

Red Heifer

A Red Heifer is Needed Before the Third Temple Can Be Built

In addition, the earlier part of 2002, there was a Red Heifer born in Israel. This red heifer, or at least the ashes, is needed to cleanse everything according to Jewish custom.

Red Heifer: The Bible predicts that the Jewish Temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem. Ever since the 70 A.D. destruction of Israel's second Temple, one major roadblock barring the reconstruction of the Temple is the fact that the Temple Mount area has been defiled with warfare. In order to cleanse the Tribulation Temple Mount for worship, the Jews will need the ashes of a pure red heifer. Before the Jewish third temple can be built, this pure red heifer must be found.

Numbers chapter 19 describes how king Solomon cleansed the first Temple with the ashes of a specially prepared red heifer (Num. 19:2-9).

The religious community in Israel had been electrified by the birth of the first red heifer on Israeli soil in 2,000 years. Since the destruction of the Second Temple (in 70 A.D.), Jews have yearned for the rebuilding of their temple and the resumption of the Old Testament offering of animal sacrifices. With the capture of the Temple Mount by Israel in the 1967 War, hope flamed in the hearts of religious Jews that their Third Temple would soon be built.

However, one huge obstacle stood in the way. Priests are forbidden from ministering in the holy things of the temple, or even entering the temple area, if they have been rendered impure by contact with a dead body. As far as we know, none of the priestly classes of Levites and Cohens in Israel today are in a state of purity.

The only thing that can cleanse individuals from ritual impurity is explained (in Numbers 19:2-7). The ashes of a red heifer of the third year must be mingled with water, and the priests are instructed to wash in this mixture. Until recently, no flawless red heifer had been born within biblical Israel since the destruction of the Second Temple according to rabbinical teaching. The birth of a red heifer to a black and white mother and a sun-colored bull is being declared a miracle by those who want to rebuild the temple and prepare the way for the Jewish Messiah's entry into Jerusalem.

The calf was born on a northern Israeli farm run by a religious high school for troubled and orphaned students and was brought to the attention of Rabbi Shmaria Shore shortly after its birth. Shore, a native of Providence Rhode Island, said he had his doubts, so he invited a number of rabbis from Jerusalem to examine the heifer and give their views. The rabbis came and quickly spread the word that something truly miraculous seems to have occurred.

Yehudah Etzion, who was present at the inspection of the red heifer, said, "We have been waiting 2,000 years for a sign from God, and now he has provided us with a red heifer. Etzion was the ringleader of a plot to blow up the Dome of the Rock with high explosives in order to make way for the building of the Third Temple. The plan was thwarted by Israel's police before

it could be carried out. Etzion stated: “There was a couple of little white hairs which worried us, but the rabbis are satisfied that it is the red heifer referred to in the Bible.

According to Jewish rabbis, there have been nine red heifers used in the entirety of Israel’s history. Writings considered holy by Jews state that during the time of the tenth heifer’s use, the Messiah will appear. Rabbi Ido Weber Erlich of Jerusalem recently stated on Israeli radio, “It is written that it is the tenth heifer that the Messiah will discover, and here we have the tenth heifer. This is a clear sign that the Messiah is near.

This happened in 1997 and set off a religious fervor in Israel. The birth of this red heifer was not considered good news by many Jews it seems. David Landau, a journalist with the liberal daily newspaper Haaretz, wrote an article entitled “The Red Heifer”: It’s No Joke. In the article he called on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his security services to take this problem in hand now.

Landau says that while a bullet to the head of the calf might be the ticket, less radical action might also be considered since any blemish or irregularity to the calf would ruin it for liturgical purposes. Abraham Poraz, a member of Parliament from the leftist Meretz Party said, “That cow represents the risk of a massive religious war. If the fanatics get a hold of it and try to take over the Temple Mount, God knows what will happen (at least he’s correct there), it only takes a few crazies to endanger all our lives.”

As Christians we understand that God will never again accept an animal sacrifice for purification from sin. Jesus Christ accomplished this for us once and for all. So, what significance does this birth of a red heifer have to us, if any? The Bible prophesies several specific things for this end time:

- (1) The rebirth of the nation of Israel (Ezek. chapter 37), fulfilled in 1948.
- (2) The rebuilding of the Jewish temple, as the angel said” Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein the Jewish **Third Temple** (Rev. 11:1-2). and
- (3) The resumption of animal sacrifices in Jerusalem (Dan. 9:27).

As it turned out, this red heifer wasn’t acceptable.

Teaching about the role of the red heifer in Bible prophecy has been an object of ridicule from some quarters. Part of this criticism may have been warranted since some things taught on the subject have not been biblically accurate. However, this does not negate the fact that there are teachings in the Bible concerning the red heifer, and that the red heifer appears destined to play an important role in the fulfillment of a major prophecy of the end time.

The Bible clearly states that a temple will stand on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem just before the **Second Coming** (see Rev. 19:14-16). Rev. 11:1-2, speaks of a temple on the Temple Mount 42 months before the Battle of Armageddon (2 Thess. 2:3-4), says that the Antichrist, at this same time, will sit in the temple of God claiming to be God.

Since there is no temple on the Temple Mount at this present time, we know that one will have to be built. However, the Old Testament teaches that a person who has become unclean through contact with a dead body, may not go up to the sanctuary of the Lord. Religious Jews believe that all Jewish people are presently in a state of uncleanness. Thus, they do not believe they can build their temple at this time even though many of them long to. The Jewish religious authorities have said that Jews should not even go onto the Temple Mount until the necessary means for cleansing from “contact with a dead body” becomes available.

The biblically prescribed method of being purified from contact with a dead body is described in Numbers chapter 19. A red heifer of the third year must be killed, its body burned, and then the ashes mingled in water. By washing in this mixture, a person is cleansed from contact with the dead.

On April 9, 2002 it was revealed that less than one month earlier, a red heifer was born in Israel. After the heifer’s owner contacted the Temple Institute on Friday, April 5th, 2002, Rabbi Menachem Makover and Rabbi Chaim Richman traveled to the farm where the heifer is located, to inspect and validate her status.

The rabbis found her to be kosher and were satisfied that this heifer could indeed be a candidate to be used in the process of purification described in the book of Numbers, chapter 19. This is a prerequisite for the rebuilding of the Holy Temple. Tradition records that a red heifer in our generation is a herald of the messianic era. It is certainly an important development towards the rebuilding of the Holy Temple.

As Christians, we know that God no longer dwells in temples made with hands. Consequently, we do not need for a temple to be constructed on the Temple Mount. We also know that Jesus Christ was the final sacrifice for sin and uncleanness; therefore, we have no need of a red heifer. The appearance of a red heifer and the possibility of building the temple in Jerusalem have nothing to do with our salvation. But it has much to do with the fulfillment of one of the major prophecies for the times just ahead. The prophecy that states a temple will be standing in the end times and that the Antichrist will stand in that temple claiming to be God.

The appearance of a red heifer, if it proves to be legitimate, takes on tremendous prophetic implications. The status of the Temple Mount will ultimately be the core issue in any final or interim solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It appears certain to be included when the international community and the Antichrist “confirm the covenant” with Israel (Dan. 9:27).

Understanding these prophetic implications, should Christians then be attempting to obtain a red heifer for Israel, and should we be assisting in the rebuilding of the temple? No, we should not. Contributing to the offering of an animal sacrifice, after the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary, is to count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. But are the appearance of a red heifer and the possibility of rebuilding the Jewish temple on the Temple Mount of prophetic significance? Absolutely! It says to the Christian, “Look up, for your redemption draws nigh!”