

Ten Commandments (Part 12)
(The Second Commandment – Part 1)

Exodus 20:4-6

I. A Comprehensive Prohibition Stated (v. 4)

-בְּצַבָּט: graven image; something crafted by a tool (Leviticus 19:4; 26:1; Deuteronomy 27:15; Psalm 97:7)

-The 2nd Commandment doesn't categorically prohibit the making of all images. It all depends on the purpose behind their use (1 Samuel 7:12; Exodus 31:1-11; 1 Kings 6, 7; Isaiah 61:10).

II. The Comprehensive Prohibition Qualified (v. 5a)

-Image worship is utterly foolish (Isaiah 44:9-20).

-Image worship dishonors God by failing to recognize His sovereignty (1 Samuel 4); by failing to recognize His majesty (Exodus 32:4; 1 Kings 12:28); and by failing to recognize His love (Deuteronomy 5:29; 6:24).

Observations

- 1) The 2nd Commandment prohibits idolatry of all kinds, both inside and outside the public worship of God.
- 2) The 2nd Commandment implies the obligation to worship the right God in the right way.
- 3) Note the relationship between the 1st and 2nd Commandments.

Practical Lessons

- 1) Photographs, paintings, sculptures, jewelry, and other forms of representational art are not violations of the 2nd Commandment.
- 2) All idolatry is an attempt to manipulate God, reduce His majesty, and spurn His love.