

# The Good Samaritan

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a story which was told by Jesus and is recorded in the Bible. It can be found in the Gospel According to Luke in Chapter 10, verses 25-37.

## What Is a Parable?

A parable is a story that has a moral or message. A parable teaches people and helps them to make decisions through the use of a story where the characters face a similar **dilemma**. Jesus used parables to teach people how God would like them to live.

## What Happens in the Parable of the Good Samaritan?

The Gospel According to Luke tells us that, as Jesus spoke to his followers, an expert on the law stood up to test him. When Jesus told the man that he should love his neighbour as much as he loves himself, the lawyer asked, "Who exactly is my neighbour?" That is when Jesus decided to use a parable to explain the concept.



Jesus told that, long ago, a Jewish man was travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho along a dangerous road. As he walked, two thieves jumped out onto the road and attacked him. They beat, stripped and robbed the Jewish man before running away, leaving him injured at the side of the road.



A short while later, a priest saw the injured Jewish man at the side of the road. Instead of helping him, the priest crossed the road and passed by on the other side. A few moments later, a **Levite** also found the wounded man. Just like the priest, the Levite crossed the road and passed by.

Later, a **Samaritan** was walking along the road. He also saw the injured man. At the time, Samaritans and Jewish people did not get along. They had very different beliefs and each group did unkind things to the other, such as damaging their holy temples. Despite this, the Samaritan took pity on the injured man. He still wanted to help the Jewish man and did not want to leave him.

The Samaritan treated the Jewish man's wounds using oil, wine and bandages. He carried the injured man to his donkey and took him to a nearby inn. When they reached the inn, the Samaritan took two silver coins from his pocket. He gave them to the innkeeper and promised to pay back anything extra that the innkeeper spent to help the Jewish man.



### Did You Know...?

Today, the term 'good Samaritan' is still used to describe any kind person who helps a stranger in need.

### What Message Was Jesus Teaching?

The message that Jesus was trying to teach through the parable of the Good Samaritan was to love your neighbour and to treat them as you would like to be treated. Even though you may have differences and may sometimes not get along, you should be kind and treat others as though they are a member of your family. The expert on the law understood this message because of the parable that Jesus had told him.

### Glossary

**dilemma** – A difficult situation or problem.

**Levite** – A member of the tribe of Levi, who helped priests in the temple.

**Samaritan** – In biblical times, a person who lived in Samaria.



# Questions

1. In which chapter of the Gospel According to Luke can the parable of the Good Samaritan be found? Tick one.

- 10
- 25
- 37
- 40

2. Number these people from 1-4 to show the order in which they met the Jewish man.

- a Levite
- a priest
- two thieves
- a Samaritan

3. **...an expert on the law stood up...**

What do you think the word expert means in this sentence? Tick one.

- someone who knows nothing about it
- someone who knows everything about it
- someone who does not follow it
- someone who tells others not to follow it

4. Look at the paragraph beginning **Later, a Samaritan was walking along...**

Which word from the text means the same as **hurt**? Tick one.

- walking
- beliefs
- injured
- unkind

5. What is a Levite?

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6. Look at the paragraph beginning **The Gospel According to Luke tells us...**

Find and copy one word from the text which means the same as **idea**.

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7. Compare the way that the Samaritan treated the Jewish man's wounds with how we would treat wounds today.

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8. Give **two** examples of how the Samaritan showed kindness to the Jewish man.

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# The Good Samaritan

A smart man once asked Jesus, "Teacher, what should I do so I go to Heaven and live forever?"

Jesus told the smart man "What is written in the Bible? What do you think?"

The smart man answered "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength and love your neighbour as you love yourself."

"That is right!" Jesus said, "Do this and you will live forever in Heaven."

The smart man asked, "But who is my neighbour?"

Jesus told the smart man a story to help him understand the answer he was looking for.

There was once a Jewish man walking along a road from Jerusalem towards Jericho. It would take the man a full day or two to walk because there were small hills all around and the road was rocky.

The man walked along the road, humming to himself as he enjoyed the lovely sunny day. Suddenly, a group of men jumped out from behind a hill and took everything that the man had, ripped most of his clothes and pushed him to the ground then hurt him badly. They left him bleeding next to the road.

A few minutes later, a priest was walking down the same path and saw the man lying on the side of the road<sup>1</sup>. The priest did not stop to help the man, he walked over to the other side of the road and acted like he didn't see the man on the ground.



A while later, another man called a Levite, whose job is to help priests work, was walking down the road<sup>2</sup>. He slowed down and walked a little closer to the man on the ground but kept on walking and did not help<sup>3</sup>.

Jesus explained to the smart man that perhaps the priest and the Levite thought the man lying down on the ground was resting and that is why they didn't stop to help, but it was easy to see that the man on the ground was badly hurt.

A few minutes later, another man came walking along the path. He was a Samaritan. Jews usually didn't like Samaritans so did not treat them well<sup>4</sup>.

As soon as the Samaritan saw the man on the ground had been beaten badly, he wanted to help the man in distress. He went over and put bandages on his cuts, poured expensive oil and wine on the cuts to stop them getting worse and lifted him onto his own donkey. The Samaritan then took the man to an inn to take care of him.

The next day, the Samaritan took out enough money for the man to rest at the inn until he was well again. He paid at the front desk and asked them to take care of the man but if he wasn't well in two months the Samaritan would come back and pay for extra costs<sup>5</sup>.

After Jesus finished the story he asked, "Which of the three men do you think was a neighbour to the man who was left hurt on the side of the road?"

The man who asked him the question said, "The one who had wanted to help him."

Jesus told the man, "Go and do the same."

