

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious Part XI: God's Condemnation Of False Prophets and Prophetesses (Ezekiel 13:1-23)

I. Introduction

- A. People who are highly rebellious against the Lord often hold to an errant view since they have heeded an errant teacher. This situation naturally leads to God's dealing in judgment with the errant teacher.
- B. Ezekiel 13:1-23 presents God's message of condemnation of Israel's false prophets and prophetesses, showing that He holds false teachers of either gender equally and highly accountable for misleading others into error and its eventual consequence of sin. We thus view this passage for our instruction and edification:

II. God's Condemnation Of False Prophets And Prophetesses, Ezekiel 13:1-23.

- A. God condemned the false prophets for harming His people by misplacing their hope, Ezekiel 13:1-16:
 - 1. The Lord had Ezekiel prophesy against Israel's false prophets who taught their own ideas, Ezek. 13:1-2.
 - 2. Ezekiel was to announce a woe of judgment against these false prophets because their words were not only false, but because they misled people to their harm like foxes who dwelt among ruins, Ezekiel 13:3-4; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1251. "Just as foxes consider ruins to be a perfectly acceptable 'home,' so also the false prophets were able to flourish in a crumbling society," taking advantage of the social decline for personal gain through feeding on the fears and anxieties of people in such a time, *Ibid.*
 - 3. Israel's moral walls were about to collapse, but the prophets did nothing to help repair these moral walls so that the society might stand in the day of God's judgment, Ezekiel 13:5 ESV; *Ibid.*
 - 4. These prophets claimed to speak the Word of the Lord when they had only seen false visions and used lying divinations in deceiving their naive hearers, Ezekiel 13:6-7.
 - 5. Accordingly, the Lord was against these false prophets, and they would no longer be included in positions of influence that they then enjoyed once their prophecies had proved to be false, Ezekiel 13:8-9.
 - 6. These prophets had specifically misled God's people by declaring that there would be peace when there was no peace, but destruction due to judgment on sin, Ezekiel 13:10a. The prophets' false ministries were like a "flimsy wall covered with whitewash" that covered over the deficiencies in the moral fabric of the society instead of calling the people to repent, Ezekiel 13:10b; *Ibid.*
 - 7. Accordingly, in judgment, these prophets would be blamed when their wall collapsed, when God figuratively destroyed it with rain, hailstones and violent winds of the Babylonian invasion, and the people would ask these false prophets where was the whitewash of their prophecies of peace when Jerusalem had been destroyed, Ezekiel 13:11-12; *Ibid.*, p. 1251-1252.
 - 8. With the fall of their false prophecies, these false prophets themselves would also be slain, and they would know that the Lord was God, Ezekiel 13:13-16.
- B. God also condemned the false prophetesses for harming His people by misplacing their hope, Ezek. 13:17-23:
 - 1. Ezekiel was called of God to prophecy against the false prophetesses who gave their own messages just like the false prophets had given their own messages, Ezekiel 13:17.
 - 2. God had Ezekiel critique these women who sewed magic charms on their wrists and made veils for their heads to put spells on people for better or for worse opposite what was just all to earn a few handfuls of barley and scraps of bread, Ezekiel 13:18-19; *Ibid.*, p. 1252. In an era where uncertainty and turmoil existed, such "frauds and charlatans" tended to "prey on the fears of the gullible" in society, *Ibid.*
 - 3. The Lord had Ezekiel declare His opposition to these prophetesses, claiming He would tear their charms from their wrists and their veils from their heads, delivering His people from their false manipulations that disheartened the upright and encouraged the wicked for the sake of material gain, Ezekiel 13:20-22.
 - 4. The prophetesses would no longer see false visions or practice divination, but God would deliver His people from their lying influence, and the prophetesses would know that He was the Lord, Ezekiel 13:23.

Lesson: *Since the false prophets and prophetesses misled God's people unto errant thinking and living, the Lord would severely punish them, delivering His people from respecting their ministries and from their false influence.*

Application: *(1) If we teach others, may we be sure we teach God's truth and not some man-made view that only misleads others to their spiritual harm. (2) May we check all teaching we hear with God's written Word. (3) If a teaching discourages the righteous or delights the wicked, it is likely errant (Ezekiel 13:22) and MUST be checked.*