

**Ezek. 13:1 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,
Ezek. 13:2 Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy,
and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the
word of the LORD;**

**Ezek. 13:3 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that
follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!**

At this point Ezekiel receives a message from the Lord directed to the false prophets of Israel. As I read through this chapter, I got the impression that there are false prophets aplenty in Israel at this time, and very few prophets that speak God's truth. The Lord describes these prophets as speaking "out of their own hearts." They are certainly not declaring a message revealed to them by God.

As I continued to think about these verses, it came to me that these false prophets know who they are—even if the people to whom they are speaking aren't discerning enough to recognize them as such. The people are more willing to believe a message that supports their own interests and desires than they are to accept a true message that calls for repentance and denial of the flesh. I believe the same is true regarding the false prophets and the listening public of today.

Ezek. 13:4 O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts.

**Ezek. 13:5 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.**

**Ezek. 13:6 They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The LORD
saith: and the LORD hath not sent them: and they have made *others* to hope
that they would confirm the word.**

The message now embraces the people of Israel who are listening to these false prophets. The Lord is comparing these false prophets to foxes in the deserts. In doing a word search on *foxes*, I found an interesting verse.

Song 2:15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our
vines *have* tender grapes.

In my study of Isaiah I found that the Lord compared Israel to a vineyard upon which He had lavished much care. These prophets were foxes spoiling the spiritual foundation of the nation of Israel.

Webster describes a fox as carnivorous, crafty, sly and cunning. I think this description fits these false prophets as well. They were feeding off their people through the wealth and influence they garnered by declaring the message they wanted to hear. They were knowledgeable and skillful in their use of deceit; they knew exactly what they were doing. Their concern was for self; they weren't concerned for the well-being of the people.

Standing in the gap and *making up the hedge* are references to meeting the needs of the people, providing protection and preparing them to fight spiritual battles. Part of that preparation was to point the people to dependence upon the LORD and obedience to His law. Moses is described as standing in the breach as an intercessor on behalf of his people against the wrath of God.

Psa. 106:23 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*.

God is very clear on the point that these false prophets are not delivering a message from Him. They are giving the people false hope for the future by denying the message of truth given by God's prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Ezek. 13:7 Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The LORD saith *it*; albeit I have not spoken?

Ezek. 13:8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I *am* against you, saith the Lord GOD.

Ezek. 13:9 And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel again addresses the false prophets directly. He challenges them. Why don't you admit that you are declaring a lying, deceptive message. You tell the people that your message is from The LORD when you know it isn't. God is declaring His direct opposition to these false prophets and their message. He is going to destroy these false prophets so that they can no longer spread their lies among the people.

Sections of scripture like this should be a huge wakeup call to the false prophets of today. It always amazes me that they think they are going to escape punishment or consequences of any kind for their actions. I think Satan has done an amazing job of deceiving them and that they must truly believe their own lies to be able to continue in them so boldly.

Ezek. 13:10 Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and *there was* no peace; and one built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered *morter*:

Ezek. 13:11 Say unto them which daub *it* with untempered *morter*, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend *it*.

Ezek. 13:12 Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where *is* the daubing wherewith ye have daubed *it*?

God is declaring judgment upon the people because of their wickedness and the false prophets who are declaring peace. They were working as a team in presenting their lies and deceit. One would make a statement and others would build on that statement with their own lies. I like the wording of the CJB.

“...If someone builds a wall without mortar, they ‘plaster’ it with whitewash [to make it appear strong]. Tell these ‘plasterers’ that a cloudburst is coming, with huge hailstones and gale-force winds; and the wall will fall down.

In other words the Lord is going to fulfill His prophecy of judgment, and then the people will know that they have listened to lies and deceit. They will be quick to lay the blame at the feet of the false prophets.

Ezek. 13:13 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend *it* with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in *my* fury to consume *it*.

Ezek. 13:14 So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered *morter*, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

The Lord is declaring that His judgment against the false prophets and the people will come with the fury, power and devastation of a great hailstorm. The lies and deceit of the false prophets will be revealed, and the false prophets will be destroyed. God is declaring the judgment and its consequences in advance so that the people will have to recognize Him as Almighty God. (2/09) The prophet Isaiah supports this reasoning.

