

the ring, and the picture of a fondly cherished father, or of a tenderly beloved mother; how dearer still should be the articles and images which recall to our remembrance those who have been our fathers and our models in faith, hope, and charity?"

When God forbade the Jews to make images (Exodus XX, 4...), He forbade them moreover to adore them, *non adorabis ea*, to show us that He only prohibited idolatry, that is the adoration of anything but God. If the prohibition made to the Jews were taken in an absolute sense, many consequences would follow, which heretics themselves are forced to reject. Were all pictures forbidden, nobody would be permitted to keep his own likeness, or that of his ancestors. If all religious veneration must be denied to what is not God, why has God threatened to punish those who violate His temple, that is, the temple of wood and stone wherein we pray to Him (I, Cor. III, 17)? Why again that profound respect for that book called the Bible? The Ark of the Covenant was made of wood covered with gold; God inflicted a terrible punishment on the Bethsamites (I, Kings, VI, 19) and the Levite Oza (II, Kings, VI, 7), for having failed in the respect due to that exterior sign, to that monument of His covenant with the Jewish people. So true it is that the *worship in spirit and in truth* (John, IV, 24) which we should render to God, in no wise excludes the use of exterior means to excite and sustain our attention, and a certain religious respect for all that relates to God.

Besides, O. D. B. B., God cannot contradict Himself; since He has not only permitted, but even commanded, in many circumstances, the making of the images relating to His worship. He commanded the making of two cherubim of beaten gold to be placed over the ark of the covenant (Exodus, XXV, 18); later, when the Jewish people, in punishment for having murmured, were afflicted with venomous serpents, Moses set up a brazen serpent, which when they that were bitten looked upon, they were healed (Numbers, XXI, 8).