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Ezekiel 13

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Ezekiel 13.

Topics.

- The LORD is against the prophets of Israel
- False visions and lying divination.
- The false prophets have misled my people.
- The LORD will break down the wall smeared with whitewash.
- Ezekiel is told to prophesy against the women who hunt souls.
- God used Babylon to fulfil these prophetic words of Ezekiel.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the "likeness" of the LORD". Ezekiel was keenly aware of God's presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem. After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God's covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chpt. 37) is a classic picture of God's ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem. Ezekiel's message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins. For a greater overview of the entire book, visit the introduction to the book of Ezekiel in chapter one.

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FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

EZEKIEL 13:1-2

The LORD is against the Prophets of Israel

- **Ezekiel 13:1-2:** The word of the LORD came to me: ²"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, who are prophesying, and say to those who prophesy from their own hearts: 'Hear the word of the LORD!'"

Prophesy from their own hearts means:

- They are prophesying what they believe will happen.
- They prophesy what the people want to hear.

These men can fall into two groups:

1. This group actually believe they are called to be the LORD'S prophets, but in actual fact are what the Bible calls diviners or soothsayers (i.e. smooth talkers), this group is the most deceptive because they appear sincere when in actual fact they are deceived.

2. This group love fame, importance and money and soon realise how easy it is to deceive people through prophecy, so under the title of prophet they use the people for their own gain and their own advantage to increase their fame and wealth through their so-called gift of prophecy. Israel was full of this type of prophet, because they loved the importance and the exaltation the people gave them.

The LORD is against the Prophets of Israel continued:

- **Ezekiel 13:3-6:** Thus, says the Lord GOD, Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ⁴Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel. ⁵You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel, that it might stand in battle in the day of the LORD. ⁶They have seen false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'Declares the LORD,' when the LORD has not sent them, and yet they expect him to fulfill their word.

These false prophets speak from their own spirit and speak false visions and lying divinations in the name of the LORD.

The lesson for us today: just because a person says they have a vision or prophesy from God it does not always mean that they have. Ezekiel was the true prophet and the assembly of Judah told him to go away. They believed the false prophets where the true prophets and the prophets they trusted lead the entire nation into destruction.

Your prophets have been like jackals among ruins, O Israel: means they have not told the people what the needed to know to have God's favour with them in times of battle.

You have not gone up into the breaches, or built up a wall for the house of Israel: means they have not told the people to repent and turn from their wicked ways.

EZEKIEL 13:7-9

False Visions and Lying Divination.

- **Ezekiel 13:7-9:** Have you not *seen a false vision* and uttered a lying divination, whenever you have said, 'Declares the LORD,' although I have not spoken?" ⁸Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have uttered falsehood and *seen lying visions*, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord GOD. ⁹My hand will be against the prophets who *see false visions* and who give lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

Divination: means seeking knowledge by supernatural methods and the practice of attempting to foretell the future or discovering the unknown through omens, oracles, or supernatural powers.

NOTICE: these false prophets are actually seeing visions, but the visions are not from the LORD (v8).

EZEKIEL 13:10-12

The False Prophets Have Misled My People.

- **Ezekiel 13:10-12:** Precisely because they (the false prophets) have misled my people, saying, 'Peace,' when there is no peace, and because, when the people build a wall, these prophets smear it with whitewash, ¹¹say to those who smear it with whitewash that it shall fall! There will be a deluge of rain, and you, O great hailstones, will fall, and a stormy wind break out. ¹²And when the wall falls, will it not be said to you, 'Where is the coating with which you smeared it?'

Walls where made of clay and stone, covering them with whitewash made the wall look clean and covered all the flaws, but underneath the whitewash the wall is still clay and the flaws are still there.

The spiritual application: the prophets are speaking words of peace, which sounds great, but they are lies, the walls of clay and stone symbolise the people who the false prophets are covering with deception and lies i.e. peace (whitewash), so the people appear on the outside strong because they believe there will be peace, but when the battle comes they will fall, because on the inside their lives have been built on lies and deceit.

You, O great hailstones, will fall: (v11) refers to the false prophets who are speaking from lying visions and deceiving the people, they are called "great hailstones" because they have tremendous influence over the people, but it is destructive influence.

A stormy wind will break out: (v11) refers to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his armies, who entered Jerusalem, destroyed the walls, burned the city, pillaged the temple of God and took the people into captivity.

When the wall falls: (v12) refers to Babylon literally destroyed the walls of Jerusalem, but the spiritual application refers to the inhabitants of the city.

EZEKIEL 13:13-17

The LORD will Break Down the Wall Smeared with Whitewash.

