

Genesis 193  
God's Attributes & Names  
Genesis 49:25-26  
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Dr. Andy Woods

Let's take our Bibles this morning and open them to Genesis 49:25-26. The title of our message is "God's Attributes and God's Names." In this section in the Book of Genesis the Lord has so strategically used Joseph to relocate God's special nation—the Nation of Israel—out of Canaan and into Egypt, where they will spend 400 years.

Here we have Joseph's father, Jacob, as the Spirit of God enables him, pronouncing blessings. Many of these things, as we have seen, are prophecies on Jacob's Dozen, Jacob's sons. They are a very special group, twelve of them who will become Jacob's Dozen—the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The Twelve Tribes of Israel are a constant feature in the Bible, from this point forward, and right into the Book of Revelation.

What is being said here about these twelve is so important and foundational to understand. In other words, if you are reading the Bible without a knowledge of these prophecies, you are missing a key feature at the beginning that God wants us to have to understand everything that He has said in His Word.

Jacob is blessing his sons, and we're already at Joseph. Joseph receives a lot of room here in these blessings, as you might imagine, since Joseph is such a central character in the Book of Genesis. In fact, what Jacob says to Joseph is so big that we had to divide it into two sections.

We have seen Jacob's blessings on Joseph's progeny, there were references there to his persecution and his survival, and now we see some future blessings given to Joseph. Some of them come directly from God, and some of them are going to come from sources created by God—an independent source that God will put into motion.

- Genesis 49:22-26: Joseph
1. Progeny (22)
  2. Persecution (23)
  3. Survival (24)
  4. Future blessings (25)
  5. Joseph to receive blessings (26)

Notice Genesis 49:25, as Jacob mentions God as the source of Joseph's blessings, and he refers to God as *"the God of your father"* and *"God Almighty."* Genesis 49:25: *"From the God of your father who helps you."* *"The God of your father,"* what does that mean? It means, "Your God, Joseph, is my God also"—as Jacob is speaking to Joseph. God is the God of Jacob, and just as God is the God of Jacob, He is also the God of Joseph.

In fact, if you go over to Genesis 49:26, it says, *"The blessings of your father have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors."* Jacob is acknowledging that as he has walked with God, he has been blessed by God. "Now Joseph, those blessings that God blessed me with are coming your direction." What exactly is God going to do for Joseph? Jacob says, *"From the God of your father who helps you"* (Genesis 49:25). God is in the helping business, and it is a good thing, because we need a lot of help. Amen.

The woman in Genesis 2 is called the helper of the man. Did you know that Eve is Adam's helpmate? My wife often says, "Do you know why the woman is the helper of the man?" Answer, "Men need a lot of help." I feel that way, not just about marriage, but I feel that way about life, in general. If anybody needs help, it is us. We are so limited, and we are sinful beyond that. God is in the helping business—God is the God who helps you.

Hebrews 13:6 says,

*"So that we confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?'"*

That is a rhetorical question. "What will man do to me?" Nothing. You might be in a situation today where you are afraid, and maybe you are afraid of a human being or a person. What we discover here is that God is in the helping business, and since God is our helper, what is there to be afraid of?

God is called the helper in Psalm 54:4. It says, *"Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the sustainer of my soul."* The Hebrew word for helper there is *"azar."* It is interesting to me that the same word is also used of the woman who comes alongside and helps the man (Genesis 2).

The reason I bring that up is because the modern-day feminist movement would likely look at the woman helping a man as an insult—some kind of derogatory expression towards a woman. Not at all. God himself is also called the same Hebrew word *"azar"*—helper. When God says that the woman helps the man, it is not a put-down at all, because the same expression applies to God Himself.

This is one of the things that Jesus was trying to get across to the disciples in the Upper Room, when He began to speak of the fact that He was getting ready to leave. When He started to talk this way, they really started to panic because He was all they knew for over three years. Now He is talking in the Upper Room about Him leaving. He is making these declarations to the 11 disciples (Judas, the only unbeliever in the group, has already left the Upper Room in John 13).

In the midst of all of this panic, Jesus tells them, "It is actually to your advantage that I am leaving" (John 16:7). Why is that? He says, in John 14:16-17,

*"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."*

The word for helper there is the Greek word "*paraclete*"—the one who comes alongside to assist.

