"WILL YOU MAKE UP THE HEDGE AND STAND IN THE GAP"?

Jan-57.

730 Pecan Avenue, West Sacramento California,
Westward-Ho Tr. Pk. Space 4.

Dear brethren and sisters;-

In ancient times cities were "hedged" in by a wall to protect them from their enimies. These walls were daubed with morter. If the morter was tempered with lime or other substances that toughened it; the wall would stand a lot of rain, wind, or other types of storms. If the wall was daubed with "untempered" morter; in a little while the elements would wear the "morter" away and the wall would fall.

In the thirteenth chapter of Ezekiel the Lord draws a beautiful figure from this. In verse 5 he says; "Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord". Notice; there were "gaps" in the wall that "hedged Israel about. No one was standing in the gaps to protect Israel, neither had they repaired (made up the hedge) the wall that hedged Israel about. Verse 10, says, ""Because, even because ye have seduced my people, saying peace; and there was no peace;---" Get it; they had falsified by saying "Peace" and there was no peace.

Now get the figure in the last part of the verse"----And one built a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered morter". So, we see dear brother, when they said the Lord said a thing he did not say; they were figuratively building a wall (of falsehood) and daubing it with untempered morter.

Verses 11-17; we are shown how God will deal with both the builders of such a wall, the wall, the untempered morter, and they that daubed it. And notice in verse 17 he plainly shows, he is talking of those "---WHICH PROPHESY OUT OF THEIR OWN HEART--" when it should have been as the Lord spake.

In Ezek. 22:28 he says, "And their prophets have daubed them with untempered morter----". Now get the last part of the verse and see what it means to daub with untempered morter; "--seeing vanity, and devining lies unto them,, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken".

And so we see, when Israel made a statement which the Lord had not said, and said, "thus saith the Lord": they were daubing with untempered morter. But when they made a statement the Lord had siad; and said, "thus saith the Lord", they were daubing with TEMPERED morter.

In Numbers, chapter 16, we have an account where a breech was made in the wall by some of the children of Israel's transgressions. But we see Moses entreated the Lord that he destroy not all of them.

In Ps. 106;--- we have the account of this rebelloin catalogued along with others against Israel; and in verse 23 he says, "Therefore he said, that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them."

Again, speaking of another time, Ezek. 22:30; he says, " and I saught for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none." A pitiful condition, indeed; no one found to "Make up the hedge" (that is repair the wall that hedged them in); nor stand in the "GAP" before the Lord. But remember in Ezek. 13:10 shows by seducing his people, "one built a wall and another daubed it with untempered morter". Verses 11-17 (same chapter), We show the awful consequence to those who built the wall,, the wall, and those who daubed it with "untempered morter". That is by devining lies, and saying, thus saith the Lord; when the Lord had not spoken. Ezek. 22:28. And we see the result in verses 30, 31.

In prophesying of our time Isiah 56:5; says,"Even unt othem will I give within mine house, and within my walls a place and a mame better than sons and daughters". We see by this God has "WALLS" about his house. The new name was to be given when the Gentiles saw his righteousness and the kings of earth his glory; Isiah 62:2. This took place at Antioch , a church that was mostly Gentile; for in Acts 11:26 we are told,"-------And the disciples were called christians first at Antioch.".

We might ask; is there a sense in which God's house; Church (1 Tim.3:15), can be called a city? There is.In Heb.12:22,23, giving the different titles by which his institution could be called; he called it " the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruselem". And remember in Isiah 56:5 we learned God's institution had "WALLS".

But does the bible tell us what those walls are? yes,indeed; Isiah 26:1, in prophesying of the christian age,he says;" In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; we have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Hence we see ; salvation is not only the "WALLS" but also bulwarks. Isiah 60:18 , says,"Violence shall no more be heard in the land,wasting nor distruction in thy borders; but thou shall call thy walls salvation and thy gates praise." Again,we see SALVATION is the "WALLS" about us.

Salvation is our "walls" and as long as we stay within those walls we are absolutely safe; But if some one has "daubed" a portion of that "wall" with "untempered morter","Saying,thus saith the Lord, when the Lord has not spoken"; when the rains,hails and storms of time are hurled against it,the "untempered morter" will give way;and down will fall that portion of the "wall". See Ezek.13:11-17. Then there should be some one to stand in the "gap" and make up the hedge(repair the gap in the wall that hedges us about).Ezekial 22:30. But in rebuilding the gap we must use "tempered morter"; and not untempered morter as spoken of in Ezek.22: 28.

My brother,my sister,will you stand in the gap and make up the hedge, usingonly a "Thus saith the Lord", the real "tempered morter" that will stand the rack of time and shield us from sin? Or will you say,"Thus saith the Lord", where the Lord has not spoken; thus using untempered morter that will not stand the test?

Of the twenty odd divisions in the church of Christ,some one has used untempered morter, "---seeing vanity, and divining lies,unto tjem, saying, Thus saith the Lord God,when the Lord hath not spoken".Ezek. 22:28

All down the ages there has been those who "daubed with untempered morter". 2 Thes.2:7,"The mystery of iniquity doeth already work--"; 2 Tim.3:13 ,Paul says,"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse,decieving and being decieved". 1 Tim.4:1,"The Spirit speaketh expressly that in latter times some shall depart from the faith,giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils,having their conscience seared with a hot iron." 2 Tim.4:3,4,"For the time will come that they will not endure sound doctrine,but after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers having iching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth,and be turned to fables".

and they thereby "daub the walls with untempered morter"; claiming God said what he never said,"Saying,thus saith the Lord, when the Lord had not spoken". Ezek 22:28.

Since the restoration started,had no one used "untempered morter", saying,"-----Thus saith the Lord God ,when the Lord had not spoken".(Ezek.22:28) We would all have been one today.

