

Micah 5:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.

Analysis

Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. God targets idolatry directly. "**Graven images**" (פְּסִילֵיכָהּ, pesilekha) are carved idols—statues, figurines representing false gods. "**Standing images**" (מַצֵּבֹתֶיךָ, matzevotekha) were sacred pillars or obelisks erected at pagan worship sites. Both violate the second commandment: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Exodus 20:4). The phrase "**work of thine hands**" (מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ, ma'aseh yadekha) exposes idolatry's absurdity: humans create gods, then worship their own creations.

Isaiah 44:9-20 satirizes idol-making: a craftsman cuts wood, uses part for fire to warm himself and bake bread, then carves the remainder into a god and bows before it, saying "Deliver me; for thou art my god." The prophet concludes: "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside." Psalm 115:4-8 mocks idols: "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not." Those who make them become like them—spiritually deaf, blind, and mute.

In Messiah's kingdom, idolatry is eradicated. Not merely external images but heart idols—anything displacing God as ultimate. Colossians 3:5 identifies covetousness as idolatry. Augustine observed humanity is incurably religious: we either worship the Creator or created things (Romans 1:25). The gospel transforms worshipers: we cease bowing to what we've made and worship the One who made us. True

worship requires God's self-revelation in Christ, not human imagination projecting deity onto material objects.

Historical Context

Israel's idolatry began early: the golden calf (Exodus 32), Baal worship under the judges (Judges 2:11-13), Jeroboam's golden calves (1 Kings 12:28-30), Ahab and Jezebel's Baal temples (1 Kings 16:31-33), Manasseh's idols in the temple itself (2 Kings 21:7). Despite prophetic warnings, idolatry persisted until the Babylonian exile (586 BC). Ironically, exile cured Israel's idolatry—post-exilic Jews never again worshiped idols. By Jesus's time, Jewish opposition to idolatry was fierce (hence conflict with Rome's emperor worship). Yet Jesus identified a subtler idolatry: Pharisees worshiped tradition, rich young rulers worshiped wealth, crowds sought Jesus for bread, not truth (John 6:26). The human heart constantly manufactures idols. Christian history shows idolatry mutating: medieval veneration of relics, prosperity gospel's worship of wealth, cultural Christianity's nationalism. Every generation must heed: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John 5:21).

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What "graven images" or "standing images" (material possessions, status symbols, ideologies) function as idols in your life, displacing God from rightful supremacy?
2. How does recognizing that you worship "the work of your hands" expose the futility of trusting anything you've created or achieved for security and identity?

3. What practical steps can you take to identify and dismantle heart idols, ensuring God alone receives your ultimate allegiance and affection?

Interlinear Text

וְהִכָּרְתִּי י	כָּסִיל יֶבֶ	וּמַצְבוֹת יֶבֶ	מִקֶּרֶב בִּ	וְלֹא
also will I cut off	Thy graven images	and thy standing images	out of the midst	H3808
H3772	H6456	H4676	H7130	
תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה ה	עֹד	לַמַּעֲשֵׂה ה	יָדֶיךָ:	
of thee and thou shalt no more worship	H5750	the work	of thine hands	
H7812		H4639	H3027	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 6:9 (Parallel theme): And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.

Ezekiel 36:25 (Parallel theme): Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.