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## The Multitude of Your Sacrifices, What Are They to Me

### 1: 10-17

**The multitude of your sacrifices, what are they to me DIG: The Jews loved the feasts such as the Passover, ceremonies, and sacrifices that God had provided for them. How, then, could He take no pleasure in their many sacrifices? Why were they meaningless and evil? What does God call the people to do in 1:16-17?**

**REFLECT: What part of your worship experience do you love the most? Can you see any part of it that is similar to Israel's worship? How is it different? Ritual was not Israel's problem. Useless ritual was their problem. What is the difference?**

Today there is a movement in the Catholic Church to return to the rituals of the church, and that they be rigidly followed. What sets traditional Catholics apart is that they celebrate the Mass in Latin, believing that no other language should be used during the church service, and that the Catholic Church is the only true church. Traditional Catholicism was born in reaction to the landmark Second Vatican Council of 1962-65 when the Roman Catholic Church attempted to make Catholicism more accessible to the people. As a result, the Mass could be spoken in any language. Women were able to perform limited liturgical duties, and celebrants could receive the Eucharistic sacrament from lay people. Traditionalists objected to all these changes, and the number of traditional Latin Mass churches has grown to 534 in 2003. According to the National Registry of Latin Masses, that is up from only 100 a decade ago.

What are these Catholic rituals? They consist of the worship of images (**Exodus 20:4-5**), the use of the rosary (**Matthew 6:7-8**), and flagellation, which is the blind hope that through self-torture, merit will be stored up and their souls will be released sooner from purgatory. The scapular is also used which is a *charm* that is designed to give the wearer protection against all kinds of perils, such as accidents, disease, lightning, fire and storms, the ability to ward off witchcraft, enchantments

and to drive away evil spirits. Prayers for the dead are encouraged, which suggest that the state of the dead has not yet been fixed and can be improved at our request. Even the use of relics is practiced by traditional Catholic doctrine. Relics, or physical objects, are supposed to accomplish physical miracles, or change the physical or spiritual destiny of the Catholic who relies on them. Relics range from pieces of the true cross, the nails, thorns from the crown of thorns, the seamless robe of Christ, the linen of Mary, her wedding ring, locks of her hair, vials of her milk, and her house (miraculously transplanted from Palestine to Italy), to the more common and more abundant bones, arms, legs, garments and other possessions of the saints and martyrs. Every Roman Catholic Church is supposed to have at least one relic.<sup>4</sup>

But the question today is the same as it has always been. Does this kind of ritualistic worship please **God**? Or do the rituals and ceremonies detract from the purity and simplicity of the Gospel? We should always look to Scripture in these matters and **Isaiah** answers these questions forcefully in **1:11-14**. The Jews were polluting the sacrificial system that **ADONAI Himself** had put in place. In these verses, **God** is anticipating **Isra'el's** defense. She could say, "But **God**, we have kept the letter of the law. We have been very careful in our sacrificial system." So **Isra'el's** defense is assumed in this section and **the LORD** now answers that defense: **Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts My soul hates**. These statements relate to the past practices that **the LORD** could endure no longer (**to see link click Aj - Stop Bringing Meaningless Offerings**). Then **God**, through **His** prophet **Isaiah**, points to the future and the things that **He** wanted them to do (see **Ak - Wash and Make Yourselves Clean**). When **Isaiah** looked around **he** saw people long on ceremony and short on faith.<sup>5</sup>



**ADONAI** always **hates** ritualistic worship (**Amos 5:21-27**) because it takes away the attention of worshipers, and causes them to forget the truths that genuine worship is meant to convey. It prevents the connection between the worshiper and **God**. Ritualistic worship hides, rather than reveals the simple truth of salvation set forth by **Yeshua: I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to**



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**the Father except through Me. If you really knew Me, you would know My Father as well. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him (John 14:6).**