



[Isaiah 1:13-15](#)

(13) Bring no more futile sacrifices;
Incense is an abomination to Me.
The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—
I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.
(14) Your New Moons and your appointed feasts
My soul hates;
They are a trouble to Me,
I am weary of bearing *them*.
(15) When you spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
Even though you make many prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood.

New King James Version

The context gives no indication that the Israelites were not observing the [Sabbath](#) on the seventh day. Rather, their attitude and way they were observing it contrasted with God's desire. Carnally, man feels free to [worship God](#) as he good and well pleases. These attitudes, as well as the practices, break the second commandment.

This passage parallels [Amos 5:21-27](#), which was preached about the same time as [Isaiah 1:13-15](#). Both show crowds in a festive attitude, yet [God](#) rejects their "worship" as worthless. Their "[holiness](#)" was a sham because it was not backed by righteous conduct in their daily lives. The spirit behind their worship was wrong. Their futile sacrifices indicate their hypocrisies: These people had the morals of alley cats; eyes hot with lust and greed; and fortunes built on crime, envy, [murder](#), and deceit. In reality, they were stingy, hateful gossipers who on the Sabbath appeared before God as if everything was okay.

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What kind of a god would accept the conduct that the Israelites exhibited? Certainly not the true God! They were going through the motions of punctilious observance, but their hearts were elsewhere, as their daily conduct showed. God is more concerned about right relationships between people than an overly scrupulous regard for formal worship on the Sabbath. Worship cannot be separated from the character and attitudes displayed in daily life. It is a person's reaction to God all through the week, not just on the Sabbath, that matters. We cannot mock God and somehow believe that we will get away with it.

In [Isaiah 2:5-18](#), God testifies of a culture immersed in all sorts of [idolatry](#). He sees a people enslaved by the superstition of astrology—they do not seek God's judgment, but they will seek and do what the omens read! Their material success has produced a self-confidence that deceives them into believing that God is unnecessary. This chapter reveals what resides at the foundation of much idolatry—[pride](#), as expressed in the phrases, "The lofty looks of man" and the "haughtiness of men." Pride drives mankind to resist God, so they will not submit to the way He wants our response—our worship—don

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Second Commandment](#)

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