

Ezekiel 43:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish.

Analysis

When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish—After purification (כְּלוֹתָךְ מִחֻטֵּא, kallôtěkhā mēḥaṭṭē', 'when you finish purging'), additional offerings: פָּר בֶּן־בָּקָר תָּמִים (par ben-bāqār tāmîm, 'a bull, son of cattle, perfect') and אֵיל מִן־הַצֹּאן תָּמִים ('ayil min-haṣṣō'n tāmîm, 'a ram from the flock, perfect').

The repetition of תָּמִים (tāmîm, 'without blemish/perfect') emphasizes that only perfection suffices for God's altar. This requirement pointed forward to Christ, the Lamb without blemish (1 Peter 1:19), whose perfect sacrifice sanctified believers forever. Ezekiel's vision includes these offerings either as memorial or as literal millennial worship—interpretations differ, but the principle remains: approaching God requires perfection, provided ultimately by Jesus.

Historical Context

Temple sacrifices (Leviticus 1-7) required unblemished animals—symbolizing perfection necessary to approach Holy God. After Solomon's temple destruction (586 BC), Ezekiel's vision (573 BC) assured exiles that sacrifice would resume. The second temple (516 BC-70 AD) did restore sacrifices, but Hebrews argues Christ's sacrifice superseded all animal offerings (Hebrews 9:11-14, 10:1-18). Millennial interpretation sees future restoration; symbolic interpretation sees Christ as fulfillment.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does the requirement of 'without blemish' offerings teach about God's holiness?
2. How do these animal sacrifices point to Christ's perfect sacrifice?
3. How do Christians interpret Ezekiel's detailed sacrificial system in light of Hebrews 10?

Interlinear Text

בְּכִלּוֹתֶךָ	מַחֲטָא	תִּקְרִיב	פָּר	בֶּן	
When thou hast made an end	of cleansing	it thou shalt offer	bullock	a young	
H3615	H2398	H7126	H6499	H1121	
בֶּקָר	תְּמִיִּם:	וְאֵל	מִן	הַצֹּאֵן	תְּמִיִּם:
H1241	without blemish	and a ram	H4480	out of the flock	without blemish
	H8549	H352	H6629		H8549

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 29:1 (Parallel theme): And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish,