

## February 14, 2009 Quit being an 'Ahab'!

Dear Men (and their companions in their life journey in Lord Jesus),  
Would you like to be regarded in the heavenlies as a man who "walks with God"? Both Enoch and Noah were faith-filled men who enjoyed a loving relationship with their Lord and obeyed His commands. And, both of these men chose to live as men who *pleased Him* (Genesis 6:9; Hebrews 11:5). Your own "walk" with God, your *halak* in Hebrew, is characterized by your ongoing pursuit to please your Lord in all you think, do, and say. Through His Spirit our faithful Lord has both called you and empowered you as His own to *walk with Him* in love-grounded, obedient trust.

But this kind of walk is surrounded by all kinds of obstacles, whether the allure of the world's wicked ways, temptation through your own sinful desires, or demonic interference in the unseen realm. In particular, the covenant of marriage that is set apart by our Father to represent His spiritual union with His Church is undergoing ever-increasing attack. Mutual wounding and subsequent unforgiveness are convincing many within Christendom to discard their vows and sever their covenant. The rampant divorce serves a twofold demonic plan: to bring down the name of our Lord and to prevent future generations from being raised to walk in Christ.

While the widespread dissolution of marriage didn't occur overnight, it HAS grown to epidemic proportions during the past 40 years, coinciding with the rise of the feminist movement in the 1970s and beyond. Both of these events have leapt to the forefront of western culture as an outgrowth of an insidious demonic entity we wrote about in **Lifebyte 62**, the **Queen of Heaven**.

We've talked with a number of couples recently and recognize the challenges you're facing as you're striving in the Spirit to align your marriage according to God's Word. The two of us were raised in homes that were ruled by Queen of Heaven dominance. Our Lord has used our own painful experiences to help us understand the depth of determination it takes in Christ to be **sanctified** from all vestiges of the Queen of Heaven entity. When you're no longer under the influence of that unclean control spirit, your marriage can then increasingly reflect Christ's likeness to others who need hope in Him.

God is surely long-suffering, repeatedly sending people with prophetic warnings to turn away from following gods that appeal to their sin nature. Worship of ANYONE or ANYTHING other than Himself is, in His words, **"an abominable thing that I hate!"** (Jeremiah 44:4). But ancient Israel, as with so many church and unchurched today, ignored both His warnings as well as the lessons to be learned from their forefathers. There ARE dreadful consequences when we bring reproach to His Name by compromising biblical obedient trust with man-focused, man-pleasing religious pursuits. Our gracious Father declares these warnings so that people will humble themselves, fear Him with holy reverence, and walk in His ways out of grateful love for Him (Jeremiah 44:10; Deuteronomy 6:5).

Rather than separating themselves unto the God of Israel when they fled to Egypt out of fear, the Jews continued in the wicked pursuit of demonic idols that had brought God's chastisement upon them in Judah. They relished their *spiritual adultery*, forsaking the God of their fathers in unfaithfulness (Jeremiah 44:1-3). Please don't think that we're just reviewing ancient history here. Mankind's sin nature *still* seeks self-rule and freedom from the boundaries of God's Word and His good commands. That wicked influence about which we're warning is mightily at work today, tearing apart homes and destroying the lives of countless children both born and preborn.

Note this. The Queen of Heaven demonic idol against which Jeremiah so forcefully thunders allures *not only women* who manipulate and control their households and husbands. If you recall, the prophet also decries MEN, both husbands and fathers and governing officials, who not only gave way to wickedness themselves but also encouraged it in their wives (Jeremiah 44:9). Jeremiah reveals that in order for the demonic Queen to dominate, it takes men ducking their God-given responsibility to keep their families undefiled: ***“When we burned incense to the Queen of Heaven and poured out drink offerings to her, did not our husbands know that we were making cakes like her image and pouring out drink offerings to her?”*** (Jeremiah 44:19). This spirit would lose its control if only men would live up to what our Lord requires of them.

Then as now, the MEN retorted with self-serving excuses and bitter accusation against God. Denying that their provision came from His hand, they attributed their former food and prosperity to the demonic Queen (44:17). Rather than humbling themselves and taking ownership of their unfaithfulness to the God of Israel, they blamed their poverty, famine and suffering on their neglect of this idol (44:18). Their words as well as their actions proved that despite being called God's people, their deceived hearts had divorced them from His covenant. His holy name would no longer be named by them (44:26).

### **The Queen of Heaven Seeks Men Who Have Sinful Motives**

Do you see? That pervasive feminine-control spirit has produced a western Christendom that surveys in the United States refer to as **"totally effeminate."** The Queen of Heaven looks for men who are bitter, or who fear man rather than God, or who seek personal prestige at all cost. I (Mike) spent a number of years as a counselor to clergy, and discovered that these three attitudes, especially *bitterness*, dominated these men and opened their teachings to the influence of the Queen of Heaven. Their Sunday sermons were pleasant and easy to listen to, not convicting. During a gathering at our retreat center, the entire group of clergy admitted that they *watered-down* their sermons in order to make them enjoyable.

In order to maintain their position of influence, clergy whose lives are overshadowed by this entity attract around themselves "Ahab's", men they can manipulate and bend. I discovered over the years that many clergy would often place men younger than themselves in leadership positions so they could control them. They were especially on

the lookout for men whose wives controlled their households. It's no surprise that contemporary Christendom has produced generations of married men who are self-centered, irresponsible "Ahab's".

Let's be clear here. In order for a woman to rule over her family, a MAN has failed to fulfill his God-given responsibilities. Remember Adam's sinful response when he was confronted by God? He gave excuses and ducked, blaming his wife. Because of Ahab's childish dependence on his wife, Jezebel controlled the tribes of Israel through her schemes and witchcraft. You may want to review **Lifebyte 27. You Must Be Born Again: Life Begins in the SPIRIT (John 3:8)**, in which this issue is further developed.

Some men are trained to be Ahab's by mothers who either belittle men in general or coddle their sons as perpetual young boys, never holding them responsible to become mature men. Others don't start off as Ahab's, but events in their lives cause them to choose the path of irresponsibility. We've encountered men who were doing well in leading their families *until they lost their job*. Some were unable to keep up with growing expenses so their wives had to pursue outside jobs. Still others slipped into the grasp of the Queen when they entered the *Wounded Stage* and let themselves be overcome by debilitating self-pity and despair. And some discovered that *retirement* produced a loss of purpose and meaning, so their wives took control. In each of these situations, the wife gave up being the man's supportive life partner (*ezer*) and began to "mother" him.

***"Fear of man will prove to be a snare,  
but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe"***  
(Proverbs 29:25).

Christianity in the United States has become dominated by an effeminized culture which has been reinforced by feminine dominance in public education. Males are being indoctrinated into making **pleasantness** the hallmark of a Christian man, with even Lord Jesus consistently portrayed as docile and sweet. Yes, a man of God must be considerate, and full of compassion and mercy (Titus 3:2; James 3:17). But when a man lets himself be controlled by **fear of rejection**, he will do all he can to be **likable**. Rather than standing for his convictions, he makes himself an Ahab, a spiritual chameleon who conforms to whomever he's with. But appeasement and approval come at a dreadful price for his family. They lose their spiritual covering of protection and are exposed to the compromise of whatever winds of spiritual or cultural fancy come along. It's not long before the primacy of God's Word and standing firm in His Spirit become subverted as "legalistic" and "intolerant", leaving his children with total disregard for any authority at all in their lives.

Take a moment and ask yourself:

- Are you generally pleasant-natured and easy to get along with?
- Do you act this way *in order to be accepted*?
- Do you speak up for your convictions when they're challenged by others?
- Are you fearful of speaking the name of Jesus among unbelievers?
- If you have children, who usually disciplines them, you or your wife?

