

CHAIM TIMES

The Newsletter of CHAIM, "CHristians Announcing Israel's Messiah"

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Do They Really Believe *It Is Finished?*

I've recently been absolutely flat-footed astounded by a very intelligent and devout Dispensational friend who believes that in the future God will again set up animal sacrifices in Jerusalem!

My friend holds to the traditional Dispensational system of doctrine that says God has dealt with mankind in a number of different dispensations. OK, so far so good, depending on what one means by that. Certainly we are all familiar with the different covenant administrations God has put in place. But in its traditional form the system goes way beyond that idea! It emphatically makes a sharp distinction between the church and Israel and claims the church is the "great parenthesis" not spoken of by the prophets, contrary to Acts 26:22-23. After the end of the "church age," they claim that God will once again turn to national Israel, which they say is at the center of the message of the Bible (we think Jesus is), and during a period of 1,000 years after Jesus returns, there will be a new temple and new sacrifices set up. This all comes out of their insistence on a literalist interpretation of scripture added to their idea of a church-Israel separation in the plan of God. They claim both Ezekiel and Zechariah speak of animal sacrifices in a future temple, so there must be animal sacrifices once again in the so-called millennium.

Ezekiel 45:19 The priest shall take some of the blood of the sin offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and the posts of the gate of the inner court.

Zechariah 14:21 And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them.

But the problem is Messiah has clearly fulfilled the animal sacrifices by becoming our atonement, removing sin and guilt and establishing our peace with God, as Hebrews clearly states:

Hebrews 9:24-26 For Messiah has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 8:13 clearly tells us that the old Temple system, the old priesthood, and the old sacrifices are obsolete. "In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete." I suppose one could say this was the first case of "planned obsolescence!" To say animal sacrifices will be restored denigrates the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Futile attempts have been made to rationalize away this problem. Some Dispensationalists say the future sacrifices will be a memorial of what Jesus did. But the Lord's Supper is our sacrament that reminds us of his sacrifice. A newer approach has attempted to say this is necessary to protect the holiness of God since he will dwell on earth amidst sinful unregenerate people. Really? Protect God? But both rationalizations fail, as the sacrifices are clearly called a sin offering and Hebrews tells us the whole system is obsolete as far as its external expressions: –sacrifices, priests, laws of clean and unclean– the whole "shebang." When Jesus made his sacrifice on the cross, hyssop was lifted up to him and he proclaimed: "It is finished." Hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of atonement in the old Mosaic system. Jesus made the final and ultimate sacrifice for sin. How wrong-headed to think animal sacrifices will again be reinstated! I do not doubt the genuine faith and sincerity of those who hold to that system, but they are seriously in error. **CHAIM is emphatically NOT a Dispensational ministry! (Sadly however most Jewish ministries are.)**

But, someone will say, how do you account for what Ezekiel and Zechariah described? I answer this question with a question. "Do you believe a future temple will have a literal river flowing out from under the altar, as Ezekiel describes? Do you believe there will be a literal fountain that people will jump into to have their sins removed as is described in Zechariah 13:1?" Believe it or not I have asked this question and some have said yes! Incredible! Clearly that cleansing fountain is symbolic of Jesus and that river of life Ezekiel foresaw is what Jesus spoke of when he said a river of living water would flow out of those who believe (John 7:38). Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit going out from his people bringing spiritual healing to the world through the gospel. Collectively we are the Temple (1 Peter 2:5). The prophets often used symbolism. **Extreme literalism misses the gospel in Ezekiel and Zechariah! In this case, instead of getting at Biblical truth hyper literalism actually obscures it!**

Indeed, it *is* finished, just as Jesus said. We never again need animal sacrifices, which were types and shadows of that greater sacrifice to come. How wonderful! It is finished! Through faith we know our sins are removed forever through that one final all-sufficient sin offering on the cross. All glory to the risen one!

CHAIM Ministry Updates



In January Director Fred Klett participated in an outreach concert "Celebrate Your Life" put on by young Russian pastor's kids. Fred played sax, harmonica, recorder, sang and gave a brief gospel presentation. Several hundred young Russian-speaking immigrants attended. Thanks Mironyuk kids for inviting him to be a part of it!



For Purim at the Rock of Israel PCA church plant we were pleased to have Robert Specter visiting us (left) from a different ministry with the same name as our congregation. He sells Judaica as a means of witness. Singer-songwriter Sally Klein O'connor (second from left) performed. We plan to have her back in the fall to work with us on one of her "Tour of Roses" campaigns at our local Russian community festival. On the right are Paul and Eva Quiram, Westminster students who are on our worship team.

Passover 2017 begins April 11. Remember to ask your Jewish friends what they are doing for Passover, wish them a happy one, and tell them Passover is important to you as a Christian. Be ready to explain that Jesus is the ultimate Passover Lamb prophesied in Isaiah 53!

Witnessing to 22 New Agers at Once!

In these pages we've asked for prayer for a Jewish friend, Ron D, a Jewish friend of Fred Klett's. Ron has been going through a tough time including divorce and illness. Pray for him. Last Fall Fred had a great opportunity to encourage Ron and he welcomed prayer as they sat together in a car. Recently Ron invited Fred to a New Age home fellowship. The host was a convert from Catholicism to liberal Judaism. Amazingly the host gave Fred the freedom to share the gospel quite thoroughly, addressing the differences between the New Age concept of God and the Biblical one, how we can be free of the guild of sin through what Messiah did for us, and how this enables us to forgive others. There were 22 people at the meeting. It was an amazing opportunity! Ron seems to be spiritually hungry but sometimes searching in the wrong places. Pray the God of Israel opens his eyes to see his own Messiah.

In Other CHAIM Ministry News...

- Rick Anderson continues to lead street and campus evangelism twice a week. Pray for Rick and this bold ongoing outreach.
- Door-to-door ministry is planned for Russian-speaking neighborhoods in NE Philly in May to boost the Rock of Israel PCA church plant.
- CHAIM ministers will conduct "Jesus Our Passover" Seders in NJ, PA, MD and Florida. Pray for these great times of motivational and educational ministry to the church. Often Jewish friends attend as well.

JOIN US FOR EVANGELISM IN PHILADELPHIA JULY 1-8

Work with the CHAIM team in some street outreach in Philly, the Cradle of Liberty! We need both experienced lay persons and teachable trainees. We'll be working side by side with you in sharing the good news.

We always have a great time during the Independence Week events. Contact us for more info and to schedule times to join in.