

THE BULL FIGHTER



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Psalm 22 is a profound piece of poetry that uses rich imagery and metaphor to convey deep feelings of anguish, suffering, and ultimately, hope. Below is an exploration of the various metaphors you mentioned, along with their Hebrew meanings and potential interpretations.

Psalm 22:12-13, which states:

“Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.”

Key Terms and Their Meanings

1. Dogs (כִּלְבִּימִ - kelevim) - Psalm 22:16

- **Meaning:** As mentioned earlier, the term כֶּלֶב (kelev) means “dog.” In biblical times, dogs were often viewed as unclean and were associated with scavenging and hostility.
- **Metaphorical Meaning:** In this context, “dogs” symbolize the psalmist’s enemies—those who are hostile, contemptuous, and aggressive, surrounding him like a pack of wild dogs.

2. Bulls (בָּשָׂן - Bashan) - Psalm 22:12

- **Meaning:** The term בָּשָׂן (Bashan) refers to a region known for its strong bulls. The word בָּקָר (baqar) can also mean “cattle” or “bulls.”
- **Metaphorical Meaning:** The “strong bulls of Bashan” represent powerful adversaries or forces that are

overwhelming and fierce. They symbolize the strength of the psalmist's oppressors.

3. Roaring Lion (אַרְיֵה שׁוֹעַג - aryeh sho'eg) - Psalm 22:13

- Meaning: אַרְיֵה (aryeh) means "lion," and שׁוֹעַג (sho'eg) means "to roar."
- Metaphorical Meaning: The "roaring lion" symbolizes ferocity and danger. It represents the fierce opposition and threats faced by the psalmist, evoking a sense of intimidation and fear.

4. Unicorns (רֵמִים - re'emim) - Psalm 22:21

- Meaning: The term רֵמִים (re'em) is often translated as "unicorn" or "wild ox." The exact identification of this creature is debated, but it is generally understood to symbolize strength.
- Metaphorical Meaning: The "horns of the unicorns" can symbolize power and ferocity. In the context of the psalm, it may refer to the overwhelming strength of the adversaries or the forces that threaten the psalmist.

5. Sword (חֶרֶב - cherev) - Psalm 22:20

- Meaning: The word חֶרֶב (cherev) means "sword."
- Metaphorical Meaning: The sword often symbolizes violence, death, or a weapon of destruction. In the psalm, it represents the threat of violence and the fear of being harmed.

6. Darling of the Dog (כֶּלָּבִים - kelavim) - Psalm 22:20

- **Meaning:** The phrase “the darling” can be interpreted as the “strength” or “power” of the dog, referring to the enemies that are likened to dogs.
- **Metaphorical Meaning:** This could symbolize the emotional pain of feeling surrounded by those who are contemptuous and aggressive, highlighting the psalmist’s vulnerability.

Summary of Metaphors

- **Dogs:** Symbolize contemptuous enemies who are hostile and aggressive.
- **Bulls:** Represent powerful adversaries, emphasizing overwhelming strength.
- **Roaring Lion:** Evokes a sense of intimidation and fierce opposition.
- **Unicorns:** Symbolize strength and power, possibly representing formidable foes.
- **Sword:** Represents the threat of violence and destruction.
- **Darling of the Dog:** Reflects the emotional pain of feeling surrounded by hostile forces.

Insights from Rabbinic Literature

1. **Symbolism of Animals:** Rabbinic interpretations often emphasize the symbolic nature of animals in the Hebrew Bible. For example, lions are seen as kings of the animal kingdom, representing strength and majesty, while dogs symbolize the baser aspects of humanity—scavengers that

reflect a lack of dignity.

2. Divine Protection: In many Jewish interpretations, the imagery of being surrounded by fierce animals reflects the psalmist's plea for divine intervention. The use of such powerful imagery underscores the seriousness of the psalmist's plight and the need for God's protection.

3. Messianic Interpretations: Some rabbinic interpretations see Psalm 22 as a foreshadowing of the suffering of the Messiah, who would face intense opposition and humiliation. The imagery can be seen as a reflection of the trials that the Messiah would endure on behalf of humanity.

4. Human Suffering and Redemption: The metaphors in Psalm 22 serve to highlight the depth of human suffering and the hope for redemption. The psalmist's vivid descriptions resonate with the experiences of many who feel abandoned or oppressed, yet the underlying message is one of faith in divine deliverance.

Conclusion

The imagery in Psalm 22, including "dogs," "bulls," "roaring lions," "unicorns," and "swords," serves to create a powerful narrative of suffering, vulnerability, and the plea for divine intervention. Each term carries significant metaphorical weight, reflecting the psalmist's emotional

state and the intensity of the struggle faced. The insights from rabbinic literature further enrich our understanding of these metaphors, connecting them to broader themes of faith, suffering, and redemption.

Hebrew and Greek Definitions

1. Bulls (Hebrew: בקר - “baqar”):

- Meaning: In Hebrew, “baqar” refers to cattle, particularly bulls, symbolizing strength and power. The bulls of Bashan were known for their size and ferocity, representing formidable adversaries.

2. Gorged (Hebrew: גָּרַר - “garar”):

- Meaning: The Hebrew term “garar” can mean to “draw” or “drag” and implies a forceful action. In the context of Psalm 22, it conveys the idea of being attacked or overwhelmed.

3. Gaped (Hebrew: פָּחַ - “peh”):

- Meaning: The Hebrew word for “gape” can refer to opening the mouth wide, often in a threatening or aggressive manner. It symbolizes the intimidation and ferocity of the bulls.

4. Gorged (Greek: κατασπαράσσω - “katasparassō”):

- Meaning: In Greek, this term means to “tear apart” or “devour,” emphasizing the violent nature of the attack.

5. Gaped (Greek: ὀρύσσω - “oryssō”):

- Meaning: This Greek term conveys the idea of digging or opening wide, often associated with aggressive or threatening behavior.

The Hebrew word for “Bashan” is בָּשָׁן (pronounced “Bashan”).

Meaning and Significance of Bashan

1. Geographical Context: Bashan refers to a region mentioned in the Hebrew Bible, located east of the Jordan River. It was known for its rich pastures, fertile land, and strong bulls. The region was associated with large cattle and was often depicted as a place of abundance.

2. Biblical References: Bashan is frequently mentioned in the context of the conquests of the Israelites. For example, King Og of Bashan was one of the last of the Rephaim (giants) and is noted for his large stature and strength. The Israelites defeated him during their conquest of the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 3:1-11).

3. Symbolism: In the context of Psalm 22, the “Bulls of Bashan” symbolize powerful adversaries. The imagery evokes the strength and ferocity of these bulls, representing the intense opposition faced by the psalmist (and by extension, Jesus) during times of suffering and persecution.

Summary

The term “Bashan” not only refers to a specific geographical region but also carries significant metaphorical weight

in biblical literature, particularly in illustrating themes of strength, opposition, and the challenges faced by the faithful.

The Hebrew word for “gaped” in the context of Psalm 22:13 is פָּה (pronounced “peh”).

Meaning and Interpretation

1. **Basic Definition:** The word פָּה (peh) primarily means “mouth.” It refers to the physical opening of the mouth but can also imply the act of speaking or expressing oneself.
2. **Contextual Meaning:** In Psalm 22:13, the phrase “they gape at me with their mouths” (פִּתְּחוּּ פִּיהֶם) conveys a sense of intimidation and hostility. The imagery suggests that those surrounding the psalmist (or Jesus, in the context of the crucifixion) are opening their mouths wide in mockery, scorn, or aggression, much like a wild animal might do when threatening its prey.
3. **Symbolic Usage:** The act of gaping can symbolize derision, contempt, or the act of preparing to attack. In the context of the psalm, it illustrates the emotional and spiritual anguish experienced by the speaker, who feels surrounded by adversaries who openly express their disdain.

Summary

In summary, the Hebrew word פֶּה (peh) means “mouth” and, in the context of Psalm 22:13, conveys the idea of hostility and mockery from those who oppose the psalmist. The imagery of gaping reflects the intense suffering and derision faced during times of distress.

The Hebrew word that is often translated as “ravening” is טָרַף (pronounced “taraf”).

Meaning and Interpretation

1. Basic Definition: The root טָרַף (taraf) means “to tear” or “to rip apart.” It is often used in the context of predatory behavior, such as that of a wild animal tearing its prey.

2. Contextual Usage: In biblical texts, “taraf” is used to describe the actions of animals that hunt and devour their prey. It conveys a sense of violence and aggression, emphasizing the predatory nature of certain creatures.

3. Figurative Meaning: The term can also be used metaphorically to describe people or forces that are destructive or harmful. For example, it can refer to those who seek to harm or oppress others, much like a predator would attack its prey.

Summary

In summary, the Hebrew word טָרַף (taraf), which can be translated as “ravening,” conveys meanings related to tearing, ripping apart, and predatory behavior. It emphasizes aggression and destruction, whether in a literal or metaphorical sense.

The phrase “beset me round” in Hebrew can be translated from the words סָבַב (sabab) and אָקַף (‘aqaf), which are often used in contexts that convey the idea of surrounding or encircling.

Breakdown of the Terms

1. סָבַב (sabab):

- **Meaning:** This verb means “to turn around,” “to surround,” or “to encircle.” It is often used to describe the act of surrounding someone or something, whether in a physical or metaphorical sense.
- **Usage in Scripture:** In Psalm 22:12, where the psalmist expresses feeling surrounded by adversaries, it conveys the idea of being encircled by threats or enemies.

2. אָקַף (‘aqaf):

- **Meaning:** This verb also means “to encircle” or “to go around.” It can imply a more strategic or intentional surrounding, often used in contexts where one is being pursued or trapped.

- Usage in Scripture: This word can be used to describe the act of being enclosed or hemmed in by foes.

Contextual Meaning

In the context of Psalm 22, the phrase “beset me round” captures the feeling of being surrounded by enemies or adversaries, emphasizing the psalmist’s sense of vulnerability and distress. It evokes imagery of being encircled by forces that threaten, much like a prey animal surrounded by predators.

Summary

In summary, the Hebrew words סָבַב (sabab) and אָקַף (‘aqaf) convey the meanings of surrounding, encircling, and being beset by adversaries. They emphasize the feelings of entrapment and vulnerability expressed in the psalmist’s lament.

The phrase “roaring lion” in Hebrew is אֵרֶשׁ הָיָה (pronounced “aryeh sho’eg”).

Breakdown of the Terms

1. אֵרֶשׁ (aryeh):

- Meaning: This word means “lion.” In biblical literature, the lion is often a symbol of strength, power, and majesty. It can also represent danger or ferocity, particularly when

used in a context that emphasizes predation or aggression.

2. שׁוֹׁׁג (sho'eg):

- Meaning: This verb means “to roar.” It conveys the sound made by a lion, which is often associated with authority, dominance, and the call of the wild. The roar of a lion can instill fear and signify its presence as a powerful predator.

Contextual Meaning

In the context of Psalm 22:13, where it states, “They gaped at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion,” the imagery of a “roaring lion” evokes a sense of intimidation and threat. The roaring lion symbolizes the fierce opposition and danger that the psalmist (and by extension, Jesus) faced.

Summary

In summary, the Hebrew phrase גָּאוֹשׁ הַיָּרֵא (aryeh sho'eg) translates to “roaring lion.” It combines the imagery of a powerful lion with the action of roaring, emphasizing both the strength and the ferocity of the adversaries surrounding the psalmist. This imagery powerfully conveys feelings of fear, danger, and the intensity of the struggle faced by the speaker.

In Psalm 22:16, the phrase “dogs have surrounded me” (Hebrew: מִיִּבְלָע יְנוּבָּרִים יָכ) employs metaphorical language

to convey a sense of derision, hostility, and abandonment.

Breakdown of the Terms

1. מִיָּבֻלִים (kelevim):

- **Meaning:** This is the plural form of the Hebrew word כֶּלֶב (kelev), which means “dog.” In ancient Near Eastern cultures, dogs were often seen as unclean animals and were associated with scavenging behavior. They were not typically regarded as pets but rather as wild or stray animals that roamed the streets.
- **Symbolic Usage:** In the context of the psalm, “dogs” symbolize the psalmist’s enemies or those who are hostile towards him. They represent individuals or groups that are aggressive, contemptuous, and threatening, much like how dogs might behave when they are in a pack, especially when they sense weakness or vulnerability.

2. יְנוּבָבִים (s’vavuni):

- **Meaning:** This verb comes from the root נָבַב (sabab), which means “to surround” or “to encircle.” The use of this term emphasizes the feeling of being besieged or encircled by adversaries.
- **Contextual Interpretation:** In Psalm 22:16, this suggests that the psalmist feels overwhelmed and trapped by those who are hostile, akin to being surrounded by a pack of dogs.

Contextual Interpretation

The metaphor of “dogs” in this verse serves to illustrate the psalmist’s feeling of being attacked and ridiculed. It conveys a sense of vulnerability and the presence of enemies who are actively seeking to harm him. This imagery resonates with the overall theme of Psalm 22, which expresses deep anguish, abandonment, and a plea for deliverance.

Summary

In summary, the phrase “the dogs have surrounded me” (מִבִּלְכִּי יְנוּבָבִים יָכֹ) in Psalm 22:16 uses the metaphor of dogs to symbolize the psalmist’s enemies and their hostile actions. The Hebrew word בֶּלֶכֶּ (kelev) denotes “dog,” while יְנוּבָבִים (s’vavuni) means “have surrounded me,” emphasizing the feeling of being besieged by those who seek to harm or ridicule him. This vivid imagery reflects the intensity of the psalmist’s suffering and the sense of being overwhelmed by adversaries.

Metaphorical Interpretation

The “Bulls of Bashan” can be seen as a metaphor for the powerful forces of sin, evil, and death that surrounded Jesus during His crucifixion. Just as the bulls are depicted as strong and threatening, so too were the forces that sought to destroy the Lamb of God.

- **Gorged and Gaped:** The imagery of being gorged and gaped upon symbolizes the intense suffering and mockery Jesus faced. The bulls represent the forces that sought to overpower Him, while the act of gaping reflects the derision and scorn He endured from those who rejected Him.

Theological Perspective: The Nature of God in Christ

The understanding of Jesus as the Lamb of God is deeply intertwined with the theological perspective that emphasizes the oneness of God.

