

Pentwater Bible Church

Book of Ezekiel

Message 21

January 24, 2016



The prophet Jeremiah Mourning The Destruction of Jerusalem by Rembrandt Cir. 1630

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Ezekiel
Message Twenty-One

The False Prophets Are Condemned

January 24, 2016

Daniel E. Woodhead

Ezekiel 13:1-16

¹And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, ²Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own heart, Hear ye the word of Jehovah: ³Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ⁴O Israel, thy prophets have been like foxes in the waste places. ⁵Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither built up the wall for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of Jehovah. ⁶They have seen falsehood and lying divination, that say, Jehovah saith; but Jehovah hath not sent them: and they have made men to hope that the word would be confirmed. ⁷Have ye not seen a false vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, in that ye say, Jehovah saith; albeit I have not spoken?

⁸Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because ye have spoken falsehood, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord Jehovah. ⁹And my hand shall be against the prophets that see false visions, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the council 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 Jehovah. ¹⁰Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there is no peace; and when one buildeth up a wall, behold, they daub it with untempered mortar: ¹¹say unto them that daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. ¹²Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it? ¹³Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my wrath; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in wrath to consume it. ¹⁴So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be uncovered; and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. ¹⁵Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar; and I will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it; ¹⁶to wit, the prophets of Israel that prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and that see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

FALSE PROPHETS DON'T SPEAK FOR GOD

Ezekiel 13:1-1-2

¹And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, ²Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own heart, Hear ye the word of Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

Ezekiel has by now pronounced a judgment from God on the city of Jerusalem and the King as well as his princes. God is directly telling him to rebuke the false prophets. We see the test of a prophet in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

¹If there arise in the midst of thee a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give thee a sign or a wonder, ²and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; ³thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for Jehovah your God proveth you, to know whether ye love Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴Ye shall walk after Jehovah your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him. ⁵And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken rebellion against Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of bondage, to draw thee aside out of the way which Jehovah thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee (ASV, 1901)

Deuteronomy 18, 21-22

²¹And if thou say in thy heart, How shall we know the word which Jehovah hath not spoken? ²²when a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him (ASV, 1901).

This being part of the Mosaic Law was know by the priests and King as well. We will see in this chapter the Lord's denunciation of the false prophets. It is a fulfillment of the passage in the last chapter of Ezekiel, *For there shall be no more any false vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.* Jeremiah had many problems with the false prophets in Jerusalem and Ezekiel did also to a lesser extent. In the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah we find the longest of all passages in his book condemning them. It is clear from reading Jeremiah chapter 23 that it is the same as this chapter in Ezekiel. They both describe the same issues with the false prophets.

Interestingly when the Lord told Ezekiel to prophecy against the "*prophets*" of Israel He called them that in a very caustic sense. He was not in any way saying that they were sincerely trying to carry out their office in any way connected to Him. Rather He uses the term, "*that prophesy out of their own heart.*" This clearly means that their prophecies

came from within themselves not from God. The apostle Peter says that the same false prophets and teachers will be among us during the New Testament times as well.

II Peter 2:1-2

¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (KJV).

The false teachers are motivated from a personal desire instead of the clear teaching of the Bible. They don't want God because they don't look to Him for guidance. They look within themselves to determine their messages. Similarly today when we encounter teachers that teach contrary to the Bible by adding to it or subtracting from they are false prophets (Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 18-19). The passage cited above from II Peter 2 continues with a rather lengthily diatribe denouncing the false teachers in great detail. This is how serious the Lord takes the issue of His Word being twisted and corrupted. The Lord hates the false teachers. The tragic fact of them is how successful financially they are drawing large crowds to hear their soothing words that deny the authority of God's Word and replace it with what the old King James calls tickling ears (II Timothy 4:3). They appeal to the masses because they remove the accountability to God and replace it with what people would like to hear. Namely, that their sins are not so bad and they can continue with what they want to do.

FALSE PROPHETS COMPARED TO FOXES

Ezekiel 13:3-5

³ Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! ⁴ O Israel, thy prophets have been like foxes in the waste places. ⁵ Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither built up the wall for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

Now the Lord expands on the origin of the false prophet's message. He says that they, "follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!" From a worldly standpoint they were hardly stupid. They knew what they were doing and would continue if it were not for God destroying them. He says that they have seen nothing, which is a reference to them not seeing the truth of God through His Word. Their manipulation of the masses is a gift from their master Satan who uses them to destroy and take people away from God. Consider how Isaiah refers to them as fools.

Isaiah 32:6

⁶ For the fool will speak folly, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice profaneness, and to utter error against Jehovah, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and to cause the drink of the thirsty to fail (ASV, 1901).

Interestingly God compares them to foxes, which are very smart animals. But their characteristic is to be crafty, mischievous and destructive. Foxes will run away when confronted with the danger of an encounter with a human. These prophets do the same. They comfort the people with lies but when confronted with truth they run away and hide. Or they lie and deny they are speaking false prophecies. Foxes sneak through holes in fences and walls to destroy livestock, gardens, bring disease and threaten the safety of small children. False prophets likewise enter the minds of the unprotected whose faith in God is weak and they wreak spiritual destruction. When Israel had strong leaders such as David and Solomon there were no false prophets in Israel. Those leaders were a barrier to keep them out. But when the leaders degenerated into apostasy the false prophets found ears within the country who would listen to them. The people spirits were low at this time and the false prophets gave them hope with a false message. God charges them for not caring for the population of Israel. They were not standing in the way of evil to keep it out of Israel. David in contrast clearly was a protector by killing bears, lions and even Goliath who all tried to bring harm to Israel (I Samuel 17:36). If the false prophets had been true to God like Ezekiel and Jeremiah, they would have warned the people of judgment to come. But instead of helping repair the “breaks in the wall” (v. 5) by strengthening the moral and spiritual lives of the people, they contributed to the decay. The false prophets were the “foxes” or scavengers, and the people were their prey. Jesus clearly considered the Pharisees of His day to be the same as the false prophets. They did not protect the citizens for God. They turned them away from God.

