THE QUESTION

What did the early church teach about the ban on images in Deuteronomy 4:15–18?

Asked by a THF member on October 29, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 8 numbered quotations · the 28 early Christian passages and 111 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-did-the-early-church-teach-about-the-ban-on-images-in

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

The early writers read this passage as a guard for true worship. Israel heard God's voice but saw no shape, so no image should be made to stand for Him. They taught that God has no body, is present everywhere, and that His living image is His Word and the human person.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
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IN THIS STUDY

1	At Horeb God was heard, not seen	**2**
2	Images pull the soul down to earth	**2**
3	Making an idol is forbidden, not only worshiping	**2**
4	God has no bodily shape to copy	**3**
5	God is never absent, so images are needless	**3**
6	The true image of God is living	**4**
7	Worshiping animal shapes is the old error	**4**
	What these passages don't tell us	**5**
	The Sources: 28 early Christian passages and 111 Bible verses, with links	**5**

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POINT 1 OF 7

At Horeb God was heard, not seen

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement recalls the words that Israel heard a voice but saw no likeness. He reads this as the Word of God coming without shape, reaching the people through what they heard, not through anything they saw.

1 “You see how the Lord's voice, the Word, without shape, the power of the Word, the Lord's shining word, the truth from heaven, from above, coming to the assembly of the Church, worked through the shining and immediate ministry.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Stromata* 6.3 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 9, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Images pull the soul down to earth

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen quotes this very law about likenesses of men, women, beasts, birds, creeping things and fish. He says it kept image-makers out of Israel so that the eyes of the soul would stay lifted to God, not dragged down to earthly things.

2 “This was so that there might be no excuse for making images—an art that draws the attention of foolish men and pulls the eyes of the soul down from God to earth.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 31 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 14, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 7

Making an idol is forbidden, not only worshiping

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tertullian says the command comes first at the making, because the made thing is what gets worshiped. The ban on likenesses of things in heaven, on earth and in the sea covers every kind of creature.

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3 “God forbids an idol to be made just as much as He forbids it to be worshiped.”

later in the same passage

“And when it adds, "nor a likeness of the things that are in heaven, and that are on earth, and that are in the sea," it has forbidden the servants of God everywhere in the universe from acts of that kind.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Idolatry* 4 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 12, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

God has no bodily shape to copy

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Arnobius answers critics who said Christians also gave God a form. He says the divine nature has no beginning or end and so has no body parts or outline at all.

4 “Our view on this matter is as follows: the whole divine nature, since it did not come into existence at any time and will never come to an end of life, is without bodily features.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Arnobius,** *Against the Heathen* 3 (c. 290–330 AD) **Source 25, page 7** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 7

God is never absent, so images are needless

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Lactantius compares an image to a picture of a friend who is far away. The picture helps only while the friend is gone. Since God is everywhere and never absent, an image of Him is never needed.

5 “But in the case of God, whose Spirit and power are spread everywhere and can never be absent, it is clear that an image is always unnecessary.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 2 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 27, page 7** Read it in the library ›

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POINT 6 OF 7

The true image of God is living

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Lactantius and Clement both turn the question around. God's true image is not carved stone or metal. It is His Word, and the human person made in His image, who can think, move and act.

6 "Therefore, the image of God is not something shaped by the fingers of men out of stone, or bronze, or some other material, but man himself, since he has both perception and movement, and does many great things."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 2 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 27, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

7 "For the image of God is His Word, the true Son of Mind, the Divine Word, the original light of light."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Alexandria,** *Exhortation to the Heathen* 10 (c. 190–215 AD) **Source 7, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

Worshiping animal shapes is the old error

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Origen describes wise men who still bowed to images of men, birds, beasts and creeping things. These are the same kinds of likeness the passage forbids, and he links this with serving the creature instead of the Creator.

8 "Sometimes they even descend, with the Egyptians, to the worship of birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 4 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 15, page 6** Read it in the library ›
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THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- These passages speak about images made to stand for God or false gods; they do not address every later use of art in churches.
- They do not explain each animal named in the passage one by one.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 28 early Christian passages and 111 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–28, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 29–117, in Bible order), then 22 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *28 passages from 11 writers*

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · source 1*

1 *Address to the Greeks* 15 (on point 6) "man alone is the image and likeness of God… [continues online] **read ›**

Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · sources 2–4*

2 *To Autolycus* 35 man has foolishly gone astray from the knowledge of Him; every founder is confounded by his graven images; in vain the silversmith makes his molten images; there is no breath… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *To Autolycus* 36 (on point 7) "fools! You worship serpents, dogs, and cats, birds, and the creeping things of earth and sea, images made… [continues online] **read ›**