The Oneness of God

- **God as One:** The belief that God is one and not a trinity is a central tenet in many theological frameworks. This view posits that Jesus Christ is not a separate divine person but rather the manifestation of the one true God in human form.

- **Incarnation of Jehovah:** According to this perspective, Jesus is Jehovah incarnate, embodying both the fullness of God and the humanity necessary for His redemptive work. He is the Almighty God in Christ, fully divine and fully human.

- **Jesus as Emanuel:** The name “Emanuel,” meaning “God with us,” emphasizes the intimate relationship between God and humanity. Jesus, in His humanity, reveals the character and nature of the Father, demonstrating that

God is present and active in the world.

The Suffering of the Father

- **The Father Suffered in the Flesh:** This theological perspective asserts that when Jesus suffered and died on the cross, it was not merely the Son of God who experienced this agony but the Father Himself. The suffering of Christ is seen as the ultimate expression of God's love and sacrifice for humanity.
- **The Lamb of God:** As the Lamb of God, Jesus represents the fulfillment of the sacrificial system established in the Old Testament. He is both the High Priest and the sacrificial Lamb, offering Himself for the sins of the world. This dual role underscores the unity of God in His plan for redemption.

Conclusion

The history of bullfighting, from its origins in the Roman Empire to its cultural significance in Spain, reflects themes of bravery, struggle, and sacrifice. The metaphorical interpretation of the “Bulls of Bashan”



serves to highlight the intense suffering endured by Jesus, the Lamb of God, as He faced the forces of sin and death.

In understanding the nature of God as one, we see that Jesus is not merely a separate entity within a trinity but the very embodiment of God Himself, incarnate in the flesh. His suffering and sacrifice on the cross represent the ultimate act of love, where the Father, incarnated in the flesh bore the weight of humanity's sin.

As we reflect on these profound truths, we are reminded of the depth of God's love and the incredible sacrifice made for our redemption. Jesus is indeed the Almighty God in Christ, the Father suffering and dying in the flesh, fulfilling the promise of salvation for all who believe.

This comprehensive exploration integrates the history of bullfighting, the metaphorical significance of the "Bulls of Bashan," and a theological perspective on the nature of God, emphasizing the oneness of God in Christ. It presents a deep reflection on sacrifice, suffering, and redemption, drawing parallels between the bullfighter's struggle and the sacrifice of Jesus at Calvary.

Introduction

Continuuing on an expanded version of the previous content that further deepens the connection between the history of bullfighting, the Running of the Bulls, and the

themes of sacrifice, suffering, and redemption embodied in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

The History of Bullfighting in Spain and Its Connection to Calvary

Origins of Bullfighting

Bullfighting, or “corrida de toros,” has deep roots in Spanish culture, dating back to ancient times. The practice evolved from the rituals of bull worship in prehistoric times to the formalized spectacle we recognize today.



development of bullfighting as a form of entertainment, incorporating it into gladiatorial games, where the strength and bravery of both man and beast were showcased.

- **Medieval Tradition:** By the Middle Ages, bullfighting had become a popular spectacle among the nobility. The first formalized bullfighting events began to emerge,

- **Prehistoric and Roman Influence:** Evidence of bull-related rituals can be traced back to prehistoric cave paintings in Altamira, Spain. The Romans also contributed to the

where noblemen would demonstrate their bravery by confronting bulls in the ring.

- 19th Century Formalization: The modern bullfighting tradition began to take shape in the 18th and 19th centuries, with the establishment of formal rules and the rise of professional bullfighters, or “matadores.” The first recorded bullfighting ring was built in 1710 in Ronda, Spain.

The Running of the Bulls

One of the most famous traditions associated with bullfighting is the “Running of the Bulls,” particularly celebrated during the San Fermín festival in Pamplona.

- Festival of San Fermín: This annual festival, held in July, involves the running of bulls through the streets of Pamplona. Participants, known as “mozos,” run in front of the bulls, trying to dodge them as they charge through the narrow streets. The event is both thrilling and dangerous, attracting thousands of participants and spectators from around the world.
- Historical Context: The tradition began as a way for farmers to transport bulls from the countryside to the market, where they would be sold for bullfighting events. Over time, it evolved into a public spectacle, combining elements of danger and celebration.
- Cultural Significance: The Running of the Bulls has become a symbol of Spanish culture, representing

bravery, tradition, and the relationship between humans and animals. It is an exhilarating yet perilous event that tests the mettle of those who participate.

Stories and Fables of Bullfighters

The Bullfighter's Sacrifice

Bullfighters, known for their bravery and skill, often face the ultimate test in the ring. Their stories can be seen as metaphors for sacrifice and suffering, much like the narrative of Jesus Christ.

1. The Tale of El Cordobés:

El Cordobés, a famous bullfighter from the 1960s, was known for his flamboyant style and daring maneuvers. One day, he faced a particularly fierce bull that charged at him with relentless fury. In a moment of bravery, he danced around the



bull, showcasing his skill. However, the bull eventually gored him, leaving him severely injured. Despite the pain, he returned to the ring, demonstrating resilience and a commitment to his craft. This story reflects the courage of

Jesus, who faced the ultimate sacrifice for humanity.

2. The Legend of Manolete:

Manolete was one of the most famous bullfighters in history, known for his grace and artistry in the ring. In 1947, during a fateful fight, he faced a bull named Islero. Despite his skill, the bull gored him fatally. Manolete's death was mourned across Spain, and he became a symbol of the tragic beauty of bullfighting. His story parallels the sacrifice of Jesus, who, like Manolete, faced the goring of sin and death to fulfill a greater purpose.



Calvary: The Ultimate Sacrifice

As we draw a parallel between the world of bullfighting and the crucifixion of Jesus at Calvary, we can see profound connections in themes of sacrifice, suffering, and redemption.

The Goring of the Innocent The Lamb of God. Jesus is God manifested in the flesh The Father incarnate suffered

in the flesh on the cross.

The Lamb of God: Jesus, often referred to as the Lamb of God, embodies the ultimate sacrifice. His innocence and purity make His suffering all the more poignant. Just as the bullfighter enters the ring, knowing the risks involved, Jesus willingly faced the cross, knowing the suffering that awaited Him.

- **The Bulls of Bashan:** The forces that opposed Jesus—the religious leaders, the Roman authorities, and the embodiment of sin—can be likened to the fierce bulls that charge at the matador. Psalm 22:12-13 captures this imagery: “Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.” Jesus faced these Bulls of Bashan, gored to death by the very sin He came to conquer.

The Cross as the Arena

The Cross as a Stage of Sacrifice: The cross stands as the ultimate arena where the battle between good and evil unfolded. Just as a bullfighter must face the bull with courage and skill, Jesus faced the cross with unwavering resolve.

- **The Dance of Death:** The bullfighter’s dance with the bull symbolizes the struggle between life and death.

Jesus' dance was one of grace and sacrifice, where He willingly laid down His life to conquer death. The horns that sought to pierce Him became the very instruments of our salvation.

Metaphorical Insights

The stories of bullfighters can serve as powerful metaphors for the themes of sacrifice, courage, and the human condition. Here are some fables and their meanings that resonate with these themes:

Fable: The Brave Matador and the Bull

Once, a brave matador faced a bull known for its strength. As the bull charged, the matador danced gracefully, avoiding its horns. In his final act, he chose to stand still, allowing the bull to charge, knowing that his sacrifice would save a child in the crowd. The child was saved, but the matador was gored. This fable illustrates the essence of true sacrifice—putting oneself in harm's way for the sake of others, much like Jesus did for humanity.