Isaiah 48:3-7 "I have declared the former things from the beginning; and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them; I did them suddenly, and they came to pass. Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass; I have even from the beginning declared it to thee; before it came to pass I shewed it thee: lest thou shouldest say, Mine idol hath done them, and my graven image, and my molten image, hath commanded them. Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them. They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them."

Ezek. 13:15 Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered *morter*, and will say unto you, The wall *is no more*, neither they that daubed it;

Ezek. 13:16 *To wit*, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and *there is no peace*, saith the Lord GOD.

The Lord continues to emphasize that He is going to reveal the lies of the false prophets through the coming judgment. They are declaring peace for the future, and they are calling God a liar in the process. He will reveal Himself as Truth.

Deut. 32:4 *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he.

Psa. 119:160 Thy word *is* true *from* the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments *endureth* for ever.

Scripture also declares that there is no peace for the wicked.

Is. 57:21 *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Ezek. 13:17 Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, which prophesy out of their own heart; and prophesy thou against them,

Ezek. 13:18 And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the *women* that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive *that come* unto you?

Ezek. 13:19 And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear *your* lies?

Not only are the false prophets declaring their lies and deceit, but there are also false prophetesses. As I continue to read, I get the idea that they are more like fortune tellers who are using their lies and deceit to make a profit. They are described as hunters of souls; hunters do not intend good for the hunted. These prophetesses were obviously leading the people down a path of spiritual destruction.

I did quite a bit of research in commentaries and on the web but could not find a definitive explanation to these practices. The ones that made the most sense indicated that the pillows were used to place their customers in a relaxed position and that the veils were used to create an aura of mystery and unique revelation. Some made comment as to the use of environment to manipulate the attitude and expectation of their clientele. These enchantresses performed their services for anyone who could pay—"every stature."

Again, it is amazing to me how easily we humans can be duped by false prophets, fortune tellers and the like and are willing to pay out good money for such lies and deceitful practices.

"handfuls of barley...pieces of bread" – JFB made a good point in reference to these phrases. These women sought the "paltry gain for which they bartered immortal souls."

Ezek. 13:20 Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make *them* fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, *even* the souls that ye hunt to make *them* fly.

Ezek. 13:21 Your kerchiefs also will I tear, and deliver my people out of your hand, and they shall be no more in your hand to be hunted; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Through Ezekiel God is declaring His opposition to these false prophetesses. He is going to free the people from their influence. Again the Lord declares that when His judgment comes to pass, the people should recognize it as from Him because He is declaring all in advance.

"to make them fly" – Again, I thought JFB had the best insight on this phrase.

"...namely, into their snares, as fowlers disturb birds so as to be suddenly caught in the net spread for them. 'Fly' is peculiarly appropriate as to those lofty spiritual *flights* to which they pretended to raise their dupes when they veiled their heads with kerchiefs and made them rest on luxurious arm-cushions...'Ye make them fly' in order to destroy them; 'I will let them go' in order to save them."

Ezek. 13:22 Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life:

Ezek. 13:23 Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

The LORD goes on to emphasize the truth just presented. These false prophetesses have spoken lies that have brought sorrow upon the righteous and encouraged the wicked to continue in their ways. This is just the opposite of God's intentions. The faithful are to be strengthened in their faith, and the wicked are to have their sin identified and judged. God affirms that He is going to deliver the people from the influence of these wicked women. Their deliverance will result in affirming God as LORD.

As I continued to think on this chapter, I was hit with the harmful effect of pride in one's life. Pride is assuming that we know better than God what is right and wrong or for our good or to our detriment. Not only did these false prophets/prophetesses destroy the souls of others through their lies and deceit, they destroyed their own souls--All for a bit of material wealth and "fame" in this lifetime without regard for eternity. Because they rejected God's authority in this lifetime, they would experience His wrath for eternity. They and we were and are surrounded by evidences of the truth of God as declared by His prophets in His Word. For some reason we are more ready to accept the lies and deceit of the enemy over the truth and love of the Father in Heaven. We would rather experience the "pleasures of sin for a season" (Hebrews 11:25).

The more I study God's word, the more I am convinced that there should be a huge difference in my life and that of the world around me. We who declare God's name and call ourselves "Christian," have a responsibility to honor His name by how we live. I grieve at the thought of how lightly I have considered that responsibility at times in my life. I pray, Father, that you will keep me ever aware through the ministry of your Holy Spirit to guard the honor of your name through my thoughts, words, and actions. Help me, Lord, to keep my mind stayed on you.