

Joel 1:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD; the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn.

Analysis

"The meat offering and the drink offering is cut off from the house of the LORD" describes cessation of temple worship. The grain offering (minchah) and drink offering (nesek) accompanied sacrifices, representing thanksgiving and devotion. Without agricultural products, prescribed worship became impossible. This crisis forced recognition: worship depends entirely on God's provision. The phrase "the priests, the LORD'S ministers, mourn" shows that even religious professionals were helpless. They couldn't manufacture substitutes or continue "business as usual." This exposes a perennial danger: treating worship as human religious activity rather than God-enabled response to His grace. The Reformed understanding emphasizes that all worship originates with God—He provides both the means (Christ's sacrifice) and the enablement (the Spirit). Apart from divine provision, no acceptable worship exists (John 4:23-24, Hebrews 10:19-22).

Historical Context

Daily temple worship required grain, wine, oil, and animals—all dependent on agricultural productivity (Numbers 28-29). The locust plague eliminated these materials, halting sacrificial system. This anticipated later disruptions: Babylonian destruction of the temple (586 BC), cessation of sacrifices during exile, and ultimately Christ's fulfillment and abolition of the entire sacrificial system. Jesus is the true grain offering—the bread of life. His blood replaces drink offerings. In Him, the shadows find substance (Colossians 2:16-17, Hebrews 10:1-18).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that worship depends on God's provision humble religious pride?
2. In what ways do we try to manufacture worship through human effort rather than receiving it as divine gift?

Interlinear Text

הַכָּבֹד	מִנְחָה	וְסֵכֶר	מִבֵּית	יְהוָה:
is cut off	The meat offering	and the drink offering	from the house	of the LORD
H3772	H4503	H5262	H1004	H3068
אֲבֵלוּ	הַכֹּהֲנִים	מִשְׁכָּנֵי	יְהוָה:	
mourn	the priests	ministers	of the LORD	
H56	H3548	H8334	H3068	

Additional Cross-References

Joel 2:17 (Sacrifice): Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?

Joel 2:14 (Sacrifice): Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

Joel 1:13 (Sacrifice): Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God: for the meat offering and the drink offering is withholden from the house of your God.

Hosea 9:4 (Sacrifice): They shall not offer wine offerings to the LORD, neither shall they be pleasing unto him: their sacrifices shall be unto them as the bread of mourners; all that eat thereof shall be polluted: for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the LORD.

Isaiah 61:6 (References Lord): But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

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