



IDOLATRY: CARVED IMAGES AND LIKENESSES OF YHWH (THE LORD)

By George Lujack

A great sin mentioned throughout Scripture that angers God is the sin of idolatry. This video will illustrate some of the ways in which man commits idolatry against God by making, serving, and praising God through artistic works and carved images of Yeshua (Jesus) and others.

MICAH 5:13 (NKJV):

Your carved images I will also cut off, and your sacred pillars from your midst. You shall no more worship the work of your hands.

The command to not make carved images, or any fixed images representing God, is the second commandment of the Ten Commandments and is further mentioned and elaborated on in many other verses throughout Scripture.

EXODUS 20:4-5 (NKJV):

You shall not make for yourself a carved image - or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, YHWH (the Lord) your God, am a jealous God...

ISAIAH 42:8 (NKJV):

I am YHWH (the Lord); that is My name. My glory I will not give to another, nor My praise to carved images.

When God gave the command to not make any images to represent Him, He also gave the reason why. He is a jealous God who will not share His praise with carved images. He views artwork, paintings, carved images, or any setup fixed object representing Him as an unworthy worthless substitution for Him.

The best way to relate this in human terms would be in the following manner... A man goes on a business trip. His wife decides to surprise him and greets him at his hotel room. When the wife arrives, she discovers her husband is with a mistress or prostitute. The husband tries to beg and explain to his wife that his mistress or prostitute means nothing to him, but he just needs someone to be with, as a substitute for her, when he goes away on his business trips. The wife, who loves her husband, is rightfully angry, appalled, and jealous. All the apologetic words of love coming from her husband cannot comfort her.

This is how God views man when he makes artistic or carved substitute images of Him and sets up those images, serves those images, and praises, reveres, and worships Him through those images.

The Catholic Church is the greatest violator of the Second Commandment, which prohibits making and setting up images of God. The Catholic Church, from its foundation, never had any intention of obeying God's Second Commandment. The Catholic Church changed its version of the Ten Commandments to accommodate its use of artwork images and carved statues of Yeshua (Jesus) and others.¹ The Catholic Church deleted the second commandment, then split the tenth commandment against coveting in two, to make the ninth and tenth commandments. Catholicism's ninth commandment is against coveting your neighbor's wife and its tenth commandment is against coveting your neighbor's property.

A Catholic argument used to defend its use of images of God is that its members are not actually 'worshipping' God through artwork or carved images; they know that the images are not actually God. The second commandment prohibits any image bearing *any likeness* of God to be made and set up. Even if people fully know that an image is not God, but is just a representation or likeness of God, they are still breaking the second commandment if they make, set up, serve, and praise any image representing the likeness of God.

After the Hebrews departed Egypt in the Exodus, in the absence of Moses, they decided to make themselves a golden calf representation of God (Exodus 32). Aaron, the brother of Moses, made the calf, so he and the Hebrews who contributed their gold to make the calf surely knew that the golden calf *was not actually* God. Whether one believes an idol is actually God or is a representation of God is irrelevant regarding the sin of idolatry. Scripture records the Hebrew golden calf idolatry incident as a great sin that angered God and brought judgment to about three thousand men for this (Exodus 32:28).

EXODUS 34:14 (NKJV):

You shall worship no other god, for YHWH (the Lord), whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.

Believers are commanded to not worship other gods and are also commanded to not worship, serve, set up, revere, make, and adore representations of God through art and carved images, which are the work of man's hands. YHWH (the Lord) does not want anyone to worship or revere Him through a stand-in substitute piece of art or carved image. YHWH (the Lord) is a jealous God who refers to Jealous as His name.

Another Catholic argument used to defend its use of artistic and carved images of God (and others) is that people have photographs displayed throughout their homes, and having artistic images and statues of Messiah (Christ) and His family is just like having photos displayed of loved family members. This is not the case.

Photos are *actual images*, capturing an *actual likeness* of an *actual moment* in time, not artistic paintings or the work of a sculptor's hands. Imagine if you entered a person's home and instead of seeing family photographs, this man had nothing but paintings and statues of his family in his home. That might be a little creepy.

Hypothetically, if Yeshua (Jesus) could be photographed, His photo would represent an actual image of Him, not the work of a craftsman's hands. If in the future, Yeshua (Jesus) allows people to photograph Him, and place a picture of Him in their homes, He would certainly NOT allow people to bow down and pray before a photographic image of Him.

The Catholic Church is by no means the only Christian denomination violator of the Second Commandment. Various Christian churches set up images of Yeshua (Jesus) in their places of worship and many individual people of the Christian faith have artwork or figurine statues of Messiah (Christ) set up somewhere prominently in their homes.

During the pagan Christmas holiday season, Christians set up images of Messiah (Christ) in manger scenes and set up Christmas tree idols of worship in their home, to which they offer sacrifices (of labor/money for gifts) and bow down and place their sacrifices (gifts) under the Christmas tree idol. Christmas tree idols must be set up, served (decorated), and then carried away from the home to be disposed of, because they cannot go by themselves (Jeremiah 10:1-6).

JOHN 4:24:

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Yeshua (Jesus) commands us to worship God in spirit and in truth, not through artistic images or carved statues. We cannot worship God in a manner of our choosing. We cannot worship God by breaking the second commandment.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10 (NKJV):

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor IDOLATORS, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous (greedy of gain), nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

GALATIANS 5:19-21 (NKJV):

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, IDOLATRY, sorcery, hatred, quarrels, jealousies, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

REVELATION 21:7-8 (NKJV):

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, untrustworthy, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, IDOLATORS, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Idolatry is a tool that Satan loves to utilize to blind people from the truth of God's word. Idolatry, in its many forms such as art, beauty, carved images, grand cathedrals, and fine clothing makes it easier to deceive people into practicing lawlessness.

Yeshua (Jesus) admonished and rebuked the blind and lawless scribes and Pharisees of His day, likening them to a form of idolatry, who by appearance seemed righteous, but inwardly they were hypocritical sinners.

MATTHEW 23:27-28 (NKJV):

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.”

Catholics, Protestants, and people of various Christian faiths who engage with various artistic images and carved statue idols of YHWH (Yeshua – Jesus, the Lord) may outwardly appear righteous, but are idolaters who are in danger of not inheriting the kingdom of God and ultimately of losing their salvation.

PROVERBS 14:12 & 16:25 (NKJV):

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Making, revering, setting up, serving, and worshiping images of YHWH (the Lord) Yeshua (Jesus) may seem like a harmless practice that actually honors Him, but Scripture repeatedly declares it to be a serious sin, a sin that will keep a person from inheriting the kingdom of God.

¹ “Catholic Religion Purposely takes out one of God’s Ten Commandments,”
< <http://www.jesus-is-savior.com/False%20Religions/Roman%20Catholicism/tencomma.htm> >.