

## WALK NOT IN THE LAWS OF OMRI AND THE WORKS OF AḤAB!

Melaḳim Aleph/1 Kings 16:16-28

Shabbat Shalom all,

**Tehillim/Psalm 1:1-2** “Blessed is the man who shall not walk in the counsel of the wrong, and shall not stand in the path of sinners, and shall not sit in the seat of scoffers, <sup>2</sup> but his delight is in the Torah of יהוה, and he meditates in His Torah day and night.”

Delighting and meditating in the Torah of יהוה is what true worshippers of יהוה do, as they worship Him in Spirit and Truth, guarding to do all He commands, by diligently walking in the “good works” prepared beforehand for us to do. It then becomes clear and safe to say that that to walk in the Way of our Master יהושע Messiah, requires our ability to hear, guard and do His Torah, standing firm on His Truth, guarding ourselves against any acts or works of lawlessness. In fact the laws of man that run contrary to the Torah of Elohim are as lawlessness in His eyes. Yet what we clearly recognise is that for any works that are carried out, there has to have been some form of counsel from a set of laws. The question we ought to ask ourselves daily is whether we are walking in the ‘good works’ prepared for us as we find great wisdom and counsel on how to do them through the Torah of Elohim, or are we engaged in other works that have been counselled to us through handed down vain traditions and dogmas/commands of men that have been taught to us as teachings?

As I was reading through the book of **Miḳah/Micah** this week, which is a book that contains a very stern warning against the state of apostasy Yisra’el was in, as he addresses the sick corruption, injustice and the clear unfaithfulness to יהוה, as they followed after the ways of the nations, instead of walking in the Torah of Elohim, and in many ways corrupted their worship unto יהוה, by trying to follow their own set of laws that had been devised by corrupt officials.

This book still proclaims a stern warning today, against those who refuse to walk in the Torah of Elohim, by choosing to follow the laws of man, and one of the verses that struck me and stirred me to prepare this message was:

**Miḳah/Micah 6:16** “For the laws of Omri are strictly observed, and all the works of the house of Aḥab, and you walk in their counsels. Therefore I give you for a ruin, and your inhabitants for a hissing, and let you bear the reproach of My people.”

Many of you may ask, “Who is Omri?” and “what are his laws?” and so tonight in a message called, “**WALK NOT IN THE LAWS OF OMRI AND THE WORKS OF AḤAB**” I would like us to look at who this wicked King was, and how so many today are guilty of walking in the counsels of inherited lies and traditions by strictly observing laws and works that have set aside the need to observe and walk in the Torah of Elohim. To look at the account of this king please turn with me to **Melaḳim Aleph/1 Kings 16:16-28** (Read)

We have just read how Omri came to power and **verse 25-26** tells us that he did more evil in the eyes of יהוה than all those before him, by walking in the ways of Yarob’am and provoking יהוה with their worthlessnesses.

The Hebrew word used for ‘worthlessness’ is הֶבֶל *hebel* – Strong’s H1892 and means, ‘vapour, breath, delusion, emptiness, futility, vanity, idols, worthlessness’, and we see this word being used in:

**Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 2:4-5** “Hear the word of יהוה, O house of Ya’aqob and all the clans of the house of Yisra’el. <sup>5</sup> Thus said יהוה, “What unrighteousness have your fathers found in Me, that they have gone far from Me, and went after **worthlessness**, and became worthless?”

**Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 16:19** “יהוה O, my strength and my stronghold and my refuge, in the day of distress the gentiles shall come to You from the ends of the earth and say, “Our fathers have inherited only falsehood, **futility**, and there is no value in them.”

Provoking יהוה with futility that has no value is still being done today by so many who have not realised the reality of the falsehood that our fathers inherited and have passed down through vain traditions and theologies of man.

As you may have realised from our Scripture portion that we read in **Melaḳim Aleph/1 Kings 16**, Omri was the father of Aḥab, the wicked king who married the Phoenician princess, Izebel and began to serve the Phoenician deity ‘Ba’al’, which the prophet Eliyahu confronted the House of Yisra’el about on Mount Karmel.

