

Jabez: A Roadsign Of Hope

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Nancy and I have been blessed with the opportunity to live in and raise our children in the same home over the past 41 of the 50 years of our marriage. We moved in a month before our youngest son was born in 1979, and over the years it has truly been a blessing and a place with many happy memories of children and grandchildren.

Our home sits on a normal suburban Chicago quarter-acre lot in a typical subdivision of rows of houses. However, because of our home's location on the center lot of the five houses between the two streets on the east and the west, we are literally the center point at the bottom of a U. We therefore have a very nice wide and long view of the backyards of the 18 homes that form the sides of the U from north to south. We have an almost unobstructed view of our neighbor's landscaped yards to the north for a little more than the length of a football field.

Although we still have a few longtime neighbors, many have come and gone. People moved for a variety of reasons: upsized, downsized, were transferred for businesses, died, or divorced, etc. When we moved in most families had kids like ours and over the years as the kids grew, so many of us put in above ground pools that from our backyard at our back patio, it looked like swimming pool row. We could see families playing with their kids in the pools in the summer and we could see us all winterizing and covering the pools in the fall. We then could watch those winterized swimming pools stand as monolithic snow-covered reminders during the winter of the silent promise of the joy of the spring and summer that was on the other side of the cold blustery Chicago winter for our families.

As families grew and the kids in the neighborhood moved on to lives and families of their own (as did ours), the pools and the decks began to come down over the years one at a time. Ours was one of the last to come down two years ago. Despite all the work to maintain it, it was still worth it for our

grandkids when we babysat or for Sunday family barbecues with our kids and our grandkids. I had the privilege of spending many days during the recent summers of sitting on the deck and watching our grandchildren enjoy the pool just as their parents did before them. But as our four children's families grew and they had their own pools, their own summer places, we made the decision to remove the pool and the deck following a problem that would probably have required a large investment to replace the pool that had always been at the south end of pool row. It was a difficult decision for Nancy and I to make mainly because of all the fond memories of the family with our kids and grandkids and each other on quiet afternoons and evening swims by ourselves.

However, removing the pool on the deck gave us the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the changing seasons across the yards to the north of us from the viewing point in our small family room off the kitchen. Most of the north wall in the room is window and sliding glass door, and looks down on what used to be pool row. It was then two years ago, after the view was no longer obstructed by the pools, that I began to notice the daily work of one of our neighbors who was well to the north in the yards.

The Tarsatanos' had lived there for a long time, as long as we had. Their three girls were about the same age as three of our kids. They always had one of the most fastidiously well manicured front yards, but now we could see the backyard—full of flowers and trees and bushes, and even nicer. What really caught my attention though was that hardly a morning passed without Mr. Tarsatano, who was retired by this time, carefully attending to his yard. He was out in the back each day inspecting, mulching, watering, covering, pruning. He would always be doing something out there regardless of the circumstances. On the nasty of winter days, for the most beautiful days of summer, he is always tending his garden.

Sometimes it would only be a careful inspection. Other times it was hours of backbreaking work. But every morning, he is carefully inspecting and executing his carefully planned and beautiful garden. None of it just grew together, but to the perfection that he intended it to be. Mr. Tarsatano is constantly moving things forward.

I am sure by now you can see where we might be headed in this split sermon. But I would like to reinforce the facet of Jesus Christ's constant tending and keeping of us, beginning in a place we have been to a few times over the last couple of months. However, first, I would like you to turn with me to II Timothy because quite a bit of what I am going to give you this afternoon will be based on some speculation but with the sure Word of God in mind, as stated in II Timothy 3.

II Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Our Great God is constantly giving us things to remind us of the awesome work that only He can do. And there are many nuggets of hope to be found in a verse or two. Please turn with me now to a place we were in last week in the sermonette that I gave, because there are a couple of precious hints of the enormous work Jesus Christ has done and continues to do. John 20:1-11 is when Mary Magdalene and Peter came to the tomb following Jesus' resurrection and then John and Peter left and Mary was left by herself.