What an amazing thing that is. "When I leave, the Holy Spirit is going to take up residence inside the believer forever." In other words, it is not a situation anymore where a few of you, Peter, James and John (let's say the inner circle) had access to Christ—the most intimate group in Christ's circles were Peter, James and John. It is not going to be like that anymore, because the Holy Spirit is going to go into every single child of God forever.

Thus Jesus, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can be intimate with all of God's people, not just a select group. To that extent, "It is to your advantage that I am leaving." It is interesting that in the midst of this wonderful teaching that He gives, He identifies the Holy Spirit as the "*Paraclete*," or the helper—the one who comes alongside to assist.

As Jacob is blessing Joseph, he is reminding him: "God is your helper. God is in the helping business, and if that's the case, what is there to be afraid of?"

Jacob goes on in these prophecies, and he begins to talk about how God is the Almighty. Genesis 49:25 says, "*From the God of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you.*" Almighty is a reference to God's omnipotence—He is all-powerful.

The things that intimidate us, wear us down, and fatigue us do not bother God at all because He is the Almighty. I had a youth pastor that put it this way, "One plus God is a majority." You do not need the world on your side applauding you if God is on your side.

It is always nice when man chimes in—family, friends, coworkers—but the truth of the matter is that there are going to be many times in your life as a Christian, where people won't understand you, where you are going to be swimming upstream. In those times, it is so important to remember that God is omnipotent. He is all-powerful.

Revelation 4:8 illustrates one of the key attributes of God:

*"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."*

What does God do as the omnipotent, all-powerful One? Does He withhold blessings from us? Quite the contrary. As you look at Genesis 49:25 it says that the Almighty blesses you. It is one thing to get a blessing from a person, but a person is finite. They are limited. It is an entirely different matter to be blessed by the Almighty God. God is not just in the helping business, He is in the blessing business. He works in history to bless his people.

I know this sounds basic, but for a long time as a Christian, I thought God was out to get me. God is out there to rip the carpet out from under me. He is out there to judge me. The Bible says, "*Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*" (Romans 8:1). God is not out to get you. It sometimes feels that way because difficult circumstances come into our lives, but even those circumstances are designed not to make us bitter, but to make us better.

Everything that happens to you is screened by an Almighty God, and everything that happens to you as a Christian is therefore your blessing. Sometimes it doesn't feel that way because part of it can take the form of character development.

James 1:2-4 says,

*"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance."*

The trials are necessary for the development of patience and endurance, and so even trials themselves are blessings. God is not out to get you as a Christian. Your sin debt has been satisfied by His blood. He is out to bless you. God is a blesser.

You are blessed just by being a human being. Did you know that? We saw that in Genesis 5:2: *"He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created."* Humanity itself is blessed by God.

Psalms 1:1 says,

*"How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers!"*

Boy, if I am a believer and I am walking with the Lord—not that I am sinless, but hopefully sinning less in the middle tense of my salvation, which is not my birth, but my growth. The blessings of God will chase you your whole life, the Bible says.

It is very important for people to understand who may come out of family backgrounds, or maybe you are under a boss, or a coach, or someone that was never pleased with you. It always seemed like no matter what you did, it wasn't enough. In those kinds of distorted relationships in our sinful world, we transfer that to God and we think that is how God is towards us.

I am here to tell you that it is a satanic lie. That is what the devil wants you to think. God is not out to get you; God is out to bless you; and for that, we can be grateful.

Do you want to know how to be blessed in 2025? Read the Book of Revelation, because the Book of Revelation is the only book of the Bible that promises a blessing for those that read it. It isn't that you won't be blessed by reading other books of the Bible, but Revelation 1:3 says,

*"Blessed (makarios) is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near."*

Let's not forget this part and heed. It is not just reading, it is heeding *"the things which are written in it; for the time is near."* A very simple way to be blessed: you just pull out the last book of the Bible and you start reading it.

I took God at His word on this, and do you know what? It is true. I will tell you the blessing that came into my life by reading the Book of Revelation. The Book of Revelation has 404

verses in it, 278 are allusions to the Old Testament. There are no Old Testament quotes in the Book of Revelation, just allusions back to it.

I would read it and I would say, "Here's something in the Old Testament I do not understand. I had better read up on that." I got to another verse. "There is another thing in the Book of Revelation that I do not understand. I had read up on that in the Old Testament." Do you know what happened to me? I had to read the whole Bible to understand the Book of Revelation.

That is one of the blessings that came into my life. I decided to be a student of the Word of God, because I couldn't make sense completely out of the Book of Revelation without the rest of the Bible. That is how the Book of Revelation has blessed me. With you it might be different, but there is some kind of blessing that is coming your way simply by being a reader and a heeder of the book.

God also creates independent sources that bless us. The blessing sometimes does not come directly from God, but indirectly through something that He has created. Jacob, in his prophecies to Joseph, starts to mention some of these things. The first thing he mentions is dew from heaven. Genesis 49:25: *"From the God of your father who helps you, and by the Almighty who blesses you with blessings of heaven above."* What are these blessings above? It is the water, or the dew, of heaven itself.

Genesis 27:39 says,

*"Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, 'Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, and away from the dew of heaven from above.'"*

Deuteronomy 33:13 says,

*"Blessed of the Lord be his land, with the choice of things of heaven, with the dew, and from the deep lying beneath."*

In other words, there is the dew of heaven which will bless you as well. We read this *"dew of heaven,"* and what does that mean? You are dealing with people living in a climate where there is no rain, particularly in the summer months. God says, "I have taken that into account"—the hot Middle Eastern agrarian climate that they were living in. God says, "I have already assigned the dews of heaven to bless you during those times of scarcity."

It is not just the dew of heaven, but there is something that is going to come up from the earth—springs and fountains. You see that in Jacob's blessing to Joseph at the end of Genesis 49:25: *"...blessings of the deep that lies beneath."* Not only the dew of heaven, but also the springs and fountains from below will be a blessing.

You might have noticed that in Deuteronomy 33:13, Moses said of Joseph, *"Blessed of the Lord be his land, with the choice things of heaven, with the dew, and from the deep lying beneath."* How helpful a spring of water would be in the dry climate that the Nation of Israel was in. It is interesting to me that God sees scarcity coming, and He provides a path by which we will be provided for in the midst of scarcity.

The interesting thing about God is that He promises to provide for us, but He doesn't tell us how. He doesn't say, "I am going to provide for you through your job." He may provide for you through your job, but what if you lose your job? Now the onus is on God to provide for us through some other means—some other source.

I have noticed that God is really creative with this. God doesn't tell me ahead of time exactly how He is going to provide for me. "God, I want a three step plan here. How are You going to do this?" God says, "None of your business. In fact, if I explained it all to you, you wouldn't understand it anyway. What I want you to do is to trust My character. My character is such that I provide for My people."

The joy that comes into a person's life when they believe those promises, because we are living in a world where gas prices, inflation, recession, world famine, planet lockdown—you name it—can come into our lives just like that. How wonderful it is to know that God is not sitting up in heaven, worried. "What am I going to do now? They've locked down planet Earth. What am I going to do?" God says, "I am a provider. I am not limited."

Take for example, the prophet Elijah. What did God say to Elijah in 1 Kings 17:2-6?

*"The word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook of Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there.'"*

"Elijah, I am going to provide for you. I am not going to tell you how, until this word was given. I am going to provide for you through the ravens. They are going to come and they are going to bring you your food." See how creative God is with this?

1 Kings 17:5-6:

*"So he went and did according to the word of the Lord, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning, and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook."*

Two square meals a day provided by the ravens. "Help yourself to a drink in the fridge if you want. The drink just happens to be this brook that I am going to put you by." It is amazing to me to look at how creative God is in the provision of His people. You do not know exactly how the provision is going to come, but it will come. For it not to come is indicative of the fact that God would be denying Himself. By nature He is a provider.

Take the Nation of Israel, who left Egypt and went to receive the Law at Mount Sinai. They were in the Sinai Peninsula where it is hot. You can see why the people were constantly rebelling against Moses, out of thirst and hunger—things of that nature.

In Exodus 16, the provision comes—manna from heaven. "Is it going to be here for a day? I had better hoard it. I had better go out there and get all the manna I can." What does manna mean in Hebrew? It means "what is it?" They knew it was a provision, and

they went out and they hoarded it. It started to rot because God says, "I don't want you to hoard. I want you to trust Me day-by-day."

They would go to springs, and from the rock, of all places, would come water that they desperately needed. They were allowed to gather a little extra manna on the day before the Sabbath, but other than that, they were to trust God moment-by-moment. Isn't that what Jesus said we ought to pray? *"Give us this day our daily bread"* (Matthew 6:11), not, "Lord, I need it in the bank for a month in advance," but rather, "Give us our daily bread."

Did you know that the manna fell and yet they were very rebellious during that 40-year time period? They were doing things like making a golden calf. If you make a golden calf, you are only violating the first two of the Ten Commandments. You can't get more of a mess up than a golden calf. Yet, the manna kept falling every single day, right on time. It did it for 40 years. That is a long time—40 years.

Finally, they made their way into Canaan (the land that is flowing with milk and honey) in the days of Joshua. The land was capable of sustaining its inhabitants, and the manna stopped because it wasn't needed anymore. In other words, it lasted as long as it was needed. Then, when it was no longer needed, it stopped in the midst of a wicked and rebellious people.

What a testimony that is of the provision of God. "Joseph, you can expect this to follow you your whole life, even though you are in a foreign land under Egyptian servitude (which is going to get nasty in Exodus 1). You can expect the provision of God like clockwork.

He also talks here in Genesis 49:25 about breasts and womb. *"Blessings of the breasts and of the womb."* Joseph had two sons, that are prominent in the Book of Genesis, that were born in Egypt—Manasseh and Ephraim. You combine those two sons, and when united they become the largest tribe in the whole Nation of Israel. It is just amazing what God did for Joseph according to His word.

Then Jacob tells Joseph, "You are going to receive even more blessings." What are they? In Genesis 49:26 the first thing that is mentioned, *"The blessings of your father have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors."* *"The blessings of your father"* is Jacob referring to himself. What Jacob is saying is this: "I have been more blessed than my forebears—my ancestors, Abraham and Isaac."

How could that even be said that Jacob received greater blessings than the patriarch Abraham and Isaac? The answer is actually pretty simple: Abraham and Isaac only blessed one son each—Jacob blessed twelve. Abraham blessed Isaac, and Isaac blessed Jacob; but what does Jacob get to do? He gets to bless twelve sons (Jacob's Dozen) that we are reading about here.

The blessings that came were blessings in excess. Excess and overabundant blessings are what Genesis 49:26 is talking about:

*"The blessings of your father have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills."*

Blessings in excess. Blessings overabundant. It is the equivalent of saying, "Your cup is running over." There are so many blessings that there is not the volume to contain it. The cup itself is not big enough, because the blessings are spilling over. That is what would happen to Joseph.

It is tempting to read this and say, "That is Joseph, but then there is little old me. I wish God would bless me like He blessed Joseph." The truth of the matter is, if that is how you think, you do not know your Bible. When you get into the New Testament and you get into our spiritual blessings (What did Joseph have? He had earthly blessings. Those are significant, and I am not trying to minimize those), and the blessings that you have are blessings that Joseph, Jacob, and the rest of them couldn't even dream of. They couldn't even understand them.

The reason why the Book of Ephesians, written to the Church Age believer, is such a big deal, is because it describes the believer's wealth. You are blessed individually, and you are blessed corporately; since that is true, you should live differently. Ephesians 1-3 talks about blessings, individual and corporate. Ephesians 4-6 says that should change the way we live. "If God has called me holy already, maybe I should clean up my language a little bit. Maybe I shouldn't watch this or that on television, because it is not fitting for who I am."

You see, the more you understand your blessings, the more it changes your behavior in the present. Then you start to understand that you are a target for a thief. The thief is not going to target people who do not have anything. Thieves will target the wealthy. Satan is your thief. Jesus said of Satan, *"The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy"* (John 10:10).

"Doesn't God love me and have a wonderful plan for my life?" Yes, He does. Conversely, Satan hates you and has a terrible plan for your life. Why is that? Why are you targeted? Because you are blessed. God has blessed you, that makes you an opponent of the prince of the power of the air.

That is why Ephesians, which talks about our wealth, has that concluding section on spiritual warfare: the armor of God, which allows us to live as very rich people in the devil's world and defend ourselves. That is why the spiritual warfare chapter is in the book.

How does the Book of Ephesians begin? It 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"* (Ephesians 1:3).

The blessing already happened. A lot of people think, "I have got to do this, this, and this, so that God will bless me." God is saying, "It doesn't work that way. You have already been blessed, therefore do x, y, and z. If you do not do x, y, and z, you are living outside of your identity, which is odd."

That is why Paul, in the epistles, keeps saying things like, "Don't you know?" In 1 Corinthians 6 all kinds of sexual immorality is going on. They were going to the temple

prostitutes, and they were suing each other. Paul says, "Don't you know? It is a doctrinal problem. It is a lack of understanding positional truth. Don't you know who you are? Because if you knew who you were, you wouldn't be acting like that. You wouldn't be sinless, of course, but you would be sinning less."