Fable: The Bull and the Lion

In a forest, a proud bull and a fierce lion



confronted each other. The lion boasted of his strength, while the bull, calm and steady, spoke of his resilience. One day, a hunter arrived, aiming to capture the lion. The bull stood between the lion and the hunter, knowing that he might be gored in the process. In the end, the lion escaped, and the bull was injured but proud. This fable teaches that true strength lies not in aggression but in the willingness to protect others, reflecting the selflessness of Christ.

Conclusion: The Legacy of the Bullfighter and Calvary

As we reflect on the history of bullfighting in Spain, particularly the Running of the Bulls, we are reminded of the cultural significance of bravery and sacrifice. The stories of bullfighters, filled with courage and artistry, resonate deeply with the themes of suffering and redemption found in the narrative of Jesus Christ at Calvary.

Key Takeaways:

1. **The Nature of Sacrifice:** Just as a bullfighter risks everything for glory, Jesus risked everything for our salvation, demonstrating the depth of His love.
2. **Strength in Suffering:** Jesus' suffering was not in vain; it was the pathway to our redemption and the defeat of sin and death.
3. **Empowerment Through His Blood:** The blood of Jesus, spilled for us, is our source of life and empowerment.

through the Holy Spirit.

Let us honor the legacy of the Bullfighter by living in the victory He has secured for us. May we embrace the gift of the Holy Spirit and share the message of reconciliation with the world, proclaiming that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life.

Final Thoughts

In the grand narrative of Scripture, the imagery of the bullfighter and the Bulls of Bashan offers profound insights into the passion of Christ and the ultimate sacrifice He made for humanity. This sermon booklet will explore the metaphor of the bullfighter, drawing parallels between the ancient practice of bullfighting and the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who was Jehovah in the flesh. Through the lens of prophetic poetry, we will uncover the depths of Christ's suffering, the power of His blood, and the spectators who bore witness to His ultimate act of love on the Cross of Calvary.

Chapter 1: The Lamb of God Jehovah Manifested in the Flesh the Father Incarnated in the Flesh

There is no trinity. God in a form of a man died and shed his divine perfect sinless spotless blood for you and I (Acts 2:38).

Scripture Reference: John 1:29

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”

Understanding the Incarnation:

The Lamb of God is not merely a symbol but is Jehovah Himself, incarnate in the flesh. Jesus, the Son of God, took on human form to fulfill the divine plan of redemption. He came not just to live among us but to die for us, embodying the ultimate sacrifice.

Metaphorical Insight:

- The Innocent Lamb: As the Lamb of God, Jesus was innocent and pure, yet He willingly stepped into the arena of suffering, much like a bullfighter entering the ring. His innocence made the brutality of His death all the more poignant.
- The Goring of the Savior: The Bulls of Bashan, representing the forces of sin and evil, gorged Him to death. Each attack was a reflection of humanity’s rejection of the divine, culminating in the ultimate act of cruelty.

Illustration: The Innocent Bullfighter

There was once a renowned bullfighter known for his exceptional skill and grace in the arena. He was beloved

by the crowd for his bravery and compassion toward the bulls. One fateful day, he faced a particularly fierce bull, known for its aggression. As the matador danced with the bull, he displayed remarkable control, but the bull, in a moment of rage, gored him fatally. The crowd gasped in horror, realizing that the very one who had brought them joy was now a victim of the violence he sought to tame. This story serves as a poignant metaphor for Jesus, the Lamb of God, who came to save us but was gored by the very sin He sought to eradicate.

Chapter 2: The Cross of Calvary - The Crucible of Suffering

The Crucifixion as a Crucible:

The crucifixion of Jesus can be likened to a crucible—a vessel that withstands extreme heat and pressure. In this context, it symbolizes the intense suffering and refinement that Jesus underwent for our sake. Just as precious metals are purified through fire, Jesus was refined through His suffering, revealing the ultimate expression of love and sacrifice.

The Science of Suffering:

- **Physiological Impact:** Medical science provides insight into the suffering Jesus experienced. The scourging inflicted upon Him would have torn through skin and muscle, causing significant blood loss and trauma. The

Roman whip, known as the flagrum, had pieces of metal and bone embedded in its thongs, designed to rip flesh apart. Each lash was like a bull's horn, piercing His body and leaving him in agony.

- **Spiritual and Emotional Pain:** Beyond the physical, the emotional and spiritual agony of bearing the sins of the world cannot be overstated. The weight of humanity's transgressions bore down on Him, leading to a moment of profound despair as He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). In this moment, the gaping wounds of sin of the Father in the flesh illustrates the depth of His sacrifice.

The Goring of the Savior:

The imagery of being gored by bulls is a powerful metaphor for the suffering Jesus endured. The goring represents the piercing pain of betrayal, abandonment, and the physical agony of crucifixion. Each thrust of the bull's horn symbolizes the assaults on His dignity and humanity, culminating in the ultimate act of cruelty—His death on the cross.

Story: The Brave Matador

Once, in a small Spanish town, a young matador named Alejandro was celebrated for his skill and bravery. He had a special bond with the bulls he faced, often expressing a deep respect for their power. One day, during a festival,

he faced a bull known for its ferocity. As he danced in the ring, the bull charged with all its might. In a heroic act, Alejandro diverted the bull's path but was ultimately gored in the process. The crowd erupted in sorrow, realizing that their beloved matador had sacrificed himself for the thrill of the fight. This story reflects the heart of Jesus, who, in His innocence, faced the Bulls of Bashan and was gored to death for our salvation.

Chapter 3: The Spectators at the Cross

The Crowd from Afar:

As Jesus hung on the Cross, the Gospel accounts speak of spectators who watched from a distance. They were a mix of followers, curious onlookers, and those who mocked Him. This scene is rich with metaphorical significance, as it reflects the varied responses to Jesus' sacrifice.

Scripture Reference: Luke 23:49

“But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.”

Metaphorical Insight:

- **Witnesses to Suffering:** The spectators symbolize humanity's varied responses to the suffering of Christ.

Some stood in mourning, recognizing the gravity of the moment, while others mocked, choosing to remain blind to the truth before them.

- **The Distance of the Heart:** Standing at a distance can represent the emotional and spiritual distance many maintain from the sacrifice of Christ. It challenges us to consider our own proximity to the cross—are we merely spectators, or are we participants in the story of redemption?



Parable: The Two Brothers
Once, there were two

brothers who lived in a village. One brother was known for his bravery, while the other was more timid. One day, a great storm threatened their village, and the brave brother rushed to help the villagers. The timid brother watched from afar, fearful of the storm's wrath. In the end, the brave brother saved many lives, while the timid brother remained a mere observer. This story illustrates that while some may watch from a distance, true courage lies in stepping forward to embrace the call to action. Similarly, we are called not just to observe the Cross but to embrace its significance in our lives.

Chapter 4: The Bullfighter Jesus -

The Ultimate Sacrifice

The Role of the Bullfighter:

In the arena, the bullfighter faces the raging bull, risking life and limb to protect the spectators and assert his skill. Jesus, as the ultimate bullfighter, faced the chaotic forces of sin and death, confronting the bull of the devil with unwavering courage.

