

Christ in the Sacrifices 16-01-31b

We pick up our study now in Ezekiel, chapters 40 through 48, looking at the concept of Christ in the millennial sacrifices, those that are yet future, that will be chronologically after the cross, and that's an interesting subject in itself. And as I said, this has been an intense topic of discussion, beginning with how much of the Bible is literal, and then is the millennium literal, and then is the millennial temple literal, and then are the sacrifices literal? And we're saying yes, yes, yes to all of those, it's true, it's real, it counts, it makes a difference, but it raises the question, what is the purpose of killing these animals? I thought it was the peaceable kingdom, the beatific vision, the lion laying down with the lamb, and the ox, and the adder, and the vegetarian carnivores, and all the rest of it, and the child shall lead them, then it seems like the humans are the bad guys because he's still grabbing animals and slaying them. So what exactly is going on? Well obviously the purpose and meaning of the millennial sacrifices, being in the temple, at the altar, under the supervision of the Levites, is going to be very similar to and complementary with their purpose, meaning, and function in the ancient Israelite day.

As you know, the millennial kingdom is the fulfillment of God's promises to Israel. And many of the things that they were not given, that they did not enjoy in the portion of the age of Israel that preceded the church age, will be given fulfillment and will be manifest in the millennial kingdom. There are seven years yet to run of the age of Israel, the tribulation period, Daniel's 70th week, Daniel chapter 9, then you have this thousand year period.

And the concepts then are related. So it's helpful to look back, I'm going to be drawing on some very good observations by Dr. Charles Ryrie, he wrote an article, I've been, as you can tell, surveying what a lot of people have written. When I find good articles, I like to share them with you.

I like this one by Dr. Ryrie, I'm not real sure where else it can be gotten, it's one of the Logos books that I have, and it's just called Dr. Ryrie's Articles, so I'm not real sure what its original publication and provenance is. But this article is helpfully titled, Why Sacrifices in the Millennium, and as I was perusing the world trying to find some ways to summarize this this morning, this article came up and I think several of his ideas are really helpful. So he says here that the view as to the purpose of these sacrifices, first memorial, and this is one we've heard before, well it's a look back at the cross, it's in the same way that the Levitical offerings looked forward, these look back.

We know that in neither case can the blood of goats and bulls take away sin, but there is the anticipation of the coming Savior who will accomplish in reality what these only shadow and anticipate, and so in the same way the millennial sacrifices would look back. Well, one of the interesting conundrums that this raises is, I can understand in the millennium with the New Testament account and all of the information we have about Jesus, how meaningful a memorial type sacrifice could be, because they would see in it what we see in it. But one of the points Dr. Ryrie brings up is, how much can you realistically think an Old Testament Israelite saw in the

sacrifice? Did they in fact anticipate a single person who was going to be the fulfillment of these? And I wanted to read you a little bit of this because it's an interesting idea, because he does the same thing we're doing in saying whatever the purpose of the millennial sacrifices are it would be related to the Levitical sacrifices.

So let me just read you this whole section. The Levitical sacrifices spoke the language of symbolism which gave them a prefigurative purpose. That's what we've been looking at all this time, right? That these symbols prefigure and anticipate Christ.

But how much prefiguring did they contain? Was there a Christological content or picture in the Old Testament sacrifices? How would you answer that? We would say yes. We've spent a couple of months now looking at that. But some say hardly any or even none.

On what basis would somebody say that the Levitical sacrifices don't actually prefigure or anticipate Christological truth at all? That's kind of a shocking idea to me. I mean, who wouldn't see Christ in the sacrifices? This is why I read articles because new ideas come to my mind I never even thought of. Some say hardly any or even none.

Others say that if the sacrifices were offered in faith they had for the offerer an eternal effect because he saw something beyond the ritual of the offering itself. And that in doing the offering there was actually, because of faith involved, it did something separate and apart from the cross of Christ. This offering itself, because I have the right attitude, did something.

So it's all over the map from nothing is going on to everything is going on. Though the offerings themselves could not automatically bring spiritual salvation if offered. And this is where we depart from the mainstream of Christianity in not believing that the Israelites thought they were getting saved by bringing the sacrifices or indeed in keeping the law.

The law has never been a means of salvation, but there's a lot of people who think it was. So though the offerings themselves could not automatically bring spiritual salvation, if offered in faith they might because of what they prefigured. So in offering, the offering in faith, you're sort of buying into the future work of Christ.