I even hate to bring up the area of giving, because so many abuses in modern-day Christendom are related to giving. So many people out there think they have to give to get blessed. So-called Christian television teaches this doctrine around the clock. "You can't get the blessing until your money goes to the person on TV, right?"

The truth of the matter is that it is completely upside down. You do not give to get blessed; you give because you are blessed. What exactly have you been blessed with? Do you see the word *"every"* there? *"Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing."* "Lord bless me." The Lord says, "You are maxed out already. Sorry, your cup is already overflowing."

Notice that these are spiritual blessings in the heavenly places. If you were to go to Jacob, Joseph, Abraham, and Isaac and start talking about heavenly blessings, they would say, "What are you talking about? I can't even comprehend what you are talking about." Because Israel is God's earthly people; but the church is God's heavenly people.

God, in His providence and graciousness, may bless you materially, but that is small pittance compared to what you already have. Just consult your spiritual inventory; read the first three chapters of Ephesians and you will see it.

The idea that, "Joseph was blessed, and that was nice for him, but I wish I would be blessed"—my goodness, do we understand who we are? Do we understand what we have? This is why Jesus will say to the struggling church at Smyrna, which had materially almost nothing, *"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich)"* (Revelation 2:9).

They were under persecution by the Synagogue of Satan. I think there is grounds in the Greek text that they had descended to a level of poverty which was abnormal, and there was a lot of poverty in that time period. These people had plummeted to that level, and they were sinking fast.

What does Jesus say to them? He says to the church at Smyrna, *"I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan"* (Revelation 2:9). Do you see the little parenthetical comment there? *"But you are rich."*

In other words, "I know you are under persecution; I know that from a material position you are very, very poor; but the truth of the matter is, you are filthy rich. That is why Satan hates you, because you have been given access to every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places," which physical poverty or spiritual warfare or persecution cannot subtract from."

There is something very interesting though, as you look at Genesis 49:26. Jacob makes the statement: *"Up to the utmost bound of the everlasting hills."* I look at that and I say,

"How can there be everlasting hills? I am in this world that is marked for destruction (2 Peter 3:10). How can the hills last forever?"

Some versions say *"everlasting hills"* or *"forever hills,"* but probably a better translation of that is *"ancient hills."* It has to do with the Hebrew word *"olam."* The word *"olam"* can be used as a reference to forever, because God is described with the Hebrew word *"olam"* in Psalm 90:2: *"Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God."*

Sometimes *"olam"* doesn't mean forever; it can mean an extended age. For example, in Exodus 21:6, it says this: *"Then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently."* Some versions say forever.

In the Book of Exodus, it is dealing with the situation where slaves are released; but there might be a slave who wants to stay a slave, because they have a good relationship with their master. In that case, you are to take their ear and pierce it, and put inside of it something like a nail or a spike that goes into it called an awl. It is something that is in their ear forever, and they will serve their master forever. In other words, what is in their ear is a sign that they like their master and want to submit to the master, even though the slaves have been released.

The word *"olam"* is used there to describe this: "You will serve your master forever." Forever there can't mean forever because the poor servant died a long time ago. So sometimes *"olam"* may not mean forever and ever, but rather a lengthy age.

That is important to keep in mind, because sometimes the Kingdom Age, which will last a thousand years, is described in Revelation 20:1-10 with the Hebrew word *"olam."* You say, "A thousand years doesn't mean forever." Sometimes it is a little tricky. *"Olam"* can not only mean forever, but it can also mean a lengthy age.

With a little exegetical insight, we see that *"everlasting hills"* is probably not the best interpretation there, because it is the word *"olam."* I prefer to translate that as *"ancient hills,"* because the hills will last for an age.

These prophecies concerning Joseph continue, saying, *"May they be on the head of Joseph"* (Genesis 49:26). "Joseph," Jacob says, as these prophecies are being given, "What I have is yours. All of these blessings are being transferred to you."

Then Jacob makes a statement here, speaking these things to Joseph: *"And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers."* "Joseph, you are going to be preeminent among your brothers—you are going to be distinguished among your brothers." That is a dramatic turn of events, is it not? Because when Joseph was 17, his brothers hated his guts; they left him for dead and sold him as a slave into Egypt. (All of the things that we have read about in the Book of Genesis.)

