

Divergent Views on the Sanctuary

DVS-3 Having Boldness to Enter the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus

1. The argument is presented by critics that Jesus did not begin His second apartment ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in 1844 as Adventists believe, but rather after Jesus ascended to heaven in the first century, in view of Paul's statements in **Heb 10:19, Heb 9:8**;
 - a. **Heb 6:19, Heb 4:16, Heb 1:3** and **Dan 9:24** are also used but will be covered in a later study;
2. **The "holiest" of all (Heb 10:19)**—supposedly a reference to the 2nd apartment of the heavenly sanctuary;
3. **The holiest (Heb 9:8)**—also believed to be a reference to the 2nd apartment of the heavenly sanctuary;
4. It is also submitted that aside from the KJV, there are many other Bible translations that render the **Heb 10:19** and **Heb 9:8** similarly:
 - a. The Berkeley Version, 1945,
 - b. Charles Williams' New Testament in Plain English (1952);
 - c. Amplified Version (1958);
 - d. J.B. Phillip's New Testament in Modern English (1958);
 - e. Today's English Version (1966);
 - f. Kenneth Taylor's The Living Bible (1967);
 - g. William Barclay's New Testament (1969);
 - h. New International Bible, NIV (1973).
5. If this argument is true, it lays to rest Adventism's teaching about **Dan 8:14** and the supposed change of ministration in Oct 22 of 1844; it effectively erodes the foundation upon which the SDA denomination has been standing on for the last 160 years and effectively destroys the denomination;
6. It behooves every thinking Seventh-day Adventist therefore to study the Bible in order to arrive at the truth regarding these controverted texts in the book of Hebrews and be able to "give an answer to every man that asketh for a reason of the hope that is in us, meekness and fear;" (**1 Pet 3:15**; see also **Jude 3**);

The Holiest of All

7. The Greek word translated "the holiest of all" in **Heb 9:8** and "the holiest" in **Heb 10:19** is "**ta hagia**" which literally means "**the holies**";
 - a. "**ta**" is the Greek equivalent of the English article "**the**";
 - b. "**hagia**" is the plural form of the Greek word "**hagios**" which means "holy";
8. The reason why "**hagia**" (or "holies") is translated "**holiest of all**" in the KJV and "**Most Holy Place**" in the NIV in these text is because of the common understanding that since "holy" is a reference in the Old Testament to the first apartment of the sanctuary, then "holies" must be a reference to the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary;

- a. This understanding is based in the Hebrew rendition of the Old Testament where “qodesh,” singular form of “holy,” is reference to the first apartment of the sanctuary, while “qodeshim,” the plural form of “qodesh” is a reference to the second apartment of the sanctuary;
- b. It must also be remembered that the translation of the texts in question (**Heb 9:8** and **Heb 10:19**) is very much affected by the translators’ personal understanding of the sanctuary service message, which isn’t much; the NIV translators, in particular, belong to those who have a leaning towards the understanding, commonly believed today, that Jesus began His ministrations in the second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary; this must surely have an impact on the way the texts were translated;

Paul’s Definition List

- 9. The difficulty is cleared when Paul’s definition list in **Heb 9:1-5** is consulted; here, Paul clearly sets forth definitions which lay down the exact meaning of the terms in question:
- 10. **Heb 9:1** --- the “**worldly sanctuary**” which is associated with the old covenant is translated from the Greek phrase “**hagion kosmikon**,” “**hagion**” is in the singular, accusative form of “**hagios**” and is here used to refer to the sanctuary as a whole;
- 11. **Heb 9:2**---in this verse Paul describes the first apartment of the sanctuary Moses built and refers to it as “**hagia**” (ἁγία) or the “the sanctuary” in the KJV; this is the same exact Greek text Paul used in **Heb 9:8** and **Heb 10:19**;
 - a. **Heb 9:3**---in this verse, Paul describes the second apartment of the sanctuary and refers to it as “**hagia hagiown**” (ἁγία ἁγίων) which literally means “the holies of holies;”
 - b. **Hagia** = “holies” (plural, neuter and nominative case)
 - c. **Hagiown** = “of holies” (plural, neuter, genitive or possessive case)

Hagion vs. Hagiown

- 12. The Greek word “**hagion**” in **Heb 9:1** which is translated “sanctuary” must not be confused with the Greek word “**hagiown**” in **Heb 9:3** which is translated “holiest;”
 - a. “**Hagion**” in **Heb 9:1** has the Greek letter “omicron” which is equivalent to the English letter “o” with the short sound; on the other hand, the “**hagiown**” of **Heb 9:3** has the Greek letter “omega” which is equivalent to the English letter “o” with a long sound;
- 13. In the Greek grammar, the ending of nouns and adjectives determine its function in a sentence; in the Greek language, the ending of nouns determines case (subject, direct object, indirect object, possessive), number (plural or singular) and gender (masculine or feminine);

The inflection of the neuter word “holy” (hagios):

	Singular	Plural
Nominative (subject of sentence)	Hagios (holy)	Hagia (holies)
Genitive (possessive form)	Hagiou (of holy)	hagiown (of holies)
Dative (indirect object)	Hagiow (in, or to the holy)	Hagiois (in, or to the holies)
Accusative (direct object)	Hagion (holy)	Hagia (holy)

- a. **Hagion** in **Heb 9:1** means “holy” in the Greek—it is in the neuter, singular, accusative (objective) case;
- b. **Hagiown** in **Heb 9:3** means “of holies” in the Greek--it is in the neuter, plural, genitive (or possessive) case;

14. **Notice again Paul’s definition list:**

- a. The first apartment of the sanctuary is “**hagia**” or “**holies**”;
- b. The second apartment of the sanctuary is “**hagia hagiown**” or “**holies of holies**”;

Usage of "Hagia" in the Book of Hebrews

15. With Paul’s definition list now clearly noted, we are now able to understand the meaning of the passages in the Book of Hebrews which appear problematic on the surface; inconsistencies in interpretation arise only when Paul’s definition list found at the beginning of **Hebrews 9** is not consulted and taken into account:
16. Taking Paul’s definition list which found at the very beginning of Hebrews 9, into consideration results in a more coherent, consistent interpretation of the problematic texts in question:
- a. **Heb 9:2** ---For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the **sanctuary (hagia)**
 - i. Paul’s definition of “**hagia**” found here; Paul meant it to refer to the first apartment of the sanctuary;
 - b. **Heb 9:8**---The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the **holiest** of all (**hagia**) was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:
 - i. “**holiest of all**” in the KJV and “**Most Holy Place**” in the NIV are incorrect translations of “**hagia**”; “**hagia**” not a reference to the Most Holy Place but the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary; in this verse, Paul is saying that the service in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary cannot be in effect as long as the service in the first apartment of the earthly sanctuary was taking place;
 - c. **Heb 9:12**---Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the **holy place (hagia)**, having obtained eternal redemption for us.
 - i. “**Hagia**” is correctly translated in the KJV as the holy place or first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary where Jesus began ministering at His ascension;
 - d. **Heb 9:24**---For Christ is not entered into the **holy places (hagia)** made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:
 - i. “**hagia**”---incorrectly translated and as the “holy places”;
 - e. **Heb 9:25**---Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the **holy place** every year with the blood of others
 - i. “**hagia**” is correctly translated as “holy place”;
 - f. **Heb 10:19**---Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the **holiest (hagia)** by the blood of Jesus,
 - i. “**hagia**” is incorrectly translated in the KJV as “the holiest”
17. There are 29 bible translations that give the correct translation of “**hagia**” in **Heb 10:19** as opposed to the 9 translations that render Heb 10:19 incorrectly; see a sampling below:

- i. Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the **holy place** by the blood of Jesus, World English Bible
 - ii. Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the **holy place** by the blood of Jesus, NASB or New American Standard Bible
 - iii. Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the **holy place** by the blood of Jesus, (The Living Bible)
 - iv. So, friends, we can now—without hesitation—walk right up to God, into “the **Holy Place.**” (The Message Bible)
 - v. Seeing therefore, brethren, that by the blood of Jesus we may be bold to enter into **the Holy place**, (1599 Geneva Bible)
18. Here are 29 versions which correctly translate ta hagia in the book of Hebrews as opposed to the 9 translations that translate hagia incorrectly; thus we see that only nine translations out of a total of thirty-eight incorrectly translate hagia as “holy of holies,” “holiest,” or “most holy place” in one or more of these passages: Heb 8:2; 9:2, 8, 12, 24, 25; 10:19; or 13:11.
- a. Murdoch Bible (1855);
 - b. Noyes (1869);
 - c. Sawyer (1891);
 - d. Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible (1895);
 - e. Young (1898);
 - f. English Revised (1881)
 - g. Coptic (1898-1905, translated from the Egyptian Coptic);
 - h. Twentieth Century New Testament (1902);
 - i. Weymouth (1903);
 - j. American Standard Version (1901, originally called the American Revised Version);
 - k. Fenton’s New Testament in Modern English (1919);
 - l. Moffett (1922);
 - m. Ballantine’s Riverside New Testament (1934);
 - n. Lamsa (1940, translated from the Aramaic);
 - o. Basic English (1941);
 - p. Confraternity (1941);
 - q. Goodspeed (1943);
 - r. Knox (1944);
 - s. Revised Standard Version (1946);
 - t. Spencer(1946);
 - u. Lattey’s Westminster Version (1947);
 - v. New World Translation (1950);
 - w. British Authorized, also known as Translator’s New Testament (1973);
 - x. New American Standard Bible (1960);
 - y. New English Bible (1961);
 - z. Beck (1963);
 - aa. Jerusalem Bible (1966);
 - bb. Byington’s Bible in Living English (1972);
 - cc. Estes (1973).

Oddity of Oddities

19. The question should be asked, why did Paul give a definition list that was rather odd and out of the ordinary way of identifying the two apartments of the sanctuary?

Paul's Definition (Heb 9:1-3)	Typical Old Testament Definition
hagia ("holies") --- first apartment of the sanctuary	qodesh ("holy")---first apartment of the sanctuary
hagia hagiown ("holies of holies") --- second apartment of the sanctuary	qodesh qodeshim ("holy of holies")---second apartment of the sanctuary

20. It would not be wrong to assume that Paul was aware of an oddity in the definition list Moses gave in **Leviticus 16** and decided to come up with his own definition list to avoid being misunderstood;
- Lev 16:2, 16, 17, 20, 23** —the second apartment of the sanctuary is not called the Most Holy Place but rather the Holy Place (ἅγιον)
 - Lev 16:16, 17, 20, 23**---The first apartment is not called Holy Place but "tabernacle of the congregation"
 - Num 18:10**---the courtyard is called "holy of holies" (tow hagiow town Hagiown) (τῶν ἁγίων τῶν ἁγίων)
21. A second question arises: Why did Moses refer to the Most Holy Place as the Holy place in **Lev 16**? The answer to this question sheds light on why Paul came up with his own unique definition list.
22. There is a theology worth noting behind all this:
- It appears that In using such terminology, Moses would like to bring to the surface the idea of a reduction or demotion of the sanctuary, in line with the call for humility and soul-affliction on the Day of Atonement;
 - The high priest took off his glorious garments and donned the garments of the common priest (**Lev 16:4**)
 - The congregation to fast and afflict themselves (**Lev 16:29; Lev 23:27-32**)
 - The offering of the congregation which was typically a bullock, was reduced to a goat on the Day of Atonement, an animal of lesser or lower value and stature than a bullock (**Lev 16:5-9 cf Lev 4:13-14**)
 - Finally , the earthly sanctuary itself assumes a lesser status as seen by the terminology Moses used (**Lev 16:2, 16, 17, 20, 23**)
 - With Paul, it's the exact opposite; Paul takes Moses' concept of demoting the earthly sanctuary, and reverses it to show that the heavenly sanctuary is much better than the earthly sanctuary;
 - The first apartment of the sanctuary-- is called "holies" or "**hagia**" (the term regularly used in the Old Testament for the second apartment
 - The second apartment---is called "holies of holies" (**hagia hagiown**)
 - Using such language, Paul promotes the heavenly sanctuary above the earthly sanctuary
 - This is Paul's way of saying the heavenly sanctuary is greater and much greater than the earthly sanctuary; it is "the more perfect tabernacle" (**Heb 9:11**);