

Idolatry as Suppression
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From Habakkuk 2:18-20. IDOLATRY: THE HUMAN DEVICE TO SUPPRESS REVELATION.

#1. What explains the apparent disinterest in the Bible and its flagrant misuse in contemporary American culture? The textual answer: idolatry. Here is how it works.

#2. "But the Lord is in His holy temple" (v. 20). This means that God is transcendent (beyond time and materiality), and He is invisible. But to the idolater, this means that God is not there! The transcendent and invisible God employs revelation, which is propositional truth. In other words, He tells us what to do and His word is intrusive.

Idolaters do not like that. So the idolater turns to an attempted objectification (concrete representation) of God. He carves an idol of "wood" and "stone" (v. 19.) Then the idolater says to it, "awake," and "arise." He treats it as if WERE God.

This objectification is "speechless" (v. 18.) There is "no breath at all inside it" (v. 20); there is no "profit" in it. Instead of man serving the will of God, the idol serves the will of man.

It is a "falsehood" (v. 18.) There is no causation in the idol. The worship of it is futile. In objectification, God is framed by human reasoning. In revelation, man is framed by the transcendent God and His Word. Idolaters will not "trust" (v. 18) Him, so a "handiwork," a human device, is made to overrule the Word of God.

The contradiction is between idolatry and revelation. We read Scripture and think, "Let all the earth be silent before Him" (v. 20.)