

A NEW BIRTH AND GHOSTS OF THE PAST

TEXT: (Proverbs 24:8-9, NIV)

⁸ Whoever plots evil will be known as a schemer. ⁹ The schemes of folly are sin, and people detest a mocker.

INTRODUCTION

1. “‘Was not Esau Jacob’s brother?’ declares the LORD. ‘Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated’” (Malachi 1:2-3, NIV).
2. “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8, NIV).

I. JACOB THE SCHEMER

1. “Esau said, ‘Jacob is the right name for him. He has tricked me these two times. He took away my share of everything you own, and now he has taken away my blessing’” (Genesis 27:36, NCV).

A. Born a Schemer

1. “When the time came, Rebekah gave birth to twins. The first baby was born red. Since his skin was like a hairy robe, he was named Esau. When the second baby was born, he was holding on to Esau’s heel, so that baby was named Jacob” (Genesis 25:24-26, NCV).
2. “See that no one is...like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son” (Hebrews 12:16, NIV).
3. “For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me” (Psalm 51:5, NLT).
4. “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard” (Romans 3:23, NLT).

B. Lived the Life of a Schemer

1. "He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!’...
“Jacob replied, ‘First sell me your birthright.’
‘Look, I am about to die,’ Esau said. ‘What good is the birthright to me?’
“But Jacob said, ‘Swear to me first.’ So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.
“Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left.
“So Esau despised his birthright” (Genesis 25:30-33, NIV).
2. "Rebekah said to her son Jacob, ‘Look, I overheard your father say to your brother Esau, “‘Bring me some game and prepare me some tasty food to eat, so that I may give you my blessing in the presence of the LORD before I die.’” Now, my son, listen carefully and do what I tell you: ‘Go out to the flock and bring me two choice young goats, so I can prepare some tasty food for your father, just the way he likes it. Then take it to your father to eat, so that he may give you his blessing before he dies’ (Genesis 27:6-10, NIV).

- 3 “He went to his father and said, ‘My father.’
 ‘Yes, my son,’ he answered. ‘Who is it?’
 Jacob said to his father, ‘I am Esau your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.’
 Isaac asked his son, ‘How did you find it so quickly, my son?’
 ‘The LORD your God gave me success,’ he replied” (Genesis 27:18-20, NIV).

C. A Way of Life

1. “‘What shall I give you?’ he asked.
 ‘Don’t give me anything,’ Jacob replied. ‘But if you will do this one thing for me, I will go on tending your flocks and watching over them: Let me go through all your flocks today and remove from them every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb and every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages. And my honesty will testify for me in the future, whenever you check on the wages you have paid me. Any goat in my possession that is not speckled or spotted, or any lamb that is not dark-colored, will be considered stolen” (Genesis 30:31-33, NIV).
2. “Jacob, however, took fresh-cut branches from poplar, almond and plane trees and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. Then he placed the peeled branches in all the watering troughs, so that they would be directly in front of the flocks when they came to drink. When the flocks were in heat and came to drink, they mated in front of the branches. And they bore young that were streaked or speckled or spotted. Jacob set apart the young of the flock by themselves, but made the rest face the streaked and dark-colored animals that belonged to Laban. Thus he made separate flocks for himself and did not put them with Laban’s animals. Whenever the stronger females were in heat, Jacob would place the branches in the troughs in front of the animals so they would mate near the branches, but if the animals were weak, he would not place them there. So the weak animals went to Laban and the strong ones to Jacob. In this way the man grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and female and male servants, and camels and donkeys” (Genesis 30:37-43, NIV).

II. THE LAW OF SOWING AND REAPING

1. “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life” (Genesis 6:7-8, NIV).

A. You Reap in a Different Season than You Sow

1. “Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, “The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob” (Genesis 27:41, NIV).
2. “When Jacob awoke from his sleep, he thought, ‘Surely the LORD is in this place, and I was not aware of it.’ He was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven.”
 Early the next morning Jacob took the stone he had placed under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on top of it. He called that place Bethel” (Genesis 28:16-19, NIV).

3. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11, KJV).

B. We Reap More than We Sow

1. “So Laban invited everyone in the neighborhood and prepared a wedding feast. But that night, when it was dark, Laban took Leah to Jacob, and he slept with her.... But when Jacob woke up in the morning—it was Leah!” (Genesis 29:22-23, 25, NLT).
2. “You know that I’ve worked for your father with all my strength, yet your father has cheated me by changing my wages ten times” (Genesis 31:6-7, NIV).

III. A NEW BIRTH

A. God is patient

1. “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9, NIV).
2. “Jacob also went on his way, and the angels of God met him. ² When Jacob saw them, he said, “This is the camp of God!” So he named that place Mahanaim” (Genesis 32:1-2, NIV).
3. “The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them” (Psalm 34:7, NIV).

B. A New Creature

1. “When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, “We went to your brother Esau, and now he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him” (Genesis 32:6, NIV).
2. “So Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him till daybreak” (Genesis 32:24, NIV).
3. “The man asked him, ‘What is your name?’
‘Jacob,’ he answered.
Then the man said, ‘Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with humans and have overcome’” (Genesis 32:27-28, NIV).
4. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (II Corinthians 5:17, NIV).

C. Ghosts of the Past

1. “But Esau ran to meet Jacob and embraced him; he threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. And they wept” (Genesis 33:4, NIV).
2. “So let my lord go on ahead of his servant, while I move along slowly at the pace of the flocks and herds before me and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir” (Genesis 33:14, NIV).
3. “So that day Esau started on his way back to Seir. Jacob, however, went to Sukkoth, where he built a place for himself and made shelters for his livestock” (Genesis 33:16-17, NIV).
4. “Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, ‘You have brought trouble on me by making me obnoxious to the Canaanites and Perizzites, the people living in this land’ (Genesis 34:30, NIV).

5. “So Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, ‘Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes. Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone’ (Genesis 35:2-3, NIV).

CONCLUSION

1. “Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit’ (Genesis 3:5, NIV).
2. “Get rid of the foreign gods you have with you, and purify yourselves and change your clothes” (Genesis 35:2, NIV).
3. “Then come, let us go up to Bethel, where I will build an altar to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone” (Genesis 35:3, NIV).

Questions:

1. Talk about how the names Jacob and Israel represented the same person but two different characters.
2. Discuss how you were born again. Does it match the Scriptures, (John 3:3-7 and Acts 2:38)?
3. What is meant by the ghosts of the past?
4. How does Satan use the ghosts of the past to make you want to quit, or continue to sin?
5. What should you do the moment you meet a ghost of the past?