

Genesis 191
True Wealth
Genesis 49:19-21
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The title of our message this morning is *"True Wealth."* In a world, particularly here in the United States, where there is an obsession with materialism—wealth, acquisitions, credit cards—what is true wealth? The Bible reveals that to us, and we are going to see that in our passage this morning as we continue in our verse-by-verse teaching through the Book of Genesis.

Joseph has been used by God so strategically to relocate Israel out of Canaan into Egypt. Joseph's father, Jacob, is now reunited with Joseph. Jacob thought that he would never see Joseph again, but now he sees him. He is 147 and he is about to die. Consequently, Jacob gathers his sons together just prior to his death. Joseph is one of the twelve (I call them Jacob's Dozen) who will become the progenitors of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Jacob begins to prophetically speak blessings over them. Many of them are blessings; many of them are realistic statements; but these are also prophetic utterances. He has spoken to Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, and Dan.

- Genesis 49:19: Gad
1. Will be pressed upon (19a)
 2. Will overcome (19b)

Now he aims his words at one of his sons named Gad, and notice what he says to Gad. in Genesis 49:19: *"As for Gad, raiders shall raid him, but he will raid at their heels."* Now notice the first part of this: *"As for Gad raiders shall raid him."* That is an amazing statement of prophetic accuracy because of where Gad would settle. Later on, when the Nation of Israel entered the Promised Land, Gad settled in what is called the Transjordan, east of the Jordan River.

In fact, it was not just Gad that settled there. It was Reuben, Gad, and half of Manasseh that settled there. If you read the Book of Numbers, it probably was not God's best for them, but that is where they chose to settle. In that place in the Transjordan, east of the Jordan River, they were in a place of military vulnerability. Over and over again in the Scripture, Gad would be attacked by those nations living adjacent to Israel.

In fact, there is a record of this in the Book of Jeremiah, which would unfold much later in biblical history. Jeremiah 49:1 says,

"Concerning the sons of Ammon. Thus says the Lord: 'Does Israel have no sons? Or has he no heirs? Why then has Malcam [a pagan nation] taken possession of Gad and his people settled in its cities?'"

It is interesting to me that long before we get any description of Gad's settlement, Jacob, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, made this prediction concerning Gad. *"As for Gad, raiders will raid him,"* and that is exactly what happened.

There is a lot of stuff floating out there on the marketplace that I wish people would not read. If you are going to do some reading outside of the Bible or books explaining the Bible, I try to give you the very best in terms of recommendations—books that have really helped me. I have recommended this book many times. It is called *"Every Prophecy of the Bible"* by Doctor John Walvoord. It shows that there is an actual record of the short-term predictions the Bible makes.

In this passage from Genesis 49, you are seeing a short-term prediction. This would be fulfilled centuries later in the Book of Joshua, in the Book of Numbers, and in the Book of Jeremiah. It represents one among a plethora of prophecies that came to pass literally and accurately. Every time God makes a prediction, it happens. We have an actual record of this in the short-term prophecies. That is what the Walvoord book demonstrates. It goes through, and it keeps its promise as the title states: *"Every Prophecy of the Bible."* It will talk about things like this, where God makes a prediction and it happens even in the short run.

"Peter, you are going to deny Me three times" (John 13:38)—not twice, not four times, not five times, but exactly three times—and it materialized. You will see this pattern over and over again in the Bible. You will say to yourself, "Do you know what? I have a choice related to the prophecies yet to come, because 27% of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written." That is a quarter of the Bible.

I run into pastors that say, "I do not teach about prophecy. It is too divisive." Walvoord was asked, "Why do you talk about prophecy so much? Don't you know it is divisive?" He had such a classic answer: "The whole Bible is divisive. Why not throw a little more kerosene on the fire?" However, many pastors just will not touch prophecy, and in so doing, they have to leave 27% of the Bible out of their ministries. The Bible is prophetic 27% of the time.

