

# Jeremiah 10:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

## Analysis

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This verse continues describing idol manufacture: 'They deck it with silver and with gold.' The Hebrew kesheph (כֶּסֶף, silver) and zahav (זָהָב, gold) indicate precious metal overlay making the idol impressive. 'They fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.' The Hebrew masmerim (מַסְמְרִים, nails) and maqqaboth (מַקְבּוֹת, hammers) reveal the idol's instability—it must be fastened to prevent falling! A god that must be nailed down to stand upright is no god. The irony is devastating: worshippers bow before an object that would fall over without human support.

## Historical Context

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Ancient idol construction often involved wooden cores overlaid with precious metals. Temple inventories from Mesopotamia record gold and silver weights used for divine statues. The need to fasten idols for stability appears in other biblical passages (Isaiah 40:19-20, 41:7). Archaeological discoveries of fallen idols in destroyed temples confirm their material fragility.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What does an idol's need to be nailed down reveal about its inability to save or help?
2. How do we 'fasten' our modern idols to keep them from falling—props and supports for things that cannot stand on their own?

## Interlinear Text

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וּבְמַקֵּב אוֹת	בְּמַסְמָר אוֹת	יִפֹּהוּ	וּבְזָהָב	בְּכֶסֶף
and with hammers	it with nails	They deck	and with gold	it with silver
H4717	H4548	H3302	H2091	H3701
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וְיָפִיקוּ:	אֵל אוֹ	וְיַצְקוּ וְ		
that it move		they fasten		
H6328		H2388		

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 46:7** (Parallel theme): They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

**Isaiah 44:12** (Parallel theme): The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his arms: yea, he is hungry, and his strength faileth: he drinketh no water, and is faint.

**Psalms 115:4** (Parallel theme): Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

**Psalms 135:15** (Parallel theme): The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.