4 *To Autolycus* 10 (1885 English) "even wash-pots and disgraceful noises? But if you cite the Greeks and the other nations, they worship stones and wood, and other kinds of material substances, — the images, as… [continues online] **read ›**

Athenagoras, *c. 170–190 AD · source 5*

5 *A Plea for the Christians* 22 (on point 4) is abiding. But the Deity is immortal, immovable, and unalterable. So neither Kronos nor his image is God. And as for Zeus: if he is air, born of Kronos, whose… [continues online] **read ›**

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Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · source 6*

6 *Against Heresies: Book I* and, by holding these beliefs, led many people astray. They call themselves Gnostics. They have images, some painted, others made from various materials, and they claim that a likeness of… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 7–10*

7 *Exhortation to the Heathen* 10 (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** “life, then, which is occupied with so much earnestness about matter, seems to me to be nothing else than full of insanity… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Exhortation to the Heathen* 4 prophetess, then at least listen to your own philosopher, Heraclitus of Ephesus, as he rebukes images for having no sense: "People pray to these images, with the same result as… [continues online] **read ›**

9 *Stromata* 6.3 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “also the prophet says, You heard the voice of words, and saw no similitude… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Stromata* 6.14 (1885 English; on point 3) “they, also in the instance of this commandment, having become devoid of sense, and addicting themselves to graven images, are judged unless they repent… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 11–13*

11 *Scorpiace* 2 (on point 3) “27:15. But in Leviticus He says: "Go not after idols, nor… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *On Idolatry* 4 **Quote 3, page 3** “images of those things are idols. The consecration of the images is idolatry… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *On Idolatry* 1 is the main crime of the human race. It is the greatest guilt charged against the world, and the full cause of judgment. For although each sin keeps its own… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 14–16*

14 *Against Celsus* 31 **Quote 2, page 2** “among them there was a law like this: "Do not transgress the law, and make for yourselves a graven image, any likeness of male or female; or a likeness of… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Against Celsus* 4 **Quote 8, page 4** “we may see those who greatly pride themselves upon their wisdom and… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Against Celsus* 63 (on point 4) does not notice the difference between what is "after the image of God" and what is "God's image." So he goes on to claim that the first-born of… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 17–19*

17 *Treatises* (on point 3) “15:15-17. In Exodus also: “You shall… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Treatises* (1885 English) “32:17 In Isaiah also: They worshipped those which their fingers have made… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Treatises* (1885 English) “the mean man bows down, and the great man humbles himself, and I will forgive them not… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 20–21*

20 *Apostolic Constitutions* And he sinned exceedingly in the eyes of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. And he set a molten image and a carved image, the image of his grove… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 7) “when these men had committed wickedness with the similitude of a calf that eats hay… [continues online] **read ›**

Arnobius, *c. 290–330 AD · sources 22–26*

22 *Against the Heathen* 6 (1885 English) “images which fill you with terror, and which you adore prostrate upon the ground in all the temples, are bones, stones, brass, silver, gold, clay, wood taken from a tree… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Against the Heathen* 3 (1885 English; on point 7) “mock the mysteries of the Egyptians, because they ingrafted the forms of dumb animals upon their divine causes, and because they worship these very images with much incense, and whatever… [continues online] **read ›**

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24 *Against the Heathen* 7 (1885 English; on point 3) “he who makes himself an image which he may worship for a god, or slaughters an innocent beast, and burns it on consecrated altars, must not be held to be… [continues online] **read ›**

25 *Against the Heathen* 3 (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** “Thus far of sex. Now let us come to the appearance and shapes by which you believe that the gods above have been represented, with which, indeed, you fashion, and… [continues online] **read ›**

26 *Against the Heathen* 6 it seriousness and pretending to be grave, to tell something so tasteless and so foolish—that images were made by the ancients to restrain wrongdoing and to stir up fear… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · sources 27–28*

27 *Divine Institutes* 2 (1885 English) **Quotes 5, 6, pages 3, 4** “the image of God is not that which is fashioned by the fingers of men out of stone, or bronze, or other material, but man himself, since he has both… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Divine Institutes* 4 (1885 English) “the very birds, which they imagine to be driven away by fear of his scythe, settle upon the images which are skilfully made, that is, which altogether resemble men, build… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *89 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

29 **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, “Let us make man according to our image and according to likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the earth, and all the creeping things that creep on the earth.” **read ›**

30 **Genesis 1:27** So God made man; according to the image of God he made him; male and female he made them. **read ›**

31 **Genesis 5:1** This is the book of the generation of men. In the day that God made Adam, he made him according to the image of God. **read ›**

32 **Genesis 5:2** Male and female he made them, and he blessed them, and he called his name Adam, in the day that he made them. **read ›**

33 **Exodus 16:32** Then Moses said, “This is the word that the Lord has commanded: ‘Fill the omer with manna, to be kept for your generations, so that they may see the bread which you ate in the wilderness, when the Lord brought you out of the land of Egypt.’” **read ›**

34 **Exodus 19:12** You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, ‘Be careful not to go up on the mountain or touch any part of it. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely die. **read ›**

35 **Exodus 19:13** No hand shall touch it; for such a one shall be stoned with stones or shot through with an arrow. Whether beast or man, he shall not live. When the voices and the trumpets and the cloud depart from the mountain, they shall go up on the mountain.’” **read ›**

36 **Exodus 19:16** On the third day, as morning came, there were voices and flashes of lightning and a dark cloud on Mount Sinai; the voice of the trumpet rang out loudly, and all the people in the camp trembled. **read ›**

37 **Exodus 19:18** Mount Sinai was all in smoke, because God had come down upon it in fire; and the smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace, and all the people were greatly amazed. **read ›**

38 **Exodus 19:21** Then God said to Moses, “Go down and solemnly charge the people, lest they draw near to God to gaze, and a multitude of them fall. **read ›**

39 **Exodus 20:4** You shall not make for yourself an idol, nor a likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth. **read ›**

40 **Exodus 28:11** It shall be the work of the stone engraver’s craft: with the engraving of a seal you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. **read ›**

41 **Exodus 32:23** For they said to me, ‘Make us gods who shall go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us out of Egypt—we do not know what has become of him.’ **read ›**

42 **Exodus 33:5** And the Lord said to the children of Israel, “You are a stiff-necked people. Be careful, lest I bring another plague on you and consume you. Now therefore take off your glorious robes and your ornaments, and I will show you what I will do to you.” **read ›**

43 **Exodus 33:6** So the children of Israel took off their ornaments and their attire from Mount Horeb onward. **read ›**

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44 **Exodus 34:3** Let no one go up with you, nor let anyone be seen anywhere on the mountain; and let not the sheep and the oxen graze near that mountain." **read ›**

45 **Leviticus 11:13** And these you shall detest among the birds, and they shall not be eaten; they are an abomination: the eagle, the griffin, and the sea eagle, **read ›**

46 **Leviticus 26:1** "'I am the Lord your God. You shall not make for yourselves things made with hands, or carved images; you shall not set up a pillar for yourselves, nor shall you place a stone as a marker in your land to worship it. I am the Lord your God. **read ›**

47 **Numbers 16:26** And he spoke to the congregation, saying, "Separate yourselves from the tents of these hardened men, and touch nothing of all that is theirs, lest you perish together with them in all their sin." **read ›**

48 **Numbers 26:64** But among these there was not a man of those numbered by Moses and Aaron when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai. **read ›**

49 **Deuteronomy 1:6** The Lord our God spoke to us in Horeb, saying, "You have lived in this mountain long enough. **read ›**

50 **Deuteronomy 4:10** about the day that you stood before the Lord our God in Horeb, on the day of the assembly, when the Lord said to me, "Assemble the people to me, and let them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and they shall teach their sons." **read ›**

51 **Deuteronomy 4:11** So you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain was burning with fire up to heaven: darkness, thick darkness, and storm. **read ›**

52 **Deuteronomy 4:12** And the Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no likeness; there was only a voice. **read ›**

53 **Deuteronomy 4:15** So guard your souls diligently, for you saw no likeness on the day that the Lord spoke to you in Horeb on the mountain out of the midst of the fire, **read ›**

54 **Deuteronomy 4:16** lest you act lawlessly and make for yourselves a carved likeness, any image, the likeness of male or female, **read ›**

55 **Deuteronomy 4:17** the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies under heaven, **read ›**

56 **Deuteronomy 4:18** the likeness of any creeping thing that creeps on the earth, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters under the earth; **read ›**

57 **Deuteronomy 4:19** and lest, looking up to heaven and seeing the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all the array of heaven, you go astray and worship them and serve them, the things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the nations under heaven. **read ›**

58 **Deuteronomy 4:23** Be careful, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord our God, which he made with you, and act lawlessly and make for yourselves a carved likeness of any of the things that the Lord your God has commanded you. **read ›**

59 **Deuteronomy 4:24** For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God. **read ›**

60 **Deuteronomy 4:25** When you father sons and sons' sons, and you have lived long in the land, and you act lawlessly and make a carved likeness of anything, and do evil before the Lord your God to provoke him to anger, **read ›**

