

Judges 17:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Micah, Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest.

Analysis

Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest—Micah's confident declaration drips with irony. He assumes that having a Levite (מִלֵּה, mi-levi) as priest for his unauthorized, idolatrous shrine will earn Yahweh's favor. The verb 'to do good' (יְתִיב, yeitiv) expresses his expectation of blessing and prosperity. Yet Micah operates under catastrophic theological confusion: he worships Yahweh through graven images (forbidden in Exodus 20:4), at an unauthorized location (violating Deuteronomy 12), with a Levite who abandons his proper role to serve an idolatrous house.

This verse epitomizes the book's theme: '**In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes**' (17:6). Micah creates a religious system that feels spiritual—he uses God's name, employs Levitical personnel, even seems sincere—yet violates every principle of true worship. He confuses religious form with spiritual reality, assuming ritual correctness guarantees divine approval. This is syncretism at its worst: mixing Yahweh worship with pagan practice, believing that right credentials (a Levite) sanctify wrong worship. Micah's story warns that sincerity without truth, zeal without knowledge, and religious activity without obedience lead to judgment, not blessing.

Historical Context

The entire narrative of chapters 17-18 occurs during the chaotic period when Israel had no centralized worship or leadership. The Levite's willingness to serve Micah's idolatrous shrine, and later Dan's apostate sanctuary, shows how thoroughly corruption had spread even among those designated for holy service. This event predates much of the book chronologically (note 18:30's reference to the captivity), placed here to demonstrate the depths of Israel's apostasy.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How do you use religious activity, spiritual credentials, or sincere feelings to justify practices that contradict Scripture?
2. In what ways do you create a customized faith that feels comfortable but lacks biblical warrant?
3. What does this reveal about the danger of evaluating spiritual authenticity by feelings, results, or sincerity rather than Scripture?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוָה	יְהוָה יְבָרֶכְךָ	וְיִתְהַלֵּל	בְּפָנָי	עַתָּה מִיכָּה	עַתָּה יְדַעַתִּי	מִיכָּה עַתָּה	וַיֹּאמֶר
Then said	Micah	H6258	Now know	H3588	will do me good	I that the LORD		
H559	H4318		H3045		H3190			H3068
וְיִתְהַלֵּל	בְּפָנָי	מִיכָּה עַתָּה	וְיִתְהַלֵּל	לְכָהּ	לְכָהּ	לְכָהּ	לְכָהּ	לְכָהּ

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