

Animal Sacrifices During the Millennium

Question: When the grammatical/historical method of interpreting the Bible is employed, we find that God has a future plan for Israel which involves the Millennial Temple. As we read Ezekiel 40-48 we read of this Temple, and also of animal sacrifices in the Millennial Temple. This has been problematic for some. They claim that after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, there is no need for animal sacrifices.

Answer: Those who argue against the animal sacrifices in the Millennial Temple because of the completed sacrifice of Christ are guilty of faulty reasoning. They reason that, prior to the death of Christ, the animal sacrifices were the means that God had appointed for the taking away sin. Consequently, the death of Christ removed the need for animal sacrifices.

However, animal sacrifices never took away sin. Hebrews 10:4 states: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." A few verses later, in verse 11 we read: "And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins."

The animal sacrifices have a different purpose than the once-and-for all death of Christ. The significance of the death of Christ is not minimized by the animal sacrifices in the Millennial Temple, because such sacrifices are not intended to take away sin.

The animal sacrifices were, and will be, tests of obedience as well as a way of maintaining fellowship with God for the Jew and gentile proselytes living in the Kingdom Age. The death of Christ does not do away with all ritual. The death of Christ has not done away with the Lord's Supper. That's a ritual. The death of Christ has not done away with going to church. We are to regularly gather with the people of God. These animal sacrifices are ritual—another kind of ritual—but ritual nevertheless. And there is still a place and function for ritual.

In the Millennial Kingdom, the Lord Jesus Christ will rule with a rod of iron. The New Covenant theocracy promised by God will retain its distinctive Jewish features. After all, the Millennial Kingdom is about Israel. There is a promised land in which Israel dwells in peace and security. The Millennial Age is not the Church Age. We shouldn't seek to understand its features in terms of the Church Age. During the Millennium, the Church Age is no more. Even though outward submission to these outward ceremonies and rituals will not be proof of a new heart, such ceremonies will exhibit a spirit of submission to the government of the Millennial King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Question: Do you think the Millennial sacrifices will serve any purpose in relation to the gentile proselytes of the Kingdom Age?

Answer: I think they will. The presence of the sin nature will require constant exhortation and instruction regarding the worship of the true and living God. And in the Millennial Age this will be facilitated by the Temple sacrifices.