John 20:12-18 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

Two things to keep in mind here. Number one, Jesus Christ Himself gives us another affirmation, being the first of the firstfruits, that the Wavesheaf offering is on the day following the Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, as High Priest presenting Himself as the first of the firstfruits of the early harvest. Number two, something that might be a bit more obscure but nonetheless very important to us and all who will come after us. More than the possible inference that He was holding a sheaf of grain like a gardener to show Himself as the first sheaf of the first harvest, it may very well be indicative of all He does to continue preparing to produce the magnificently beautiful garden, as was His intended purpose from the beginning in Eden.

He is the Gardener that will bring order and beauty back from the ugly, chaotic disorder that sin has brought down on all of mankind, as we vividly have been witnessing these days of rage (as Joe [Baity] spoke about in the sermonette). As an aside, someone who was a landscaper and a former student of Ambassador College, told me there used to be a joke going around Ambassador College that Ambassador College either produced ministers or landscapers. He, of course, said it as a bit of self-deprecating humor, and it was an amusing comment knowing how good he is at what he does. But the truth of the matter is, Jesus Christ is in fact a landscaper Himself, creating something much more magnificently beautiful than we could ever even imagine.

Throughout God's Word, if we are looking for them, God continues to give us small road signs of sure hope that He is moving us in the right path as we maneuver through this chaotic and evil time, this evil day all around us. Whether it is something as obvious as when Jesus Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father, stood to encourage Stephen in the final moments of his life as recorded in Acts 7:55-56, or something as subtle as God's Word showing Him as a gardener who is working diligently towards a harvest that will include much more in the first winter harvest, we can learn much from every Word of God.

As I said, throughout His Word God gives us signposts of encouragement, and on this first Sabbath after the Feast of Pentecost and the memorial of the spreading of the "Miracle Gro" fertilizer through His Holy Spirit, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts on what I consider a wonderful

reminder of His plan for all men. Please remember, this is only my speculation, but I would like you to turn with me now to a scripture that refers to perhaps one of the more enigmatic men in the whole of the Bible. (But please keep II Timothy 3 16-17 and God's perfect inspired Word, and in this case, a compact road marker or hope for all men.) Please turn to I Chronicles 4.

I Chronicles 4:9-10 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 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.

Why would God note the prayer and His response abruptly within this list of generations, and point out Jabez without even noting who his brothers were? It certainly is a seemingly strange declaration within its context, unless we actually begin to examine it and consider it within its context.

It is recorded within the line of David, a man after God's own heart, who was carefully chosen by God rather than the people, to fulfill God's plan and purpose, not only then, but as king directly under the King of kings later, as Christ continues to bring mankind back into line with God. A footnote in the *NIV Study Bible* on I Chronicles 4:1-23 and 2:10-34 states that the chronicler's primary concern in the genealogy of Judah is with the line of David as shown by the way these sections are arranged. Please keep in mind that the line of David is the center of this whole section in which Jabez appears.

I would also like to point out to you that this is not the only time that God has interrupted a list of genealogies to place an important historical marker within them. Although this one is a marker of hope, the two will we be looking at as biblical examples of this kind of exclamation point, are markers showing critical points where mankind headed more clearly in the direction *away* from God than *towards* Him. Both of these appear in the early chapters of Genesis and are indicative of seminal moments in history of men of events clearly moving men farther away from God in enmity against Him.

Genesis 4:19-24 Then Lamech took for himself two wives: the name of one was Adah, and the name of the other was Zillah. And Adah bore Jabal. He was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. His brother's name was Jubal. He was father of those who play the harp and the flute. And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman of bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah. Then Lamech said to his wives: "Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; wives of Lamech, listen to my speech! For I have killed a man for wounding me, even a young man for hurting me. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold."

