

Sacrifices in the Millennium

Do you believe that there will be animal sacrifices during the Millennial Kingdom? If so, would these sacrifices be an affront to the final sacrifice of the Messiah?

Ezekiel chapters 40-44, speaking of the Millennial Temple, tell us that there will be animal sacrifices during the Messianic Age. Ezekiel 44:10-11 describes the Levites in the Millennial Temple performing animal sacrifices:

“But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering in the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them” (NASU).

Many Christian prophecy teachers, who we would describe as being against the validity of the Torah for Believers today, even recognize the reality of animal sacrifices being performed by Levites during the Millennium. Tim LaHaye states in his *Prophecy Study Bible*, commenting on Ezekiel 43:15-27, that “The offerings will be memorial and retrospective, looking back to Christ’s finished work on the cross, instead of looking forward to Christ.”¹ These same sentiments are repeated by John F. Walvoord, former chancellor of Dallas Theological Seminary, in his book *Israel in Prophecy*:

“A number of Scriptures also describe the temple worship which will characterize the millennial kingdom. According to Ezekiel, a magnificent temple will be built, and a system of priesthood and memorial sacrifices will be set up...Some have felt it impossible to have a system of animal sacrifices subsequent to the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross in light of New Testament passages stating that the sacrifice of Christ makes other sacrifices unnecessary. Though varied explanations have been given for Ezekiel 40-48 which unfolds these details, no satisfactory explanation has been made other than that it is a description of millennial worship. In any case, it is clear that the sacrifices are not expiatory, but merely memorials of the one complete sacrifice of Christ. If in the wisdom and sovereign pleasure of God the detailed system of sacrifices in the Old Testament were a suitable foreshadowing of that which would be accomplished by the death of His Son, and if a memorial of Christ’s death is to be enacted, it would not seem unfitting that some sort of a sacrificial system would be used.”²

Any animal sacrifices restored to the Temple in Jerusalem during the Millennium will be a memorial of Yeshua’s final sacrifice for us. As pre-millennialists, we all believe the Lord will be there in person to explain to us the exact significance of what these sacrifices mean.

¹ Tim LaHaye, ed., *Tim LaHaye Prophecy Study Bible*, KJV (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 2000), 885.

² John F. Walvoord, *Israel in Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), pp 125-126.