

Astounding News – for the first time in 2,000 years . . .

Passover Sacrifice to be Offered in Israel!

Suddenly, almost like a bolt from the blue, the Jewish Sanhedrin announces that this year a Passover Sacrifice will be made in Israel for the first time in almost 2,000 years, since the destruction of the Jewish Temple in 70 A.D. What is planned? What is going on? What are the repercussions? What does it all mean? And how does it fulfill Bible prophecy?

William F. Dankenbring

In a recent letter, J.R. Church of *Prophecy in the News* writes: “On March 29, the Jews in Israel will be eating lamb for Passover. For nearly 2,000 years, they have simply had a dry shankbone on each plate. But history is in the making! A sacrificial altar has been constructed 12 miles northeast of Jerusalem at a place called Mizpah/Jericho where the sacrifices will take place.”

This information about this remarkable fulfillment of Bible prophecy is included in the cover story in the March 2010 issue of *Prophecy in the News* magazine. Says J. R. Church, “Construction has begun on a Jewish Temple at Mizpah. When the time is right, they say that the whole thing, Temple, altar and all, will be moved to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Wow! What a time to be alive!”

I agree. Hallelujah, the Temple is already been started being built!

Spiritual Bombshell Explodes

In the March 2010 *Prophecy in the News*, Gary Stearman wrote an article titled, “The Modern Sanhedrin and the Coming Korban Pesach.”. “Korban” is the word for “sacrifice,” and “Pesach” is Hebrew for Passover – the ancient Passover sacrifice.

Says Stearman, “This year, for the first time in two millennia, Jews in Israel, sanctioned by the Sanhedrin and the Jewish Temple Institute, are preparing to sacrifice several lambs on

Monday, March 29 for that evening Passover meal. [The Jews still observe a fixed calendar date instead of the observed new moon, so their Passover is 2 days earlier than the observed new moon calendar]. The ritual, called Korban Pesach, will require both a sanctified altar and an officiating priest. There has not been such a sacrifice in nearly 2,000 years! Sanhedrin plans for this event began several years ago.”

History of the Sanhedrin

Here is the history behind this event. Writes Stearman, “The Jewish Sanhedrin was originally called a ‘senate’, from the Greek term *gerousia*. The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus mentions it in reference to Antiochus III (122-187 B.C.) As a ruling body, it first became known in Israel about the time of the Jewish return from the Babylonian exile. The existence of a concoction of Jewish elders existed prior to Nebuchadnezzar’s invasion, but not recognized as a formal ruling body.

“Under the rule of the Seleucid Greeks in the centuries preceding the arrival of Jesus Christ, Israel had been allowed to retain governance of their internal affairs, and attended to it through the convening of what they then began to call by its present name, ‘Sanhedrin.’ In the Greek language, this word means ‘to sit together,’ or ‘counsel together.’” The New Testament Sanhedrin was comprised of priests drawn from the Pharisees and Sadducees, under the leadership of the High Priest.”

The Sanhedrin’s authority was in effect during the trial of Christ at the Palace of the High Priest that condemned him to death in 30 A.D. After the Romans conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple in 70 A. D. the Jews attempted to revive the Sanhedrin Court at a place called Jamnia, southwest of Jerusalem, near the Mediterranean coast. It continued to meet in various locations, finally coming to a complete halt in A.D. 425; its final meeting took place on the Sea of Galilee in the city of Tiberias.

Says Stearman, “From that time until about seven years ago, rabbis were deadlocked on the question of whether or not they had the proper biblical authority to reconvene the group even though they had already returned to Israel. The Sanhedrin had traditionally been headed by Israel’s high priest, exalted rabbis, scholars and other important community leaders. However, during the exile there was no priesthood and to function officially, the Sanhedrin had to operate within the bounds of *halacha*, (conformity to the *Torah*), with priestly ordination and ritual purity.”

The End-Time New Sanhedrin

Declares Gary Stearman, “In October of 2004, several hundred rabbis, acting as representatives from a variety of Israeli cities and settlements, met in Tiberias, where the original Sanhedrin had been disbanded (425 A.D.), for the purpose of reviving the court. From a pool of scholarly rabbis, they elected the traditional 71 members. Before the eyes of excited observers

around the world, the Sanhedrin rose to life again. At the time, prophecy watchers deemed this a major milestone in the life of modern Israel.