- Who generally leads your children in spiritual discussions, prayer, and Bible study?
- To whom do your children turn for the 'final word' on a matter?
- Does your wife really respect you, or does she dominate you?
- When others interact with you and your wife, do they respect her and her convictions more than they do you?

***"Let this people turn to you, but you must not turn to them"*** (Jeremiah 15:19).

There is a certain consequence when you yearn to be true to Jesus in all that you say and do. He'll put you into situations in which you must choose either to be faithful to Him, or to give way to fear of man and go along with unrighteous conversation or opinions or activities. Everyone, and we mean EVERYONE who counts himself a follower of Jesus goes through testing — many times. Tests reveal whether we're all talk or responsively obedient (2 Corinthians 13:5). Each test God gives us is designed not to destroy us, but to verify the genuineness of our trust in Him (1 Peter 1:7). Our Lord wants us to live as *His light*, exposing the works of darkness and pointing to the Source of that light so that others will be drawn to Him.

Erwin Raphael McManus, in his book *The Barbarian Way*, which we recommended to you a while back, comments on where *pleasantness* has led westernized Christianity today:

"Domesticated Christians are far too willing to *abdicate the battle* for the soul of the world.

Civility focuses our energy on all the wrong places.

We spend our lives emphasizing our personal development and spiritual well-being...

In contrast Jesus calls us to a different way. He tells us this is a *battle of kingdoms*...

To see from a *kingdom perspective* is to know that there is a *conflict of invisible kingdoms*

and that people's lives are forever changed by what happens in the unseen.

We are called to be *warriors of light in dark places*." (italics added)

Again, McManus admonishes, **"We spend our lives emphasizing our personal development and spiritual well-being..."** We've followed our Lord Jesus for over three decades. Sadly, the most common testimony we've heard in congregations has been what we call **"dumping out the garbage pail."** Week after week it seems that people share the same type of testimony, "I used to fill in the sin, and now I don't." We're delighted that our Lord faithfully convicts and strengthens His own to overcome nagging sin. But we grieve how sorely absent among so many of the gathered are testimonies to the glory and faithfulness of our Lord as they join Him in advancing His Kingdom!

It's no small thing that God's Word calls for soldier hearts committed to lifelong service to their King (2 Timothy 2:3,4; Philippians 2:25). But few men are being challenged and

encouraged to live as mighty soldiers for the Captain of the host! So few Ahab-oriented clergy promote the steadfast warrior spirit that's needed for Kingdom service. Therefore the testimonies that are shared as a result of their teaching are more fitting for Ahabs — self-focused, dumping-out-the-pail over and over again. Absent are testimonies of the Goliath-slayers who delight our Lord and endure in His strength.

When you testify how God has used you in the lives of others, this isn't bragging. When you respond to His prompting with the understanding of His grace and empowerment at work in and through you, your testimony brings Him glory. A testimony that glorifies our Lord draws attention to what HE has done through you as His waiting and available vessel. Paul returned to Jerusalem and Antioch on several occasions to encourage fellow Jesus-followers about what God had done among the Gentiles through him. But the servant-nature of Paul also caused him to limit his testimony to that which brought praise to His Lord: ***"I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done"*** (Romans 15:18). Be prepared to fully and boldly serve your Lord when He calls — and do so with a humble servant's heart that rejoices when your King is exalted!

***"This is what the LORD Almighty says:  
'Look! Disaster is spreading from nation to nation;  
a mighty storm is rising from the ends of the earth'"***  
(Jeremiah 25:32).

You can't help but be aware that all around the world a spiritual battle of immense proportions is raging! On the surface it looks like an economic crisis, but in reality, the warfare that's in the spiritual realm is far greater than any of us can comprehend (see Isaiah 55:8,9). We all live with an extremely incomplete understanding of what God is doing. Most of our awareness of Him is based on how His actions affect us personally. But there is a larger divine plan unfolding that is impacting every nation on earth. And, if our God is dealing with nations, then He is also taking on the demonic principalities that control them.

