

Key words in Habakkuk

Image: Hebrew *pesel*—2:18—related to a verbal root meaning “to hew out stone” or “to cut or carve wood” (see Ex. 34:4). A *pesel* is an image or idol in the likeness of a human being or animal made from stone, wood, or metal. God prohibited the Hebrews from making such idols at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 20:4). God intended the lack of images among the Hebrews to be one distinguishing feature of their true religion. Tragically, Israel followed the example of their pagan neighbors and worshiped carved images (Judg. 18:30; 2 Chr. 33:7). The psalmist describes such images as worthless and those who worship them as shameful (Ps. 97:7). Both Isaiah (Is. 40:19, 20; 44:9–20) and Hab. (2:18, 19) mock those who would put their trust in images made with mere human hands. They have no capacity to see, hear, speak, or do anything for their devotees.

<https://sites.google.com/a/indubiblia.org/inductive-bible-study/habakkuk-1>