



MICAH

Micah is a shortened form of Micaiah, which in Hebrew means 'who is like God?' The prophet Micah the Morashthite lived in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. He was a farmer from the lush green district of Shephelah between the plains of Philistia and the hills of Judah, twenty-two miles southwest of Jerusalem, near a major road between Africa and Asia. This area was in the southern Hebrew kingdom of Judah, and therefore under the rule of Hezekiah.

Little is known of Micah's personal life. He was a contemporary of Isaiah and may have been influenced by him. Having observed the depressed condition of the farmers and the oppression of the poor by the rich, he became a champion of the downtrodden.

He felt their sufferings as if they were his own. From these observations and feelings it is understandable that he was moved by the sins of Samaria and Jerusalem. His writings are graphic and poetical, and are among the most cutting and bitter of prophetic works.

Two forces moved Micah to stand forth as a prophet. First, he lived in the time of the Assyrian invasions and felt that the Assyrians were agents which God was using to punish the people of Israel for having sinned and rebelled. Second, the more pressing force was that of the social injustice which prevailed. Micah made charges against the corruptness of Samaria and Jerusalem, and the prevalence of dishonesty -- scales and weights were wrong, short measure was given in trade, women thrown out of their homes and children enslaved. Micah came to the conclusion that life could not go on in this way and that destruction must follow if those wicked ways were not changed.

His message abounds in bold interrogations. It is directed against the false prophets, law-breaking rulers and priests as well as greedy landowners and merchants.

It is a warning of the consequences of sin and God's pleading with the people to reform. It is summed up in God's demand: "What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and live in humble fellowship with our God." (VI:8). A message of joy is found in the prophecy of a ruler and savior for Israel, a King from the House of David, to come not from Jerusalem but from the humble Bethlehem of Ephrath. While the only indication of Micah's success in converting the people is a reference to him in the XXVIth chapter of Jeremiah, which shows that he may have brought about some reforms, his teachings have permanent value. The ethical ideas, code of behavior and teachings of the moral demands of God are all applicable today. One has only to look around and see that there is corruption, greed, dishonesty and oppression. Heed should be taken of these great lessons. Micah's having shown that true religion consists not in offering elaborate external sacrifices, but in humbly offering oneself, is enough to make his prophecy speak forever.

-- Christian, BSG / Manchester NH

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THE OFFENSE OF THE FAMILIAR

Jesus was "hometown folks" to the people of Nazareth. They knew his family; they certainly expected no more from him than from other Nazareth dwellers. So when great claims began to be made about him they "took offense" (Matt. 13:57). They rejected him because they knew him well. This is the offense of the familiar.

1. The offense of the familiar can effect our worship of God. On a typical Sunday we may come to church at the same hour, we wear the same suit, sit in the same seat, hear the same preacher, greet the same people -- everything is so familiar. And we may fail to hear the mighty God speaking to us because we expected business as usual.

2. The offense of the familiar can effect our study of the Bible. Most of us know parts of the Bible so well that our minds shift to neutral when we read or hear them. A new translation may help. Still, like the people of Nazareth, it's easy to say, "we've heard that before." And sameness is deadening. God may become "a very old gentleman living in heaven," while Christ becomes a "pale Galilean." (J. B. Phillips).

3. The offense of the familiar can effect our Christian fellowship just because we've been around a person for' .some time doesn't really mean we know him. The familiarity of a person's face may just hinder us from looking deeper. We may go to the same church, but our lives touch only as marbles in a bag -- superficial contact. We may have nothing more in common than the spectators at a drive-in movie.

Let's not be offended by the familiar -- let's move in to the things around us and change them as Christ attempts, to and often succeeds in changing us.

No two leaves of a tree are identical in shape. Why should we expect two people to be identical or anything to remain "familiar." Christians change and grow.

--Richard Thomas, BSG

Superior

White Plains NY

The Front Page Article was written by Br. Christian, who is Co-ordinator of the Brotherhood Vestment Exchange. He graduated this month past from Notre Dame College, with a degree in Religious Studies and Nursing.

COMMUNITY NOTES



Worcester MA: Four Brothers who were unable to attend Lesser Chapter in New York, met for a day of fellowship and prayer on March 13th. Br. Michael was host to Brs. Luke Anthony (North Easton MA), Roy (Boston MA) and Matthew Joseph (Manchester NH). The day included the offices of Diurnum and Vespers, a reading from the life of our Patron, Holy Father Gregory; and a discussion of

the Rule and its application to parochial ministry as well as to personal spirituality. The Brothers shown (Matthew Joseph, Michael, and Luke Anthony, l. to r.) are enjoying a covered dish supper (Br. Roy took the photo) which brought the day to a close. The Brothers returned to their individual ministries, refreshed and renewed by this time of fellowship within the Order.



Boston MA: While in town recently, visiting with the Rev'd Richard M. Rowland, Provincial Chaplain of Province I, Br. William took the opportunity to call upon Br. Roy and to spend an evening with Br. Luke Anthony (in North Easton) as a guest of two of Brother's parishioners there.

While in Boston, Br. William and Fr. Rowland attended a celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Br. Roy's parish, St. Stephen's. Br. William assisted Br. Roy in teaching the Sunday School class, one of Br. Roy's several ministries there. Taking time out for photos, Br. Roy is shown (below) with some of his students; and Brs. Roy and William (left) are seen at the altar of St. Stephen's Church.



. . . . More COMMUNITY NOTES

Brooklyn NY: Brs. William Francis and Stephen are involved in a new work, directing and teaching the Sunday School at St. Philip's, at the invitation of the Rector, the Rev'd Bruce M. Williams.

Rockville MD: Br. John continues his far ranging work: preaching at Christ Church, Kensington, and the Episcopal Church Home; conducting a confirmation class at St. Paul's, Baden; visiting with the All Saints Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville; and meanwhile running his Campus Chaplaincy program at Montgomery College.

Orlando FL: Provincial Chaplain Emeritus, the Rev'd Robert J. Vanderau, Jr. has been appointed Canon Pastor of the Cathedral of St. Luke. Congratulations to this old friend of the Brotherhood!

New York NY. Brs. Stephen and Edward Peter conducted a Quiet Day Retreat at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, for students of Upsala College.

East Haddam CT: Brs. James and Tobias Stanislas gave a talk on the history of the Religious Life and the place of the Brotherhood in the ongoing movement of the Holy Spirit in the Church, at St. Stephen's Church.

Manchester NH: Br. Christian has completed his studies at Notre Dame College, and has graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Religious Studies and Nursing, and a Minor in Music.

APPEAL FOR MISSION

Many thanks to those of you who have so generously responded to our Appeals in the past. As the Order grows, so does its need for assistance from the community of friends and supporters.

We ask your continued help in our work of service to the needs of the Church. Your contribution, which may be sent to us in the envelope supplied in this issue of The Servant, will assist us in carrying out our varied missions of teaching, service and prayer.

May God bless and keep you, always.

INTERCESSIONS

Sr. Margaret Helena, CSJB
Sr. Agatha Louise, CSJB
Sr. Rose Miriam, CSJ
Patricia Marie Spille
Jules F. Formel
The Rt. Rev'd Harold Louis Wright

For the Clergy, especially

The Most Rev'd Robert A. K. Runcie

The Rt. Rev'd Horace W. B. Donegan Visitor
Emeritus

The Rt. Rev' d John M. Allin

The Rt. Rev'd Paul Moore, Jr. Visitor and
Protector

and for the Clergy of Province II, and our Brothers serving there:

The Rev'd Thomas F. Pike Chaplain Emeritus

The Rev' d J. Norman Hall

The Rev' d Ledlie I. Laughlin, Jr.

The Rev' d Robert R. Parks

The Revd Edgar F. Wells, Jr.

The Rev'd Frank L. Knight Provincial Chaplain

The Rev' d Errol A. Harvey

The Rev'd Richard L. May

The Revd Canon Edward N. West

The Rev'd Bruce M. Williams

Brs. Richard Thomas, James, Leslie Victor, Jason Jude, Anthony Francis, John Peter, William Francis,
Stephen, Andrew, Tobias Stanislas, William and Edward Peter

For the Religious Orders, especially:

The Sacramentine Nuns

The Visitation Nuns

The Society of St. Paul

The Society of St. Barnabas

The Transfiguration Retreat

The Community of St. John Baptist

The Brotherhood of St. Barnabas

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, Norfolk, England

The Companions and Friends of the Brotherhood of St. Gregory Victor Manuel Cruz Blanco

The Episcopal Church in Colombia, South America

Br. Martin, SCK

Jerry Moize

Edward H. Munro

Charles F. Kramer, III

Collier P. Skye

Sr. Francis Katherine

Fr. Schmidt

Fr. Brown

Irene

Katherine

David

Nancy

Thanksgivings for:

The renewal of the Annual Vows of Profession of Br. Matthew Joseph

Fr. Vanderau's institution as Canon Pastor of St. Luke's Cathedral, Orlando, Florida The ministry of the
Rev'd Canon Edward N. West

The institution of the Rev'd Richard N. Ruedger as rector of Good Shepherd, the Bronx, N.Y. The Life
Profession of Sr. Cintra Pemberton, OSH

The marriage of Mary Beth Haller and Eugene Petruzzi

The baptism of Leonce Soto