

Hebrews 9:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary.

Analysis

The first covenant 'had ordinances of divine service' (Greek 'dikaiōmata latreias' - regulations for worship) and 'the earthly sanctuary.' This establishes the old covenant's concrete, physical nature - specific rituals in a material building. These were real and divinely ordained, yet earthly and temporary. Reformed theology values the types while emphasizing they found fulfillment and replacement in Christ's spiritual, eternal realities.

Historical Context

The tabernacle (later temple) was central to Israel's covenant life. Its elaborate rituals and restrictions made God's holiness visible and taught separation between holy God and sinful people, creating longing for the greater access Christ provides.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What do the old covenant's elaborate rituals teach about God's holiness and human sin?

2. How does Christ's spiritual priesthood surpass the physical ordinances of the earthly sanctuary?

Interlinear Text

εἰχέν	μὲν	οὖν	καὶ	ἡ	πρώτη	σκηνή	δικαιώματα
covenant had	verily	Then	also	G3588	the first	G4633	ordinances
G2192	G3303	G3767	G2532		G4413		G1345
λατρείας	τό	τε	ἄγιον	κοσμικόν			
of divine service	G3588	and	sanctuary	a worldly			
G2999		G5037	G39	G2886			

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 25:8 (Temple): And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

Hebrews 8:2 (Temple): A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Leviticus 18:30 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not any one of these abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: I am the LORD your God.

Leviticus 22:9 (Parallel theme): They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.