Metaphorical Insight:

- **Confrontation with Evil:** Jesus did not back down from the challenge. Instead, He engaged with the powers of darkness, knowing that His victory would come through suffering. Just as a matador must read the bull's movements, Jesus understood the nature of sin and its consequences.
- **The Dance of Death and Life:** The bullfighter's dance with the bull symbolizes the struggle between life and death. Jesus' dance was one of grace and sacrifice, where He willingly laid down His life to conquer death. The horns that sought to pierce Him became the very instruments of our salvation.

Story: The Final Showdown

In a legendary bullfighting event, a matador faced a bull known for its ferocity. As the bull charged, the matador took a deep breath, steadied himself, and performed a series of intricate maneuvers. In that moment, he realized that the bull was not just an opponent but a symbol of the struggles he faced in life. With every pass, he danced

with danger, ultimately bringing the bull to submission. Similarly, Jesus faced the ultimate danger on the cross, submitting to death to bring us eternal life.

Chapter 5: The Legacy of the Cross

The Cross as the Ultimate Sacrifice:

The Cross of Calvary stands as the ultimate symbol of love and sacrifice. It is here that Jesus, the Bullfighter, faced the Bulls of Bashan, enduring the goring that would lead to our redemption.

Scripture Reference: John 3:16

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Metaphorical Reflection:

- **The Depth of His Love:** The cross is not merely a historical event; it is the culmination of God’s love for humanity. Jesus willingly faced the Bulls of Bashan, the gaping wounds, and the mockery of the crowd, all for the sake of our salvation.
- **The Invitation to Participate:** The legacy of the cross invites us to participate in the story of redemption. We are called to carry our own crosses, to confront our own bulls, and to embrace the transformative power of Christ’s

sacrifice in our lives.

Fable: The Crossroads

In a small village, two paths diverged in the woods. One path was easy and well-trodden, while the other was steep and rugged. A traveler stood at the crossroads, unsure of which path to take. He watched as others chose the easy route, but he felt a pull toward the difficult one. As he journeyed along the steep path, he encountered challenges that tested his resolve. In the end, he discovered that the struggles he faced led him to a beautiful valley filled with peace and joy. This fable illustrates that the path of sacrifice and struggle leads to the ultimate reward—eternal life through Christ.

Conclusion: The Bullfighter's Legacy

As we reflect on the metaphor of Jesus as the bullfighter, we are reminded of His courage in facing the Bulls of Bashan. Each lash, each gaping wound, and each moment of suffering was a testament to His love for us. He became the ultimate sacrifice, enduring the cruelty of man and the weight of sin.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Strength in Suffering:** Jesus' suffering was not in vain; it was the pathway to our redemption and the defeat of sin and death.
2. **The Nature of Sacrifice:** Just as a bullfighter risks

everything for glory, Jesus risked everything for our salvation, demonstrating the depth of His love.

3. Empowerment Through His Blood: The blood of Jesus, spilled for us, is our source of life and empowerment through the Holy Spirit.

Let us honor the legacy of the Bullfighter by living in the victory He has secured for us. May we embrace the gift of the Holy Spirit and share the message of reconciliation with the world, proclaiming that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life.

Final Thoughts

This sermon booklet serves as a tapestry of woven truths, illustrating the depth of Christ's sacrifice and the power of His blood. Through the metaphor of the bullfighter and the prophetic insight of the Bulls of Bashan, we gain a deeper understanding of the love and grace that God has bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who was Jehovah in the flesh. Let us carry this message in our hearts and share it with others, proclaiming the victory of the cross and the hope of eternal life.

This expanded booklet now integrates the concept of the Lamb of God as Jehovah in the flesh, the imagery of the bullfighter, and stories that enrich the understanding of Jesus' sacrifice. Each chapter builds upon the previous one, creating a comprehensive and engaging narrative

that reflects on the significance of Christ's work on our behalf and the varied responses of those who witnessed His suffering.

Below is an enriched and expanded version of the sermon booklet that incorporates the concept of the Lamb of God as Jehovah in the flesh, who died as a man, alongside the metaphor of the bullfighter and the imagery of the bulls that gorged Him to death. This version will also include stories and illustrations related to bullfighters.

The Bullfighter in the Ring - A Messianic Reflection on the Bulls of Bashan

Introduction

In the grand narrative of Scripture, the imagery of the bullfighter and the Bulls of Bashan offers profound insights into the passion of Christ and the ultimate sacrifice He made for humanity. This sermon booklet will explore the metaphor of the bullfighter, drawing parallels between the ancient practice of bullfighting and the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who was Jehovah in the flesh. Through the lens of prophetic poetry, we will uncover the depths of Christ's suffering, the power of His blood, and the spectators who bore witness to His ultimate act of love on the Cross of Calvary.

Chapter 1: The Lamb of God - Jehovah in the Flesh

Scripture Reference: John 1:29

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”

Understanding the Incarnation:

The Lamb of God is not merely a symbol but is Jehovah Himself, incarnate in the flesh. Jesus, the Son of God, took on human form to fulfill the divine plan of redemption. He came not just to live among us but to die for us, embodying the ultimate sacrifice.

Metaphorical Insight:

- **The Innocent Lamb:** As the Lamb of God, Jesus was innocent and pure, yet He willingly stepped into the arena of suffering, much like a bullfighter entering the ring. His innocence made the brutality of His death all the more poignant.
- **The Goring of the Savior:** The Bulls of Bashan, representing the forces of sin and evil, gorged Him to death. Each attack was a reflection of humanity’s rejection of the divine, culminating in the ultimate act of cruelty.

Illustration: The Innocent Bullfighter

There was once a renowned bullfighter known for his exceptional skill and grace in the arena. He was beloved by the crowd for his bravery and compassion toward the bulls. One fateful day, he faced a particularly fierce bull, known for its aggression. As the matador danced with the bull, he displayed remarkable control, but the bull, in a moment of rage, gored him fatally. The crowd gasped in horror, realizing that the very one who had brought them joy was now a victim of the violence he sought to tame. This story serves as a poignant metaphor for Jesus, the Lamb of God, who came to save us but was gored by the very sin He sought to eradicate.

Chapter 2: The Cross of Calvary - The Crucible of Suffering

The Crucifixion as a Crucible:

The crucifixion of Jesus can be likened to a crucible—a vessel that withstands extreme heat and pressure. In this context, it symbolizes the intense suffering and refinement that Jesus underwent for our sake. Just as precious metals are purified through fire, Jesus was refined through His suffering, revealing the ultimate expression of love and sacrifice.

The Science of Suffering:

- **Physiological Impact:** Medical science provides insight

into the suffering Jesus experienced. The scourging inflicted upon Him would have torn through skin and muscle, causing significant blood loss and trauma. The Roman whip, known as the flagrum, had pieces of metal and bone embedded in its thongs, designed to rip flesh apart. Each lash was like a bull's horn, piercing His body and leaving him in agony.

- **Spiritual and Emotional Pain:** Beyond the physical, the emotional and spiritual agony of bearing the sins of the world cannot be overstated. The weight of humanity's transgressions bore down on Him, leading to a moment of profound despair as He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). In this moment, the gaping wounds of sin of the Father in the flesh illustrates the depth of His sacrifice.

