

## **Moonshot**

**Excerpted and adapted from a *shiur* by Dayan Yitzhak Grossman**

February 9, 2023

<https://baishavaad.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/5-Yisro-R-Yitzchok-Grossman-la-saasun-iti-20230105-bhv-1.mp3>

*You shall not make [images of what is] with Me; gods of silver and gods of gold you shall not make for yourselves.*

Shmos 20:20

The Gemara (Rosh Hashanah 24a) says that among the images this prohibits making are those of humans and celestial objects like the Sun, Moon, and stars. In addition, Chazal forbade retaining such images due to *chashad* (suspicion by others of idol worship).

The Gemara distinguishes between three-dimensional images, which are forbidden, and two-dimensional ones, which are permitted. According to the Ramban, this distinction applies only to the *issur deRabanan*, but the *issur de'Oreisa* forbids even two-dimensional images. According to the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch, the distinction applies even to the *issur de'Oreisa* concerning human images. (Two-dimensional images of celestial bodies are forbidden, because celestial bodies are often perceived as two-dimensional.) It would seem that according to the Shulchan Aruch one may draw a picture of a person, and R' Ovadia Yosef and others rule that one may photograph people. But the Divrei Malkiel and a minority of *poskim* forbid it, because some *Acharonim* rule like the Ramban.

The Chut Shani says that according to the Shulchan Aruch, one may not make a simple drawing of the Sun, Moon, or stars. R' Moshe Feinstein and others maintain that only a picture that evinces artistry is prohibited. The Shulchan Aruch cites an opinion that a partial image of the Sun is permitted.