Thankfully, our Lord isn't calling any of us to understand everything that's going on throughout the world! However, we do need to know and obey that which He holds us responsible for as revealed by His Spirit and in His Word. And, a key responsibility for you married couples is making sure your marriage aligns with His purpose for you together so that He can be seen at work in your midst and be praised.

We've written previously that as our Lord is fulfilling His promise to restore the Jewish people to the land of Israel, He is also revealing the Hebraic foundations to us Gentiles. We're living during the first generation in which all people groups may indeed be able to access the Gospel of the kingdom. When that happens, as He promised, the end will come (Matthew 24:14)! But if you're entertaining a self-serving Ahab spirit, complacently enjoying your slice of the world's pleasantness, then you're probably cringing at the thought that the end may be approaching. However, those of us who have responded to His call and labored in Kingdom service *look forward* to the return of

our King. No affliction or difficulty past or present or still to come can compare to the joy of seeing Lord Jesus face to face!

***"For God, Who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed" (2 Corinthians 4:6-9).***

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***"This is what the LORD says: 'Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD..."***

***But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him" (Jeremiah 17:5,7).***

Please, don't let your hopes rise and fall over whether Washington is going to restore the greed-based comfort and "entitlements" that so many in this country are accustomed to. Everything our government leaders are planning and doing is a sin against God. These 'Ahab' leaders are violating the Word of God by heaping ponderous financial burden on the children of tomorrow in order to feed the greed of today.

If you're following Jesus as the only Lord of your life, don't put your trust in the solutions of deceived government leaders. So many within both the Administration and westernized Christendom have proven themselves to be 'Ahab's', more concerned with pleasing people than with obeying and pleasing God. If either of these systems was concerned with the requirements of our Lord, there would be a widespread call for repentance throughout this nation. You don't hear them sounding that call, do you? While they may not want to be obedient to God's commands, make sure you and your family do, no matter what it costs you.

Both Israel and the United States currently have the world's attention. Tragically, these two nations are placing their trust in **human leadership** to get them out of their difficulties. And, the deceived leaders of these two nations trust in their **weapons** (see Psalms 20:7) and their **past reputation**. Both of these nations will be brought to their knees in God's own time and way. You can be sure that He will accomplish this in such a manner that no one will doubt it is He who is orchestrating it.

But let's narrow our focus here. If you're a man who would like to be found faithful to our Lord, it's time that you, your wife and your family heed His warning — a warning He is giving from a heart of love that's yearning for repentance! ***"This is what the LORD says: 'Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions'"***(Jeremiah 18:11). Please, out of love for our glorious Lord, examine your life

closely. Repent if necessary, and rid your marriage and your home of ALL that our Lord considers sinful. Especially make sure that NO vestige of the Queen of Heaven influence is found between you and your wife.

Men, we can't speak strongly enough to warn you how our Lord hates the Queen of Heaven influence and anything that has to do with it. Make sure you aren't in any way an Ahab within your own home. As long as YOU sit back as an Ahab, your wife won't be able to rid herself of the Queen's controlling influence. If you've grown up in a home with a dominant mother, or if your a wife is a daughter of a divorced mother, you need to be all the more determined in your sanctification from these influences. You need to experience just how powerful the Spirit of Jesus is in changing the both of you so that your marriage can reflect Him.

Possibly, just possibly, our Lord will honor His promise to Jeremiah IF enough of us choose to live repentantly: ***"If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned"*** (Jeremiah 18:7,8). Do you want our Lord to relent? Then let's make living repentantly, forsaking ALL sin so that we can freely love and serve our Lord, our daily goal.

Trusting the only One Who changes lives and marriages,  
*Mike & Sue*