This "boring from within",that is,"--Saying,thus saith the Lord God, the Lord hath not spoken",Ezek 22:28; is the great enemy of the church of Christ.When one can "daub the wall with untempered morter", thus endangering the spuls of men,from within; We should everyone be ready to stand in the gap and make up the hedge(that is,repair the gaps in the wall that hedges us in); and that wall is SALVATION.

There are many scriptures showing we should always follow the word of God,thus using "tempered morter". Phil.1:27;"Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ. That whether I come and see you,or be absent from you; I may hear of your affairs that ye all stand fast in one Spirit,with one mind,striving togather for the faith of the gospel".2 Tim.3:14;"But continue thou in the things which thou hast heard and been assured of,knowing of whom thou hast learned them". 2 Tim.3:16,17;"All scriptures are given by inspiration of God,and is profitable for doctrine,reproof, and for correction and for instruction in righteousness,that the man of God may be perfect,throughly furnished unto all good works."1 Tim.4:15,16;"Meditate on these things,give thyself wholly to them,that thy profiting may appear unto all. Take heed unto thyself and the doctrine,continue in them;for in so doing thou shall both save thyself and them that hear thee". 2 Jno.9;"Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God;but he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the son.""1 Pet.4:11;"If any man speak,let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister,let him do it as of the ability which God giveth------".

So we could continue on and on showing in "daubing the walls of salvation",it should be with the word of God,the tempered morter" God has given; And NOT the "untempered morter",where man says," thus saith the Lord God when God hat not spoken",Ezek.22:28. I wish I had more space,but space for this lesson has run out as I have several interesting letters.. May God help every one of us to stand in the gap and make up the hedge(by repairing the breaches in our walls of salvation) using only the "temppered morter of God's word is my prayer. As ever Your's in Christ,

J.S.Bedingfield.

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OUR MAIL BOX.

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The Nelsons of Route 1,Box 14 B.M. Somerton Arizona writes; both bro. Pergin and brother Broadway had been with them and had made good talks. We know these brethren and know they can put it out. They also write, Willie Nelson,Harry Davis,Harry Dye,and Jack Renick al make good talks and are a great hepl to the elder brethren. Some of those boys just mentioned,I knew some years back when they were mere lads.

Brother Foye Garrison of Box 102 Nocona Texas writes; that on Dec. 28,1958 brother Coy Baker of Portales New Mexico was with them and deliverod them a good lesson. Brother Baker was a formenr resident of Nocona. He writes their house was almost full that day and they had a wonderful feast. He also wrote sister Garrison,his mother ,had been able to go to church twice lately. May the good lord bless her back to her former health again,if it be his will, is our prayer.

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Brother Harry Wegley of Box 47-A,Murphy Stage Road,Grants Pass Oreg., writes,all is well at Cave Junction Oregon.. The little band of faithful there are carrying on in a scriptural way. Brother Wegley and Family goes to Cave Junction Oregon to Church . So does faithful sister Bumgardner of Medford Oregon.

Brother J.V. Wood of 214 West Marshall, Midwest City 10, Oklahoma, writes all is well with the faithful there. He writes us brother W.E.Daniels of Broken bow Oklahoma was with them and preached them a good sermon on ,"Watch".Brothe Wood writes they have been having quite a bit of sickness there among the members. Our hopes and prayers are that they will all soon be back on the fireing line in the battle of the Lord.

Brother R.C.Clements of Broken Bow Oklahoma, writes; he is somewhat improved in health but not well by any means. He writes his only sr brother in the flesh is very ill in a rest home at Austin Texas. His brother is also a christian. Our hopes and prayers are for the two Clements brethren that they may be soon restored to normal health again. Brother Clements writes thing are picking uo for the church at Brokenbow as several were back with them the last meeting. He expresses a great desire some one would start the paper uo again. Brother Clements was editor of the paper,"It is written", for some time.

Brother F.H.Logan of 611 South Sunset Blvd. Modesto California writes; all was well at Modesto but brother and sister Condor,who were not able to attend church regular yet. We hope and pray both brother and sister Condor will soon be at their best,standing in the gap and making up the hedge, the wall of Salvation, arround God's people. Brother Logan also wrote there was to be a discussion of the bread question between his son,J.D.Logan and brother Winchester. It was to have been last friday and saturday nights. However I have not recieved an account of the results. Brother Logan request that I state all brethren passing that way will be appreciated and welcome. And let me venture the statement; any where there are faithful brethren meeting all will be welcome.

Brother W.E.Daniels of Broken Bow Oklahoma writes ; his wife is out of the hospital after a gall bladder operation. She was at his writing,in Kansas with their daughters,bu was to come back to Oklahoma City soon for a checkup and then home. We are glad to note sister Daniels is well on the road to recovery and pray for her entire recovery. He also wrote about meeting with the church where brother and sister J.V.Wood meets, and preaching for them. He reported they had a nice crowd out although some were absent on account of sickness.

He also writes the church at Stillwell has only about 14 members but are fighters for God's holy word. He sent me the names of three Browns who are leaders in the church there. I remember my sister Maud Scott wrote me of brother Jim Brown holding them a meeting at Crosbyton Texas.

Brother Lowery and Ervin Tibbs are going right ahead with the work at Roseville. Brother Lowery is threatened with some opposition; but I know Ervin Lowery can stand in the gap and make up the hedge of salvation arround God's people.

May God bless everyone of us to be ready when there is a "gap" in our "WALLS" of salvation; to stand in the gap,and make up the hedge,our wall of salvation, Using only Tempered morter,the word of God. And resist every effort to use "untempered morter", where men say, thus saith the Lord God, when God has not spoken".Ezek.22:28.

As ever, your's in Christ,

J.S.Bedingfield.