

MISTAKE 15

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE RED HEIFER

An announcement was made on Thursday, September 15th, 2022, that five red heifers, bred by a Christian rancher in the state of Texas, had arrived in Israel. This has caused much excitement in certain quarters of those following last days Bible prophecy.

Why? It is contended that these red heifers meet all of the biblical requirements for sacrifice. Supposedly, the sacrifice of a red heifer is absolutely necessary before the Third Temple can be built. The fact that finally an appropriate heifer now exists is claimed to be a major step in the rebuilding of a Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.

IT IS NOT A SIGN OF THE SOON COMING OF CHRIST

Is this something for Bible believers to get excited about? Is this a sign of the soon coming of Christ? The answer is a categorical, “No!” Indeed, it is a mistake to claim that it is.

Why do I say this? Well, first let’s take a trip down memory lane.

In the early 1980’s I started doing a detailed study on Bible prophecy with an emphasis on the predictions in Scripture that a Third Temple was to be built in the last days. The First Temple, built by Solomon, was destroyed in 587 B.C. while the Second Temple, built after the Jews returned from Babylon and then later enlarged by King Herod, was destroyed in A.D. 70.

It was also at that time that I first got acquainted with Israeli activists who wanted to see a Third Temple built. This eventually led to my book “The Coming Temple” (co-authored with Chuck Missler).

Since then I’ve written other books on the issue, the latest being *The Jews, Jerusalem, and the Coming Temple*. (this is a free download at our website educatingourworld.com... it can be found under the heading *Bible Prophecy*.)

Among the subjects that were dealt with included the spreading of the ashes of a sacrificed red heifer for the purpose of removing the defilement from the Temple Mount. It has been claimed that this is necessary before a new temple can be built.

In the early 1980’s there was excitement about the discovery of a red heifer that seemingly fit the biblical requirements. An American farmer who lived in the state of Mississippi claimed that he had bred a red heifer that was biblically acceptable.

Since I was working on the book about the coming Temple, as well as speaking on the subject, I would often be asked about this supposed claim. The questions were, “Does this mean the Temple will be built soon?” Is this a sign of the soon coming of Christ?

For questions such as this. I always gave the same reply, “No, it has nothing to do with the soon coming of the Lord.”

So, why did I say this some forty years ago as well as saying the same thing when this new announcement was made? Well, there are a number of reasons.

THE JEWS DO NOT HAVE THE TEMPLE MOUNT UNDER THEIR CONTROL

First and foremost, a sacrifice today would be worthless according to Jewish hopes of building a new temple. Why? To begin with, the real estate where a new temple will be built, the Temple Mount, is not in the hands of the Israelis but rather continues to be controlled by Islam.

In June 1967, when the Jerusalem was liberated, and the Temple Mount was back in the hands of the Israelis for the first time since A.D. 70, there was excitement that a new temple would soon be built. However, ten days after the liberation of the Temple Mount the defense minister Moshe Dayan met the Muslim leadership and agreed to give back the custodianship of the area to Islam.

THERE IS STILL NO FREEDOM OF WORSHIP ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT

Supposedly the Jews were to have freedom of worship on the Temple Mount but that never became a reality. To this day, the Jews, instead of worshipping on the Mount have to settle with worshipping at the Western Wall of the Temple Mount complex. In other words, there is no Jewish or Christian worship allowed on the Mount. No praying, no overt worship of any kind is tolerated.

So, Jews cannot even openly worship on the Temple Mount, let alone plan to build a Third Temple. Therefore, the idea of sacrificing a pure red heifer in anticipation of building the next temple is literally out of the question.

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAVE YET TO SUPPORT FREEDOM OF WORSHIP ON THE MOUNT

Add to this, the various Israeli governments since 1967, have not looked favorably on allowing the freedom of the Jews to openly worship on the Mount, let alone constructing a new temple.

So, this is why, when I'm asked the question about the subject of the red heifer and the soon return of Christ I continue to give the same answer as I did four decades ago.

Sadly, there have been numerous Christians, who believed that the coming of Christ was imminent, because of the signs that were taking place, that have now been deflated by the passing of time. Some have left the faith while others have become scoffers. It is heartbreaking to talk to such people.

Why? Because they were assured that the Bible predicted that Christ must come soon after certain events took place. Since He did not, they assumed the Bible was in error; rather than those who misinterpreted what it taught on the subject.

Hopefully, from this discussion we can learn some valuable lessons. Yes, Christ is returning. Yes, there are many signs that are setting the stage for His return. However, this issue of the red heifer is NOT one of them.

Furthermore, as the Bible says, we do NOT know the day nor hour of His return. He has NOT limited Himself to returning by any particular date.

Will it be soon? We do not know. I asked people in the 1980's what if Christ does not return in the next few years? There is nothing that requires this to happen. Usually, I was met with derision. He's coming back soon I was told. Soon, to them, was in a few years at the most. As we know, that did not happen.

I repeated the same question to believers in the 1990's, the 2000's, 2010 to 2020. Unhappily I usually got the same response. He must come back soon. No, He does not have to.

He certainly may return in the near future but there are no circumstances, or biblical requirements, forcing His immediate return.

Lessons To Be Learned From The Red Heifer

In the meantime, we should be going about our lives living for Him and preaching the message of His First Coming. The cross of Jesus Christ remains the message that we are to proclaim, though it often gets lost when people talk about “last days” Bible prophecy. Please do not let it happen to you!