The Goring of the Savior:

The imagery of being gored by bulls is a powerful metaphor for the suffering Jesus endured. The goring represents the piercing pain of betrayal, abandonment, and the physical agony of crucifixion. Each thrust of the bull's horn symbolizes the assaults on His dignity and humanity, culminating in the ultimate act of cruelty—His death on the cross.

Story: The Brave Matador

Once, in a small Spanish town, a young matador named

Alejandro was celebrated for his skill and bravery. He had a special bond with the bulls he faced, often expressing a deep respect for their power. One day, during a festival, he faced a bull known for its ferocity. As he danced in the ring, the bull charged with all its might. In a heroic act, Alejandro diverted the bull's path but was ultimately gored in the process. The crowd erupted in sorrow, realizing that their beloved matador had sacrificed himself for the thrill of the fight. This story reflects the heart of Jesus, who, in His innocence, faced the Bulls of Bashan and was gored to death for our salvation.

Chapter 3: The Spectators at the Cross

The Crowd from Afar:

As Jesus hung on the Cross, the Gospel accounts speak of spectators who watched from a distance. They were a mix of followers, curious onlookers, and those who mocked Him. This scene is rich with metaphorical significance, as it reflects the varied responses to Jesus' sacrifice.

Scripture Reference: Luke 23:49

“But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.”

Metaphorical Insight:

- **Witnesses to Suffering:** The spectators symbolize humanity's varied responses to the suffering of Christ. Some stood in mourning, recognizing the gravity of the moment, while others mocked, choosing to remain blind to the truth before them.
- **The Distance of the Heart:** Standing at a distance can represent the emotional and spiritual distance many maintain from the sacrifice of Christ. It challenges us to consider our own proximity to the cross—are we merely spectators, or are we participants in the story of redemption?

Parable: The Two Brothers

Once, there were two brothers who lived in a village. One brother was known for his bravery, while the other was more timid. One day, a great storm threatened their village, and the brave brother rushed to help the villagers. The timid brother watched from afar, fearful of the storm's wrath. In the end, the brave brother saved many lives, while the timid brother remained a mere observer. This story illustrates that while some may watch from a distance, true courage lies in stepping forward to embrace the call to action. Similarly, we are called not just to observe the Cross but to embrace its significance in our lives.

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In a small village, two paths diverged in the woods. One path was easy and well-trodden, while the other was steep and rugged. A traveler stood at the crossroads, unsure of which path to take. He watched as others chose the easy route, but he felt a pull toward the difficult one. As he journeyed along the steep path, he encountered challenges that tested his resolve. In the end, he discovered that the struggles he faced led him to a beautiful valley filled with peace and joy. This fable illustrates that the path of sacrifice and struggle leads to the ultimate reward—eternal life through Christ.

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Key Takeaways:

1. Strength in Suffering: Jesus' suffering was not in vain; it was the pathway to our redemption and the defeat of sin and death.

2. The Nature of Sacrifice: Just as a bullfighter risks everything for glory, Jesus risked everything for our salvation, demonstrating the depth of His love.

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Below is an expanded and enriched version of the sermon booklet, incorporating hermeneutical and expository insights, parables, tales, fables, and metaphorical insights. This version will delve deeper into the significance of the Cross of Calvary, the spectators who watched from afar, and the overarching themes of sacrifice, redemption, and the nature of Jesus as the ultimate bullfighter.

The Bullfighter in the Ring - A Messianic Reflection on the Bulls of Bashan

Introduction

In the grand narrative of Scripture, the imagery of the bullfighter and the Bulls of Bashan offers profound insights into the passion of Christ and the ultimate sacrifice He made for humanity. This sermon booklet will explore the metaphor of the bullfighter, drawing parallels between the

ancient practice of bullfighting and the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, who fought against sin and death. Through the lens of prophetic poetry, we will uncover the depths of Christ's suffering, the power of His blood, and the spectators who bore witness to His ultimate act of love on the Cross of Calvary.

Chapter 1: The Bulls of Bashan

Scripture Reference: Psalm 22:12-13

“Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.”

Understanding Bashan:

The region of Bashan, known for its fertile pastures and strong cattle, symbolizes strength and ferocity. The bulls of Bashan represent the powerful forces that opposed Jesus, including the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders who conspired against Him. These bulls, in their strength, also symbolize the cruelty inflicted upon our Savior during His passion.

Metaphorical Insight:

- **Strength and Power:** The bulls symbolize the powerful forces that opposed Jesus—religious leaders, Roman authorities, and spiritual darkness.

- **Ferocity of Opposition:** Just as a bull can charge with aggression, so too did the forces against Jesus attempt to overwhelm Him, seeking to crush His spirit.
- **Endurance and Courage:** Jesus, like a bullfighter, faced these adversaries with unwavering resolve, demonstrating courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

Parable: The Brave Shepherd and the Bull

In a small village, a shepherd tended to his flock, always vigilant against the dangers that lurked nearby. One day, a fierce bull escaped from a neighboring farm, rampaging through the village. The villagers trembled in fear, but the shepherd stepped forward, armed only with his staff. He approached the bull, not with anger, but with a calm demeanor, speaking softly to it. The bull, sensing the shepherd's confidence, eventually calmed down. This story illustrates that true strength lies not in brute force but in courage and love. Similarly, Jesus faced the Bulls of Bashan with unwavering love and sacrifice.

Chapter 2: The Cross of Calvary

The Crucifixion as a Crucible:

The crucifixion of Jesus can be likened to a crucible—a vessel that withstands extreme heat and pressure. In this context, it symbolizes the intense suffering and refinement that Jesus underwent for our sake. Just as precious metals are purified through fire, Jesus was refined through His suffering, revealing the ultimate expression of love and

sacrifice.

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- **Physiological Impact:** Medical science provides insight into the suffering Jesus experienced. The scourging inflicted upon Him would have torn through skin and muscle, causing significant blood loss and trauma. The Roman whip, known as the flagrum, had pieces of metal and bone embedded in its thongs, designed to rip flesh apart. Each lash was like a bull's horn, piercing His body and leaving him in agony.
- **Spiritual and Emotional Pain:** Beyond the physical, the emotional and spiritual agony of bearing the sins of the world cannot be overstated. The weight of humanity's transgressions bore down on Him, leading to a moment of profound despair as He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). In this moment, the gaping wounds of sin of the Father in the flesh illustrates the depth of His sacrifice.

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The imagery of being gored by bulls is a powerful metaphor for the suffering Jesus endured. The goring represents the piercing pain of betrayal, abandonment, and the physical agony of crucifixion. Each thrust of the bull's horn symbolizes the assaults on His dignity and humanity, culminating in the ultimate act of cruelty—His death on the cross.

Fable: The Goring of the Innocent

In a distant land, a wise old man told a tale of an innocent deer who roamed the fields. One day, a bull, driven mad by a hunter's taunts, charged at the deer, goring it with its horns. The villagers mourned the loss, for the deer had brought joy to many. This fable illustrates the senseless violence that can arise from unchecked aggression. Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, was gored by the bulls of sin and hatred, suffering for the very ones who sought to destroy Him.

Chapter 3: The Spectators at the Cross

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and the significance of the Cross of Calvary. Each chapter builds upon the previous one, creating a comprehensive and engaging narrative that reflects on the significance of Christ's work on our behalf and the varied responses of those who witnessed His suffering.

