

EZEKIEL 13:1-23 | PROPHETS AND PROPHETESSES

EZEKIEL 1:1-16 | PROPHETS

- Verses 1-7 – The false prophets of Israel
 - The **word of the Lord came** is a standard mark of transition in the book of Ezekiel. It is used 92 times in the Scripture, 47 of these (51%) are found in Ezekiel. Here, the **word of the Lord** comes in its more standard format of the spoken word to Ezekiel (rather than a vision).
 - The word instructed Ezekiel to **prophecy against the prophets of Israel**.
 - He was to rebuke them for being prophets **that follow their own spirit** but have no real word / vision from God.
 - How common that self-proclaimed prophets today do the same thing.
 - It should be remembered that even the prophet himself can be deceived because our spirits easily lead us astray, in a *very convincing* manner.
 - In the Old Testament, prophecies were most often *verbal* or *visual*. Even the time it was a **still small voice** (1 Kings 19:12), it was *still a small voice!*
 - These *spirit-driven* prophets **are like the foxes in the deserts**. Presumably this is a figure of speech that likens the false prophets to the *sleek, sly fox* that is impossible to catch and tie down.
 - In verse 5 a word is given, presumably to the nation, that they had allowed **the gaps** (in the wall, speaking allegorically) to remain open. They had not **made up the hedge** to keep the foxes out. Recall that one of Israel's solemn obligations was to be discerning with "prophecy." See Deuteronomy 13:1-5, Proverbs 14:15, Jeremiah 5:31, 29:8-9, as well as 1 John 4:1, which is found in the New Testament but given in a Jewish setting.
 - To claim that **The Lord saith it** (v. 7) when the Lord has not spoken is serious business. Sadly, the making of such claims did not go away with the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians, nor later to the Romans, nor even in the church today.
- Verses 8-9 - Divine hostility
 - Due to the **vanity** (emptiness) and **lies**, God had turned His face against them.
 - The punishment for the prophets was harsh: *they would be written out of the citizenship of Israel*.
 - The student of the Old Testament should always recall that salvation in the Old Testament was through the coming Kingdom and thus through citizenship with Israel. To be *put out of the camp* was to lose any hope of salvation.
 - Later, the Roman Catholic church, viewing itself as Israel, adopted this as its own doctrine, mixing it with its misplaced concept of holding the keys to the Kingdom.
- Verses 10-17 - False prophets and a fake wall.
 - The false prophets had ignored the true prophets, who were warning of imminent danger. The false prophets proclaimed **Peace; and there was no peace**.
 - One of these prophets gave prophetic symbolism building a wall, while other false prophets **daubed it with untempered mortar**.
 - The Lord reminded the people that an **overflowing shower** would be enough to do it in.

- The wall, which doubtless represented the supposed strength of Jerusalem would crumble, and the false prophets would be destroyed.

EZEKIEL 13:17-23 | PROPHETESSES

- Verse 17 - Female prophets
 - It was not uncommon to have a female prophet under the old covenant. The priesthood was reserved for certain men, but *prophets* and *prophetesses* were not normally priests (Ezekiel being an exception).
 - Just as a man could be a false prophet, so could a woman. Both genders of false prophets prophesied **out of their own hearts** (v. 2, 17), and the heart is *not* the source of prophetic information.
- Verses 18 – 19 –
 - Just as the false male prophets had their false symbol, so the women had a false symbol.
 - The phrases **sew pillows to all armholes** and **make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature** do not communicate well today.
 - The idea is *concealment* of the arm (specifically the arm of the Lord, and thus His strength), and the *covering* of the eyes of those of **stature** (influence).
 - By the dual work of hiding the strength of the Lord and covering men’s eyes to it, the women would feign protection from war, building a “loving” society that would provide **handfuls of barley** and **pieces of bread**.
 - By doing this, the women would **slay the souls that should not die, and...save the souls alive that should not live** (v. 19). That is, the work of the prophetesses was doing *exactly opposite* from what the Lord desired.
- Verses 20-21 - The judgment of God
 - God is **against your pillows**, and these pillows are used **to hunt souls to make them fly**.
 - The passage is not clear but must relate to their work to **slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live**.
 - In the end, God was going to work against their work.
- Verses 22-23 - The ultimate rescue
 - Ultimately, God was going to **deliver my people** from the vain prophecies and lies both of the prophets and the prophetesses. These together were *doing exactly the opposite of the Lords will but doing it in the name of the Lord*.
 - In the end, the Lord would put an end to this.

EZEKIEL 14:1-19:14 | PROGRESSION OF JUDGMENT (PART 1)

EZEKIEL 14:1-11 | ELDERS

- Verses 1-3 – Shameful inquiry
 - There were **certain elders of Israel** that came seeking Ezekiel’s prophetic word. God’s reaction was blunt: **should I be inquired of at all by them?** What gall, the Lord believed, to approach the Lord after setting up **idols in their heart**.
 - The men should have heeded the words of King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 5:2: **Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God**.