Now there is a reversal. "You are not going to be hated by your brothers; you are going to be preeminent among your brothers." All the way back in Genesis 37:4 we see the attitude of the brothers (Jacob's other sons) towards Joseph. It says,

*"His brothers saw that their father [Jacob] loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not even speak to him on friendly terms."*

When Jacob took that very colorful coat and draped it over Joseph, these brothers couldn't stand it anymore, in terms of jealousy—they hated him. They hated the love Jacob had for Joseph; they hated the partiality. Yet God used all of this to accomplish His purpose of getting the Nation of Israel into Egypt.

Genesis 50:20 says, *"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good."* As a quick side note: Are there people in your life that hate you? Are there people in your life that are jealous of you? Are there people in your life that detest you? Do not think that because that is happening, you are outside the will of God.

All of those things happened to Joseph—unprovoked by Joseph—and he was directly in the will of God. God is going to get you from point A to point B, but the ride is going to be a little bumpy. Sometimes it will involve some treachery, some betrayal, some people that you thought you could trust in, you discover you can't trust them—petty gossip, petty jealousy.

I say that because there have been many times in my life where people have come against me, and I think, "What have I done to bring this on myself?" In some cases, maybe I have done something; but in other cases, I have done absolutely nothing. That is God's path for you—that is His will.

Do not try to get out of it. Do not try to negotiate for a better deal. This is how it works. This is the sovereignty and the providence of God. If you start walking forward with God, in many cases the world and even the church world itself are not going to stand up and applaud any more than they did for Joseph; but God used all of these things to move Joseph into the place that God had for him.

We are now at the end of Joseph's life, and God says to Joseph, through Jacob, "The very brothers that hated you are now going to give you a place of preeminence. I have changed their hearts." By the way, this is what Jesus said in Revelation 3:9 to the Church of Philadelphia, which is another church like Smyrna, under persecution:

*"Behold, I will cause the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you."*

In other words, "I am going to work so providentially in Philadelphia that the day is going to come when the very people that didn't have a kind word to say about you, I am going to switch things around and they are actually going to be on your side. I am going to make them come and acknowledge that I love you." We are not told when this happened for Philadelphia—if it is in this life or the next life—but with Joseph it was in this life.

There have been times in my life where the very people that oppose me are now the ones singing my praises. It is very tempting to pull out the record book and say, "That is not what you were saying 20 years ago." It is the outworking of God's purposes.

When that kind of thing starts to happen in your life—when the very people that hated you are now on your team, on your side—do not think that this is some weird thing. This is how God works. It is how God worked in Joseph's life, and it is how God worked in the life of the church at Philadelphia. It is an amazing thing that God does, as He reverses circumstances and opponents become allies. Only God can do that; it is part of the pattern of God.

Genesis 49:26: *"And on the crown of the head of the one distinguished among his brothers."* What an amazing statement that is, given everything that we have learned about the brothers' hatred for Joseph.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum says this concerning these verses:

"In the blessing of Joseph, five different titles of God were used: Mighty One of Jacob, Shepherd, Stone of Israel; Your Father's God; and the Almighty" (The Book of Genesis, 651).

Look at all of these names of God that were given in just this short amount of space. Growing as a Christian is not just becoming aware of God's attributes, it is becoming aware of His names because the names of God reveal a different ministry that He has to His people. He does not exercise the same ministry all the time. There are different ministries that He exercises and His different names bring out these features.

Julian Wellhausen, the author of the JEDP theory, which denies Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, tried to argue that these names come from different sources because Moses didn't know all these names.

In the JEDP theory, J stands for the Yahwist source, E stands for the Elohist source, D stands for the Deuteronomist, and P stands for the priestly source. In other words, "Do not think that Moses wrote all this down. This is the work of some compiler, long after the time of Moses, stitching together a bunch of disconnected writings and putting it together in what is called the Book of Genesis."

There are certain seminaries that you can go to, and they will teach you that; and they won't even give you another option. Mosaic authorship is not even on the table when you watch *"Mysteries of the Bible"* or the History Channel. They will throw this at you, not even giving you the possibility that maybe Moses compiled this.

Maybe the reason that Moses is using different names for God is not so much to demonstrate different sources, but because different names of God reveal different ministries from the same God. Can we not have that as a possibility? They do not bring this on the History Channel. They just bring on someone from Harvard to deny Mosaic authorship of the Bible, which opens the door to liberalism.