“After centuries of dormancy, two things had changed that made this possible. First was the reestablishment of the state of Israel. And second, about a hundred rabbis had received ordination by the “laying on of hands, or *semicha*. This had been accomplished several months earlier, as the first step toward the establishment of a revived priesthood. Furthermore, during this time, the Temple Institute had formalized the drive to rebuild the Temple. At the Sanhedrin’s first meeting, the best Jewish scholars were elected to membership, and a *Nasi* (Hebrew: ‘prince,’ or in modern interpretation, ‘president’) was selected.”

The Rabbi selected to be the president of the Sanhedrin is Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, who in 1965 began the monumental work of translating and annotating a modern rendering of the Talmud. He has received honorary degrees from Yeshiva University, Ben Gurion University Bar Ilan University and Florida International University for his outstanding work.

Another leader of the Sanhedrin is Torah scholar Rabbi Yehuda Edri, and expert on Temple measurements, location and archaeology. Still another is Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, founder of the Jerusalem Temple Institute. “His focus is upon building the Third Temple,” says Stearman.

Stearman writes, “The Sanhedrin’s goals are clear-cut and focused upon taking Israel to the next level in their return from the Diaspora. That would be the reestablishment of the office of High Priest and his priestly acolytes, as well as the construction of the Third Temple. It is a practical matter that along with these goals comes Jewish devotion to the sovereignty of Jerusalem as the Davidic capital. Jewish leaders did not come to this position without a struggle.

Plans to Perform the Passover Sacrifice

“In 2007, Steinsaltz led a group of rabbis in the search for a qualified priest. After a time, they located a Kohen who was a butcher. It was their plan to ordain him to perform a Passover sacrifice on the Temple Mount. They petitioned Israel’s High Court of Justice, for permission. The Israeli government’s official position was to leave affairs on the Temple Mount in the hands of the Arab *Waqf*, which has rigid control over the mosques of Omar and Al Aqsa and has lately tightened its grip on the entire area.”

Unfortunately, the Israeli High Court took the government’s side of the issue and denied the request. They concluded that such a sacrifice would raise Arab/Israeli tensions to the point of open conflict or war.

And there were other frustrations. In 2008, an animal rights group called *Tnoo Lachayot Lichyot* (“Let the Animals Live”), contended that the Passover sacrifice of a lamb would constitute the crime of *cruelty to animals*. Although an Israeli court rejected their claim, it showed that there is continuing debate on the subject.

Writes Stearman, “But the Sanhedrin pushes onward. This year, they are rapidly moving toward the establishment of a Temple with all its attendant services. Their first step is the immediate plan to complete *Korban Pesach*. This Hebrew term means simply, ‘Passover Sacrifice’.

“Sanhedrin authorities now believe that the time is right for the renewal of a traditional Passover, as once practiced at the Temple. They follow the teachings of the 13th –century rabbi called Rambam (Moses Maimonides), who declared that the Temple Mount was still a sanctified place, in spite of all the insults that it has suffered since the Roman occupation.”

For Maimonides, “*Korban Pesach* is possible on the platform of Mount Zion, at any time there is a sanctified leadership in Israel willing to perform it. Furthermore, he declared that the commandment to keep Passover in the manner decreed by the Lord in Exodus is incumbent upon every Jewish generation.”

God’s Commandment

In the book of Exodus we read God’s command, “Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household . . . Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight [*ben ha arbayim*, literally, “between the two evenings,” meaning late afternoon]. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two door posts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs . . . You shall let none of it remain until morning . . . And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, you sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD’s Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD” (Exodus 12:3-12).

The first Passover sacrifice took place in haste in the individual homes of the Israelites in Egypt, during the time of Moses, as they were preparing to flee from Egypt.

Sanhedrin writers point out that the Passover was still being offered a century after the Roman destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., apparently upon a different, but still sanctified, altar.

“But soon afterward,” says Stearman, “with the persecutions of the Diaspora, questions of ritual purity kept the Jews from observing the practice. If there were no priesthood, and no sanctified place of offering could the people even legally offer a lamb? There remained only the shank bone of the lamb on a Passover *seder* plate for centuries.”

That is, until *now!*

The Ninth of Av

Sanhedrin leaders have moved forward with their plans, and on *Tisha B'Av* 5769 (July 30, 2009), in cooperation with the Temple Institute, they began the work of building a sacrificial altar. They followed the precepts of the Lord which he gave to Moses. (see Exodus 20:22-25).

The Sanhedrin leaders chose the date of *Tisha B'Av* – the 9th of Av – because on that date in AD 70, their Temple had been burned down by the Romans. They reasoned that there could be no better day to commence the construction of a new “Great Altar” than on this day. After fasting and prayer, “they assembled at the shore of the Dead Sea to gather stones, unhewn and untouched by human hands. These were carefully wrapped in plastic and sealed before being taken to an assembly site at *Mizpeh Jericho*, 12 miles to the northeast of Jerusalem. There, workers began preparation for the first modern *Korban Pesach*.

