

**Significance of the Red Heifer
Para Aduma
(the red heifer)**

Five red heifers arrived in Israel on October 15, 2022. They came from a ranch in the state of Texas. Since then, conversations and considerations about the red heifer have been, renewed, and are running high.

The red heifer is mentioned at least four times in Scripture:

Genesis 15:9: in the covenant offering of God and Abraham

Deuteronomy 21:1-6: when an unknown murder has taken place

Numbers 19:1-22: for the purpose of cleansing during the wilderness journey

Hebrews 9:13: referred to in a statement of contrast

A question about tradition and truth must be considered when thinking about the red heifer and its place in the future of Israel in relation to its third Temple and its Kohen or priests.

In studying the red heifer, I cannot help but wonder if God's original intent for the ashes of the red heifer was to be a temporary ceremony for the children of Israel while in their wilderness journey. Why? Think of how difficult it would be, if not impossible, to have to stop and set up the Tabernacle and an altar every time someone in the crowd became defiled and needed to offer a sacrifice.

Yet, in light of **Ezekiel 36:24-26**, I cannot help but wonder if the traditions of the rabbis that say the Temple Mount must be sprinkled before the third temple is rebuilt is more than a tradition.

In light of the five red heifers currently under observation in Israel, looking at them **practically** and **prophetically** may prove helpful.

PRACTICALLY

The ashes of the red heifer, according to **Numbers 19** is for cleansing of the body after one comes into contact with a dead body or something dead like a bone or even walking, unknowingly, over a grave. (That is why an arch bridge was built across the Kedron Valley from Mount Moriah and Mt. Olivet. To keep the priest taking care of the red heifer offering from accidental defilement.)

Numbers 19 is pretty self explanatory as to how the red heifer ashes are attained. Many things connected with ceremony are interesting. Things like the cedar wood, the hyssop, and the scarlet that was to be added to the burning heifer by the priest. What is their significance? What is their message? God never does anything without reason.

There are questions surrounding the ashes of the red heifer as to what would or would not make them acceptable. For instance, some believe when a new red heifer is found and prepared, its ashes, in order to be acceptable, must be mixed with old ashes that have been preserved from former red heifers. Although that idea may be more than tradition and although there is no obvious Scriptural provision for this idea, others believe the ashes of an acceptable red heifer prepared in proper fashion will be sufficient without the preserved ashes of old.

It is my opinion that when the time comes to do what needs to be done, either some of the old red heifer ashes, which, were said to be hidden will be found by some archeologist. Or, they will figure out that new ashes will suffice for the cleansing of the Temple Mount and the Kohen that are to do their priestly service there.

I have been unable to discern how much of the expectations surrounding the red heifer in relation to the overall expectations and demands placed upon it are just rabbinic tradition or oral truth passed from generation to generation. Much of what takes place in Israel is guided by both the Talmud and the Mishnah (which is the oldest collection and codification of Jewish law known...much of which is tradition), the and other writings I am not familiar with. Oral tradition in Israel is greatly honored and highly esteemed.

In light of the birth of the five red heifers being watched in Israel, Rabbi Kupietky is recorded as saying: “ I really believe that *the* red heifer was born this year” (meaning that red heifer that will meet the requirements making it fit to be offered). He explained that the current Hebrew year 5781 when set in the form of an acronym reads: “for it is the year of the red heifer.” Not knowing Hebrew and the application of numbers to letters I cannot affirm or deny his statement. But, I readily admit I like it very much and pray he is right in his thinking.

There is a tradition that says, from the first red heifer brought to Moses during the days of the Tabernacle to this current time, there have been a total of nine red heifers offered. Rabbi Maimonides (mi-mon-uh-deez) has predicated the 10th red

heifer would signal the appearance of the Messiah! In fact, some believe the Messiah will be the one to offer it Himself and to also build the third Temple.

For the heifer to be acceptable for offering it must meet certain qualifications. Again, some of these qualifications are apparently taken from Scriptures, but others may come from Jewish tradition.

The qualifications are:

1. It must be female.
2. It must be within its third year or at least two years and a day old, but not yet four years old.
3. It must be completely without blemish or spots.
4. If it has more than two other color hairs (white or black rising from the same follicle) it is to be rejected, according to the Mishnah.
5. It could have never been pregnant or used in any breeding process.
6. It could have never been harnessed or worn the yoke or have been used in labor in anyway: (some say not even a bird could have lit or her back or even had a cloth laid on her back without being disqualified)
7. It must be slaughtered outside the holy city Jerusalem within the sight of the Temple.

PROPHETICALLY

In the mind of many, a tenth red heifer is needed in order to start building the third Temple on Mount Moriah. If one of the current five red heifers qualify, construction could begin and be accomplished within the next two years. It is believed the blood of the red heifer must be sprinkled on the mount or before the mount due to the multitude of deaths that have happened there through its years of desolation, before the Temple and its priests could become ceremonially cleansed with the water of separation (which is ashes of the red heifer mixed in water).

Although thinking about the discovery and the offering of a red heifer is nothing less than exciting to those who know and love prophecy, one has to be deeply touched with the many implications connected to such a discovery. For instance, if one is discovered, and the process begun, there would be great fighting, agony, war, death, bloodshed, and disasters connected with any attempt to build a third Temple on the Temple Mount as Israel currently stands politically and globally.

Even if the third temple was to be successfully constructed, many believe it would denote the soon appearance of the antichrist and the awful time Jesus said would come known as the Tribulation: a period of great judgment unlike any other period of time known to man. Jewish authorities are prepared today to rebuild the third Temple. They have plans in place, utensils and garments needed for Temple worship have been discovered or made. The Kohens have been identified, with the aid of DNA testing, and they have been trained to perform the duties expected of them at the altar and around the Temple once worship is again established.

In thinking about the fact there have been no red heifers in the last 2,000 years and now there are five with great potential, is it not possible to assume that before this time, neither the world or Israel were ready for the return of the Messiah? Could it be that in light of current world conditions we see advertised across all forms of social media in our day that they testify to more than a likelihood that we are living in the days when these things shall come to pass?

Could it be that the Lord is soon to return for His bride? Could it be that the antichrist is soon to be manifest via the signing of a seven year peace treaty with the nation of Israel? Could it be that the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet is ready to be fulfilled?

No one knows the day or hour of our Lord's return, but we can know the season! And, if we look at the leaves on the trees, it seems that they are definitely pointing to the season of the Lord's return.

May we pray as John prayed in Revelation 22:210 "Even so come, Lord Jesus."

Tom Price, 2022