And that's, we've been leaning in that direction, right? In terms of righteousness, in terms of the fruit of faith, which is righteousness for a believer. Only believers ought to be offering these sacrifices. You don't get saved by offering a sacrifice.

But still the question remains. Now we're getting to the nub. Still the question remains, largely unanswerable.

What did the offerer understand about any prefiguring in the sacrifices? Your average Simeon, the goat herder, bringing his offering down there. When he is involved in an olah or a trespass offering, what does he really see in terms of anticipation by faith? How much would he have understood? What we can understand because we have the New Testament revelation is another matter. Here are some things to consider.

This is Dr. Ryrie. Number one. The law was a shadow of things to come.

That's Hebrews chapter 10 verse 1. The law is a shadow of good things to come. But how much could be seen in that shadow? Number two. Performing the works of the law could not save eternally.

That's your Romans 3.20. By the deeds of the law, no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But if you went through Romans, if you remember what Romans is about, Romans is also written to believers about believers. And when it says, by the deeds of the law, no flesh will be justified, this is not salvation justification.

This is living justification. This is living righteousness. And just keeping the works of the law doesn't make you righteous as a believer.

But there's just this unfortunate entanglement with salvation in Romans. So, once again, number one. How much could an Old Testament believer really see in the shadow of the Levitical sacrifice? It's a fair question, right? Your average, you know, if Uriah the Hittite brought his stuff down there, would he be thinking of an individual personal Savior, God incarnate, who's going to come and suffer and provide redemption, reconciliation, and all the rest of it? Secondly, performing the works of the law could not save eternally.

We would say could not provide justification or righteousness. It's not righteousness by works. Number three.

In the regular repetition of offerings, the one bringing an offering might have longed for some complete dealing with sin. He might have said, I keep having to bring, you know, when is the sin problem going to be solved? He might have even gone so far as to believe in an ultimate solution for sin. But it seems as though that would be very nebulous and vague, right? That's number three.

Whatever hope a worshiper may have had, he had no sense of complicated cleansing simply because the repetition of the offerings forbade such a conclusion. This is once again Hebrews chapter 10 verses 1 and 2. The law having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of things. I'm reading Romans 10, 1 and 2. The law having a shadow of good things to come, not the very image of things, not the image, it's a shadow.

You don't get the complete work of Christ. You don't get a complete photograph of Christ. It's a shadow.

It's a suggestion. It's an adumbration. It's an anticipation.

But it can never with these same sacrifices which they continually offer year by year make those who approach perfect. Can't make them complete. For then wouldn't they have ceased to be offered? If you could bring a really great Olah and a really great Minkah and a really great Shalem Shalomim and a really great trespass and sin offering, all of your Zebakim would be

perfect.

Couldn't you then quit offering sacrifices? No. Then they would have ceased to be offered but the worshippers once purified would have had no more consciousness of sins because they would be perfect. And by the law comes the knowledge of sin and the repetition of the sacrifices is a reminder that sin is present and is with us and has not been solved.

That's the idea. Number four. Did you get number three? Number three.

The repetition of the offerings could have been some sort of message to the offerer that there's an ongoing presence of sin and the offering isn't sufficient in itself. Why can't I offer one that covers all of my sins past, present and future poured out on the animal and judged? Number four. To acknowledge that an Israelite might have had some glimmer of a better provision than the animal sacrifices and have faith in that better provision is one thing.

And that's pretty much what we believe. We think an Israelite could have faith that God has his solution coming. But to say that that glimmer revealed Jesus Christ the Savior is a big leap.

To accomplish that leap requires one to see more details about the Messiah than the Old Testament reveals. Personal, individual, human Savior. Do you get that practicing the sacrifices? Watching what goes on in the Levitical offerings? The assumption is that's a pretty big leap to say your average Israelite could figure out Christ was coming to die on the cross.

Number five. Didn't Moses see Christ and therefore have a clear prefiguring of him? And this is coming from Hebrews 11, 26 and 27. Remember Hebrews 11, the faith chapter going down the roster of faith heroes.

You get to Moses who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt for he looked to the reward. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasure of Egypt. Moses.

Well, it's an interesting use of the word Christos there. What does Christos mean? It means the same thing as Mashiach, which means what? Anointed. David is Mashiach.

He is anointed. Samuel anointed David and he became Mashiach. Mashiach means the anointed one.