“The altar was meticulously fabricated in accordance with Jewish law, using a mortar mixture of sand, clay, tar and asphalt. Upon that occasion, the Temple Institute’s founder, Rabbi Yisrael Ariel, is quoted as saying, ‘Today is not just a time to mourn the destruction of the Temple. It is also a time to build.’”

Due to Arab occupation of the Temple Mount, however, they could not build the altar on the Temple Mount itself. A new strategy had to be devised.

Writes Stearman, “The current Institute director, Yehuda Glick, said, ‘Unfortunately, we cannot currently build the altar in its proper place on the Temple Mount. We are building an altar of the minimum possible size so that we will be able to transport it to the Temple when it is rebuilt.’”

This year, on Monday, March 29 (Nisan 14, 5770 in the “fixed” Jewish calendar), it is the intention of the Sanhedrin to oversee the first *Korban Pesach* since the destruction of the Temple. Surely this is an event to be carefully watched. It will involve much ritual sanctification, perhaps even the ordination of a high priest. It will set a precedent that will reach far into the future. But most of all, it will be a statement to the world that Israel has no intention of giving up its Holy Land.” The fixed calendar is the modern Jewish calendar created in 357 A.D. which approximates the actual “new moons.” Hopefully, the Sanhedrin will return to the original sighting of “new moons” soon, in order to have months really begin on new moons!

Exciting News

What shocking, exciting NEWS!

For many years I have said that the Jews would rebuild their Temple and once again begin offering sacrifices – the Scriptures foretell that there will be a Temple during end-times! Many scoffed, ridiculed, and refused to believe it. However, the facts are quickly assembling into place. Prophecy marches forward.

Christians who believe that the Jews will witness the building of a Temple are now seeing the construction and dedication of the altar for that Temple. Yehuda Glick's statement says that it will be brought to the Temple Mount in due time. The Sanhedrin's attitude seems to be "If we build it, He will come."

And they are right!

The prophet Malachi declared, in no uncertain words, "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, *will SUDDENLY COME to His temple*, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, *He is coming*, says the LORD of hosts" (Malachi 3:1).

"But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness" (3:2-3).

Prophecies of an End-Time Temple

Jesus Christ in the Mount Olivet prophecy speaks of signs of the end of the age and the *signs of Christ's second coming*. Among them, He declared, "Therefore when you SEE the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, *standing in the holy place* [the Temple of God, in the "holy of holies"), then let those who are in Judea *flee to the mountains*" (Matt.24:15-16)..

Yeshua plainly says a physical temple is going to exist again, prior to his return!

Christ referred to a prophecy of the prophet Daniel. Daniel, of course, was a prophet during Old Testament times, and lived 500 years before Christ. Just what did Daniel say about the Temple and "abomination of desolation"?

Daniel had a prophetic vision of the future. Speaking of four kingdoms in the end of days, he says: "Out of one of them [the four horns or kings that divided up the Earth's nations] came another horn, which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them. It set itself up to be as great as the Prince of the host; it *took away the daily sacrifice* from him and the *place of his sanctuary* was brought low. Because of REBELLION, the host of the saints, and the *daily sacrifice* were given over to it. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground" (Dan.8:9-12, NIV).

"Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, '*How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled* – the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?' He said to me, 'It will take 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be reconsecrated'" (Dan.8:13-14). What is the real meaning of this strange vision?

This vision refers to *many days in the future*. What is the length of this vision of the daily sacrifices and the transgression of desolation? For 2300 days the Sanctuary which is the Temple

was to be trodden under foot by the Gentiles. Then the Sanctuary was to be restored and cleansed. The Hebrew word for “cleansed” also means “RESTORED.”

The End of Days

As other scriptures show, this refers to the end of days (our day and the Great Tribulation). This prophecy was for the latter time . . . for at the appointed time the end shall be” (Dan.8:19). This was to occur “when the transgressors have reached their fullness” (verse 23).

The Bible teaches the Temple must be rebuilt before Christ’s return. This is talking about the Sanctuary of God in Jerusalem, a literal physical Temple (not spiritual). When the *transgressors* shall reach their fullness. A great king shall rise up, a cunning man of mighty power who will destroy fearfully and cause deceit and craft to prosper under his rule. He EXALTS HIMSELF above all, and *opposes* all that is called god or worshipped (Dan.8:24-25).

Daniel was told that the “vision refers to many days in the future” (v.26).

