

The 2nd Commandment
Images for Use in
Worship Are Prohibited

Exodus 20:4-6 Part 1

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Overview

- God forbids idols, specifically images
- Moses preaches a sermon about this (Deut. 4)
- The people have not seen God's form+
- Idols often represent the host of heaven+
- The host of heaven+ have been allotted by God to the pagan nations,
- If and when Israel rebels, she will be turned over to the host of heaven+

2

Images for worship are forbidden

- **Exodus 20:4, 5a**

You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them;

3

Other important laws about idols & gods+

- Do not mention their names (Exo. 23:13)
- Do not practice divination (Deut. 18:10)
- Destroy their places of worship (Deut. 12:2)
- Do not make an image to represent Yahweh (Deut. 4:15, 16)

4

The prohibition covers objects for use in worship, not all images

- **Exodus 20:5a**

You shall not worship them or serve them+

- The tabernacle had images ordained by God
- Solomon's temple had lions, oxen and cherubim (1Kings 7:29)

5

Yahweh revealed Himself to them with words, not a form (*temunah*)

- **Deuteronomy 4:15**

So watch yourselves carefully, since you did not see any form on the day the LORD spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire,

6

Moses did see the form (*temunah*) of Yahweh

- **Numbers 12:8**

With him I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And **he beholds the form of the LORD**. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant, against Moses?

7

The apostles saw the form and were given God's words

- **1John 1:1**

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life

- **1John 5:21**

Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

8

Idolatry of creature worship (Gen. 1)

- **Deuteronomy 4:16-18**

so that you do not act corruptly and make a graven image for yourselves in the form of any figure, the likeness of **male or female**, the likeness of **any animal** that is on the earth, the likeness of **any winged bird** that flies in the sky, the likeness of **anything that creeps** on the ground, the likeness of **any fish** that is in the water below the earth.

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The host of heaven are allotted to the pagans; Israel is Yahweh's

- **Deuteronomy 4:19**

And beware, lest you lift up your eyes to heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, **all the host of heaven**, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those **which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples** under the whole heaven.

10

The host of heaven are allotted to the pagans; Israel is Yahweh's

- **Deuteronomy 29:26**

And they went and served other gods and worshiped them, **gods whom they have not known and whom He had not allotted to them**.

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The host of heaven are spirit beings

- **1Kings 22:19-22**

And Micaiah said, Therefore, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the **host of heaven** standing by Him on His right and on His left. And the LORD said, Who will entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said this while another said that. Then **a spirit came forward** and stood before the LORD and said, I will entice him.

12

Israel is God's allotment!

- **Deuteronomy 32:8, 9**

When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, When He separated the sons of man, He set the boundaries of the peoples According to the number of the **sons of God** [LXX and Qumron reading]. For the LORD's portion is His people; **Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.**

13

The **sons of God** are the heavenly council, the **host of heaven**+

- **Job 1:6**

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

14

Pagan images often represent the **host of heaven**+which are wicked beings

- **Deuteronomy 32:16, 17**

They made Him jealous with strange gods; With abominations they provoked Him to anger. **They sacrificed to demons** who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread.

15

Pagan images often represent the **host of heaven**+which are wicked beings

- **2Kings 17:16**

And they forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God and **made for themselves molten images**, even two calves, and made an Asherah and **worshiped all the host of heaven** and served Baal.

16

Israel, the land and the people, were Yahweh's allotment; if they persisted in rebellion they were kicked out of the land and turned over to the **host of heaven**+ the allotment of the pagans

- **Acts 7:42**

But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, **It was not to Me that you offered victims and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, O house of Israel?**+

17

Israel is God's possession, He saved them from pagan idolatry in Egypt, having conquered Egypt's **gods**+

- **Deuteronomy 4:19b, 20**

all the host of heaven, and be drawn away and worship them and serve them, those which the LORD your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron furnace, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today.

18

Images for worship will bring God's wrath

- **Deuteronomy 4:23, 24**

So watch yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which the LORD your God has commanded you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.

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Applications and Implications

- 1) God is unseen and offers His Words, not any image
- 2) We must beware being like the pagans who use images (mental or tangible) to access the spirit world
- 3) We must avoid unbelief that leads to idolatry

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- 1) God is unseen and offers His Words, not any image

- **Exodus 32:1**

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him."

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- 1) God is unseen and offers His Words, not any image

- **Exodus 32:4, 6b**

He took this [gold] from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. . . and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play."

22

- 2) We must beware being like the pagans who use images (mental or tangible) to access the spirit world

- **1Corinthians 10:6, 7**

Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play."

23

- 3) We must avoid unbelief that leads to idolatry

Jesus spoke (Hebrews 1:1, 2) and is now invisible to us. We must believe His words

- **Hebrews 10:37, 38**

For yet in a very little while, He who is coming will come, and will not delay. But My righteous one shall live by faith; And if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.

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