

Coach House Church

BEACONS

THE WALL

15TH SEPTEMBER 2021

After the summer break, in which I hope you had time to rest and recharge, ready for a new start -of everything- I'm happy to welcome you back to our beacons. As we are back to some normality, beacons from the Coach House Church will be uploaded weekly on a Wednesday.

I have the privilege to restart this series and today's beacon It's called The Wall. In the bible walls are often use to protect and guard precious gardens and vineyards. The prophets often used the imagery of a wall to portray God's protection around his people. In the text that we are going to read today from the Bible the wall represents something completely different : it represents the work of the spiritual leaders during prophet Ezekiel life. Let's read from Ezekiel.

"Because they lead my people astray, saying, "Peace," when there is no peace, and because, when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash, therefore tell those who cover it with whitewash that it is going to fall. Rain will come in torrents, and I will send hailstones hurtling down, and violent winds will burst forth. When the wall collapses, will people not ask you, "Where is the whitewash you covered it with?" " "Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: In my wrath I will unleash a violent wind, and in my anger hailstones and torrents of rain will fall with destructive fury. I will tear down the wall you have covered with whitewash and will level it to the ground so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you will be destroyed in it; and you will know that I am the Lord. So I will pour out my wrath against the wall and against those who covered it with whitewash. I will say to you, "The wall is gone and so are those who whitewashed it,"
Ezekiel 13:10-15 NIV

When you read the book of Ezekiel you can see that the prophets of the day were more inclined to say what the people wanted to hear than to tell them what God really said. They were seeking to please people not to please God. We know that the prophet's book was written during a time when the Israelites were captives of the Babylonians who had taken over the land.

Ezekiel was the only prophet during the exile to tell the truth, to really say what God was saying. This made him very unpopular and put him in some really difficult situations

What I want to draw your attention to today is the whitewashed wall. There is a lot of things that can be represented by a whitewashed wall. Things like: a work that is done in a rush and is not properly finished; It could also mean a work not good enough which you try to paint over with whitewash in a desperate attempt to cover up the imperfections and lack of effort and skill.

From what we know about Ezekiel, we can tell that his wall was strong and properly built. The prophet did not spare any effort in the work he was doing, this was such a contrast with the spiritual leaders of the day; that's why God was angry with them and promised punishment in the form of a Babylonian invasion.

Jesus, in the new Testament, used the imagery of whitewash to talk about the Pharisees. In Mathew 22 He called the Pharisees "whitewashed tombs" because they looked good on the outside but are full of death on the inside . What God wanted and asked for from the the leaders of the Israelites, was completely different from what they actually did. First let's see what God wanted from them:

"I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one."
Ezekiel 22:30 NIV

The Lord has chosen Israel to be his witness. However, that did not happen. They tried to pick and choose from the God's laws; their hearts were not sincere though. So they failed and the Lord had to discipline them because of his holiness; in his presence no impurity and no immorality can exist.

Have you ever wondered why God called them whitewashed walls and whitewashed tombs?

In the olden days people used to use whitewash in houses but especially on barn walls because of its disinfectant and sanitising properties. Whitewash prevents the growth of bacteria and mould and when it flakes and falls off the wall it removes with it any debris.

That made me think that God might have seen their way of keeping the law as a poor attempt to cleanse themselves with Human Resources instead of accepting and trusting God's cleansing.

Looking at our own lives, and the work we do for the kingdom of God, would our wall stand if God was to try it through the wind and storm? Are we involved wholeheartedly in the things that God has asked us to look after? Are we doing our best, not sparing any effort, just like Ezekiel, or just like the false prophets, are we trying to cover it up- paint over it- to make it look better than it really is? Are we putting up a front instead of being the real deal? Are we using our resources and our standards or are we acting and working in God's strength, relying completely on him?

Take a minute and think about these questions and when we see things that we have to change, let's not put it off; let's do it today. Let's ask for strength to be that faithful steward of the things the Lord had entrusted with: our families, our work, our ministry, our friends and our hearts.

Lord I pray that you will search us Father, and help us Lord, to become those people that you have in mind for us to be. Those people that you created us to be. Help us to serve you according to your standards not ours ;in Jesus name I pray.
amen



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