Many of those prophecies have happened; and some of the prophecies are yet to come. When you see a track record, it gives you tremendous confidence that the prophecies yet to come will happen, just as God said just given a matter of time. It is like standing at the free throw line in the game of basketball, and making nine free throws in a row. Then asking the observers, "Can I make the tenth one?" You are going to say yes, because you see a track record. That is what you have in Scripture, even in things like this.

Jacob is ready to die, and he is speaking to Gad. He says, *"As for Gad, raiders shall raid him"* (Genesis 49:19). In spite of that, because of his vulnerability in the Transjordan, it also says here in this prophecy, *"But he will ride at their heels."* It is a description of Gad's fighting ability. Gad, because of its military defenselessness and its position east of the Jordan, had to learn to fight. The rest of the Scripture records how Gad became an outstanding fighter. Deuteronomy 33:20 says, *"Of Gad he said, 'Blessed is the one who enlarges Gad; he lies down as a lion, and tears the arm, also the crown of the head.'"* Later on in the Bible, Gad is pictured as a lion tearing the arm off of an opponent.

First Chronicles 5:18:

"The sons of Reuben and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, consisting of valiant men, men who bore shield and sword and shot with bow and arrow and were skillful in battle, were 44,760, who went to war."

It continues and talks about those Gadites that went to war.

First Chronicles 12:8:

"From the Gadites there came over to David in the stronghold in the wilderness, mighty men of valor, men trained for war, who could handle the shield and the spear, and whose faces were like the faces of lions, and they were as swift as the gazelles on the mountains."

First Chronicles 12:37:

"From the other side of the Jordan, of the Reubenites and the Gadites and of the half-tribe of Manasseh, there were 120,000 with all kinds of weapons of war for the battle."

When you are reading the rest of your Bible, and you are reading about how successful Gad was in warfare, you say to yourself, "I expect that, because that is what Jacob, in the first book of the Bible—the Book of Genesis—predicted would happen." I say to the Lord, "Lord, you really take this prediction stuff seriously. Maybe I should take it seriously. Maybe I should prepare myself accordingly, because there is coming upon the earth a lot of prophecies that have never been fulfilled. I want to be right with God." Amen. I want other people to be right with God. These things will happen, because God is a very good free throw shooter. Amen.

Genesis 49:20: Asher

1. Wealth (20a)
2. Produce delicacies (19b)

Jacob now switches to the second son that we will look at here—Asher. It gets even more interesting. Jacob makes a comment about Asher's wealth (Genesis 49:20), and then how Asher would be involved in the production of delicacies. Genesis 49:20 says, *"As for Asher, his food shall be rich, and he will yield dainties."*

This is very important. You will notice that Asher settled in the Northwestern portion of Israel. We would not know this until the Book of Joshua, but he is located up north, right next to the Mediterranean Sea. That helps explain this prediction here: *"As for Asher, his food shall be rich."* In other words, Asher is going to become very, very wealthy.

You have to study what Jacob says about these twelve tribes prior to his death, and what Moses would later say concerning these twelve tribes before his death. Remember that Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land and could only see it from a distance. He died in the Transjordan on Mount Nebo. Take Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33—

Moses's and Jacob's predictions about these twelve—and put those together. You will start to see the spine of the Scripture, and you will understand why things are happening.

One of the prophecies that is made about Asher is that he would become wealthy. Moses brings this up as he is giving his farewell prophecies. In Deuteronomy 33:24 it says, *"Of Asher he said, 'More blessed than sons is Asher; may he be favored by his brothers, and may he dip his foot in oil.'"*

In other words, he is blessed above and beyond the others in certain areas. Of course, it is very easy to try to read into that petroleum and all of these kinds of things, but most people would say oil is just a generic description of wealth. I am here to tell you that it fits exactly what has happened in modern times in that northwestern portion of the nation, next to the Mediterranean Sea.