Matthew 23:13

¹³But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in (KJV).

LYING DIVINATION

Ezekiel 13:6-7

⁶They have seen falsehood and lying divination, that say, Jehovah saith; but Jehovah hath not sent them: and they have made men to hope that the word would be confirmed. ⁷Have ye not seen a false vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, in that ye say, Jehovah saith; albeit I have not spoken?

Instead of receiving a sure word from God they just relied on their own imaginations, which were driven by their own wicked motives. They declared lies that emanated from human invention and not God’s Word. They were foretelling the future without divine insight. They were delusional and from their corrupt evil minds came the lies that they attributed to the divine. By attributing their false prophecies to God they confused the people even more than the prophets of Baal who spoke in the name of Baal (I Kings 18:26). There was no confusion in the Baal prophets that were opposed by Elijah in his conflict with them on Mount Carmel. Jeremiah quoted God by saying; “*the Lord has not sent these prophets yet they ran, and He has not spoken to them and they prophecied*” (Jeremiah 23:21).

GOD IS AGAINST THE FALSE PROPHETS

Ezekiel 13:8-9

⁸*Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because ye have spoken falsehood, and seen lies, therefore, behold, I am against you, saith the Lord Jehovah.*
⁹*And my hand shall be against the prophets that see false visions, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the council 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 Jehovah (ASV, 1901).*

The false prophets claimed to speak for Him but He is saying that He is against them because they don't speak for Him, only themselves. Ezekiel cites three aspects of the judgment as a result of their false prophecies. 1) They would not belong to the council of God's people. They had the ears of the bad leaders and they enjoyed influential positions in Jerusalem and as well as among the exiled in Babylon. But because of the false prophecies they would lose this influence and position that they presently enjoyed. 2) Their names would be blotted out of Israel's records, which was the list of the citizens. This means a loss of citizenship (Ezra 2:62). This is tantamount to an excommunication. And it will result in their not being in Heaven with the genuine prophets. 3) They would never again enter the land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael) because they would die either running away from the Babylonians or in Babylon if they were prisoners of war. They will be outcasts like lepers.

FALSE PROPHETS ARE LIKE BAD MORTAR

Ezekiel 13:10-12

¹⁰*Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there is no peace; and when one buildeth up a wall, behold, they daub it with untempered mortar: ¹¹say unto them that daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. ¹²Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it (ASV, 1901)?*

There is much repetition regarding the false prophet's character. This repetition is emphasis to describe the seriousness of what they do. God says, "*they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there is no peace.*" They are lying and telling the people that in this instance the Babylonians were not going to invade. Today this takes the form of encouraging sinning by denying divine retribution. God will not punish sin they say. It is ok to have abortions, commit adultery, engage in homosexual relationships etc. Their prophecies were deceptive and God likens their lies to a crumbling wall that is in need of strong mortar. But instead of strong quality mortar one uses whitewash or a weak substitute that has no strength and will wash off in the first rain. Therefore it will provide no genuine protection. It might look sturdy until the test comes and then it fails. Instead of a rain shower God says great hailstones will fall along with a strong wind and they will tear down the defective wall. So shall also the false prophets be taken down. Finally the truth of the nature of the false prophets would be revealed to the people. They would ask the prophets, *Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it?* The daubing or

“whitewash” was their false prophecies; and when Jerusalem was destroyed, this would be revealed. So just where is this peace and tranquility they promised?

THE PROPHETS OWN WORK WAS THEIR DESTRUCTION

Ezekiel 13:13-16

¹³Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my wrath; and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in wrath to consume it. ¹⁴So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be uncovered; and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah. ¹⁵Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar; and I will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it; ¹⁶to wit, the prophets of Israel that prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and that see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

God says, “I will bring a stormy wind of my wrath and an overflowing shower of anger to consume them.” In continuing with the wall illustration He says that the wall will be brought down and the foundation shall be uncovered. Their false prophecies will result in them losing their lives as He destroys the false prophets. Everyone will see what was actually underneath their false prophecies. Lies, deceit and self serving illusions will all be revealed and come to an end. They will be completely demolished. The false prophets not only misled the nation by lying to them but prevented most of the people from repenting.

Paul gives us a similar admonition of the work of the false prophets in the New Testament. He says this about those who continue in deceiving work of false teachers. *It is written, “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are”* (1 Corinthians 3:17). That is, believers are the temple of God, which is, the Church. The Church has for its foundation the Truth of God, and the doctrine of Christ. A rejection of the doctrine of Christ is so common now that it defiles the spiritual temple of God, His Church. It is the worst and most profane thing to occur to our Lord. Ignoring the truth of the Bible is widespread and the false leader with his work corrupts the best, the holiest. God’s people need to heed the warning to have no fellowship with such who do the work of false prophets. In fact we must speak out against them (e.g. Ezekiel 11:1-3).

NEXT MESSAGE: THE LORD HATES LYING WOMEN PROPHETS

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

E-mail info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com Toll Free 877-706-2479