I would contend that Moses is the compiler of the Book of Genesis, and I would contend that he intentionally used these different names of God because God has different ministries to His people depending upon the need of the moment. There is no need to go into this theory of different sources—the JEDP Theory.

Here are some names of God found in the Book of Genesis: "*Elroi*"—"El" meaning God, and "*roi*" sees—"You are the God who sees." This is speaking of His awareness. Sometimes God is called "*El Olam*"—"El" God, and "*olam*" in this case is everlasting (because "*olam*" can refer to forever, but not always). As we have traveled through the Book of Genesis, we have run into the name "*Jehovah Jireh*"—"the Lord will provide" (Genesis 22). There was a need at that moment: who is going to pay the debt if Isaac is going to be spared?

#### Names for God in Genesis

1. Elohim (1:1)—Power
2. Yahweh (2:4)—Relational
3. El roi (16:13)—Aware
4. El Olam (21:33)—Eternal
5. Jehovah Jireh (22:14)—Provision
6. God Isaac Feared (31:42, 53)—Reverenced
7. God, the God of Israel (33:20)—National

At the beginning of the Bible, God is called "*Elohim*," speaking of His power (Genesis 1). That is a great name of God in the Creation account, where He breathed the heavens and the earth into existence, because He is a God of power. In Genesis 2, He is called "*Yahweh*" because He is relational. The God that created everything wants a relationship with us, a personal relationship. That fits that chapter very nicely, because that is the creation of the "*anthropos*"—the first man. In Genesis 1 we see the creation of the "*cosmos*," including man; but in Genesis 2 the focus is on day six of Creation. God discloses Himself with a relational title.

"*Elroi*"—I am the God who sees and I am aware. "*El Olam*"—I am forever. "I am the uncaused cause. There never was a time in which I was not." That is what He is saying there. When the Jehovah's Witnesses come to your door, they will try to convince you that Jesus was a created being. Your response is, "Not so." "*El Olam*" is the God who has always been—the uncaused cause.

Jesus Christ, is the eternally existent second member of the Godhead, just like God the Father is the eternally existent first member of the Godhead, and the Holy spirit, is the eternally existent third member of the Godhead. There always was a time when these Three were in existence. That is what El Olam means.

"*Jehovah Jireh*"—the God who provides (Genesis 22:14). He is also called "*the God that Isaac feared*"—He is to be revered. He is not just a buddy or a pal, or someone you hang with. This is the God that deserves respect. What does the Bible say? "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*" (Proverbs 1:7)—Respect for God, and respect for His ways.

Sometimes, as evangelicals we can get a little casual with God. That has a place, because Jesus calls us friends; and we can cry out to Him—Galatians 4:6 says, "*Abba! Father!*" (which means daddy). However, in that pursuit let's not forget that He is a God that deserves respect.

He is a national God; He is the God of the Nation of Israel. I think that needs to be communicated to some of our politicians, because I am afraid that a lot of them look at the Middle East as just an art of the deal. We are not dealing with the art of the deal here. You are dealing with God. He who touches Israel, touches the apple of God's eye. Let's keep that in mind if we want to prosper as a nation. That was a bipartisan statement there. Anybody in that office needs to understand that, and they need people around them that can explain these things to them.

It is a glorious thing to look at these attributes and to look at these names. We will pick it up next time with Benjamin and then move into the conclusion of Genesis 49.

If you are here today and you do not know Christ personally, we would like to give you the gospel. Today is the day of salvation. It is called the gospel, because it means good news. There is a breach between God and man through sin. Jesus came into the world 2,000 years ago through His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension to fix the problem. He came to fix the problem we can't fix.

What He asks us to do is to receive what He has done, as a gift. The only way to receive a gift from God is to believe (Romans 4:4-5). They came to Jesus in John 6:28-29 and they said, *"What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?"* Sounds like religious people, right? "What have we got to do, God, to be pleasing to you?" He said, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

It can't be that easy, but it is that easy, because God designed it to be that easy. He designed it to be an affront to the pride of man that always wants to earn something from God. If you come to God on God's terms, you can't earn anything from Him any more than you can earn a gift. If you earn a gift, it is not a gift anymore.

You can't make payments on this. You can't say, "God bought lunch and so I will leave the tip." It doesn't work that way. You receive it as something free, and you receive it by grace (unmerited favor). I exhort anybody who has never received this free gift to receive it now. It is a matter of privacy between you and the Lord, where the Spirit convicts you, and you respond by trusting in the finished work of the Messiah.