

Isaiah 1:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts?

Analysis

God rejects formalistic worship divorced from covenant faithfulness. The rhetorical question 'Who has required this at your hand?' exposes the irony: Israel performs temple rituals while violating the moral law these ceremonies symbolize. God desires obedience over sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22), anticipating Christ's condemnation of external religion without heart transformation (Matthew 15:8-9). This underscores the Reformed emphasis on true worship flowing from regenerate hearts.

Historical Context

Despite Jerusalem's temple worship continuing, the people's oppression of the poor and judicial corruption profaned sacred assemblies. The temple courts, meant for reverent approach to God, became sites of empty ritual.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. In what ways might contemporary worship become ritualistic without genuine devotion?
2. How does this verse inform our understanding of acceptable worship in the new covenant?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	תָבֹאוּ	לִרְאֹת	פָּנַי	מִי	בִקֵּשׁ	זֶאת
H3588	When ye come	to appear	before	H4310	me who hath required	H2063
	H935	H7200	H6440		H1245	
מִדֶּכָּה	רַמְסֵה	חֲצֵרֵי:				
this at your hand	to tread	my courts				
H3027	H7429	H2691				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 34:23 (Parallel theme): Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel.

Exodus 23:17 (Parallel theme): Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.