Polygamy entered the picture with Lamech, who was the seventh from Adam through Cain, and was representative of a society that was quickly sinking in depravity and growing in contempt for God's way. This example of moving away from the closest thing to a sanctified God-plane relationship is very significant in a move by men recorded within the genealogy of Cain. Just as an aside, it is interesting that Cain was a tiller of the ground. He was actually the first of the men trying to take Jesus Christ's role to himself and do it the way he *wanted* to do it instead of the way he was *told*.

Another place we can look at this historical sign marker is in Genesis 10. I will be reading verses 8 through 12.

Genesis 10:8-12 Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod, the mighty hunter before the Lord [or against the Lord]." And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, Calneh, and in the land of Shiner. From that land he went to Assyria and built Ninevah, Rehobeth Ir, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).

Here, the genealogy of the descendants from Noah is interrupted with another critical footnote in mankind's history of the empire building in enmity against God. God points out Nimrod's blatant first attempt at one world government under him in defiance against the Creator.

I use both of these examples as historical footnotes of men moving away from God as recorded within genealogies, because we need to see Jabez is very likely another historical footnote in history of a seminal moment when God was moving men back *toward* Him. I want us to see that, especially today, that I think this is especially important in these times in which we live, Jesus Christ is faithfully doing all that needs to be done constantly and consistently, in spite of the temporary circumstances in which we are being shaped and pruned according to His Word. It is a very difficult time, as Joe pointed out.

Within these two verses, there are a number of clues to the identity of Jabez.

I Chronicles 4:9-10 Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called him 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 his request.

The phrase "bore him in pain" is a derivative of the same Hebrew wording that records God's curse following Adam and Eve's sin.

Genesis 3:16-19 To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat of the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

The first curse of sin is in childbirth. And though each man is not born sinful, each of us is born under its curse. And each man immediately faces

the almost overwhelming pulls of the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, which drives carnal nature that is enmity against God and continues to cause pain and hardship.

However, immediately before God curses man for sin, is God's first promise of the eventual deliverance from a curse of sin through the One who would be born within the pain and sorrow of the human condition from the root of Jesse.

Genesis 3:14-15 So the Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."

Immediately God gives the hope of realignment with Him through a descendant of Adam and Eve. This is something that King David himself understood by the grace of God, and looked forward to as we can see from his life and his inspired word in the Psalms.

My speculation here, because of where it appears within the line of Judah leading to David, Jabez is either a type of our hope through the work of Jesus Christ or a title for David himself, who God declared was a man after His own heart. Although he was born as every other man, subject under the immediate curse of sin and stumbled many times through his life, his focus was typically on God and seeking to repent and grow in the grace and knowledge of God, expanding his borders to become more like God by submission to the God of Israel through the intervention of God's Holy Spirit.

It is important for us to keep in mind that God is always in control, especially in these chaotic times when the consequences of sin are exploding all around us and we want to jump into the fray. As the old saying goes, "this ain't our fight" except from the standpoint of how do we handle it with the gifts we have been given to prepare to serve all the people swept up in the zeitgeist of today.

Israel did not catch God by surprise when they demanded a king like other nations, as you can clearly see if you look in Deuteronomy 17:14, where you read that Moses' instructions from God was when they would come to the land and demand a king. But when God sent Samuel to anoint Saul as king of Israel, God gave the people what they wanted in a king like the nations around them. He was a man from a powerful family who physically stood head and shoulders above men and was very much like the kings of the pagan nations around them.

I would like us to take a quick look at the Scriptures here to show us that the people got what they wanted in Saul, but with David as king, what God wanted. Turn with me I Samuel 8 where Samuel records Israel's demands for a king and God's instructions to Samuel to give the people what they wanted and expected, along with the caution regarding what they would fulfill in the kings.

I Samuel 8:1-10 Now came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of the first was Joel, and the name of the second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice. [sound familiar?] Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like the other nations." [also very familiar] But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us."

So Samuel prayed to the Lord. And the Lord said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them out of Egypt, even to this day—with which they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also. Now therefore, heed their voice. However, you shall solemnly forewarn them, and show them the behavior of the king who will reign over them. So Samuel told all the words of the Lord to the people who asked them for a king.

I Samuel 9:1-2 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of the Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. [remember this is Saul's father] And he had a choice and handsome son whose name was Saul. There was not a more handsome person than he among the children of Israel. From his shoulders upward he was taller than any of the people.

I Samuel 9:16-17 "Tomorrow about this time I will [this is God talking to Samuel] send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me." So when Samuel saw Saul, the Lord said to him, "There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This is the one that will reign over My people."

I Samuel 12:13 "Now therefore, here is the king whom you have chosen and whom you have desired. And take note, the Lord has set a king over you."

God gave Israel exactly what they wanted. As you know, Saul did end up to be just what God thought he would be. But God was still in charge over David. David was the king who God wanted. Turn with me over to chapter 16.

I Samuel 16:1-13 Now the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided myself a king among his sons." And Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears it, he will kill me." But the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do; you shall anoint for Me the one I name to you." So Samuel did what the Lord said, and went to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and

said, "Do you come peaceably?" And he said, "Peaceably; I come to sacrifice to the Lord. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons, and invited them to the sacrifice. So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, "Surely the Lord's anointed is before Him!"

But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as a man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." So Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one. Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Thus Jesse made seven of his sons pass before the Samuel. And Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen these." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all of the young men here?" Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here." So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!" Then Samuel took the horn of oil, anointed him in the midst of his brothers [he was sanctified in the midst of his brothers]; and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose and went to Ramah.

This is one of the indicators that points to us to the identity of Jabez with the context of David's genealogy in the first few chapters of I Chronicles. God sent Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint a king that He had selected from among Jesse's sanctified and honorable sons. David was not a son of Jesse that Samuel expected to be king, but of all his brothers, God looking at the heart, declared him to be the one He wanted to suit His purposes, thus declaring him more honorable than among his brothers in the eyes of God.

We know that David's life was like every man's life, a struggle with overcoming carnal nature, much the same as that struggle that Joe talked about in the sermonette. But the difference is that he continued to look to God as his only hope to bring him from what he was to what God planned him to be through the miracle of God's grace and being led by His Holy

Spirit—the same Spirit that He has given to us to lead through the toil and turmoil of this world driven by a carnal mind these days

Again, consider this further in terms of David's own prayer for forgiveness, as he looked forward to his own change from the curse of sin to the life that would only come through the work of Jesus Christ and the giving of the Holy Spirit. Please turn with me to Psalm 51. Psalm 51, of course, is David's marvelous psalm of repentance. But there is some really interesting things in here that really match up with Jabez.

Psalm 51:1-5 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when you judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.

Psalm 51:10-15 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.

Perhaps these same verses (if you do not mind the redundancy), from verses 10 through 15, as translated from the *Message Bible in Contemporary English*, can help us more clearly see the strong parallel between Jabez's life and answered prayer as stated in these two verses in I Chronicles 4, and the life of King David and the hope of all men.

Psalm 51:10-15 (MSG) God, make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis week from the chaos of my life. Don't throw me out with

the trash, or fail to breathe holiness in me. Bring me back from the gray exile, put a fresh wind in my sails! Give me a job of teaching rebels your ways so that the lost can find their way home.

Commute my death sentence, God, my salvation God, and I'll sing anthems to life, to your life-giving ways. Unbutton my lips, dear God; I'll let loose with your praise.

Within this two-verse synopsis of the life of Jabez in I Chronicles 4, we see the same process taking place within the curse and pain of sin Jabez' mother brought him in this chaotic world. But by the end of his life, God answered his prayer, expanding Jabez' territory beyond the curse of sin to the Kingdom of God through the intercessory work of Jesus Christ, who gave of Himself and gave him the opportunity to be a living example of God's handiwork through the Spirit dwelling in him.

