

Not My Will: Sacrifice - Cat of Nine Tails

Isaiah 53; Matthew 27:11-26; John 19:12; Romans 5:8; Hebrews 9:12, 22; 1 Peter 1:18-19

The Flogging:

Read Matthew 27:11-26. Before Jesus was crucified, he was beaten. Roman soldiers used a whip called a flagrum, sometimes called a cat of nine tails, which was a whip made from leather strands embedded with sharp bone or metal. Every strike tore into flesh. Before victims were crucified they were often tied to a post and flogged with the flagrum until skin tore, muscles were exposed, and blood flowed from the victim.

One reason they would beat someone before crucifixion was to weaken the victim so that the crucifixion wouldn't take as long due to the blood loss and physical shock. Mark 15:44 says that Pilot was surprised to find out that Jesus had died so quickly, which probably meant that the Roman soldiers significantly injured Jesus in the flogging.

The other reason was to get a confession out of the victim before the crucifixion.

Read John 19:12. Pilot had Jesus beaten hoping that people would feel bad for Him and then he could let Jesus go. Instead we read that the opposite is true. The crowd couldn't get enough of it and called out for more and more pain to be inflicted on Jesus.

Roman law considered flogging to be such a severe punishment that Roman citizens were normally protected from it. This is why Cicero famously wrote that flogging a Roman citizen was a terrible crime.

The Blood:

Isaiah had prophesied all of this centuries before. Read Isaiah 53.

Every lash Jesus received was not random suffering. It was part of the price of our redemption. It leads us to something the Bible talks about over and over again — the blood.

Growing up in church I always found it odd that people were singing so much about Blood, and yet nobody talked about it unless we were “drinking” the blood in communion. It was strange to say the least.

The Hebrew word for blood is *Dam*. "Blood" in Hebrew is דָּם (pronounced *dahm*), a word representing both the physical liquid and the metaphorical life force. It is strongly connected to the word for red (*adom*) and human (*Adam*), symbolizing that humanity (*Adam*) was created from the ground (*adamah*) and animated by blood (*dam*).

Adam was created from *adamah* and the force that gave him life was *dam* which just happens to be *adom*. In other words blood represents life. Leviticus 17:11 and 14 teaches that “the life of the flesh is in the blood.”

Blood is not just a symbol of death —it is the symbol of life given. We are created from the dirt and will return to the dirt, but blood in between!

This is why the Old Testament sacrificial system required blood. Sin brings death, and life has to be given in place of life. Read Hebrews 9:22. This doesn't mean God is bloodthirsty. It

means sin brings about death. And life must be given to restore life. That's why animals were sacrificed for centuries in the temple. Those sacrifices were only temporary, but God had a plan on how to solve the problem of sin and death.

Read Hebrews 9:12. Jesus did what thousands of sacrifices could never do. He paid the price once and for all.

Physical Blood vs Spiritual Blood:

The way blood works in the human body actually reflects what Jesus' blood does spiritually. Blood in the body has several functions. And each one mirrors what the blood of Jesus does for us.

- **Blood Gives Life**

- Blood carries oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. Without blood flow, cells die.
- The same is true spiritually. Read 1 Peter 1:18-19. Jesus didn't just forgive us. His blood gives us new life. Sin drains life from us. But the blood of Jesus restores life.

- **Blood Cleanses**

- I know this sounds strange, because at some point we have all had to throw clothes away that had a blood stain on it, but... Blood carries waste and toxins to organs that remove them. It cleans the body from the inside.
- Spiritually, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin. Not just covers it. Not just ignore it. It washes it away completely. Your sin was placed on Him so His righteousness could be placed on you.

- **Blood Protects**

- Blood carries white blood cells that fight infection. Your immune system depends on it.
- In the same way, the blood of Jesus provides spiritual protection. This is why throughout Scripture people say: "I plead the blood." It is not superstition. It is a declaration that Christ's sacrifice has already won the victory.

- **Blood Heals**

- When you are wounded, blood begins the clotting process that stops bleeding and starts healing.
- Isaiah 53:5 says: "*By his stripes we are healed.*" The wounds Jesus suffered opened the door for our restoration. Not only physical healing. But emotional healing, spiritual healing, relational healing.

- **Blood Restores Order**

- Blood helps regulate body temperature, pH, and balance. Without it, the body falls into chaos.
- Sin does the same thing to our lives. It brings disorder. But the blood of Jesus restores peace and stability between us and God. Read Romans 5:8. The blood

brought us back into relationship with God. This is exactly what Isaiah prophesied.

Mission of the Messiah:

Read Isaiah 61. It describes the mission of the Messiah.

Verses 1-2 say, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to bind up the brokenhearted... to proclaim freedom for the captives... to comfort those who mourn.”* Notice the exchange language. Beauty for ashes. Joy for mourning. Praise instead of despair.

How is that possible? Jesus took our suffering onto Himself. He took what we deserved so we could receive what He deserved.

The message of the cross is not just historical. It is personal. It's living. The blood of Jesus means: Your past can be forgiven. Your shame can be washed away. Your life can be restored.

Some people carry guilt for years, but the cross declares something powerful: The price has already been paid. You don't earn redemption. You receive it.

When Jesus was beaten, every strike opened wounds. Blood flowed from his back before he ever reached the cross. The crowd saw suffering, but heaven saw redemption being purchased. The blood of Jesus was not spilled in defeat. It was poured out in love. And because of that blood: You can be cleansed. You can be restored. You can be made new.

The blood of Jesus didn't just cover sin. It conquered it. By his stripes we can be healed! May His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Not My Will!

The significance of salvation is not just about us as individuals. It's about humanity having access to God. Christ's blood is what connects God to Humanity! All of humanity!

Reflection Questions:

- According to Hebrews 9:12, how is Jesus' sacrifice different from the animal sacrifices offered in the temple?
- Which idea stands out to you most: that Jesus' blood **gives life, cleanses, protects, heals, or restores order**? Why?
- Have you ever struggled with guilt or shame that was difficult to let go of? How does the message of the cross speak to that?
- How can remembering the suffering of Jesus shape the way you live and treat others?