

Liberty And Justice Through Jesus
Liberty And Justice From The Idols Of False Religion

Judges 17:1-13 (ESV)

There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. And he said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoke it in my ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed be my son by the LORD." And he restored the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, "I dedicate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a carved image and a metal image. Now therefore I will restore it to you." So when he restored the money to his mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith, who made it into a carved image and a metal image. And it was in the house of Micah. And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and household gods, and ordained one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah to sojourn where he could find a place. And as he journeyed, he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. And Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place." And Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes and your living." And the Levite went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because I have a Levite as priest."

Micah's goal was that the LORD would prosper him, but Micah's methods betrayed every Biblical principle that leads to true prosperity.

What does it mean to prosper?

The Hebrew word *yatab* means "do good to" or "be well with".

God wants His people to prosper.

Deuteronomy 29:9 (ESV)

Therefore keep the words of this covenant and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do.

God gives us commands to prosper us and our children.

Deuteronomy 4:40 (NIV)

Keep his decrees and commands, which I am giving you today, so that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may live long in the land the LORD your God gives you for all time.

God expects us to do good so that we prosper.

Deuteronomy 6:18 (NIV)

Do what is right and good in the LORD's sight, so that it may go well with you and you may go in and take over the good land the LORD promised on oath to your ancestors.

God humbles us to prosper us.

Deuteronomy 8:16 (NIV)

He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness, something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you.

God prospers those who seek Him.

2 Chronicles 26:5 (ESV)

He set himself to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God, and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him prosper.

God prospers those who confess, rather than hide, their sins.

Proverbs 28:13 (ESV)

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

The greatest threat to you living a life of prosperity is the idol of individualism.

Micah's Mistakes

Stealing From His Mother

Investing In Idols

Your Own Personal Jesus

God graciously spared Micah through the most unpredictable way.

Judges 18:17-20 (ESV)

And the five men who had gone to scout out the land went up and entered and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, while the priest stood by the entrance of the gate with the 600 men armed with weapons of war. And when these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the metal image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" And they said to him, "Keep quiet; put your hand on your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?" And the priest's heart was glad. He took the ephod and the household gods and the carved image and went along with the people.

Judges 18:24-26 (ESV)

And he said, "You take my gods that I made and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then do you ask me, 'What is the matter with you?'" And the people of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows fall upon you, and lose your life with the lives of your household." Then the people of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home.

Jesus is the Judge who will steal our idols, destroy our false religion and take his rightful place as our King.

Hebrews 10:7-18 (ESV)

Then I said, 'Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.'" When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "Behold, I have come to do your will." He does away with the first in order to establish the second. And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.