I ran across two very interesting comments on this enigmatic man, Jabez. The first is from the *NLT Study Bible* and the second from *E. W. Bullinger's Companion Bible*. The study Bible wrote,

Jabez received the name because of the pain he caused his mother, as a chronicler recorded a fulfillment of the curse of Eve for sin in the garden in Genesis 3:16. Although his name bore the brand of the curse, he was more honorable than his brothers, and his prayer changed the outcome of his life. His prayer consists of a plea for blessing, followed by the request for true prosperity and protection from harm. And his last request might mean "keep me from causing trouble and pain from sin." God listened to his prayer and removed the curse.

Then Bullinger writes about this man something quite interesting regarding this man's name. Bullinger writes,

Transposition or reversal of the letters in his name in the Hebrew may intimate a change in the experience, and may exactly mean, "may he have gain and grief reversed."

I would like to point out one more very important point to be noted. In I Chronicles 4:10 there is something in the Hebrew that is missing in the

translation in the English. There is an aposiopesis, or sudden silence between "that I may not cause pain" and "so God granted him what he requested." Again from Bullinger,

Aposiopesis is a Greek word from a rhetorical figure, not a grammatical figure, placed under the figures depending on omission. Because within it, something is omitted. It is the sudden breaking off of what is being said or written so the mind may be more impressed by what is too wonderful or solemn or awful for words, or when things may be, as we sometimes say, better imagined than described. Its use is to call our attention to what is being said for the purpose of impressing us with its importance.

The aposiopesis is divided under four heads according to the character of the subject. The first head is promise, the second is anger and threats, third is grief and complaints, the fourth inquiry and deprecation. The number one is promise, which is the category of I Chronicles 4, verse 10, and indicates something great. A great thing is promised, too great to be conveyed in words. [Bullinger writes of this section] The words that immediately follow show that God was so much more ready to hear than Jabez was to pray. Without waiting for Him to finish his prayer, it is added, "and God granted him what he requested."

Brethren, we are living under the curse of sin in a society being shredded, just as it probably was in the days of Jabez. But the one who placed Adam and Eve in His Garden is still tirelessly working to bring us back. Jabez, or David, represents what we all have been given the privilege right now to become, because He has given us His Holy Spirit apart from the zeitgeist that is driving this world of chaos.

In this world, we must follow David's faulted example as a man after God's own heart, not falling into the traps of this world but earnestly praying as he said there in Psalm 51, "God make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis week in the chaos of my life. Don't throw me out with the trash, or fail to breathe holiness in me. Bring me back from the gray exile, put a fresh wind in my

sales! Give me a job teaching rebels your ways so the lost can find their way home." Are we doing that, brethren? And are we doing it by the way we are living our lives according to Jesus Christ?

Verse 14, "Commute my death sentence, God, my salvation God, and I'll sing anthems to your life-giving ways. Unbutton my lips, dear God; I'll let loose with your praise." This is our job as Jesus Christ, who is the Gardener who never quits working, will make sure we will be what He intended from the beginning apart from the curse of sin. Jabez represents the promise and as a road marker of hope along the way. This is the hope for all men, by the grace of God, to go from being born under the curse of sin to the gift of eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

Is it possible that the hope that can only come through Jesus Christ and the giving of His Holy Spirit, is actually contained in these two seemingly out of place verses?

Let us finish up this message in Romans 15, as we consider how important it is during these evil days that we hold on to our hope and the promise that is in Jabez. Christ is always working to finish what He has begun in the Garden. And we must focus on the beauty that is already ours through His Holy Spirit dwelling within each of us, and not focus on the ugliness of the curse that is raging around us.

Romans 15:4-13 For whatever things were written before, were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision of the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy, as it is written: "For this reason I will confess to You among the Gentiles, and sing to Your name." And again he says: "Rejoice, O

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Gentiles, with His people!" And again: "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!" And again, Isaiah says: "There shall be a root of Jesse; and He who shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in Him the Gentiles shall have hope." Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

By the will of God and the diligent work of Jesus Christ, the curse is reversed for us so we can abound with joy and peace, just as Jabez, while living in this chaotic world, still under its curse.