When you put capital A, capital O, you're looking to Christ capital C. But there were many Christs, there were many Mashiachs in the sense of anointed ones. So there is the thought that Moses in Hebrews 11, 26 esteeming the reproach of anointing. The reproach of his anointing as an anointed deliverer of Israel.

Not saying all of the hardship I'm about to have leading these people for 40 years to the promised land. He didn't know it would be 40 years. But leading these people out, whatever hardship entails.

I am sharing in the sufferings of the future Messiah Christ who is going to come and suffer for the sins of the world. Is that what Hebrews 11, 26 is really saying? You see the point here? Esteeming the reproach of his anointing as the leader to bring them out of bondage greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. It keeps it in the context of what Moses likely thought.

He thought, well, there's going to be a lot of reproach in being the designated one. The one God has anointed to bring these people out. But that would be better than sticking around in Egypt and enjoying the loot.

So, did Moses actually anticipate the Christ that he would eventually meet on the Mount of Transfiguration. Back in the day when he was talking to the burning bush and throwing the rod down and turning the rest of it, the plagues. So, that would be yes only if Christ means Jesus Christ.

But no, if as is likely, the reference is to Moses himself as God's anointed, i.e. a Christ. And I personally think that's what Moses was thinking about. He said, look, this is a long hard road here taking these people out.

But this is going to be better in pleasing God than sticking around in Egypt and just enjoying riches. So, that's number five. Number six.

This is all, did the Levitical sacrifices actually bring to the mind of an Israelite a literal personage Jesus Christ. Number six. David believed God would forgive his sin and he knew that forgiveness could not come from bringing sacrifices.

That's Psalm 51. So, David believed in forgiveness and he knew that forgiveness wasn't in these sacrifices. So, that's a fact that plays into this.

Seven. Paul calls the Old Testament days times of ignorance in Acts 17.30. Truly these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent. Times of ignorance.

So, it's likely that they didn't know, certainly not everything we know about a coming Christ. Number eight. First Peter 1.10. Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully who prophesied of the grace that would come to you.

But it places limits on how much Old Testament prophets knew. They were unclear as to whom and to what period and circumstances the Spirit of Christ was pointing. Peter says the prophets didn't have a clear grip on this.

And the prophets were the creme de la creme of mature believers in the Old Testament age. Though they might have understood something about a coming Messiah and Deliverer, they did not know who the person would be. And their confusion and uncertainty were demonstrated during our Lord's earthly ministry.

As recorded in John 1.19. This is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are you? Matthew 11.3. Same thing. The messengers of John go to Jesus and say, Are you the coming one or do we look for another? Even John himself had a question about, Is there one or two coming ones? So this question is not possible to answer conclusively. I can answer it pretty certainly.

I don't think the Old Testament Israelites necessarily anticipated the person of Jesus Christ. And this goes back to our evangelical and, you know, ice church heritage in some ways. Where there are people who have claimed and graduates of Dallas Seminary have claimed that salvation in every age and in every generation has always been by placing personal faith in Jesus Christ.

In order to do that and be saved in the Old Testament, you would have to say that those Israelites anticipated the coming individual named Jesus Christ who would be the Son of God, who would be the propitiation for sins and place their faith in anticipation in Him. I find that unpersuasive. And I don't think it was necessary because of Hebrews 11.6. He that comes to God doesn't have to believe in a personal individual Savior named Jesus Christ who will be the Lamb of God and the atonement for everybody's sins.

This is the reason John at the Jordan was proclaiming, Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. That's kind of a new thing. That's a revelation.

That's a prophet revealing a new thing. He's not just identifying. He is condensing a set of truths that people can place faith in.

So, faith believes that He is and that He rewards those who seek Him. That's sufficient for salvation in the Old Testament day. God is the God of Israel and He will reward those who seek Him.

And part of that reward is fixing the sin problem. And as Israelites brought these Levitical sacrifices, they said, I don't know how He's going to do it. I can tell that these sacrifices are not a solution.

This is a temporary measure, but it must be anticipating something more. I get a lot of the principles, substitutionary, wages of sin is death, all kinds of things here. I think that's about as far as it went.

But that was sufficient. Their faith in God was sufficient for salvation. Well, connect your Levitical sacrifices to your Millennial sacrifices.

