

DID JESUS TELL THE JEWS TO SACRAMENTALLY GNAW HIS FLESH?

The Catholic Church thinks that though there is no change in the physics of bread and wine, they really turn into the body and blood of Jesus during the Mass to be spiritual food and drink

The Church says the miracle is spoken of in the Bible at John 6 when Jesus told the Jews to eat his flesh and drink his blood.

Verse 52 the Jews ask how he can give his flesh to eat.

Verse 53 he says they cannot have eternal life unless they eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood. This is the first time he mentions blood.

Verse 54 he stops using the ordinary word for eating and introduces the shocking concept of eating his flesh and drinking his blood like rabid animals. He said they must gnaw his flesh animal style. He used the crude blatant language of animals eating human flesh. He used an Aramaic word translated into Greek as trogein, which means to crunch or to gnaw like an animal or to tear apart with teeth. He says that whoever does this has eternal life and he will raise him up on the last day.

Verse 55 simply says his flesh is real food and his blood real drink.

Verse 56 says that the one that gnaws his flesh and drinks his blood lives in him and he lives in that person. Trogein is used.

Verse 57 he says that as he lives by God so the person who gnaws his flesh will live because of himself. Trogein is used.

Verse 58 he says that this flesh is the bread that has come down from Heaven and is not like ordinary bread which does not give eternal life. Whoever gnaws the bread will live forever. Trogein is used.

After verse 53 Jesus did not say they must eat his flesh. The crude and vulgar word trogein is used. That was to express that what he was saying was symbolic. The Catholics say he used such extreme language to show that he literally meant we have to eat his body and blood and used such shocking words to emphasise that they could become literal food and drink for us. Would Jesus who could instead say, "God who made all things has the power to turn bread into my body without it seeming to change" resort to such a device? Why not say, "I mean real eating"? And the Jews found the metaphor sickening and ridiculous and offensive. Would Jesus provoke them if he meant what the Catholics say he meant? The Jews had a taboo about cannibalism and that was what Jesus seemed to be endorsing. Both those who deny that John 6 teaches the changing of bread and wine into Jesus and those who say it does teach that then agree that the gnawing is symbolic. Catholics say it means eating communion. Others say it is a metaphor for reaping the fruits of the sacrifice of Jesus' body. As our sins do violence to Jesus by making him pay for them on the cross, availing of the spiritual benefits can fittingly be referred to as gnawing. It is more reasonable to assume the symbolism of gnawing is saying just that. Where there is symbolism, assume the least exotic interpretation.

Why does Jesus change from eat my body to gnaw my body? Why does he merely tell them to drink his blood and not to slurp on it? It's metaphors that is why.

Suppose Jesus did say we eat his body and drink his blood. There is no need to read transubstantiation into that for he could feed us this way without turning bread and wine into himself. The eat my body drink my blood really just mean eat me and drink me. The Church teaches that though evil people can eat the body of Jesus in the sense of eating Jesus in the form of bread there is a sense in which they do not eat him. He cannot be the food of souls that hate him. The soul won't be fed by him. The soul cannot literally need flesh - it might need only grace and the gift of virtue from God. Even in the idolatry of the Catholic communion, there is evidence that Jesus when he asked us to eat his flesh and drink his blood meant, "Have a relationship with me that nourishes you spiritually based on the fact that I have sacrificed my body and blood to God to pay for your sins and reconcile you to God and feed you with grace." Jesus said that he was the bread of life and that to come to him was to cease to hunger so eat stands for coming to Christ. He said that he who believes in him will never thirst so to drink is to believe in him (John 6:35). To eat his body stands for coming to Jesus sacrificing his body for your sins and to drink his blood stands for believing in his bloody sacrifice on Calvary. The passage tells us that eat and drink is not literal.

Jesus compares the food he will give to the manna that Israel had to survive on in the wilderness. He implies that the food he gives is absolutely essential. Catholic teaching says communion is not essential for babies and indeed many go to

Heaven without ever having got communion. Whatever he meant he did not mean communion.

Jesus says the bread he will give is his body for the life of the world and the Jews ask among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat it?" And he says his body and blood have to be eaten and drunk for everlasting life. When Jesus reacted like that instead of setting them straight it seems he did mean to turn bread and drink into his body and blood. But if the bread is literal so is the flesh but it can't be both bread and flesh. Jesus had no reason to correct the Jews for he left clues he didn't mean it literally. He told them that they had to eat his body and drink his blood or they would have no life, no saving relationship to make them live in God, in them. But the entire New Testament teaches that communion is not necessary for salvation but availing of the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus is. It was the latter he meant. He said a minute later that they would believe easier if they seen him ascend physically to heaven but added that the flesh is useless but only the spirit gives life. So his body cannot give life only the divinity in him can.

Catholics say if the Jews had been wrong to suggest that Jesus meant eat his flesh literally he would have corrected them but he didn't. So they conclude that he meant it literally. The Jews asked, "How will he do it?" In other words, "This is an ordinary dude and how could he do what he says?" Jesus does not answer this. He does not respond. A response would be, "I am the Son of God and I have the Father's power to do miracles." He says about eating his body and drinking his blood. He is saying not responding.

What would he correct them for when he was in the habit of ignoring what was said to him? In John 4, Jesus tells a woman by a well that he wants a drink. He tells her that whoever drinks from the well will thirst again but whoever drinks the water he gives will never thirst. She says that she wants this water so that she may not have to come to the well again or thirst. He does not correct her for taking him literally therefore the Catholic argument based on what the Jews asked Jesus doesn't prove a thing. She thought he meant magic water and he didn't tell her what he really meant. Yet this non-correction thing in John 6 is what the entire Catholic Mass stands on and led to the Church "infallibly" stating that communion is literally Jesus. The Church deliberately distorts the Bible to teach this doctrine for it knows fine well from say John 4 that its argument is false.

The reference to gnawing Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood are to be understood in the light of the teaching that everybody absolutely needs Jesus. He is so needed that you have to gnaw him like a starving animal. That alone is enough to show that he did not mean any eucharist ceremony. Nobody was starving for bread made body and thirsting for wine made blood. It is about him claiming to be the way the truth and the very life of the person.