61 **Deuteronomy 4:28** There you shall serve other gods, the works of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. **read ›**

62 **Deuteronomy 4:36** Out of heaven his voice was heard, to instruct you; and on earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words out of the midst of the fire. **read ›**

63 **Deuteronomy 5:4** The Lord spoke with you face to face on the mountain, out of the midst of the fire. **read ›**

64 **Deuteronomy 5:8** You shall not make for yourself an idol, nor a likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth. **read ›**

65 **Deuteronomy 5:22** These words the Lord spoke to all your congregation on the mountain, out of the midst of the fire—darkness, thick darkness, storm, a loud voice—and he added no more; and he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me. **read ›**

66 **Deuteronomy 5:26** For what flesh is there that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and shall live? **read ›**

67 **Deuteronomy 6:15** for the Lord your God among you is a jealous God, lest the Lord your God be angered with wrath against you and utterly destroy you from the face of the earth. **read ›**

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68 **Deuteronomy 7:25** You shall burn the carved images of their gods with fire. You shall not covet silver, nor shall you take gold from them for yourself, lest you stumble because of it; for it is an abomination to the Lord your God. **read ›**

69 **Deuteronomy 8:19** And if you forget the Lord your God with forgetfulness, and go after other gods, and serve them and worship them, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that you shall perish with destruction. **read ›**

70 **Deuteronomy 9:7** Remember, do not forget, how you provoked the Lord your God in the wilderness. From the day you came out of Egypt until you came to this place, you have continued disobedient toward the Lord. **read ›**

71 **Deuteronomy 9:8** Even in Horeb you provoked the Lord, and the Lord was angry with you, so as to utterly destroy you, **read ›**

72 **Deuteronomy 11:16** be careful lest your heart be puffed up, and you transgress and serve other gods and worship them, **read ›**

73 **Deuteronomy 12:4** You shall not do so to the Lord your God. **read ›**

74 **Deuteronomy 18:16** according to all that you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, ‘We will not again hear the voice of the Lord your God, nor will we see this great fire any more, and so we shall certainly not die.’ **read ›**

75 **Deuteronomy 20:18** so that they may not teach you to do all their abominations, which they have done for their gods, and you sin before the Lord your God. **read ›**

76 **Deuteronomy 27:15** “Cursed is the man who makes a carved or a molten image, an abomination to the Lord, the work of the hands of craftsmen, and puts it in a secret place.” And all the people shall answer and say, “So be it.” **read ›**

77 **Deuteronomy 28:64** And the Lord your God shall scatter you among all the nations, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which neither you nor your fathers knew. **read ›**

78 **Deuteronomy 29:17** And you saw their abominations and their idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which are among them. **read ›**

79 **Deuteronomy 34:10** And there has not arisen again a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, **read ›**

80 **Judges 5:5** The mountains were shaken before the face of the Lord Eloi, this Sinai, before the face of the Lord God of Israel. **read ›**

81 **1 Kings 19:11** And he said, “You shall go out tomorrow and stand before the Lord on the mountain; behold, the Lord will pass by.” And behold, a great and strong wind, tearing the mountains apart and breaking the rocks in pieces before the Lord; the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake; the Lord was not in the earthquake. **read ›**

82 **1 Kings 19:12** And after the earthquake a fire; the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a gentle breeze. **read ›**

83 **2 Kings 17:16** They forsook the commandments of the Lord their God and made themselves a molten image, two young cows; and they made groves, and they worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. **read ›**

84 **2 Kings 17:35** The Lord had made a covenant with them and commanded them, saying, “You shall not fear other gods, nor worship them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them; **read ›**

85 **2 Kings 17:36** but only the Lord, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great strength and with a high arm, him you shall fear, and him you shall worship, and to him you shall sacrifice. **read ›**

86 **2 Kings 17:37** The ordinances, the judgments, the law, and the commandments that he wrote for you to do, you shall keep all the days; and you shall not fear other gods. **read ›**

87 **Psalms 8:6** and you set him over the works of your hands; you subjected all things under his feet, (Septuagint Psalm 8:7 (Psalm 8:6 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

88 **Psalms 97:7** Let all who worship carved images be put to shame, those who boast in their idols; worship him, all his angels. (Septuagint Psalm 96:7 (Psalm 97:7 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

89 **Ecclesiastes 2:2** I said to laughter, “Madness!” and to gladness, “What is this you are doing?” **read ›**

90 **Song of Solomon 4:16** Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind; blow through my garden, and let my spices flow out. **read ›**

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91 **Isaiah 46:1** Bel has fallen, Nebo is broken; their carved images have gone to the wild beasts and the cattle. You carry them bound up like a load for a weary and faint man, and hungry, without strength, at the same time— **read ›**