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The Strength of the Bull's Horns



Metaphorical Insight:

The horns of a bull are powerful instruments, capable of inflicting severe damage. They symbolize the sharpness of the accusations and the brutality of the treatment Jesus endured. The gaping wounds caused by the horns represent the deep emotional and physical pain inflicted

upon Him as He was mocked, beaten, and ultimately crucified.

The Gaping Wounds:

- **Medical Perspective:** The gaping wounds that Jesus suffered can be understood through the lens of medical science. The scourging inflicted upon Him would have torn through skin and muscle, causing significant blood loss and trauma. The Roman whip, known as the flagrum, had pieces of metal and bone embedded in its thongs, designed to rip flesh apart. Each lash was like a bull's horn, piercing His body and leaving him in agony.
- **Prophetic Fulfillment:** Isaiah 53:5 reminds us, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." The imagery of being gored by bulls reflects the profound suffering that Jesus endured. He was not just physically wounded but emotionally and

spiritually devastated as He bore the weight of our sins.

The Cruelty of the Romans:

The Roman soldiers, like the bulls of Bashan, surrounded Jesus with their mockery and violence. They gaped at Him with disdain, treating Him as less than human. Their cruelty was not just physical; it was psychological, as they sought to humiliate and degrade the King of Kings. The gaping wounds on His body mirror the gaping hearts of those who rejected Him, illustrating the depth of their cruelty.

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The Crucifixion as a Crucible:

The crucifixion of Jesus can be likened to a crucible—a vessel that withstands extreme heat and pressure. In this context, it symbolizes the intense suffering and refinement that Jesus underwent for our sake. Just as precious metals are purified through fire, Jesus was refined through His suffering, revealing the ultimate expression of love and sacrifice.

The Science of Suffering:

- **Physiological Impact:** Medical science provides insight into the suffering Jesus experienced. The combination of scourging, the weight of the cross, and the crucifixion itself would lead to extreme physiological stress. Hemorrhagic

shock, dehydration, and respiratory distress would have been part of His suffering. Each breath would have been a struggle as His body fought against the pain and trauma.

- **Spiritual and Emotional Pain:** Beyond the physical, the emotional and spiritual agony of bearing the sins of the world cannot be overstated. The weight of humanity's transgressions bore down on Him, leading to a moment of profound despair as He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). In this moment, the gaping wounds of sin of the Father in the flesh illustrates the depth of His sacrifice.

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- **Confrontation with Evil:** Jesus did not back down from the challenge. Instead, He engaged with the powers of darkness, knowing that His victory would come through suffering. Just as a matador must read the bull's movements, Jesus understood the nature of sin and its consequences.
- **The Dance of Death and Life:** The bullfighter's dance with the bull symbolizes the struggle between life and death. Jesus' dance was one of grace and sacrifice, where He willingly laid down His life to conquer death. The horns of the bull represent the very forces that sought to destroy Him, yet through His death, He disarmed those forces, bringing life to all who believe.

The Price of Redemption:

The price Jesus paid at the cross was immense. He endured the gaping wounds and the goring of the Bulls of Bashan so that we could be set free from sin. His blood, precious and powerful, became the means of our redemption. The horns that sought to pierce Him became the very instruments of our salvation.

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As we reflect on the metaphor of Jesus as the bullfighter, we are reminded of His courage in facing the Bulls of Bashan. Each lash, each gaping wound, and each moment of suffering was a testament to His love for us. He became

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3. **Empowerment Through His Blood:** The blood of Jesus, spilled for us, is our source of life and empowerment through the Holy Spirit.

Let us honor the legacy of the Bullfighter by living in the victory He has secured for us. May we embrace the gift of the Holy Spirit and share the message of reconciliation with the world, proclaiming that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life.

This expanded booklet now incorporates the strength of a bull's horns and the metaphorical implications of Jesus' suffering, drawing parallels to the cruelty He faced during His crucifixion. The insights into medical science, the crucible of the cross, and the role of the bullfighter further enrich the narrative surrounding Jesus' sacrifice

and its significance for humanity.

Below, I have expanded the sermon booklet with additional points and content that delve deeper into the metaphorical meaning of Jesus as a bullfighter. This includes insights into the qualities of a bullfighter, the spiritual implications of the metaphor, and how it relates to Jesus' mission and sacrifice.

The Bullfighter in the Ring - A Messianic Reflection on the Bulls of Bashan

Introduction

In the grand tapestry of Scripture, the imagery of the bullfighter and the Bulls of Bashan offers profound insights into the passion of Christ and the ultimate sacrifice He made for humanity. This sermon booklet will explore the metaphor of the bullfighter, drawing parallels between the ancient practice of bullfighting and the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ, who fought against sin and death. Through the lens of prophetic poetry, we will uncover the depths of Christ's suffering and the power of His blood, which purchased our salvation.

Chapter 1: The Bulls of Bashan

Scripture Reference: Psalm 22:12-13

“Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me. They gape at me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion.”

Understanding Bashan:

The region of Bashan, known for its fertile pastures and strong cattle, symbolizes strength and ferocity. The bulls of Bashan represent not only the physical power of the beasts but also the cruel forces that surrounded Jesus during His crucifixion. The Hebrew word for Bashan (בָּשָׁן) implies richness and abundance, yet it is in this place of abundance that Jesus faced the greatest trial.

Metaphorical Meaning:

- **Strength and Power:** The bulls symbolize the powerful forces that opposed Jesus—religious leaders, Roman authorities, and spiritual darkness.
- **Ferocity of Opposition:** Just as a bull can charge with aggression, so too did the forces against Jesus attempt to overwhelm Him, seeking to crush His spirit.
- **Endurance and Courage:** Jesus, like a bullfighter, faced these adversaries with unwavering resolve, demonstrating courage in the face of overwhelming odds.

Prophetic Insight:

The bulls of Bashan represent the Jewish leaders and

Roman authorities who conspired against Jesus. They surrounded Him, taunting and mocking Him, just as a bullfighter faces a raging bull in the arena. The imagery evokes the cruelty and violence inflicted upon Jesus, who became the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

Fable: The Brave Shepherd

In ancient times, there was a shepherd who faced a fierce bull that had strayed from its herd. The bull was known for its strength and aggression, causing havoc in the village. The shepherd, armed only with his faith and a staff, confronted the bull. Instead of fighting with brute strength, he calmed the bull with gentle words and a steady hand. This fable illustrates that true strength often lies in courage and faith rather than violence. Similarly, Jesus faced the Bulls of Bashan with unwavering love and sacrifice.

Chapter 2: The Bullfighter in the Ring

The Art of Bullfighting:

Bullfighting is a tradition that dates back centuries, characterized by the bravery and skill of the bullfighter, or matador. The bullfighter must possess not only physical strength but also wisdom, agility, and a deep understanding of the bull's behavior. The arena becomes a stage where life and death dance in a delicate balance.

Metaphorical Connection:

In this metaphor, Jesus is the bullfighter, facing the bull called the devil. With every strike, the devil sought to defeat Him, but Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, fought valiantly. Just as a matador uses grace and strategy to outmaneuver the bull, Jesus used love and sacrifice to conquer sin and death.