Here is a news article that goes back to 2015, but it is still a valid news item. It says,

"In the summer of 2010, '...huge deposits of natural gas were found along Israel's northern coastline...Israel is actually sitting on top of vast amounts of oil'" (Strandberg, Todd. "Could Israel Become a Major Oil Exporter," online: www.bibleprophecy.com, accessed 26 May 2015).

When I look at where Asher is positioned in the Book of Joshua, I say to myself, "It is no accident that massive natural gas discoveries were found in that Mediterranean ocean right next to Asher, because that is what God said would happen." He said it in Genesis 49; and He said it again in Deuteronomy 33.

Understanding the end times scenario is not just the belief that Israel is going to be regathered from the nations (that's enough of a prediction). God, in preparation for the end time drama, is going to reach out and He is going to regather His people—the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—back into their homeland. They have been in a position called the Diaspora, or the worldwide dispersion, for 2,000 years. They have actually been in that position ever since Rome invaded the Land of Israel in A.D. 70, about 40 years after Jesus ascended back into heaven.

In fact, Jesus Himself, in Matthew 24 and countless other passages, predicted that invasion and when it would come. It would be different from the Babylonian captivity, where Israel was taken to a specific area called Babylon, in the east in modern-day Iraq. It is sometimes called the land of Shinar, or sometimes Mesopotamia, which literally means "between the rivers" (between the Euphrates and the Tigris).

Daniel 1:2 says that is where the nation was taken during the Babylonian captivity; but the prophet said, "That is just small potatoes," as they were taken into the Babylonian captivity and brought back 70 years later in the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, etc. "There is going to be another dispersion—this one spearheaded by Rome—that will push the nation into worldwide dispersion. For 2,000 years the Jews have been in this place of worldwide dispersion, under the disciplinary hand of God, because *'whom the Lord loves the Lord chastens'*" (Hebrews 12:6). Amen.

They rejected their King. I understand that there are individual Jews that get saved today. Most of them are New Testament writers, to be honest with you (Paul is one of them); but the pattern is very clear that the nation said no to their king. According to a covenant that God made with them called the Mosaic Covenant, He said, "It is time for discipline." The discipline would be that they were pushed into worldwide dispersion, where the Jewish people would even despair of life itself as they have been persecuted from place to place no matter where they have gone.

God said, "After 2,000 years of this, I am going to bring them back into the exact same land that the Romans kicked them out of." The number 2,000 years is not given, but I am reading in hindsight into these prophecies given 2,000 years ago. We are watching it happen—the miracle on the Mediterranean. Never has a country been outside of its homeland for even a few generations and maintained its ethnic identity, its language, and its religion.

How many Jebusites do you know? We read about them in Scripture. What happened to the Jebusites? Sociologists say that when a country is outside of its land, it assimilates, and it loses its distinctiveness. The Jewish people have been outside of their land for 2,000 years, and they have gone right back into the same land, reviving their same language (the language of Hebrew), with their same religion, and with their same ethnicity.

People say, "I wish God would do miracles today. If God just did a miracle today, I would believe He is true." Are you kidding me? Every time you pick up the newspaper and read about Israel, you are seeing a modern-day miracle. It is not just the regathering of the Jews from the Diaspora back into their land (which, by the way, has never, ever happened), but it is the prediction that they would become wealthy in the process. "Watch Israel very carefully," God says, "Because she will become wealthy. In fact, she will become so wealthy that it will precipitate the infamous Gog-Magog invasion into the Land of Israel, which is yet coming."

Your Bible predicts that a coalition of nations, spearheaded by Russia, Iran, and Turkey, amongst others, will invade the Nation of Israel in the last days. It is in Ezekiel 38-39. The Bible is so clear that it tells you what the motive of the attack is. Why the attack from Russia, Turkey, Iran and others into the Land of Israel? It is very clear in the Bible that it is because of their wealth.

It says in Ezekiel 38:12,

"To capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world."

Do you know what the word for "center" there is in Hebrew? It is the word for "navel" or "belly button," which is the center of the body. As far as God is concerned, the Nation of Israel is the centerpiece of everything that He is doing in the end times, just as one's belly button is the center of the body.

When these nations come against Israel, they are coming for their money. They are coming for their cattle, goods, plunder, and spoil. It says the same thing in Ezekiel 38:13: *"Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish"* (Spain, near Morocco). Those are all the nations involved in the Abraham Accords today. The next nation expected to fall under the auspices of the Abraham Accords would be Saudi Arabia.

As best I can understand, the Abraham Accords are normalization agreements between Muslim nations and Israel. "You recognize our place on the map," Israel says, "and we will normalize relations with you." Meaning "we will open up to you the four T's: travel, trade, tourism, and technology. Saudi Arabia, being the next to become part of these Abraham Accords, explains why Saudi Arabia, (Sheba and Dedan) speaks up when this invasion from Iran, Turkey, and Russia occurs.

"Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish with all its villages will say to you, 'Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder?'" (Ezekiel 38:13).

Saudi Arabia does not do anything to stop this invasion, but she speaks up on behalf of Israel. Why would she speak up? Answer: Abraham Accords. Why does Saudi Arabia speak up? Because Saudi Arabia (Sheba and Dedan) understand why these nations have come against Israel—to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, and to capture great spoil.

What is predicted is Israel would come back into her country in the last days in unbelief, in preparation for the events of the Tribulation period. In the process, she would become wealthy. She would actually become the envy of the nations, which Ezekiel said 2,600 years ago. That is why the invasion is coming.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum talks about the fulfillment here of Genesis 49:20 concerning Asher's wealth.

"In fact, he was assigned land along the Mediterranean Coast, which is very suitable for growing many things; and to this day, it is rich in olive trees and producing olive oil" (*The Book of Genesis*, 648).

I do not know how you slice this, but whatever way you look at it—any angle, whether it is the natural gas deposits in the Mediterranean, whether it is what is happening on the Mediterranean Coast—I am here to tell you that it is a fulfillment of what God said would happen. It is actually a key ingredient, a key plank, if you will, in the whole end time scenario.

You say, "Pastor, why do you believe stuff like this?" "Because I have a track record in the Bible." Of course I would; any sane person would believe this. If God can make nine free throws in a row (which He has done), then any prophecy about the wealth of Israel in the last days has to get your attention.

Mark Twain, in 1867, visited that land. He wrote about it two years later in his book called *"Innocents Abroad."* He went over there and he said, "There is nothing here. There are no thriving civilizations here. There is no economy here. There is nothing here but a

barren desert expanse. There is no shrubbery. There is nothing that is green here." At one point he ran into a goat and he said, "It must be a goat that eats rocks to survive, because there is nothing here but rocks."

He wrote about it in *"Innocents Abroad."* He said,

"...A desolate country whose soil is rich enough, but is given over wholly to weeds... a silent mournful expanse... a desolation is here that not even imagination can grace with the pomp of life and action... we never saw a human being on the whole route... there was hardly a tree or a shrub anywhere. Even the olive tree and the cactus, those fast friends of a worthless soil, had almost deserted the country" (267, 285, 302).

Keep that in mind, when the youth of today are in educational systems where the professors keep telling them that Israel went back into the land and usurped a thriving civilization called the Palestinians. There was no thriving civilization. Everything that our youth are being exposed to today is propaganda. There was nothing there but a barren expanse, as Mark Twain saw in 1867.

God's Word says in Leviticus 26:43:

"For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected my ordinances, and their soul abhorred my statutes."

(The reason they went into Babylonian captivity was because they did not observe the Sabbath.)

God, in the Book of Leviticus at Mount Sinai, said, "Every day that the Jews spend outside of their land in the diaspora, the land itself will be desolate; but once they go back into the land, it will become very, very wealthy." You have to understand something: Islam, with its belief that Jerusalem is a holy site and that region belongs to them, is very interesting concerning the fact that the name Jerusalem does not even appear in the Quran.

If you watch Muslims today praying on the Temple Mount, what You will see is their backside—their rear end—is aimed towards the Temple Mount. Their front side is aimed towards Mecca and Medina, their true holy sites, which exist in Saudi Arabia. But when the Jews go back into the land and, just like God says, a barren expanse will become alive agriculturally, then all of a sudden Islam says, "Do you know what? That is our land."

They invented this doctrine very late in the game that the Temple Mount was where Muhammad ascended back to Allah on a steed named Barak. (I cannot make this stuff up.) They made up this doctrine that the land really is an Islamic holy site, which is again propaganda. It has to do with jealousy. It is as if you have two kids at home (or two grandkids), and you give one kid a toy on Christmas. The kid is very happy until the kid sees that his brother or sister got a different toy, and then kid A, through covetousness, wants toy B.

That is exactly how to understand the Middle East. No one even cared about that region of the world until the Jews (just like God said would happen), would go back into the land and make it prosperous. Whenever you are seeing evidence of Israel's prosperity, you have to anchor that in what God said would happen, going all the way back to his prophecies through Jacob to Asher and other prophecies.

Look at Israel today. It is just unbelievable what has happened there. She has produced a gross domestic product which has outstripped that of her neighbors. Whoever thought that could happen to the point where her neighbors are insanely jealous over it? The whole thing is predicted right here in Genesis 49:20. *"As for Asher, his food shall be rich, and he will yield royal dainties."* What does that mean, *"yield royal dainties"*? He will become so wealthy that he will produce choice food for kings, that is what is predicted. We are watching it happen right before our eyes.

You are running into pastors that say they will not teach on Bible prophecy. To me, this is the most fascinating thing in the world, talking about this. Israel will become rich. Now, you might be here saying to yourself, "That is good for Israel., but I wish I were rich too." You are rich, because you have something more, as a member of Christ's Church.

In Ephesians 1:3, Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."*

In other words, it already happened. "Oh Lord, please bless me." God says, "What else do you want?" A lot of Christians feel that they have to give to get blessed (it is very sad to watch), when the Bible is saying that you give because you are blessed. You live a different life not to get blessed; you live a different life because you already are blessed.

What blessings do you have? *"He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places."* Asher has his blessings, but we have ours, which are actually better. There is no blessing in the spiritual realm that God has held back from you, at the point of faith alone in Christ alone. This is how, when you walk through trials (which we all do), you have a different mindset in those trials, because you know that those trials, whatever they are, can't take away your blessings.

The church at Smyrna was a very persecuted and struggling church. In fact, the word for *"poverty"* there (Revelation 2) is the lowest level of poverty you could sink to. In the midst of all of that, what did Jesus say to the church at Smyrna?

"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan" (Revelation 2:9).

In other words, you have a bunch of people who were Christians, and they were going through tribulation. They were going through poverty, and they were being persecuted over and over again. Jesus says to them, "You are rich, because you have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. You actually have resources that transcend even what Asher would receive."

First Peter 1:4-5 addresses this. Keep in mind who Peter is dealing with: he is writing to Christians who are about to be sacrificed to the jeering crowds in the Roman Coliseum, under a madman named Nero. Peter says,

"To obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled, and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

"You mean inflation can't touch it, Lord?" "No, inflation can't touch it." "High gas prices can't touch it, Lord?" "Nope, high gas prices can't touch it. It is your inheritance, and 'it is reserved in heaven for you.'" "How do I know, Lord, that I am going to get there, because I am about to be killed by a bunch of ravenous lions." Peter says, "I am glad you asked. 'You are protected by the power of God through faith for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.'"

Your life may not go the direction you want, but nothing can derail you from your inheritance, because it is kept for you and given to you by grace. That is why I have entitled this sermon "True Wealth." It is easy to become jealous of Asher. "I want to discover oil in my backyard, Lord." Maybe the Lord will give that to you, but if He does, or if He does not, you have something that transcends that—true riches.

"Pastor, do you have a good book you can recommend that teaches this?" "Yes, the Book of Ephesians." That is the whole point, because the first three chapters are individual and corporate blessings (Ephesians 1-3). No commands are given in Ephesians 1-3—not a single command about living right or doing this or doing that. It is just, "Calm down. Relax. Let me tell you how rich you are."

After going on and on like that for three chapters, it is not until Ephesians 4 that he uses the word "therefore." When Paul uses the word "therefore" you ask, "What is the word there for?" "Therefore" switches us from knowledge to behavior.

Once you understand who you are in Christ, your behavior changes. I am not giving to get blessed. I am not living to get blessed. I am living a different way because I am blessed. See that? It is a totally different motivation for the Christian life. So much of Christianity today has descended into relevant type teaching where people want a command for their lives. Paul will not give you a command; he will not give you a command for three chapters, until you understand your identity in Christ.

He prays over and over again that our eyes would be open to what we have individually and corporately. Once that veil is lifted, now you are in a position to make application to the life of the Christian. Yes, Asher is blessed, and Israel is blessed. It is all prophetically significant, but you are blessed as well.

Genesis 49:21:Naphtali

1. Unrestrained movement (21a)
2. Speech sophistication (21b)

What about Naphtali (Genesis 49:21)? What does Jacob say about another one of his sons, Naphtali, in these prophecies? He says, *"Naphtali is a doe let loose, he gives*

beautiful words." Looking at the first part of that, what does that mean "a doe let loose"? It could be a female deer or a doe, and it is talking about how Naphtali would become a mountainous people. They, like Gad, would develop great ability in warfare, and unrestrained movement.

You see that as you move through the Bible. For example, in the Book of Judges (Judges 4:6) it says,

"Now [Deborah] sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him, 'Behold, the Lord, the God of Israel, has commanded, 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun.'"

What warfare they engaged in there in Judges, under the leadership of Deborah. It says in Judges 4:10, *"Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kadesh, and ten thousand men went up with him; Deborah also went up with Barak to Kadesh."* Then what did they do? Judges 4:16 says, *"But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not even one was left."*

How and why did that happen? It is because that is what Jacob said would happen in these prophecies. Naphtali, like Gad, would develop this tremendous ability in the area of warfare. You are an informed Bible reader, having read Genesis 49 and everyone else who has not really studied Genesis 49, the Book of Judges is a mystery to him; but not you, because God made another prediction there.

God means what He says and says what He means. It would not be fulfilled until centuries later, but so what? Any kind of delay in the fulfillment of prophecy is not a denial; it is just a delay—it just has not happened yet. It is not a cancellation; it is just a postponement. Because I talk frequently about prophecy people say, "People have been talking about this for 2,000 years and it has not happened yet." My answer is, "Just wait; give it enough time. God does not run things on your schedule, neither does He run things on my schedule; but everything He says will happen."

I think what we are seeing now is largely preparatory for things to come, but they will happen. This is why the apostle Peter, in 2 Peter 3:9, says, *"The Lord is not slow about His promises"* to the human beings. It seems like there is some big holdup in the parade; yet, from the perspective of God, there is no holdup. These things are going to materialize—the unrestrained movement that is predicted for Naphtali.

One other thing is predicted for Naphtali at the end of Genesis 49:21. It says, *"[Naphtali] gives beautiful words."* What does that mean, *"beautiful words"*? It means agreeable speech, refined speech, capable of wise words; that is a prophecy about Naphtali. You do not have to look far in your Bible to see it come to pass, because right after Naphtali is involved with that great military movement in Judges 4, Naphtali, among others involved in that military campaign, praises the Lord in Judges 5.

