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THE HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE PART 2

THE NEW TEMPLE

When Titus destroyed the Temple in 70 A.D. it changed how Judaism came to be practiced. Sacrifices to God were to be done only in the Temple, therefore all sacrifices under the Law (Torah) ceased even to this very day.

New practices emerged throughout the diaspora, especially beginning in the second century A.D., roughly 50-80 years after Jerusalem's destruction. New customs and ceremonies have continued to develop from the Middle Ages onward. Some of these observances were covered in the High Holy Days Series that I just completed.

The new practices emerged due to the lack of Temple worship. Synagogues promoted these things to serve and unite observant Jews. These practices are in lieu of the sacrificial system. No sacrifices could be done without a temple. They cannot be done in a synagogue.

The Jews still believe a new Temple will be built in Jerusalem and animal sacrifices will once again commence. This belief is because of what is sometimes called Ezekiel's Temple. The Prophet Ezekiel prophesied in the early part of the Book of Ezekiel that God would withdraw His presence from Jerusalem (which occurred in 70 A.D.) leaving it desolate for the gentiles to occupy. In the latter part of the book, chapters 40-48 he prophesies that Israel will come back together and the Temple would be restored with the "living water" proceeding from it and God's people dwelling around it.

Israel has indeed come back together in partial fulfillment of this prophecy. The Balfour Declaration of 1917-1918 decreed a geographical homeland for Israel and the people began to re-gather there. In 1948 Israel was officially recognized as an independent nation.

The rabbis today firmly believe they will be building a new Temple and sacrifices will resume. The plans have been drawn. The funding is available. They have chosen the site. Their problem is that the chosen site is under Muslim control. That has not deterred their determination.

They have even already chosen and prepared the Red Heifer. Oh, what is the "Red Heifer"? We learn about it in Numbers chapter 19. A heifer is a young female cow. Its "red" color is a reddish brown. It is a special animal raised for a burnt sacrifice for sin whose ashes are saved to be mingled with water to purify and cleanse a person who has been defiled relating to dead bodies or bones.

They are so certain the new Temple will be built that they are already keeping a red heifer for this sacrifice.

Christians see this new Temple as being Christ. Jesus referred to Himself as the Temple that would be destroyed, then raised up in three days (death and resurrection) (John 2:19-20).

I would also point out that **WE** are the temple of God. His Spirit dwells within every born-again-believer. Yes, we are a physical temple (our body) in which God's presence, the Holy Spirit, dwells. This is the better fulfillment of "Ezekiel's Temple" for it is not made with hand, or by sticks and stones.

The "church" (you and me, the saved ones) are God's **NEW** temple. Jesus is the High Priest of our Temples.

See I Corinthians 6:16-20 and 3:16-17