

Proverbs 21:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind?

Analysis

The wicked person's worship is inherently abominable to God—not merely imperfect but detestable. The second clause intensifies this: 'how much more' when worship is offered 'with a wicked mind'—hypocritically, manipulatively, or presumptuously. God looks at the heart, not external religious performance. The unregenerate person's best works are filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6); his worship is offensive. This destroys any notion of salvation by religious observance apart from regeneration. God desires truth in the inward parts; external compliance without heart transformation is worthless. Only through Christ can sinners offer acceptable worship. This should produce both humility (recognizing our unworthiness) and gratitude (marveling that Christ makes us acceptable).

Historical Context

Israel's prophets repeatedly condemned empty ritualism divorced from justice and heart obedience (Isaiah 1:10-17, Amos 5:21-24). God desires mercy, not sacrifice.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Do you approach worship with a pure heart, or merely external compliance?
2. How does understanding worship's acceptability only through Christ affect your approach to God?

Interlinear Text

בִּזְבַּח הַשְׁעִים יְתַעַב הַשְׁעִים אֶת בְּחֵדֶל
The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination H2077 H7563 H8441 H637 H3588 it with a wicked mind H2154

יביאתו:

how much more when he bringeth

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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.

Proverbs 15:8 (Sacrifice): The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Jeremiah 6:20 (Sacrifice): To what purpose cometh there to me incense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices sweet unto me.

Matthew 23:13 (Parallel theme): But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

Proverbs 28:9 (Parallel theme): He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

