

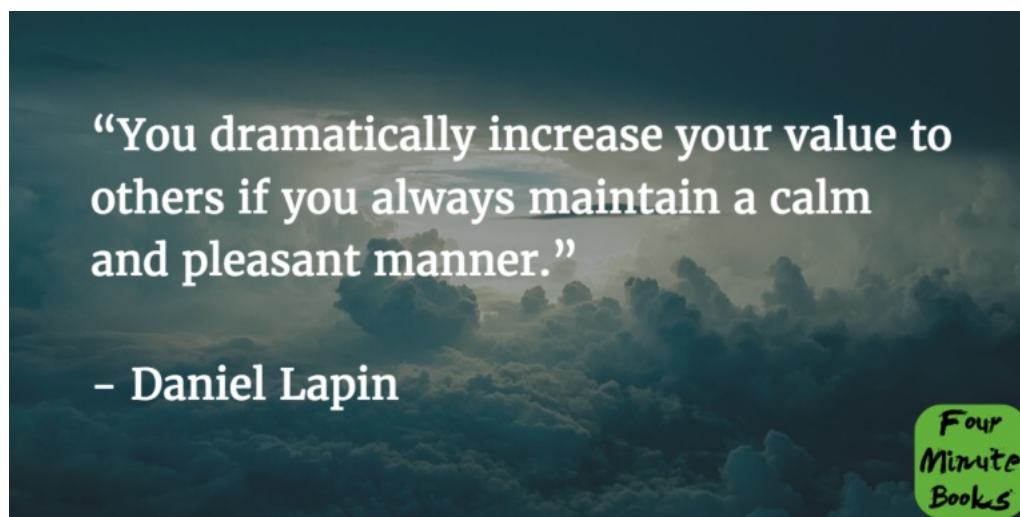
# Thou Shall Prosper Summary

 [fourminutebooks.com/thou-shall-prosper-summary](https://fourminutebooks.com/thou-shall-prosper-summary)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Thou Shall Prosper* examines the tried and true principles of age-old, Jewish tradition for creating a life of wealth, prosperity and integrity, and combines them with examples from the modern world of business, to help you live a successful life.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



After learning that a fair share of my fellow millennials find themselves in a financially unsatisfactory situation, due to student loans, uncertainty and never being educated about proper money management, I decided to learn and share more about this topic. The personal finance category on this site is malnourished as is and it's time to change that.

Last week, I shared my own approach to financial freedom in its current state and now, I think it's time to learn more. *Thou Shall Prosper* felt like a great place to start. Written in 2002 by rabbi Daniel Lapin, it draws lessons from Jewish religion and tradition about money. Similar to *The Richest Man In Babylon*, the book draws on stories, metaphors, but also contemporary events and examples to shape your financial perspective in a way that generates wealth.

Here are my 3 favorite lessons:

1. Consider business as an object to get away from the belief that it's inherently bad.
2. Root yourself in a few, never changing values, but remain open to change at the same time.
3. Forget retirement, it's an idea society's trying to sell us with little to no benefit.

Are you ready for a new look at money, seen through some very, very old glasses? Then let's go!

## Lesson 1: Think of business as a neutral object – it's not good or bad in its own way, but depends on how people use it.

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Mark Zuckerberg, Sergey Brin, Larry Page, Gary Vaynerchuk, the list of Jewish entrepreneurs who shape the globe is long. And I'm starting to understand why. The Jewish perspective on money and business is absolutely perfect to win in a meritocratic system.

Jews belief in **ethical capitalism**, which is to say they think hard work should be rewarded, but be predicated on honesty, integrity and a strong moral code. They see business as a means to take care of yourself first, so you are then in the best position to give to others. Instead of considering selling as an evil activity, Jewish tradition frames it as a source of creativity, of helping others grow and enable them to do business themselves.

Not everyone carries these attitudes and sure, not all of them ever work out perfectly in business, but Jews focus on the positive and don't blame business itself. **By considering business as a mere object, a tool, that is useless without humans who use it, they remain objective.**

That lets them hold those accountable, who abuse it, instead of condemning business altogether.

## Lesson 2: Pick a few values to ground yourself in and then be open to change with anything else.

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Gary Vee likes to say that winners pull from opposite sides and boy, are Jews winners. One of their biggest symbols, the Star of David, is a union of very different ideas, according to one of its many interpretations: the first of the two triangles represents God, humans and the physical world, the second openness to change.

The punchline is that **Jews try to embrace and stay rooted in these three core values, while remaining open to whatever changes happen.** Ideally, change should come about gradually, which is why religious festivities marking a big change, like for marriage or death, usually last several days.

This is not just a great attitude towards life, but also a huge advantage in business: a solid company always has a great, consistent culture, but isn't afraid to change direction fast and often, if necessary to succeed. Take Disney, for example. They've always been committed to family and child entertainment, but over the years, have tried and expanded into lots of other areas and age groups.

Changing without changing where it counts is what makes great people and businesses. One of my favorite quotes comes from German poet Hermann Hesse. Roughly translated, it means:

| *Stay as you are by continuing to change every day.*

## Lesson 3: Don't even try to retire, it's an idea built on three lies.

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"Religion is a scam!" "Politics are a scam!" "Health insurance is a scam!" "Wall Street is a scam!" We throw around the word "scam" a lot these days. And fast too. Out of the many things we "call out" this way on a regular basis, few actually deserve those accusations.

There is one idea though, that rarely has to defend its reputation, when actually, it might be time to question it: **retirement**. The foundation of the American dream, this end-all, be-all goal most people chase all their lives might not be the silver bullet most people believe it to be.

In fact, Daniel Lapin says it's based on three lies, which have penetrated our culture pretty deeply at this point:

1. **Work is just a means to an end.** When you only work to work no more, life becomes weary and dull. But work has so much meaning to offer for you and humanity, it can transform us and the world around us. As long as you're doing it right.
2. **Old age makes you weak and unproductive.** Sure, your physique won't be as good in later years, but your experiences, your network, your skills – they just get better!
3. **People are meant to consume, not to create.** Just because we don't *need* to create much today – since everything is supplied to us – doesn't mean we shouldn't. Creation lends meaning to our existence.

Don't ever start counting the days and don't ever stop providing value through your work. Live life until the last minute. I'm sure that's not a scam.

## Thou Shall Prosper Review

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The summary of *Thou Shall Prosper* on Blinkist was great. I'm starting to see a pattern among the perspectives on personal finances of successful people, that I agree with the most, and the Jewish traditions and philosophies around money. This resonates really well with me, I think it's a very suitable, sustainable approach to go after financial freedom. Big thumbs up!

[Read full summary on Blinkist >>](#)

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## What else can you learn from the blinks?

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- The many misconceptions about Jews and money, and where their financial literacy really comes from
- How Jews reframed business and why that let them succeed at it early in history
- Why many Jewish customs hand themselves to networking and building relationships
- Which traits make up leaders and where you're most likely to acquire them

- Why forecasting isn't that hard and what you can do to predict the future
- How generosity and giving to charity help with making money

## **Who would I recommend the Thou Shall Prosper summary to?**

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The 18 year old high school graduate, who'd love to study business, but has heard all his life from his parents that capitalism is evil, the 31 year old mother, who's been saving for her child's future, but struggles with new ways of investing, and anyone who's current plan is to finally be happy when they retire.