

'You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. **You shall not bow down to them or worship them**; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments' (Exodus 20:4-6).

'**Do not make idols or set up an image** or a sacred stone for yourselves, and do not place a carved stone in your land to bow down before it. I am the LORD your God' (Leviticus 26:1).

'All this took place because the Israelites had **sinned against the LORD their God**, who had brought them up out of Egypt from under the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. They worshipped other gods and followed the practices of the nations the LORD had driven out before them, as well as the practices that the kings of Israel had introduced. The Israelites secretly did things against the LORD their God that were not right. From watchtower to fortified city they built themselves high places in all their towns. They set up sacred stones and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree. At every high place they burned incense, as the nations whom the LORD had driven out before them had done. They did wicked things that aroused the LORD's anger. **They worshipped idols, though the LORD had said, "You shall not do this."** The LORD warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and seers: "**Turn from your evil ways.** Observe my commands and decrees, in accordance with the entire Law that I commanded your ancestors to obey and that I delivered to you through my servants the prophets."

But they would not listen and were as stiff-necked as their ancestors, who did not trust in the LORD their God. They rejected his decrees and the covenant he had made with their ancestors and the statutes he had warned them to keep. **They followed worthless idols and themselves became worthless.** They imitated the nations around them although the LORD had ordered them, "Do not do as they do."

They forsook all the commands of the LORD their God and made for themselves two idols cast in the shape of calves, and an Asherah pole. They bowed down to all the starry hosts, and they worshipped Baal. They sacrificed their sons and daughters in the fire. They practiced divination and sought omens and sold themselves to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, arousing his anger.

**So the LORD was very angry with Israel and removed them from his presence.** Only the tribe of Judah was left, and even Judah did not keep the commands of the LORD their God. They followed the practices Israel had introduced. Therefore the LORD rejected all the people of Israel; he afflicted them and gave them into the hands of plunderers, until he thrust them from his presence' (2 Kings 17:7-20).

'The idols of the nations are silver and gold, **made by human hands.** They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them' (Psalm 135:15-18).

'**All who make idols are nothing**, and the things they treasure are worthless. **Those who would speak up for them are blind**; they are ignorant, to their own shame. Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit nothing? **People who do that will be put to**

**shame**; such craftsmen are only human beings. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and shame' (Isaiah 44:9-11).

'Some pour out gold from their bags and weigh out silver on the scales; they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god, and they bow down and worship it. They lift it to their shoulders and carry it; they set it up in its place, and there it stands. From that spot it cannot move. Even though someone cries out to it, **it cannot answer; it cannot save them from their troubles**' (Isaiah 46:6-7).

'This is what the LORD says: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the heavens, though the nations are terrified by them. For the practices of the peoples are worthless; they cut a tree out of the forest, and a craftsman shapes it with his chisel. They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter. Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field, **their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good**" (Jeremiah 10:2-5).

'Those who cling to **worthless idols** turn away from God's love for them' (Jonah 2:8).

"Of what value is an idol carved by a craftsman? Or an image that teaches lies? For **the one who makes it trusts in his own creation**; he makes idols that cannot speak. **Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!'** Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it." **The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him**' (Habakkuk 2:18-20).

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and **does not live in temples built by human hands**. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, **we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.** For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:24-31).

‘Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but **the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God**, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord’s jealousy? Are we stronger than he?’ (1 Corinthians 10:19-22).

‘You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and **led astray** to mute idols’ (1 Corinthians 12:2).

‘Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or **what fellowship can light have with darkness?** What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. **Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.**” And, “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

‘The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop **worshipping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk.** Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts’ (Revelation 9:20-21).

‘But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, **the idolaters** and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death’ (Revelation 21:8).

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# WHAT THE

# BIBLE

# SAYS

# ABOUT

# IDOLS

‘...They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath’ (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10).