

Amos 5:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts.

Analysis

Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them (ki im-ta'alu li olot uminchoteikhem lo ertzeh, פִּי אֶם-תַּעֲלִידֵי עֹלוֹת, לא אֶרְצֶה)—God categorically rejects Israel's worship. Olah (עֹלָה, "burnt offering") was the premier sacrifice, wholly consumed on the altar (Leviticus

1. . Minchah (מִנְחָה, "grain offering") accompanied burnt offerings (Leviticus
2. . Shelamim (שְׁלָמִים, "peace offerings") were fellowship meals celebrating covenant relationship.

God says: **I will not accept** (lo ertzeh, לא אֶרְצֶה) and **I will not regard** (lo abbit, לא אֲבִיט)—meaning He refuses to acknowledge or approve their worship.

The phrase **your fat beasts** (meri'eikhem, מְרִיאיֵיכֶם, "fattened animals") emphasizes they brought expensive, high-quality sacrifices—yet God rejects them. Why? Because worship divorced from justice and righteousness is abomination (vv. 21-24). Isaiah 1:11-15 and Micah 6:6-8 make identical points: God desires obedience, not ritual; mercy, not ceremony. Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matthew 9:13, 12:7). Hebrews 10:8 notes that God takes "no pleasure" in sacrifices offered under the old covenant—how much less when offered hypocritically!

This doesn't mean ritual is inherently wrong but that ritual without heart-righteousness is empty performance. The Reformed tradition rightly emphasizes

that worship must be in spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24)—external forms mean nothing if divorced from internal reality and ethical obedience.

Historical Context

Israel maintained elaborate worship at Bethel and Dan, offering sacrifices regularly (Amos 4:4-5). But their worship was syncretistic (mixing Yahweh worship with Canaanite practices) and hypocritical (maintaining ritual while oppressing the poor). They assumed religious observance guaranteed divine favor regardless of ethics. Amos demolishes this: God rejects worship that coexists with injustice. This was fulfilled when Assyria destroyed Israel (722 BC)—their sanctuaries couldn't save them.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do churches and individuals today sometimes substitute religious ritual for genuine obedience and justice?
2. What does it mean that God refuses to "accept" or "regard" worship offered without righteousness?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	אֲמַן	תַּעֲלוּ	לִי	עַל זֹת	וּמִנְחֹתֶיךָ
H3588	H518	Though ye offer	H0	me burnt offerings	and your meat offerings
		H5927		H5930	H4503
לֹא	אֶרְצֶה	וְשָׁלָם	מִרְיָאֵיכֶם	לֹא	
H3808	I will not accept	the peace offerings	of your fat beasts	H3808	
	H7521	H8002	H4806		

אֲבִיט:

them neither will I regard

H5027

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 66:3 (Sacrifice): He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.