I have put together a simple diagram showing the various kings of the two houses of Yisra’el and Yehudah from the time of the split to the end of the record in **Melaḳim Aleph/1 Kings** in order to get a clearer picture historically where Omri and Aḥab fit in... (please see diagram below)

AN OVERVIEW OF THE KINGS OF YISRA'ĒL AND YEHUDAH FROM THE SPLIT INTO TWO HOUSES TO THE END OF MELAKIM ALEPH/1 KINGS



After Shelomoh died the nation of Yisra'el was split into 2 kingdoms – the northern 10 tribes (known as the House of Yisra'el) and the southern two tribes of Yehudah and Binyamin (known as the House of Yehudah)

As you will see from the diagram that Omri was the 6<sup>th</sup> king of Yisra'el and he reigned 6 years in Tirtsah in opposition to Zimri who set himself up as king, and a further 6 years in Shomeron, where he bought the hill of Shomeron from Shemer. I find this very interesting in itself as we understand the wickedness of Omri:

The number 6 is the number of man – and with him being the 6<sup>th</sup> king of Yisra'el and reigning 6 years in two different places, we can metaphorically see a picture of the reign of the evil one being taught as law – 6 – 6 – 6.

All the trouble began with Yarob'am who did evil in the eyes of יהוה, by setting up his own worship sites in Bēyth El and Dan, making 2 golden calves – one for each site as a means to stop Yisra'el from going down to Yerushalayim to worship at the temple, in fear of losing his reign to Rehaby'am. In his quest to establish a reign, he set up his own set of rules in regards to worship and appointed his own priesthood, outside of the house of Lēwi. I would like to quote from the works of Josephus, the early historian, which relates all the events we see being written of in the Books of the Kings, and in his works he has related a quote from Yarob'am in his address to the northern kingdom of Yisra'el:

**“I suppose, my countrymen, that you know this, that every place hath Elohim in it; nor is there any one determinate place in which He is, but He everywhere hears and sees those that worship Him; on which account I do not think it right for you to go so long a journey to Yerushalayim, which is an enemy's city, to worship Him. (228) It was a man that built the temple: I have also made two golden heifers, dedicated to the same Elohim; and one of them I have consecrated in the city Bēyth ěl, and the other in Dan, to the end that those of you that dwell nearest those cities, may go to them, and worship Elohim there: and I will ordain for you certain priests and Lēwites from among yourselves, that you may have no want of the tribe of Lēwi, or of the sons of Aharon; but let him that is desirous among you of being a priest, bring to Elohim a bullock and a ram, which they say Aharon the first priest brought also.” (229) When Yarob'am had said this, he deluded the people, and made them to revolt from the worship of their forefathers, and to transgress their laws. This was the beginning of miseries to the Iḇ'rim, and the cause why they were overcome in war by foreigners and so fell into captivity.**

**The works of Josephus : Complete and unabridged. Antiquities chapter 8 (4 – (227-229))**

By the time Omri came on the scene, around 48 years after Yarob'am began to reign, Yisra'el had been heavily steeped in mixed worship, and his line came to a complete end at the death of his granddaughter, Athalyahu, who had tried to destroy all the offspring of the reign of Yehudah when her son was killed.

She was the daughter of Aḥab who had married Yehoram, the king of Yehudāh! Omri further introduced and established many laws that his son Aḥab and Izeḅel, his Phoenician daughter in law, enforced upon Yisra'el. Under Omri's wicked rule Yisra'el continued to compete with the Torah of יהוה, to the point where the Torah/Law of יהוה was almost forgotten, and as a result Yisra'el was divorced and scattered all over the earth! Omri was no different from the wicked kings who had gone before him, however he grew worse than all those who reigned before him as they all sought how they could turn people away from following יהוה, by implementing their daily wicked practices. The result of all this wickedness is that יהוה caused each of the kings and their families to be slain by another so that none would be left of the wicked rulers and their families.

We have no record of who Omri's father was, as it is nowhere to be found in Scripture, showing us just how wicked this man was, that יהוה did not even allow the record of his father and birth to be written and recorded!

Omri established Shomeron as the new capital of the House of Yisra'el, and 'Shomeron' - שֹׁמֶרוֹן - Strong's H8111 means, '*watchtower, great watchman, the most guarded*' which he bought from - Shemer - שֶׁמֶר - Strong's H8106 which means, '*preserved, kept*' and also has the meaning of, '*lees, dregs, aged wine*' in referring to the dregs at the bottom of the barrel – and by him setting up his own wicked reign and capital for the House of Yisra'el, we can see metaphorically how those who reject the Torah of יהוה, in order to walk in their own selfish ways, can be likened to those who earnestly watch over and guard the dregs of the traditions and dogmas of man, by setting up their own high places of mixed abominable worship!

Under the reign of Omri, Yisra'el expanded a great deal and were physically strengthened in acquiring much growth and prosperity by extending their power to the east, beyond the Yardēn, and gained control over the king's highway which provided access to a steady stream of luxury goods, gold, silver and tin that was exchanged between Arabia and Mesopotamia. Under his reign Yisra'el was commonly known as the "House of Omri", and was continued to be known as this long after his death. This empire was further expanded by his wicked son Aḥab and Izeḅel, which portrayed a long period of apostasy from יהוה and turning toward serving Ba'al – the Phoenician sun-deity of fertility.

