

# Bite Size Bible Study

Did you REALLY feel it? #196

By Pastor Lee

There was a priest who was teaching a group of children about the story of the Good Samaritan. He really wanted them to get it deeply and so went to great lengths to describe how the man was beaten and left for dead. He didn't soft peddle the blood and gore of the situation. When he had finished the story he asked what the children would do if they had come across the beaten man. Hands went up. But before he could choose one; a girl in the back blurted out, "I'd throw up".

Maybe the story is a little gross, but it brings up an important point. How often do we sit with a story or parable from the Bible and let our emotional being feel it?

When we read the story of the Good Samaritan, do we think, "I get the principal" and then read on? Do we try to feel the emotional state of each person? Do we try to see the story from different angles?

Do we try to feel the pain of being beaten to within an inch of our life? Or the conflicting emotions of either of the two men that passed by him; or the empathetic reaction of the Samaritan man?

If the answer is no then we have missed an important part of the story or parable, and I would say that we have missed an important part of what God has provided for us, for our spiritual education.

Have we ever stopped to experience the self-loathing of Judas after he betrayed Jesus? It must have been excruciatingly painful.

*When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."* Matthew 27:3-4 NIV

We have all done things that we wish we could take back or have a redo. Maybe we can use our feelings that we had then to understand Judas and put him in a better light, rather than heap our condemnation on him. Anyone must be at an emotional rock bottom to contemplate and execute his or her own death.

Have we experienced the confusion and expectations of Abram?

*Some time later the word of Adonai came to Avram in a vision: "Don't be afraid, Avram. I am your protector; your reward will be very great." Avram replied, "Adonai, God, what good will your gifts be to me if I continue childless; and Eli'ezer from Dammesek inherits my possessions? You haven't given me a child,"*  
Genesis 15:1-3a CJB

We know what happened but Abraham did not yet know how this was going to play out. Even with his faith in God, he must have had doubts and questions. Have we tried to experience his feelings at this point in his life? Or have we lived the joy he must have had when Isaac was born?

We can experience the joy Mary had when she was pregnant with Jesus. She knew that He was to be the Messiah. She had been chosen by YHVH to be the one to birth Him. When we read Mary's Prophetic Song in Luke 1:46-55 we have the opportunity to experience her joy.

*"My soul is ecstatic, overflowing with praises to God!  
My spirit bursts with joy over my life-giving God!  
For he set his tender gaze upon me, his lowly servant girl.*

*And from here on, everyone will know  
that I have been favored and blessed.*

*The Mighty One has worked a mighty miracle for me;  
holy is his name!*

*Mercy kisses all who fear him,  
from one generation to the next.*

*Mighty power flows from him  
to scatter all those who walk in pride.*

*Powerful princes he tears from their thrones  
and he lifts up the lowly to take their place.*

*Those who hunger for him will always be filled,  
but the smug and self-satisfied he will send away empty.*

*Because he can never forget to show mercy,  
he has helped his chosen servant, Israel,*

*keeping his promises to Abraham  
and to his descendants forever."*

(Passion Translation)

Jesus shows us His emotions and empathy for others when He says,

*"Yerushalayim! Yerushalayim! You kill the prophets! You stone those who are sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children, just as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you refused! Look! God is abandoning your house to you! I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of Adonai!'"* Luke 13:34-35 CJB

This is not just a cute quote; it is a peek into the mind of our Messiah. His compassion for even those who were in the process of killing Him is shown in His words. Have we lived with His emotions and feelings for others long enough for it to make an impression on our character?

There are literally hundreds of stories and parables that we can use to gain a better understanding of those who lived in these stories. Only by sitting quietly and trying to experience what is in those stories, can we truly say that we have gained the depth of the story. Only when we can feel what they felt, can we understand the depth of the lessons that a passage is trying to convey to us.