evident from that comprehensive promise of the new Covenant: to wit:

“And they shall be my People, and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and, of their children after them; And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.”
(Jer. 32:38-41)

*“The Father formed a Resolution in Eternity to render the Elect happy, and in infinite Wisdom fixed upon Methods no less surprising than effectual, to bring; about this gracious Intention; All His decrees are subservient to this Purpose, and His acts in Providence as well as Grace tend to its Accomplishment; so that the Whole of what he does, is wisely calculated, to promote the Happiness of those to whom he stands in a federal Relation. It is His unalterable Determination to enjoy, and for ever be enjoyed by them, or eternally to communicate consummate Bliss, and glory that is inconceivable to them in Heaven. With very good reason therefore, it may be concluded, that the Person of the Father is theirs. This is as true of the Son, who, with the Father, concurred in the Design of their eternal Salvation, and is given to them, and for them; For God so loved the World, he gave his only begotten Son (**John 3:16**). This Donation of Christ was the Result of his own, as it is of the Father’s good Pleasure. All that he did, or acts, is with a manifest View to the Welfare of these Persons: His Assumption of our Nature, obeying the law, suffering on the Cross, and rising from the Dead, his Ascension to Heaven, and making Intercession there, all directly tend to secure the everlasting Felicity of God’s Chosen. Whence it is easy to observe, that God the Son is become theirs. They have the same Interest in the Holy Spirit, who is also given to them: Because the Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given unto us (**Romans 5:5**) The third Person in the Trinity agrees with the Father and the Son in carrying on the Design of the Salvation of Sinners: He is not less concerned in this great Affair; pursuant to the Father’s Purpose in Election, and the Son’s in Redemption, the Holy Spirit quickens the Elect, when dead in Sin, and continues Influences upon them, to ripen the Work of Grace in them, until it is perfected in Glory. At the Time of*

Regeneration he enters into the Soul, and remains there as a Spirit of Illumination and Consolation: He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever (John 14:16). Thus all the Persons in the Godhead are the Saints'. All the divine attributes are the Elects'. EVERY PERFECTION IN GOD DISPLAYS ITSELF IN BRINGING ABOUT THEIR SALVATION."

1.) LOVE gave birth to the design, and runs through every part of it. This was wrought out in the council halls of eternity. Our Predestination to immortal Dignity and Honor, such as is proper to the sons of God, is to the Praise of the Glory of Free Grace; to wit:

***"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in LOVE; Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him; In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ."*(Eph. 1:4-12)**

Beloved, pause to admire all these steps that God has taken in order to its accomplishment. These are but the Fruits of the same infinite LOVE toward these Elect people. Hence the Apostle John observes that God is LOVE (1 Jn. 4:16) i.e., to those who by His Spirit know and believe their interest in the Divine Favor.

2.) The WISDOM of God has as deeply interested itself in promoting of the Saints' Happiness; His LOVE formed the Resolution, and His WISDOM directed to all the Means leading on to the Execution. As only boundless LOVE – DIVINE LOVE – could give rise to the stupendous Decree of Saving Sinners, so Infinite Divine WISDOM – ALONE (!) – could surmount the Difficulties attending it, and point out Methods suitable to accomplish it. Beloved, just think of it. In our glorious Salvation, sin is pardoned, and yet punished; we escape the Curse of the Law, though, notwithstanding, all the Law's just penalties are suffered; We are delivered from the awful stroke of sin-avenging Justice, and yet it loses nothing of its Demands. We are wholly unable to obey the Law, but yet we are Justified by it; and announced perfectly righteous by it; and all of which is through the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ for us. This way of securing Divine Honor, in conjunction with our Happiness, sufficiently evinces – and ought to satisfy anybody – that infinite divine WISDOM contrived our Recovery from the pathway to Hell. And for this reason the Apostle calls the Gospel, which is a Revelation hereof, the WISDOM of God in a Mystery; and the hidden WISDOM, that God ordained to our glory; to wit:

***"Howbeit we speak WISDOM among them that are perfect; yet not the WISDOM of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought; But we speak the WISDOM of God in a mystery, even the hidden mystery, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."*(1 Cor. 2:6,7)**

3.) The POWER of God may be the sine qua non (i.e., without which, nothing) of everything. After all, we are talking about a very few little helpless lambs in the midst of great hosts of ravenous, blood-thirsty wolves. The POWER of God – indeed, the Absolute Sovereignty of an Ever-Present Almighty God pledged to come to their prompt and effective relief in every situation described above; widely advertised far and wide: LAMBS vs. WOLVES – to wit:

***“GO YOUR WAYS; BEHOLD, I SEND YOU FORTH AS LAMBS AMONG WOLVES.”
(Lk. 10:3)***

The preamble to The Great Commission itself was something of a pledge of timely and all-sufficient aid and assistance from an Omnipotent Savior to His little church; to wit:

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”(Mat.28:18-20)

Beloved, should we take a fresh look at this Grand Old Commission? Clearly our dear Lord Jesus is sending His beloved apostles on very dangerous lifetime missions, that ended with the martyrdom of nearly all of them. How better could the Savior cheer and strengthen their hearts than to assure them that He was omnipotent, and that every ounce of His Power was pledged to them and to guarantee the success of their lifetime mission? All power is mine; you go and preach. Beloved, that surely appears to me to be a winning combination. As a general rule it may be said that the POWER of God has always and for ever acted in favor of the Elect. Powerful and sinister Obstructions attended their Salvation that only Omnipotent help could remove; and such Adversaries are engaged against them that almighty POWER alone could conquer. They are naturally in such a State which requires the Exertion of the same unlimited POWER to make them meet for Glory. And the Number, Policy, and Vigilance of their Enemies, with their own Weakness, make it necessary for them to expect all their protection from above. Their Redemption was a Work of Divine POWER; hence, Christ, as crucified, is said to be the Power as well as the Wisdom of God; to wit:

“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called (i.e., God’s Elect), both Jews and Greeks, Christ the POWER of God, and the WISDOM of God.”(1 Cor. 1:23,24)

4.) FAITHFULNESS. Divine FAITHFULNESS stands engaged for the security of God’s People. Many and full are the Promises that refer to the Salvation of Israel; All which may be safely relied upon, because of the eternal Veracity of their infinitely great Author, who it is absolutely impossible should ever fail of accomplishing what he has given His Word to do for any. This the Apostle improves as an Encouragement to Faith, under sufferings for the Gospel’s sake; If we believe not, yet he abideth FAITHFUL, He cannot deny Himself; to wit:

“It is a FAITHFUL saying; For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; If we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us; If we believe not, yet He abideth FAITHFUL; He cannot deny Himself.”(2 Tim. 2:11-13)

God is not mutable (i.e., changeable), as Creatures are, but is eternally above all Variableness or shadow of Turning; to wit:

“Do not err, my beloved Brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”(James 1:16-18)

We also read of two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie; and we understand that the two immutable things are His Promise and His Oath. See, **Heb. 6:17**. And, there is a beautiful passage in the **23rd chapter of Numbers** that accurately extols the Truth of God about this glorious doctrine, out of the mouth of the false prophet Balaam; to wit: ***“And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor; God is not a man, that he should lie; nor the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” Num. 23:18,19.*** O Beloved. Our dear Savior never declines in His promised Favors, nor sinks below his gracious engagements. Since therefore He designed, and has promised, the complete Happiness of His Own, in such words as we find in **Titus 1:1-3**; to wit:

“Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH GOD, THAT CANNOT LIE, PROMISED BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN; But hath in due times manifested His Word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior.”(Titus 1:1-3)

I say, because of these wondrous promises, it may be justly concluded that we shall be sanctified wholly; that our souls, bodies, and spirits, shall be preserved faultless and blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ***“FAITHFUL is He that calleth you, who also will do it.” 1 Thes. 5:24. “But the Lord is FAITHFUL, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.” 2 Thes. 3:3.***

5.) JUSTICE/GRACE. Allow the Poet to speak here, to aid the understanding as well as the memory; to wit: ***“O! when I view Thy strange design, to save a fallen race; Which of Thy glories brightest shown, The JUSTICE or The GRACE?”*** The JUSTICE OF GOD acts in favor of the Elect, as well as all the other Divine Perfections; but the absolute JUSTICE of a Holy God is an Attribute which strikes a guilty Creature, without hope of an Interest in Christ to cover his sins, with the greatest Terror; it speaks nothing but eternal Destruction to a Sinner out of Him; and therefore the Consideration of it must be most awful, without a View of His blessed Salvation. But as its demands have been fully answered by Christ, the Surety of His People, it concurs with Goodness in promoting their Salvation; Mercy and Truth are met together, as are Justice and Grace. And, most beautifully of all may be, ***“RIGHTEOUSNESS and PEACE have kissed each other;”*** to wit:

“Surely His salvation is nigh them that fear Him; that glory may dwell in our land. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from Heaven.” (Psa. 85:9-11)

The everlasting question is, How may our dear Lord Jesus be JUST and at the same time be the JUSTIFIER of guilty sinners? The answer, in short, is this: THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST IS IMPUTED to God’s Elect. That, my friend, is known as GRACE. ***“Grace, ‘tis a charming sound, harmonious to the ear! Heav’n with the echo shall resound, And all the saints shall hear. Grace all the work shall crown, in everlasting days. It lays in Heav’n the topmost stone, And well deserves the praise.” “For by grace are ye saved.” Eph. 2:8.*** I love you. Amen.