This same end-time tyrant, or evil prince, this same “king of fierce countenance” (Dan.8:23-25), is also prophesied of in Daniel 9:26-27. Here Daniel records, “. . . but the people of the prince that shall come shall DESTROY the city AND THE SANCTUARY (that is, the Temple!) . . . and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.”

This is clearly speaking of the same spectacular time frame and prophetic event to occur at the very end of this present age -- the “consummation,” or “time of the end.” Here again we find mention of a Temple or “sanctuary” which must exist, in the end of days, with animal sacrifices being offered.

Daniel also mentions this incredible sacrilege in his eleventh chapter. This prophecy also ends in the “end of days.” In verse 30 Daniel relates that a great “king” will “pillage Jerusalem and *pollute the sanctuary, putting a stop to the daily sacrifices*, and worshiping idols inside the Temple. He will leave godless Jews in power when he leaves – men who have abandoned their fathers’ faith. He will flatter those who hate the things of God,” just as Antiochus Epiphanes did in 165-167 B.C., “and win them over to his side” (Dan.11:30-32, *Living Bible*).

Says the Septuagint version, beginning in verse 31: “And seeds shall spring up out of him, and *they shall profane the sanctuary of strength* [the Temple of God in Jerusalem!], and they shall *remove the perpetual sacrifice, and make the abomination desolate*. And the transgressors shall bring about a *covenant [treaty, “peace” agreement] by deceitful ways*: but a people knowing their God shall prevail, and do valiantly. And the intelligent among the people shall *understand much* [much truth will be revealed!]: *yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil of many days*” (Dan.11:31-33).

In a prophetic Psalm which refers to the time of the Great Tribulation, God’s people pray to Him, “Walk over these total ruins; *our enemies have destroyed everything IN THE TEMPLE*. Your enemies have shouted in triumph IN YOUR TEMPLE; they have placed their flags there as signs of victory. . . They *WRECKED YOUR TEMPLE and set it on fire; they desecrated the*

place where you are worshiped” (Psalm 74:3-7).

In a similar Psalm is another prophecy of the time God's people will be invaded and taken captive by a foreign power in the Great Tribulation. God's people will lament, “O God, the heathen have invaded your land. They have DESECRATED YOUR HOLY TEMPLE and left Jerusalem in ruins” (Psalm 79:1).

Jeremiah laments, “The enemies robbed her of all her treasures. *She saw them enter the Temple itself*, where the Lord had forbidden Gentiles to go” (Lam.1:10). The prophet continues, in chapter two, “The Lord in his anger has covered Zion with darkness, its heavenly splendor he has turned into *ruins*. ON THE DAY OF HIS ANGER [the Great Tribulation] *he abandoned even his Temple*” (Lam.2:1).

The “day of His anger” refers to the Great Tribulation and the “Day of the Lord,” the time of God's WRATH and FURY because of His peoples’ sins and transgressions of His divine covenant and law! It is the time of His intervention in world affairs, the time He punishes His people with dire calamity and distress for their mounting sins! Therefore, this prophecy is aimed at our modern end-time age and generation! And here again a “Temple” is mentioned, which a wicked Gentile ruler will enter, and which God Himself will “abandon.” The very fact that He has abandoned it is evident because He will allow the heathen to enter it and pollute it!

In this same chapter of Lamentations, Jeremiah relates, “Like an enemy, the Lord has destroyed Israel; he has left her forts and palaces in ruins. He has brought on the people of Judah unending sorrow. He SMASHED TO PIECES THE TEMPLE where we worshiped him” (Lam.2:5-6).

The apostle Paul also predicted the same unusual event He wrote to the Thessalonians that in the end-time there would be a great “falling away” from the truth, an “apostasy,” when a “man of sin” would be revealed, the “son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits AS GOD IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD, showing himself that he is God” (II Thess.2:3-4).

There is a prophecy found in the book of Revelation which foretells a future Temple in the “day of the Lord” (Rev.1:10), the time before the coming of the Messiah. A servant of God named John wrote:

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and MEASURE THE TEMPLE OF GOD, AND THE ALTAR, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple, measure it not; for IT IS GIVEN TO THE GENTILES . . .” (Revelation 11:1-2).

Without a doubt, this means that there will be a future Temple, built during OUR TIME, today, and also implies that part of the Temple Mount will remain in the hands of the Muslims.

How exciting! The news of a renewed KORBAN PESACH in Israel, this year, is paving the way and bringing on and hastening the fulfillment of these tremendous end-time prophecies which must be fulfilled before the Messiah comes!