

Bite Size Bible Study

Emotion #256

By Lee Logue

When you think of Bible Studies you probably don't think of emotions as being part of the study. But let me take you down a thought path that you may not have traveled.

Emotions are often thought of as positive or negative. However, it is not the emotion that should be considered right or wrong, but the action one allows that emotion to cause.

Emotions come in many flavors: admiration, adoration, appreciation, amusement, anger, anxiety, awe, awkwardness, boredom, calmness, confusion, craving, disgust, dread, empathic pain, excitement, fear, horror, interest, joy, nostalgia, relief, romance, sadness, satisfaction, surprise; to name just a few.

There is strong scientific consensus that other creatures, and possibly many animals, do experience emotions. Research seems to indicate that animals possess brain circuits and neurochemical systems that allow them to feel both negative and positive emotional states.

Complex emotional behaviors have been observed. Primates & Elephants have been observed displaying empathy, grief, and strong social bonds. Rodents have been observed showing that they can experience playfulness or compassion toward others. And Dogs & Horses often exhibit clear responses to human facial expressions, by reacting to angry versus happy faces.

So, if we open our eyes, we can see emotions in much of God's creation.

Now for the path that you may not have traveled before.

During this last Passover, I was thinking about Jesus' life and the emotions He must have felt as He traveled through it toward His crucifixion.

Did He feel joy and admiration when the centurion had such great faith in Jesus to heal his servant?

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly."

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?"

The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."

Matthew 8:5-10 NIV

Did He feel thankful and valued when the woman with the bleeding was healed because of her faith, and what other emotions might He have been feeling at that time?

And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." Mark 5:25-29, 33-34 NIV

What emotions of sadness and empathic pain was Jesus feeling as He looked down on Jerusalem?

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'" Luke 13:34-35 NIV

Knowing what was going to happen in Judas Iscariot's life, what emotions was Jesus feeling when Judas betrayed Him with a kiss?

While he was still speaking a crowd came up, and the man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve, was leading them. He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Luke 22:47-48 NIV

We are not told when Jesus knew how and when He would die. Certainly, during the last three and a half years of His ministry He must have had a good idea of how events would go down. Jesus explicitly told His disciples about his death and resurrection multiple times, mentioning his suffering, rejection by religious leaders, crucifixion, and resurrection on the third day. This was often met with confusion or denial from his disciples. What emotions might He have felt each time He mentioned His impending death?

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Matthew 16:21 NIV

They left that place and passed through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he was teaching his disciples. He said to them, The Son

of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise." But they did not understand what he meant and were afraid to ask him about it.
Mark 9:30-32 NIV

As we can see Jesus spoke openly about this to His disciples. But what emotions was He feeling? Was He looking forward to it or dreading it?

Luke tells us that Jesus often prayed alone. *But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed* (Luke 5:16 NIV). I can't help but think that this subject was on His prayer list.

In His prayer at Gethsemane, we see His emotional stress. *Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."*

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

He went away a second time and prayed, "My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done."

When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. So, he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Look, the hour has come,

and the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"
Matthew 26:36-46 NIV

On the one hand, He knew He was going to suffer. It was going to hurt – A LOT. But this was what the Father had sent Him to do.

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them, "We are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be delivered over to the Gentiles. They will mock him, insult him and spit on him; they will flog him and kill him. On the third day he will rise again." The disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about.
Luke 18:31-34 NIV

On the other hand, His suffering, death and resurrection would bring about the redemption for the sins of the world.

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.
John 17:1-3 NIV

We speak very glibly about mixed emotions – yet this must have been the apex of His mixed emotions.

Rejection and death, do not bring on positive emotions.

But resurrection and life for the entire world would bring extremely high positive emotions.

How many different emotions do you think Jesus was feeling at this point in His life?

The next time you read a passage about Jesus, see if you can feel the emotions that He must have been feeling.