What is Judges 5? It is a worship song. You are going to run into another worship song in Exodus 15, where God will part the Red sea. Israel will escape from Egypt, and God will close the Red sea on the pursuing armies; and the Egyptians, who double-crossed

Israel and went back on their promise and tried to bring them back into captivity, were drowned.

What would you do if you were involved in that, escaped and saw that happen? As you escape to the other side of the sea on dry land, what would you do? You would just praise the Lord. This is the salvation of God. There is nothing else you could really do other than just say, "I can't believe this happened. Lord, forgive me for doubting you. You have delivered us above and beyond what we could ever hoped or asked for. I just want to praise You."

Exodus 15 is a whole chapter where they are praising the Lord. The same thing happens in Judges 5. There is tremendous military success that has happened, and they do not know what to do other than to just praise the Lord with amazing words—beautiful words, agreeable speech. Judges 5 is really what worship is.

There is a lot of infighting in the body of Christ for decades on worship and the worship wars. Most of the people involved in these very intense disputes and discussions could not even define what worship is. What is worship? Worship is a response to truth. That is what it is.

Jesus said that we are to worship Him in spirit and truth (John 4:23-24). It is not about whether you get the liver quiver of the day. It is not about whether your personal preferences are met in church A or church B. What worship is, is that you react to truth in such a way that you cannot believe what God did for you. You cannot believe that not only did He purchase us from the slave market of sin, but spiritually speaking, He made us the richest people on planet Earth, even richer than Asher, as we are tied into an inheritance that cannot be taken away.

When you hear that, what do you do? You just want to praise the Lord. You are less caught up in style and personalities as you are caught up in the Lord. Doesn't Jesus deserve our worship? He is our Creator. That in and of itself qualifies Him for worship; but He is also our Redeemer. He created me, then when I, along with humanity, went astray He stepped into the line of fire and absorbed the penalty that should be on me in His place.

That is why one of the most intense worship scenes that You will see in Scripture is in Revelation 4-5. You want to talk about worship? Let's talk about the heavenly scene, post rapture, amongst 24 elders, the 4 living creatures, and everything in heaven. They are just worshipping. There is nothing there about if they are going to use a guitar or drums. That is not even a focus. What is focused on is Jesus.

He is worthy of worship because He is our Creator (Revelation 4). He is worthy of our worship because He is our Redeemer (Revelation 5). That is the pattern for us; and that is what Naphtali would do after this military victory in Judges 4. It is what the whole nation of Israel did at the parting and the closing of the Red Sea. It is predicted here: *"[Naphtali] will give beautiful words"* (Genesis 49:21).

How the Bible focuses on our words. Proverbs 18:21 says,

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit."

I understand there is the prosperity movement today where they teach that you can command money into your bank account, command your healing, and all of these things. They try to access these verbal laws, and that obviously is not what we are talking about here. We are talking about the potency of the tongue. I can destroy or I can edify just by how I use this two-by-two slab of mucous membrane between my gums called the tongue.

"Lord, I have a tongue problem. A lot of bad things are coming out of my mouth." The Lord says, "No, you do not have a tongue problem, you have a heart problem." Here is what Jesus said in Matthew 12:34:

"You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."

Adrian Rogers, the late, great preacher, said, "What comes up in the bucket was down in the well." If mud is coming up in the bucket, that means mud is in the well; if bitterness, sarcasm, or constant criticism are perpetually coming out of my mouth, then there is something going on in my heart that is not right.

The opposite is true: if edification, love, comfort, or truth is perpetually coming out of my mouth, if worship is coming out of my mouth, if praise is coming out of my mouth, then that is what is in my heart. That is how I know, at any moment as a Christian, whether I am walking in the flesh or walking in the Spirit. What is the content of one's communication like? The mouth is a window to the heart. That is what Jesus meant when He said, *"For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."* Naphtali, with pure hearts, would have pure worship to the Lord.

