

PEACE BY THE SPIRIT DEVOTIONAL SERIES 1

# The God of *Emotions*

A Devotional and Emotional  
Reading of Genesis

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PEACE  
LITERATURE

Books for Ministry & Peace by the Spirit

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# Genesis 1-3

## The Biblical Storyline and Emotional Management – An Emotional Drama with a Happy Ending

God decided one day to extend his love to people that he made in his image. According to Genesis 1:31, God saw what he had made, and it was very good. God was satisfied with his creation, he was satisfied with the result of his actions. He evaluated it - and it was perfect for him without default.

This perfection included the free will of man, the woman, and the angels, with the possibility not to accomplish his or her God-given tasks for God's glory, for which they were created.

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image (*śelem/eikōn*), according to Our likeness (*dāmūt/ homoiōsis*) ..." (Genesis 1:26)

Image and likeness evoke the subject of identity. Image is *śelem* (עֶלֶם) in Hebrew and *eikōn* (εἰκών) in the Greek of the LXX.<sup>1</sup> Both man and woman should find their identity in God, based on the fact that they are both made in God's image and resemble him. Likeness is *dāmūt* (דָּמוּת) in Hebrew and *homoiōsis* (ὁμοίωσις) in the Greek. Man and woman are made to be like God. Yet, they are not called to be God themselves, or to replace God, or be without God, as Satan suggested. The human being still needed to submit to God's rule, both Adam and Eve. Nevertheless, they were allowed to participate actively in God's rule. They received power over the rest of the creation. They needed to use that power for the good of the rest of the creation, with the same loving care that God displayed. The feeling of power in Genesis 1:26 is thus linked in the sub-structure to the feeling of love. In the Hebrew *rādā* (רָדָה) is used, that is "to rule, to become powerful." It is translated in the Septuagint by *archō* (ἄρχω), having a similar semantic field as *rādā*.

"... and let them rule (*rādā/archō*) over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."<sup>27</sup> God created

# Genesis 4

## Are you religious like Abel or Cain?

Eve remained religious and recognized God's help even in the fallen state (Genesis 4:1). Both Cain and Abel were religious. It was not the kind of offering that mattered to God, but the heart attitude. Cain had the wrong heart attitude because he believed that his offering would be accepted no matter his heart attitude. He was angry when God accepted Abel's offering, but he rejected Cain's offering. Instead of questioning himself and understanding that worship is a matter of attitude and not what is visible to the outside, not what is countable in dollars or hours. 4:7 clearly indicates that it was not the kind of offering, but the attitude of offering that was the problem with Cain. The evil power desire of sin was luring. Cain had received power from God to overcome evil, to change of heart and to be accepted by God, as well. He refused to repent and to change of heart. God had not predestined him to lose the battle against sin, selfishness, hypocritical religiosity, jealousy, pride. God had provided power to overcome and find peace with God, just as his brother Abel. He decided to kill his brother instead of killing sin. Anger takes all joy and peace away. Anger is the desire to see the other suffer for having presumably caused one's own frustrations. The truth is that only one's own brain is capable of generating the emotion of anger. The other person can only be a stimulus by voice or sight that is evaluated in order to decide upon the desired emotion by way of evaluation of information in order to decide for the appropriate action. Cain decided to act and to eliminate his presupposed rival so that he could stay alone on earth and become God's favorite person based on his own requirements thrown into the negotiations of the game of power. The only problem was that he wrote his bill without the waiter. God in turn decided that Cain was guilty, not Abel. Cain needed to change, not Abel. Nevertheless, even after the heinous crime in which Cain indulged, God's endless mercy gave him still time to repent and to think otherwise. Actually, he actually gave him years to wander around on earth and find his way wandering back to God. Would you have taken that chance?

Genesis 4:7 uses the same word *təšūqâ* for the evil desire, just as Eve in

# Genesis 34

Michael J. Fox

This chapter is about anger and peace, just as the other chapters. Jacob's purpose was to live in peace with Shechem and the surrounding people, the Perizzites and the Canaanites. His brethren were ready to make peace, based on the condition that the others would behave according to their expectations, at least that the others would not do anything wrong, unjust. That is the test. What price are you ready to pay for peace? If the other one is ok, then we're ready to keep peace. If the other one does according to his culture and leaves us alone in peace with our culture, it's ok. But when the other one starts getting on our nerves or does anything wrong, there is no forgiveness, even if the other one asks for it?

This is exactly what happened in Genesis 34. Jacob's daughter was raped by Hamor. The next step was that Hamor's son Shechem wanted to marry her. Therefore, the plan was to offer to Jacob that the daughters of Shechem would marry the men of Jacob's household and that the daughters of Jacob's household would marry the men of city of Shechem. Jacob's sons strongly disagreed and sought for revenge.

They offered a deceitful plan. They pretended peaceful intentions and offered that Hamor's offer would be accepted on the condition that all men in Shechem would be circumcised. Surprisingly, the men of Shechem accepted. In this way, the first attempt to seek for an open conflict failed. Jacob's sons believe that they would never accept so that they had a reason to quarrel with them because of Dinah and the injustice committed.

Now, since the men of Shechem had accepted, the peace-pact was made. Jacob was ok with this because it would allow a peaceful future for his whole household. The injustice committed towards Dinah could be overcome. Accepting the past as past and going forward into a better future was the sacrifice for peace to be made. At least the men of Shechem accepted to pay reparations and accepted the most outstanding cultural mark of identity: circumcision. What more could be asked to go forward in peace?