This wickedness continued to grow and eventually we see in Scripture the effect and punishment of sin being carried out, as Yēhu slaughtered the 70 sons of Aḥab! 70 is a significant number in Scripture, as we have previously discussed in our Torah portions that 70 is a number that represents the fullness of the whole House of Yisra'el and by Aḥab's 70 sons being slaughtered, we see how the sons of the wicked one will be put to death, while the remnant of the faithful will be established as the whole House of Yisra'el would be restored in the Blood of Messiah!

Omri's wickedness also infected Yehudāh, as his granddaughter Athalyahu married Yehoram, the son of Yehoshaphat, and he did evil in the eyes of יהוה.

Under the established 'laws of Omri', we see how the effect of such wicked laws of man were carried out under the reign of Aḥab, when he desperately wanted Naḅoth's vineyard; and when Naḅoth made it clear that he would not sell his land and give up the inheritance of his fathers, and sought to preserve the Torah of יהוה, which forbid the alienation of the heritage of one's clan. Aḥab was not happy at this and he went home and sulked; and being a half-believer (which is not a true believer at all) he hesitated to act, and Izeḅel his wicked wife reminded him that Naḅoth's refusal was ridiculous under the Phoenician law, by not agreeing to the kings request. Izeḅel then publicly condemned Naḅoth in a public trial, and set up sons of Beliya'al to bear false witness against him and charged him with blaspheming Elohim and the king, and sentenced him to be stoned to death, After his death Aḥab went and took the field of Naḅoth, with a total disregard for the Torah of Elohim, while enforcing the laws of Omri which promoted the practices and laws of the Phoenicians. In Phoenician eyes it was blasphemy against Ba'al to try to assert the righteous right rulings given by יהוה, and it was blasphemy against the king to assert that he was not free to enforce the Phoenician system that treated land as a commodity and not as a heritage and an inheritance.

Miḳah/Micah describes this wickedness displayed by Aḥab under the wicked laws of Omri in:

**Miḳah/Micah 2:1-3** "Woe to those plotting wickedness, and working out evil upon their beds! In the light of the morning they practise it, because it is in the might of their hand. 2 And they coveted fields and seized them, also houses, and took them away. And they oppressed a man and his house, a man and his inheritance. 3 Therefore thus said יהוה, "See, against this clan I am planning evil, from which you do not remove your necks, nor walk proudly, for this is a time of evil."

Omri's statutes and laws are in many ways still being strictly observed today, in the form of the establishment of humanism and materialism, giving people an assumed right to rule themselves, while rejecting and forsaking the Torah of יהוה. The 'gospel' of mammon is tickling the ears of the masses who are turning a deaf ear to the truth and in the process they cling fast to the vain and empty traditions of man and teach and establish as their own "laws of freedom", the dogmas of man that has cast the Torah of יהוה behind them.

After the killing of Naboth, Eliyahu was sent to confront Aḥab and the Ba'al prophets on a showdown on Mount Karmel, where the clear choice was presented to the nation of Yisra'el – to choose that day whom they would serve – if it was Ba'al then serve him, but if יהוה then serve Him. What many do not know as a result of a lack of knowledge is that the Hebrew word 'Ba'al' - בַּעַל – **Strong's H1168** means, '**lord, husband, landowner**' and was also the name of a supreme male divinity of the Phoenicians or Kena'anites – and so to correctly translate this into English in order to bring home a sober wakeup call that many need to hear today, as the spirit of Eliyahu must come first before Messiah returns, is that Ēliyahu's words are best translated for us today, from the Hebrew as follows:

**“Choose this day whom you will serve – if it is ‘The Lord’ serve him, if יהוה (Yahweh) serve Him”!!!!**

When Messiah came and spoke to the Shomeroni woman at the well in Shomeron, and offered her the True Living Water, He in a sense came to proclaim His coming for the lost and scattered sheep; and at that time both the scattered House of Yisra'el and the House of Yehudāh had been corrupted in their worship as the '**laws of Omri and the works of Aḥab**' had seriously infected the whole body, and the worship that was being offered up on both the hill of Shomeron and Yerushalayim were false, and Messiah said to the woman in:

**Yohanan/John 4:21-23** “יהושע said to her, “**Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither on this mountain, nor in Yerushalayim, worship the Father. 22 “You worship what you do not know. We worship what we know, because the deliverance is of the Yehudim. 23 “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father also does seek such to worship Him.”**

The laws of Omri and the works of Aḥab represent for us today the '**rule of self**', where each individual is able to choose how he or she wants to worship, and justify their corrupted and wicked worship practices as being acceptable, being blinded under the veil of inherited lies and traditions! Inheritance according to the Covenants of Promise are not taught by the false shepherds nor understood by the masses, as they simply seek to appease themselves with self; and we have come to clearly see how Christianity at large has become a very selfish religion that promotes heresies and lies as the Truth. יהושע Messiah tells us very clearly that the True worshippers will worship in Spirit and Truth and not cling to the teachings and practices of man, that has set up its own high places, but will rather delight in and meditate on the Torah of יהוה. These 'laws of Omri and works of Aḥab' are still being strictly observed today as many hold fast to and follow the wicked counsels of man-made commands that are taught erroneously as being the way to worship. As we consider the application of this truth a little closer to home, we do not have to look far in seeing that on either side of the pure narrow path of Truth there are twisted 'ditches' of wicked '**laws of man**' in regards to an assumed mode of worship – one the one side we see the poison of Rabbinic teachings that enforce an 'oral torah' that has become an identifiable means of worship to the corrupt 'house of Yehudāh (Jews)' as taught through their man-made '**Talmud and Mishnah**'; and over on the other side in the opposite ditch we see the 'Christian theologies of man' as birthed through the Catholic Church in the form of '**catechisms**' and church '**by-laws**' that are taught as the proper ordinances of their faith. In both of these corrupted systems of worship based on man-made laws, the Torah of יהוה is reduced to the status of having very little or no effect or purpose as their own dogmas take precedence over the Truth – as the 'works' of these 'laws' are loved out by the masses who cling to the vain traditions and lies of such laws that have been handed down through the centuries, causing so many to perish for lack of knowledge in the Truth of the pure Torah of יהוה, as the masses trapped in both 'ditches' of these wicked systems of man are being led astray to commit whoring by default of enforced man-made traditions that are taught as commands of men.

By the warning that the Master יהושע Messiah gives to the assembly in Thyatira in **Hazon/Revelation 2**, who allowed the woman Izebel and her wicked teachings to lead many astray and commit whoring, we must take heed to hear and guard to do all the commands of Elohim, and flee all whoring that is craftily disguised and taught as being acceptable. The effect of Omri and his wicked reign, which established the wicked roots of Yarob'am, are still affecting so many today. And what we take notice of is that the name of **Naboth** - נָבוֹת - **Strong's H5202** which means, '**fruits**' is exactly what the enemy wants to destroy and stop from growing – the very fruits of righteousness! And the enemy will stop at nothing to try to 'steal away' our promised inheritance, and we must not be afraid of the one who can 'kill the body', but stand firm in the fear of יהוה, remaining steadfast in our loving commitment to guarding and walking in His Torah.

As we stand firm in the faith of our Master יהושע Messiah, may we be faithful in guarding the Truth with our all and not sell out our inheritance under the wicked influence of wicked laws and works that lead to death, no matter how appealing they may seem!!! Walk not in the laws of Omri and the works of Ahab – laws and works that cast aside the need for the Torah of Elohim, and substitute the Truth for a false grace message that has many on a broad path to destruction – but rather let us be the blessed of Elohim – those who delight in and meditate day and night upon the Torah of יהוה, in the full assurance of the promised inheritance to come!

In what areas have you possibly found yourself following any made up laws for self? Or what vain reasonings, if any, have you allowed to be established in your walk, reasonings that has caused you to justify compromising complete obedience? What counsels of false traditions and inherited lies are you still holding on to? Counsels that cause you to think that it is ok to do what you feel is right, even when it clearly is forbidden in the Word?

It is time for the True worshippers to worship the Father in Spirit and Truth, and let go of the laws of Omri and the works of Ahab, that seek to only satisfy the flesh and self!

We have a risen King, who reigns on High and we have a responsibility to proclaim that reign as we faithfully walk in His Truth, obeying His Torah. As we consider how Eliyahu stood up with the odds of 850 to 1 against the Ba'al prophets and prophets of Izebel on Mount Karmel, and was victorious as יהוה brought forth His judgement, may we too be bold and confident as the remnant that must stand up and proclaims the Truth, being careful to not fall into the trap of walking in laws of man that run contrary to the Torah, and be diligent in putting to death the deeds of the body as we live by the Spirit – that is the breath of יהוה – hearing, guarding and doing His clear commands! Hear the warning call to 'Walk NOT in the laws of Omri and the works of Ahab', but rather we who 'stay in Messiah' must walk as He walked!!!

Shalom!