

Answer: Let us read the passage carefully:

Isaiah 66:3 (ESV) says:

“He who slaughters an ox is like one who kills a man; he who sacrifices a lamb, like one who breaks a dog’s neck; he who presents a grain offering is like one who offers pig’s blood; he who makes a memorial offering of frankincense is like one who blesses an idol. They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations.”

At first glance, one might mistakenly conclude that this verse forbids slaughtering animals or eating meat. However, this is a misunderstanding of the passage. If that were the case, then offering grain offerings (which the text also condemns) would be forbidden too—but we know from elsewhere in Scripture that offerings are acceptable to God (Romans 12:1, ESV).

So, what is really happening here?

Understanding Isaiah 66:3 in Context

God is addressing people who bring large, showy sacrifices to Him, thinking that quantity and grandeur will please Him, while their hearts remain distant and rebellious. This is not about the act of sacrifice itself but about the condition of the worshiper's heart.

In fact, God reminds us in the very next verses:

Isaiah 66:1-2 (ESV):

“Thus says the LORD: Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is my resting place? All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”

God is not impressed by elaborate rituals or grand offerings if they come from proud or unrepentant hearts. Rather, He values humility, brokenness, and reverence for His Word.

The Deeper Meaning of Sacrifices

When a wicked person brings a sacrifice, it is not truly a pleasing offering but more like a curse on themselves. Their sacrifice is likened to heinous acts—killing a man or breaking the neck of a dog—to show how detestable it is in God’s eyes.

Proverbs 15:8 (ESV) confirms this principle:

“The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him.”

This means God desires obedience and a right heart above ritual sacrifices:

1 Samuel 15:22 (ESV) says:

“To obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.”

Practical Applications

- Do not offer God anything obtained by dishonest or sinful means—such as money earned through corruption, theft, or immoral activities like drug dealing, drunkenness, or prostitution.
- Deuteronomy 23:18 (ESV) states clearly:
“You shall not bring the fee of a prostitute or the wages of a dog into the house of the LORD your God in payment for any vow, for both are an abomination to the LORD your God.”
- Moreover, if there is conflict or unresolved sin between you and others, reconcile first before bringing offerings to God:

- *Matthew 5:23-24 (ESV) says: “So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then*

come and offer your gift.”

What About Eating Meat?

The Bible does not forbid eating meat. In fact, dietary laws in the Old Testament allowed for the consumption of various clean animals, and the New Testament teaches Christian liberty in such matters (Romans 14:2-3, ESV).

The key takeaway from Isaiah 66:3 is not about food or eating habits but the attitude behind worship and offerings. God desires true worship from sincere hearts, not empty rituals or hypocrisy.

Summary

- Isaiah 66:3 condemns hypocritical and prideful sacrifices, not the act of eating meat.
- God values a humble and repentant heart over any external

ritual.

- Obedience to God's Word and sincere worship are more pleasing than sacrifices or offerings given without faith and love.
- We are called to live with integrity, offering God what is rightfully ours, with hearts aligned to Him.

May the Lord help us to worship Him in spirit and truth.

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