92 **Ezekiel 8:10** And I went in and looked, and behold, vain abominations, and all the idols of the house of Israel portrayed upon them all around. **read ›**

93 **Tobit 8:6** You made Adam, and gave him Eve his wife as a helper and support; from them came the seed of mankind. You said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a helper like himself.’ **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Solomon 2:23** For God created man for incorruption, and made him an image of his own nature. **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Solomon 11:15** In return for the senseless reasonings of their unrighteousness, by which they were led astray to worship irrational creeping things and worthless vermin, you sent upon them a multitude of irrational creatures for vengeance, **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Solomon 14:11** Therefore there will be a visitation even upon the idols of the nations, because, though part of God’s creation, they became an abomination, and stumbling blocks for the souls of men, and a trap for the feet of the foolish. **read ›**

97 **Wisdom of Solomon 15:5** whose sight comes to fools as a disgrace, and they long for the breathless form of a dead image. **read ›**

98 **Wisdom of Solomon 15:13** For this man, more than all others, knows that he sins, when he fashions fragile vessels and carved images from earthy matter. **read ›**

99 **Wisdom of Solomon 15:15** For they even counted all the idols of the nations as gods, which have neither the use of eyes to see, nor noses to draw in air, nor ears to hear, nor fingers of hands to touch, and their feet are useless for walking. **read ›**

100 **Wisdom of Solomon 15:18** Moreover, they worship even the most hateful animals, for, compared in thoughtlessness, they are worse than the rest. **read ›**

101 **Wisdom of Sirach 17:3** He clothed them with strength fitting for them, and made them according to his image. **read ›**

102 **Wisdom of Sirach 48:7** you heard rebuke at Sinai, and judgments of vengeance at Horeb; **read ›**

103 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:39** These things of wood, overlaid with gold and with silver, are like stones from the mountain, and those who serve them will be put to shame. **read ›**

104 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:63** And the fire sent from above to consume mountains and forests does what it is ordered; but these are not like them, either in form or in power. **read ›**

105 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:71** In the same way their gods of wood, overlaid with gold and with silver, are like a bramble in a garden on which every bird perches, and like a corpse cast out into the darkness. **read ›**

106 **1 Maccabees 1:47** to build pagan altars and shrines and idol temples, and to sacrifice pigs and common cattle; **read ›**

107 **2 Maccabees 2:2** and that the prophet, having given them the Law, commanded those who were being carried away not to forget the statutes of the Lord, and not to be led astray in their thoughts when they saw images of gold and silver and the adornment on them. **read ›**

108 **3 Maccabees 4:16** The king, greatly and continually filled with joy, held banquets before all the idols, with a mind led astray far from the truth and with a profane mouth, praising things that are mute and cannot speak to them or help them, and speaking what was not fitting against the Most Great God. **read ›**

109 **1 Enoch 15:4** And you were holy, living, eternal spirits; yet you defiled yourselves with the blood of women, and with the blood of flesh you fathered children, and with the blood of men you lusted, just as they also produce flesh and blood—they who die and perish. **read ›**

110 **1 Enoch 90:38** I saw until all their generations were transformed, and they all became white bulls; and the first among them became a lamb, and that lamb became a great animal and had great black horns on its head; and the Lord of the sheep rejoiced over it and over all the oxen. **read ›**

111 **Acts 2:8** How then do we each hear in our own native language? **read ›**

112 **Romans 1:23** and traded the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, four-footed animals, and creeping things. **read ›**

113 **1 Corinthians 15:49** And as we have borne the image of the one made of dust, let us also bear the image of the heavenly one. **read ›**

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114 **Ephesians 1:5** having predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, **read ›**

115 **Ephesians 1:10** for an administration when the times reach their fullness, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth— **read ›**

116 **Hebrews 12:18** For you have not come to a mountain that might be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness, darkness, storm, **read ›**

117 **Revelation 4:7** The first creature was like a lion, the second creature like a calf, the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *22 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Exodus 20:2 · 20:22

Deuteronomy 6:4 · 6:12 · 11:27 · 12:2 · 12:30 · 13:1 · 13:6 · 13:16

Psalms 135:15

Proverbs 15:1 · 23:11

Jeremiah 8:11

Matthew 5:8 · 7:12 · 10:22

Luke 6:31

Romans 1:25

1 Corinthians 1:27

Ephesians 5:1

Revelation 19:4

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Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What did the early church teach about the ban on images in Deuteronomy 4:15–18?” on October 29, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

Library only. This study was written only from The Historic Faith’s library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed above, with a link to read it.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY