

Temple Institute Reveals Path Ahead for Red Heifer Ceremony

The world is abuzz with talk about the red heifers of Israel, and many wonder when the purification ceremony is expected to take place.

Dozens of questions hang in the air as millions of people around the globe struggle to understand the significance of the red heifer and what must be done for the ceremony to take place.

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In a recent post on Facebook, the Temple Institute, the leading authority on the red heifers as well restoring the items used within the temple, clarified much of the questions people had regarding the sacrifice, as well as the statement from Hamas targeting the “red cows.”

“The Torah commands us to perform the mitzvah (Torah commandment) in order to be in a ritually pure condition,” Rabbi Ariel explained to Israel365 News. “This is necessary for us to engage in anything that is holy or sanctified. It is important to understand that impurity is not any type of physical dirt or something. For most ritual impurities, bathing in a mikveh (ritual bath) is sufficient. The highest level of impurity comes from contact with the dead and to purify this condition, the ashes of the red heifer are required. This condition comes not only from contact with the dead. But to be under the same roof as a dead body also brings about this severe level of ritual impurity. This can typically happen if a person is inside a hospital in which a dead body is present. In such cases, the ashes of the red heifer are the only method for becoming ritually pure.

Lacking the ashes of the red heifer, this condition remains forever.”

Rabbi Ariel went on to explain the in-depth, physical requirements that must be met for such a ceremony to ever take place.

“We know that there have been nine red heifers throughout history, the first having been prepared in the times of Moses and Elazar, the son of Aaron,” Ariel explained. “A red heifer is a female cow that is completely red, with no more than one non-red hair on its entire body. In the language of the Bible, red is not exclusively what we know today as red. It also includes brown and other similar shades of red. This excludes black. All of the hairs on its body must be the same color.”

“The animal must also be two years and one month old,” Rabbi Ariel explained. “There can be no blemish, no holes in the ear. Until that point, it is considered a calf and not a cow. At that point, the cow can be slaughtered and prepared.”

The ceremony is not being conducted as a way to expedite or usher in the coming of the Messiah, Ariel explains, but in actuality it is simply a sign of obedience by the Jewish people to obey the Law given to them by God through His servant Moses.

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Ariel also listed three specific requirements that must take place prior to the sacrifice being performed.

1. Purity of the red heifer

“The calves must be checked periodically,” Ariel explained.

"They were perfectly red when they were born and when they arrived, but this can change with time," he said. "Non-red hairs can suddenly appear and they can also disappear over time."

2. A kosher priest, or Kohen, must perform the ceremony

"The second requirement is to have a kosher Kohen, a Jewish man who has descended from Aaron the priest, and who has not been made ritually impure by proximity to a dead body," Rabbi Ariel explained. "He has to be pure in order to perform the ritual and prepare the ashes. For example, he cannot be born in a hospital. We have a few priests like that."

"We're looking for priests who have been careful in this matter of meaning distanced from dead bodies from cemeteries and from hospitals. They have to have a clear family tradition that they are descended from priests. There are actually many, many men like this. He also has to be at an age where he can slaughter the cow at least 15 years old and he hasn't been in a hospital until that time."

3. The altar must be facing the front of the Temple on the Mount of Olives

"The third requirement is we have to prepare the place on the Mount of Olives that is precisely in front of the place of the Temple. There are some differing opinions and some practical and halachic questions about this. As you know, there are currently many graves on the Mount of Olives. You have to find some pathway in and out that is pure. We need to build some special construction that allows access without the transference of impurity."

"There is a description of a structure like this in the second Temple: a bridge from the Temple Mount to the Mount of Olives that had spaces preserved against impurity."

As the times we live in quicken, the biblical prophecies God left for us continue to be fulfilled according to His will and timeline.

While forces of evil work to try and stop these events from happening, we can take comfort in the fact that God's Word is true and when our time comes we will reign in glory with Him forever.{eoa}

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