In those sacrifices, when we look back at them, we can see a lot more than people who were performing them might have been able to gather because we know exactly what it is Christ did. And we've had the Apostle Paul and Peter and John explain it in intense detail. Their anticipation would have been more general.

There is a redemption going on. And there were many pictures of redemption. Remember, the

Levites themselves were a redemption of the firstborn sons in Israel, right? The Levites go and serve in lieu of the firstborn of every family going down and serving.

They did a census and there's one Levite for every firstborn in Israel. And then there was some short and they had to pay some money to make up the difference, right? Because there is redemption. So they got this concept in multiple ways.

And redemption implies a Redeemer. And one of the things Dr. Ryrie does not mention is Job. I know my Redeemer, singular, my Goel, lives.

And I will see Him on the last day. So Job was able to anticipate from the concept of redemption. Boaz and Ruth, you remember that story? The redemption, the kinsman Redeemer.

And so I think the information was available. And I think those who were pushing, like we hope we are. Aren't we trying to get the best understanding of God's truth that we can? I think those that were doing that in the Old Testament could reach that point.

Job was one of those guys. And he performed priestly functions. So he could see it in the sacrifices that he offered for his children.

And ultimately that he offers for Bildad and the rest of his friends that have come. So, how does that reflect in the millennial? Well, is that the only purpose that those sacrifices could have had is to instill in Israelites a sense of the coming Redeemer? I think they could get it from that if they really sought and asked and lifted up their voice for understanding. And sought it like silver and searched for it in treasures.

I think God would reveal that. And I think He did. I think David saw his greater son coming.

I think Job saw it. I think Jacob saw it. I think several others saw it coming.

I think Moses eventually saw it coming. But that wasn't necessarily part of his motivation to deliver the people. But, here's my question.

Would that then be the only purpose for the sacrifices? If the sacrifices reflect multiple truths, could they not have multiple purposes? And I think they do. And one of those is to reflect obedience. This is a way to obey.

How many different ways can you obey? And how many overt public ways can you show your obedience? And this is a way to publicly demonstrate, I believe in God. I don't care what the rest of you yahoos are doing. But, there's an occasion here that calls for a sacrifice and I'm going to go offer it.

It is a part of my life. And it is a visible part and a manifest part. This is a public thing.

It doesn't say build a wall around your backyard. And in that enclosure build an altar and

privately and quietly offer a sacrifice. You go down to a place where there are milling throngs.

And there are priests. And you publicly bring your sin offering. Or your ola, or your minka, or your peace offering.

And a lot of people are participants. And it is a reflection of a heart of obedience. Now, can you do the sacrifice and you don't really have a heart of obedience? Can you do the action and not really have the heart? Yes.

But if you have the heart, you will definitely do the obedience. And that's the ideal. And you have the whole book of Malachi, which I thought about including in this study.

But it's coming up in our Kings and Prophets study. And of course you know that most of that book is talking about corruption of the sacrifices. So we will, it will be kind of a twofer when we get to Malachi.

Because we will revisit some of the concepts in this study. Because those were people who were doing sacrifices but not with a heart of obedience. So much so that the sacrifices themselves, they were bringing blind animals.

And they figured, well, once you burn it, you didn't know it was blind. You know, I'm going to dedicate my fine prized bull. I'm going to do that to my friends and family.

But when I actually take one down to the temple, it's my limping, halting, flea-bitten, diseased one. I made a big show back at the ranch. But the one that actually made it to the altar is the worst one in my whole herd.

That's what Malachi is about. Heart of obedience. But in the ideal, the purpose of the sacrifice is not to, you know, God's not going to close every loophole.

And people can do it wrong. You can pray for the wrong reasons. You can give for the wrong reasons.

You can manifest Christian behavior for all kinds of wrong reasons. It doesn't mean that the right reason isn't the purpose. So to show obedience.

You know, Psalm 116.14. I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people. I made a public vow and I am fulfilling that vow publicly because it is a part of a reflection of obedience. And that's a double-edged sword because not only is it the benefit of the individual, I am personally going to obey and this is part of my obedience.

But in the bringing of these sacrifices, in the doing of them according to the law of Moses, there is the testimony of the sacrificial system itself. And this goes back to the public Bible. People don't have scrolls of Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy.

In the ancient Israel community, what is your Bible? Your Bible is the living witness of those

sacrifices and offerings and all of the other articles of holiness and cleanliness and purification that are a part of the law. And so not only does the individual fulfill a responsibility for obedience, but a picture is maintained that witnesses to all. It is a billboard at the tabernacle and the temple that says, God is holy.

Sin is unacceptable. When sin occurs, atonement must be made. Something must happen to fix that problem.

So it has at least that two-fold purpose. I think almost everybody can agree that the sacrifices were an opportunity to reflect genuine obedience on the part of an individual and an opportunity to be a part of the living Bible that witnessed to the entire community, young children. You know, Simeon comes and brings his bull and Simeon is being personally obedient.

Here's little Manasseh over here and he's looking and he says, Wow, why is he doing that, Daddy? And his father will say, Because, and explain it. So obedience and witness were good purposes. Now, flipping forward to the millennial kingdom, where you've got these bulls and sacrifices taking place again, would the purpose be the same? Can it in fact, especially for those who are familiar with New Testament truth, because there's going to be all stripes and all kinds throughout the thousand years of the millennium, as these sacrifices are offered and somebody looks at it and says, What is going on with killing these animals? I was a member of the ASPCA, you know, what is going on here? Well, let's go back to what we know about Levitical sacrifices.

Is it going to be a living Bible again? There is a written Bible, but does anyone have an excuse that doesn't know that at the center of government and the seat of the Davidic kingship for the entire planet, there is this ritual taking place? If you don't get the Bible in paper or online or whatever else, people who are bringing their glory in and see these sacrifices and offering taking place have no excuse because it is there, it is manifested, it is visible. It is also an opportunity for these resuscitated believers from the Old Testament age who are now once again in physical bodies to reflect obedience, to show that they believe, that their faith is manifest in their works. And they are entering into and gaining an understanding of the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, seeing it in a memorial fashion and in a personal obedience fashion in these sacrifices.

So, there is the sense of public witness, there is the sense of reflecting personal obedience, and there is the sense of distilling the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in both Levitical and Millennial sacrifices. Dr. Ryrie highlights the unique features of the Millennial era. It is different from all other times in human history.

Some of them, kingdom worship is highlighted by the personal presence of Christ in Jerusalem. This is Zechariah 8.3. The Lord says, I will return to Zion and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain.

In verse 22, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem

and to pray before the Lord. 8.3 and 8.22 of Zechariah. This is part of that public witness idea.

Many of Israel's festivals will be observed. The ones that are mentioned as taking place include the new moon in Ezekiel 45.17. The prince's part will be to give burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings at the feasts, the new moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering to make atonement for the house of Israel.

All of the offerings that we have studied will be included. That is Ezekiel 45.17. And it's again in chapter 46, verse 20. This is the place where the priests shall boil the trespass offering and the sin offering and where they shall bake the grain offering.

If you missed out the Minkah, there it is in 46.20. They do not bring them out into the outer court to sanctify the people. Passover and unleavened bread will be celebrated. The sanctuary is cleansed on the first and seventh days of the first month.

And all of the principal atoning sacrifices are shifted from the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and Feast of Booths fall. Everything goes to the beginning. It's all going to be at the beginning, the month of Abib.

It tells us in 45.18 and 20. Interestingly, the Feast of Pentecost is not mentioned as being celebrated in the Millennium. Feast of Trumpets and the Day of Atonement are not mentioned.

Of course, the Day of Atonement, that may be the place where you recognize the fulfillment of the ultimate atonement because that was the day where once a year the corporate atonement was anticipated, and that has taken place. Of course, Pentecost, we've already come into being, so they don't need to celebrate that anymore. And the Feast of Trumpets, of course, the announcement of the Second Coming, that has already taken place.

So these might be celebrated as holidays in retrospect, but they are not official feasts. So, in conclusion, there is legitimate grounds, at least you can understand that there would be legitimate reasons for those millennial sacrifices, not just as a memorial, not just say, well, I'm just going to remember that Jesus died on the cross, but to once again, for the nation of Israel, reflect obedience, to communicate to that nation and to those who come to the capital city year by year, the work of Jesus Christ, because there is still evangelism in the millennial kingdom. There will be unbelievers, there will be little children that are brought back and they're going to grow to maturity.

And what meaneth this? What meaneth these stones? Well, what meaneth these sacrifices? And it will be a witnessing opportunity, because they're not going to have a great Catholic cross, statue, crucifix for people to ask about. It is these living sacrifices. And the fundamental idea here and the point of application I would offer to you is, why doesn't God just make a big monument that the whole world can see for a thousand years? Same reason He didn't do it in Leviticus.