- **Ezekiel 13:13-17:** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I will make a stormy wind break out in my wrath, and there shall be a deluge of rain in my anger, and great hailstones in wrath to make a full end. ¹⁴And I will break down the wall that you have smeared with whitewash, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you shall perish in the midst of it, and you shall know that I am the LORD. ¹⁵Thus will I spend my wrath upon the wall and upon those who have smeared it with whitewash, and I will say to you, The wall is no more, nor those who smeared it, ¹⁶the prophets of Israel who prophesied concerning Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her, when there was no peace, declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁷"And you, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own minds. Prophesy against them.

I will make a stormy wind: (v13) refers to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his armies.

A deluge of rain and great hailstones to make a full end: (v13) refers to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his armies, they broke down the wall, slaughtered the people, killed the kings sons, and blinded Zedekiah the king of Judah, then emptied the city of its inhabitants by taking them in chains captive to Babylon for seventy years.

NOTICE: the prophets prophesied out of their own minds, meaning they prophesied what they believed God would do and led the entire nation into destruction (v16-17).

EZEKIEL 13:18-23

Ezekiel is told to Prophecy against the Women who Hunt Souls.

- **Ezekiel 13:18-23:** and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew magic bands upon all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every stature, in the hunt for souls! *Will you hunt down souls belonging to my people* and keep your own souls alive? ¹⁹You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live, by your lying to my people, who listen to lies. ²⁰"Therefore thus says the Lord

GOD: Behold, I am against your magic bands with which you hunt the souls like birds, and I will tear them from your arms, and I will let the souls whom you hunt go free, the souls like birds. ²¹Your veils also I will tear off and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand as prey, and you shall know that I am the LORD. ²²Because you have disheartened the righteous falsely, although I have not grieved him, and you have encouraged the wicked, that he should not turn from his evil way to save his life, ²³therefore you shall no more see false visions nor practice divination. I will deliver my people out of your hand. And you shall know that I am the LORD."

Women who hunt down souls: applies to women of other faiths who worship idols and pagan gods, and who physically or spiritually seduce the men of Israel over to their belief system, they were probably a religious leader of some god or goddess.

Sew magic bands upon all wrists: (v18) these bands did not have any magic powers, but the people who wore them believed they did, if there was any power at all which affected a person it was not in the band, but in the person's superstition and their irrational, but usually deep-seated belief in the magical effects of the band, especially in the likelihood that good or bad luck would result from wearing it

Make veils for the heads of persons of every stature: (v18) veils were a head covering that symbolised a person's faith toward God. It appears these women of other gods and who had influence were placing veils on the heads of any person regardless of their faith, lifestyle or god simply to establish a greater following for themselves.

Clairvoyants and fortune-tellers: these women appear to have great religious authority; the people of Israel were giving them food, to hear their visions and prophecies. The women would be very much like our clairvoyants or fortune-tellers today.

Putting to death souls who should not die and keeping alive souls who should not live: the women by their false visions and practice of divination were leading the people of Israel away from God so in this sense they were putting to death those who should not die, and the people of Israel were giving the women food who in turn would have been giving it to her followers, so in this sense she was keeping alive those that should die.

Eternal life: God asks these fortune-telling women, "Do they think they can save their own soul by converting a man of Israel over to their religion." The religion of these women was everlasting life, through their lying visions and divination they were deceiving people in to a false hope of eternal life.

NOTE: when the Bible says, "Lying visions" it does not mean the women themselves knew they were a lying vision (some might), but most would be having visions and believing them to be true and from God, but they were deceived themselves and worshipped other gods so their visions were false and what they spoke was from their own mind (v17).

A lesson for today: when a person is deceived, they don't know they are deceived (that is the power of deception) so they speak with absolute confidence and authority totally convinced that what they are saying is true. Their listeners perceive their total conviction and sincerity to what they are saying and therefore believe it to be true, but it is a deception even though it is spoken in absolute sincerity. This is why deception is so powerful.

The LORD tells these women He will:

- Tear their magic bands and their veils from off them.
- Set free the souls of those they have deceived.
- Deliver His people from the gods of the women and their lying visions.

God used Babylon to fulfil these prophetic words of Ezekiel:

Babylon's armies invaded Jerusalem and took its inhabitants into captivity for seventy years. They went into captivity to Babylon as two rebellious nations who had turned from the LORD their God to idols and who were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods. But while in captivity God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar. They went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His Shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) gave permission to Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel back to their beloved City Jerusalem as one nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to pagan gods again).

The popularity of false religion: the fortune-telling women have encouraged the wicked, so their followers are not convicted to turn from their evil, this is one of the reasons the religion of these women was so attractive it taught they can have God and eternal life without changing their corrupt actions and behaviour.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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