Ephesians 4:29 says,

"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."

Can I just add an addendum: or your social media page. The problem with this electronic world that we are living in is that you can say something very angrily over email, social media, etc., and if you do not erase it, it is there, inscribed in electronic ink for the world to see.

There have been a lot of things that I have put on social media, and I forgot to erase them. They have a way of recycling back. I say, "I sure I do not want that up there. I said that in the wrong spirit. I was really not walking in the Spirit when I electronically said that. My heart was not right at that point. Forgive me, Lord."

Ephesians 4:29: *"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification"*—that means building up, because I do not want to destroy people; I want to build them up—*"according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear."* Are you a person of verbal grace? You are going to have a

pretty big following if you are. People want to be around you. However, if you are a person of criticism and jealousy, and those things come out of your mouth, then people will say, "I know where that person is coming from. I am going to avoid them." How important it is that we be people of edification and people of grace related to how we talk.

For years and years in my Christian life, I thought this was talking about profanity. All I have to do is avoid some of those four-letter words, and then I am okay. Obviously, I am not here promoting profanity or vulgarity, which is earthy type speech that is not fitting for who we are in Christ; but this is not even dealing with profanity. You could use no profanity and still be delivering words that really are not gracious and really are not edifying.

"Pastor, do you have a good book that you can recommend on this?" "I have a good book and a good chapter: it is called the Book of James, chapter three. We have taught the Book of James here. I tell you, that has got to be one of the most convicting books, because it just showed me and continues to show me how far I need to go. I am not there, not in my salvation, but in my growth.

Naphtali is going to be known for these beautiful, beautiful words. The prophecies get even better in Genesis 49:22-26, where there are going to be prophecies given concerning Joseph and everything that he went through. It will wrap up with Benjamin.

If you're here today and you want to hear some beautiful words like what we have been reading about, I have got some for you. We celebrated it this morning at the Lord's Table. It is called the gospel. "*Gospel*" is a beautiful word because it means "*good news*." It is good news because Jesus entered our world, and He stepped out of eternity into time 2,000 years ago to fix a problem that I can't fix—it is unfixable. The fact that I am a sinner, separated from God, actually hurling towards His judgment, that is your biggest problem as a person.

Christ's final words on the Cross were, "*It is what finished*" (John 19:30). It is a translation of the Greek word "*tetelestai*," which actually is an accounting word found all over the Mediterranean world, meaning "*paid in full*." Everything has been paid, and all I have to do is receive what He did, as a gift.

According to Scripture, I receive what He has done as a gift through faith in Him alone. Faith is more than an intellectual awareness of Jesus Christ. It has with it the ingredient of trust. If someone knows stuff about Jesus but is not trusting in Him, then they are not a believer in the biblical sense of the word. I know a lot about that because I spent 16 years of my life in that particular condition. I could rattle off all kinds of data about Jesus, but the element of trust was not there, because I was trusting myself and my own works. I was my own savior in that sense.

Jesus says, "That is not how it is going to work." In John 6, some people came to Jesus and they said, "*What shall we do to do the works of God?*" (John 6:28). Sounds like good religious people, right? "What have we got to do, Lord?" He says, "*This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent*" (John 6:29). That is how you get saved—those are beautiful words to us.

I encourage anyone within the sound of my voice who has never placed their faith in Christ, in the way I am describing it, to do so now. The Bible says, "*[Today] is the day of salvation*" (2 Corinthians 6:2). Why would you gamble with your eternity? Why would you gamble with the most important part of you, which is your soul, which lives forever? Jesus says, "*What will a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mark 8:37).

Trusting in Christ, you know what will happen to your soul—you are going to arrive in eternity, fully glorified, receiving your full inheritance. You can receive that offer now. You do not have to walk an aisle to receive it, join a church to receive it, or give money to receive it. It is a matter of privacy between you and the Lord, where the Lord says, "It is time," and you trust in the work of the Savior.