It is God's people who by their active obedience show forth the Lord in His death and in His life. And that's the principle for you and me. God doesn't want a static memorial like Absalom tried to raise for himself.

This pile of stones is my legacy and my heritage because I have no son coming after me. God's witness to Jesus Christ and God's witness to His plan of salvation and His accomplishment of it is not a paper book with ink squiggles. It's not just the record of a testament.

It is the living witness of God's people. The Levitical offerings were a living witness in the past. The millennial offerings will be a living witness in the future.

And what it tells us is that we bring our sacrifice of Romans 12, 1 and 2, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service. Your daily life is the testimony and memorial to the Lord Jesus in His life, in His death, in His resurrection, and in the anticipation of His return. It's your life that is a better witness than paper.

Your life is a better witness than a monument or a crucifix or a plaque or a painting. Your life is God's Bible to the world. You don't know who's reading it.

One of the things when you have a web-based ministry like I work for, you want to know, well, if we put things on a DVD set and we distribute 10,000 DVD sets, how many people actually watched any of those sermons? I have no way of knowing. I can track visits to a website and say, well, we had this many visitors with this many downloads and this many page views and so on. But if you put it out in media and distribute it, put it on a USB stick or something, well, did anybody ever plug it in? Did it get used? There's no way to track it.

It's bread on the water. God says, put the bread on the water and it won't come back void. And so you trust that if the Word of God is there, however many people, even if it's just one in some foreign country, but that one grows up to be that country's great preacher or great evangelist, that was the means that God used.

Your life is like one of these things that is sent out. There's no measure. You can't know until the Lord comes back what observation, what impact, what effect your daily obedience, your bringing of the sacrifice had.

Simeon might have brought a sacrifice. Manasseh might have seen it. Manasseh might have had his life transformed when he got the answers to the question about that sacrifice.

Simeon never knew it. He was just being obedient. He was doing what he knew he was supposed to do, and that's us.

That's our daily lives. You don't know what God is doing with your life. You don't know what that witness and that testimony is.

It is sufficient for us to know that we are being obedient and that it is a witness, and we leave it

to God how far-reaching that witness might be. And you might have to be faithful. I always think about Simeon and Anna down at the temple.

They're both ancient. Why wasn't one of them young? Why wasn't she like the Virgin of Medjugorje or whatever it is the Catholics have where these young girls see visions of Mary and all that? Anna is a croaking, 100-plus-year-old, wrinkly, prune woman, and Simeon is at the end of a long, long life. People are saying, Why is that guy still around? He's staggering around.

Well, I'm still here because I haven't seen the Lord's Christ. Why are both of those individuals that see the newborn Christ, why are they so old? Because that was the moment that vindicated a lifetime of obedience. That was the moment.

That's the public witness. It took them 90, 100, 110 years of faithfulness and obedience. If they had lapsed, if they had gotten tired, if they had been satisfied with 60 or 70 years, they wouldn't have been there to see the baby Jesus.

But they were faithful and they were obedient all the way to the end, and it's that final time vindicates a lifetime. Well, that's us. So when you think about Christ and the sacrifices, Levitical, Millennial, Spiritual, Literal, what it boils down to in terms of our lives and our responsibility is the requirement of a steward is to be found faithful, to be obedient, to be looking at the master's purposes, not to take to himself because the master is away and to eat and drink and be merry and beat the fellow servants, to be faithful to the stewardship.

And you don't know what God is going to do with that. It is enough to be obedient and to know that God is doing something with it. We don't have to know.

Do you think Simeon and Anna have any idea of how many people have become aware of their witness and been intrigued and been impressed and had life-changing truth come into their soul because they happened to be there on that day, because that's where they always were? They have no idea yet. When they get raised up at the second coming of Christ and this Millennial Kingdom begins and these sacrifices resume, they will be there. They'll be there.

And so will we. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the wonderful reflections of the Lord Jesus that we see in the past, the present, and the future. We pray that God the Holy Spirit will keep these things in the forefront of our minds, help us to be aware of them and to have them be influential in the decisions that we make and the priorities that we set and the goals that we pursue so that our lives will, just as we have seen in so many cases here in your word, that our lives will also be a reflection of your glory and a manifestation of the worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name.

Amen.