Qualities of a Bullfighter:



1. **Courage:** Bullfighters face dangerous bulls, risking their lives to protect others. Jesus faced the ultimate danger—death itself—showing unparalleled courage.

2. **Skill and Precision:** A bullfighter must know the bull's movements

and anticipate its actions. Jesus demonstrated divine wisdom, knowing the hearts and minds of those around Him.

3. **Compassion:** While bullfighting can be brutal, the best matadors respect the animal. Jesus showed compassion even to His enemies, praying for those who persecuted Him.

4. Endurance: Bullfighting requires physical and mental endurance. Jesus endured immense suffering, both physically and emotionally, through His trials leading to the cross.

Story: The Cunning Matador

There was once a matador known for his cunning and skill. He faced a bull that had never been tamed, a beast that charged with unrelenting ferocity. Instead of meeting force with force, the matador danced around the bull, using its own momentum against it. This dance of life and death is reminiscent of Jesus' battle with sin. He did not confront the devil with sheer power but with the wisdom of His sacrifice, turning the very instruments of death into a means of salvation.

Chapter 3: The Suffering of the Savior

The Whip and the Horns:

As the bullfighter faces the bull, the Roman soldiers used a whip with metal tips to scourge Jesus, inflicting deep wounds upon His back. Each lash was like a bull's horn, tearing into His flesh, causing blood to pour from His body.

Scripture Reference: Isaiah 53:5

“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.”

The Blood of the Lamb:

The blood that flowed from Christ was not just any blood; it was perfect, precious, and powerful. It was the blood of the Father incarnate, the ultimate sacrifice that cleansed us from sin. The imagery of blood in the Bible signifies life and atonement, and through His sacrifice, Jesus purchased our redemption.

Metaphorical Meaning:

- **The Cost of Redemption:** Just as a bullfighter risks life and limb for glory, Jesus risked everything for our salvation, enduring suffering to secure our freedom.
- **Victory Through Suffering:** The bullfighter's scars tell the story of battles fought; similarly, Jesus' wounds tell the story of our redemption, demonstrating that through suffering comes victory.

Fable: The Sacrificial Lamb

In a small village, a farmer raised a lamb that was pure and unblemished. When the time came for the village's annual sacrifice, the farmer hesitated, knowing the lamb had brought him joy and companionship. But he understood the importance of the sacrifice for the community. As he held the lamb, he realized that love often requires sacrifice. Jesus, like that farmer, willingly laid down His life for us, knowing the joy and redemption it would bring to humanity.

Chapter 4: The Cross of Calvary

The Ultimate Showdown:

As Jesus hung on the cross, the Bulls of Bashan surrounded Him—representing the mocking crowd, the Roman soldiers, and the spiritual forces of darkness. The cries of “Crucify Him!” echoed like the roar of bulls charging in the arena.

Scripture Reference: Psalm 22:16-18

“For dogs have surrounded me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed me. They pierced my hands and my feet; I can count all my bones. They look and stare at me. They divide my garments among them, And for my clothing they cast lots.”

The Final Victory:

In the arena of the cross, Jesus fought the ultimate battle against sin and death. His resurrection three days later was the victory cry that declared, “It is finished!” Just as a bullfighter triumphs over the bull, Jesus triumphed over the enemy, securing our salvation.

Metaphorical Meaning:

- **The Cross as the Arena:** The cross represents the ultimate arena where Jesus faced the fiercest opponent—sin and death. It was here that He displayed the greatest

act of courage and love.

- The Spectators: Just as a bullfight draws a crowd, the crucifixion drew onlookers—some mocking, others mourning. The spectators symbolize the world's response to Jesus' sacrifice.

Story: The Final Fight

In a legendary bullfighting event, a matador faced a bull known for its ferocity. As the bull charged, the matador took a deep breath, steadied himself, and performed a series of intricate maneuvers. In that moment, he realized that the bull was not just an opponent but a symbol of the struggles he faced in life. With every pass, he danced with danger, ultimately bringing the bull to submission. Similarly, Jesus faced the ultimate danger on the cross, submitting to death to bring us eternal life.

Chapter 5: The Holy Spirit and Our Transformation

The Gift of the Holy Ghost:

Through His blood, Jesus purchased the gift of the Holy Spirit, empowering us to live victoriously. The Holy Spirit is not a separate entity but the very presence of God within us, transforming our lives and enabling us to walk in His ways.

Scripture Reference: 2 Corinthians 5:19

“That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”

Understanding the Godhead:

Jesus is not divided into separate persons; He is the fullness of the Godhead. He is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This understanding reinforces the unity of God’s purpose in our salvation.

Metaphorical Meaning:

- Empowerment for the Fight: Just as a bullfighter relies on training and skill, we rely on the Holy Spirit to empower us in our daily battles against sin and temptation.
- Transformation and Renewal: The Holy Spirit transforms us from the inside out, allowing us to reflect Christ’s love and courage in our lives.

Fable: The Fire Within

In a distant land, a young boy watched as a blacksmith worked tirelessly at his forge. The flames danced, and the metal glowed red-hot. The blacksmith explained that the fire transformed the metal, making it stronger and more resilient. Just as the fire refined the metal, the Holy Spirit refines us, transforming our weaknesses into strengths. Jesus, as our bullfighter, not only faced the enemy but also ignites the fire of the Holy Spirit within us, empowering us to overcome.

Conclusion: The Bullfighter's Legacy

As we reflect on the metaphor of the bullfighter in the ring, we are reminded of the courage, sacrifice, and love of Jesus Christ. He faced the Bulls of Bashan—symbolizing the cruelty of humanity and the forces of darkness—and emerged victorious. His blood was spilled for you and me, a powerful testament to His love and grace.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Courage in the Face of Adversity:** Jesus exemplifies the courage of a bullfighter, facing the fiercest opposition with love and sacrifice.
2. **Victory Through Suffering:** His suffering was not in vain; it led to our redemption and victory over sin and death.
3. **Empowerment by the Holy Spirit:** Just as a bullfighter trains and prepares, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live victoriously in Christ.

Let us honor the legacy of the Bullfighter by living in the victory He has secured for us. May we embrace the gift of the Holy Spirit and share the message of reconciliation with the world, proclaiming that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life.

Final Thoughts

This sermon booklet serves as a tapestry of woven truths, illustrating the depth of Christ's sacrifice and the power of His blood. Through the metaphor of the bullfighter and the prophetic insight of the Bulls of Bashan, we gain a deeper understanding of the love and grace that God has bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ. Let us carry this message in our hearts and share it with others, proclaiming the victory of the cross and the hope of eternal life.

This expanded booklet now includes additional points and content that delve deeper into the metaphorical meaning of Jesus as a bullfighter. Each chapter builds upon the previous one, creating a comprehensive and engaging narrative that reflects on the significance of Christ's work on our behalf.

Let's expand each chapter with more content, including stories, fables, and deeper insights into the metaphor of Jesus as the ultimate bullfighter. We will also include the tradition of the Running of the Bulls and its significance in relation to the themes of sacrifice, courage, and redemption.

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In this metaphor, Jesus is the bullfighter, facing the bull called the devil. With every strike, the devil sought to defeat Him, but Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, fought valiantly. Just as a matador uses grace and strategy to outmaneuver the bull, Jesus used love and sacrifice to conquer sin and death.

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Written by Elder Keith Joel Walker

Read & Obey Acts 2:38

