Are robots truly capable of understanding human emotions? In my opinion, a robot could never fully comprehend human feelings. The deeper rooted, more intricate feelings that people have would likely be difficult to program into an AI machine. Because emotions are so often not something one could write down or explain in an accurate way, coding them into a set program would prove trying. The issue is simply too complex for an artificial brain to understand. Even if people could input emotions accurately there would still be some ethical dilemmas.

Personally, I do not think robots should be given human emotions. This would get rid of the point of AI robots in some human jobs. The efficiency of robots lies in their ability to follow direct commands without question. With human-like emotions added in, the robot would lose that because it would develop its own sense of morals. However, robots with morals could be used to replace people in dangerous jobs, such as in the military or the fire department. This could save lives that are lost every day in such positions, so this is a difficult issue to resolve.

As for the question of what it means to be “human”, and if you can still be human without feeling emotions, I think the answer is quite obvious. Experiencing emotion is one of the most fundamental things that separates humans from other animals and machines. While some animals like more intelligent mammals and birds may experience emotions, they never understood it like humans did. That is what set us apart. We were able to explore, wonder, and ask questions, but most importantly, feel compassion for our neighbours in a way animals couldn’t. Things like going out of our way to make sure people around us feel safe is something even the most intelligent animals don’t do, at least that we’re aware of. Therefore, a machine is infinitely less qualified to configure such feelings. A behavioral trait like this takes years of learning and experiencing to understand fully, and even then it demands a separate “human-esque” element, impossible for cybernetic organisms to possess.

Overall, I believe that robots with human feelings could be useful in certain cases. In situations like the simulated tests, of course the robots will be superior in performance. The course is designed as a one-dimensional, linear scenario, or in other words, exactly what the robots are good at. But in a situation like the incident in the Middle-East, where many innocent civilians were slaughtered by these machines in cold blood, they obviously are not as applicable. When making a split second decision, like to shoot or let live a child with a knife, the robot does not understand that child has a family; people that care about them. The robot merely understands its programming, which is to neutralize on sight. But of course an officer would know better, which is precisely why we must be cautious going forward dealing with issues like this.