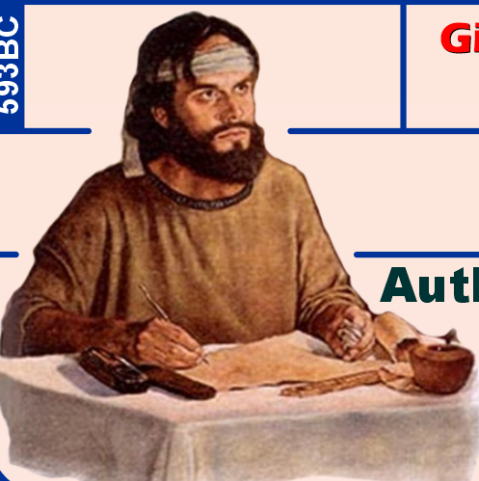


FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

13

BOOK OF EZEKIEL — OUTLINE

INWARD → Personal		OUTWARD ↺ Peoples		ONWARD → Prophetic									
1 — 3		4 — 24		25 — 32		33 — 48							
Ezekiel's Call to Ministry - Ezekiel Birth (623BC) and Ministry Years (593-571BC) 597BC is the 2nd Deportation; Ezekiel taken at age 25 593BC Ezekiel begins Ministry at age 30		Sinfulness of Israel and Fall of Jerusalem - A Disobedient Nation (4-7) - A Departed Glory (8-11) - A Disciplined Nation (12-24) - The Futility of False Optimism (12-19) - The History of Judah's Corruption (20-24)		Judgment on Nations that Opposed Israel - Ammon (25:1-7) - Moab (25:8-11) - Edom (25:12-14) - Philistia (25:15-17) - Tyre (26:1—28:19) - Babylonia (26) - Sidon (28:20-24) - Egypt (29-32)		Restoration of Israel in the Future - Return of Israel to the land (33-39) - Restoration of Israel in the Kingdom (40-48) - Promised Land; Millennial Temple, and the Glory of God							
593BC		Given BEFORE the siege of Jerusalem		587BC		Given DURING the siege of Jerusalem		586BC		Given AFTER the siege of Jerusalem		571BC	
								The City Destroyed 7 Years Prophesying JUDGMENT					
								The City Restored 15 Years Prophesying HOPE					
Author: Ezekiel (“God strengthens”) Place: Babylonia Time: About 22 years (593-571BC)													
Events: 605BC — FIRST Siege upon Israel by Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel taken) Ezekiel 17 years old													
597BC — SECOND assault upon Jerusalem (Ezekiel taken) Ezekiel 25 years old													
593BC — Ezekiel at age 30 called by God to testify against Israel Ezekiel 30 years old													
586BC — THIRD assault upon Jerusalem (City & Temple destroyed) Ezekiel 37 years old													

FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM — SIGNS AND MESSAGES

EZEKIEL 12-14

(1) The SIGN of the Baggage and the Hole in the Wall (Ek.12:1-16)

(2) The SIGN of Trembling while Eating and Drinking (Ek.12:17-20)

(1) First MESSAGE on the Certainty of Judgment (Ek.12:21-25)

(2) Second MESSAGE on the Certainty of Judgment (Ek.12:26-28)

(3) Third MESSAGE on the Certainty of Judgment (Ek.13:1-23)

(4) Fourth MESSAGE on the Certainty of Judgment (Ek.14:1-11)

(5) Fifth MESSAGE on the Certainty of Judgment (Ek.14:12-23)

FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM — PARABLES AND MESSAGE EZEKIEL 15-19

- (1) PARABLE of the Fruitless Vine (Ek.15:1-8)**
- (2) PARABLE of the Adulterous Wife (Ek.16:1-63)**
- (3) PARABLE of the Two Eagles (Ek.17:1-24)**
- (4) MESSAGE on Individual Responsibility (Ek.18:1-32)**
- (5) PARABLE of Lamentation for Israel's Princes (Ek.19:1-14)**

The background of the slide is a scenic landscape. In the foreground, there are dense bushes with bright orange and yellow autumn leaves. A dark wooden fence runs along the bottom left. In the middle ground, a calm blue lake stretches across the scene, with several small, forested islands. In the background, rolling mountains are visible under a sky filled with soft, white and grey clouds. The overall lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

THIRD MESSAGE ON THE CERTAINTY OF JUDGMENT

Ezekiel 13:1-23

**And the word of the LORD
came to me, saying,**

EZEKIEL 13:1



And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, (Ek.13:1)

- **Ezekiel's third message was directed against Israel's false prophets and prophetesses who were leading the nation astray.**
- **In a large measure they were responsible for the people's misplaced hope.**
- **Ezekiel 13 is an amplification of Ezekiel 12:24, dealing with "false" prophets.**



For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. (Ek.12:24).



"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy out of their own heart, 'Hear the word of the LORD!' "

EZEKIEL 13:2



"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy out of their own heart, 'Hear the word of the LORD!' " (Ek.13:2)

- **Ezekiel was to announce judgment on these false prophets.**
- **The message of the false prophets came from their own imagination (Ek.13:17), not from God.**
- **Ezekiel was challenging the source of their message.**



"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who prophesy, and say to those who prophesy out of their own heart, 'Hear the word of the LORD!' " (Ek.13:2)

- He was using the word “prophet” ironically; these were not true prophets, but they claimed to be such.**
- They were foolish because they disregarded God's word and relied on themselves.**
- It is not clear in this chapter whether the Lord was speaking primarily of the false prophets in Jerusalem or in exile. He may be referring to both.**



**Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe
to the foolish prophets, who
follow their own spirit and have
seen nothing!"**



EZEKIEL 13:3



Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! (Ek.13:3)

- **Since their message came from their own spirit, Ezekiel could rightfully claim that they had seen nothing.**
- **From God's law impersonating a prophet is like modern society of impersonating a police officer because it harmfully defrauds people.**
- **“Woe” is a prophetic literary form known as a funeral dirge (Is.5:8,11,18,20-22; Je.22:13,18).**



Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! (Ek.13:3)

- **Foolish prophets seems to refer to self deception not low intelligence.**
- **Here is the problem! It is their own spirit that is leading them, not God's Spirit!**
- **They speak their word in God's name!**



**O Israel, your prophets
are like foxes in the
deserts.**

EZEKIEL 13:4



O Israel, your prophets are like foxes in the deserts. (Ek.13:4)

- **Not only was the message of the false prophets untrue; it was also dangerous.**
- **The false prophets were like foxes among ruins.**
- **Foxes are not generally known for their destruction. It is probably better to understand that Ezekiel was referring to the nature of the foxes' dwelling places.**



O Israel, your prophets are like foxes in the deserts. (Ek.13:4)

- Just as foxes consider ruins to be a perfectly acceptable “home,” so also the false prophets were able to flourish in a crumbling society.**
- The Lord compared these false prophets to foxes that prowled around among ruins looking for holes in which to hide.**
- The only concern of foxes and these prophets was their own welfare and self-interests. They contributed nothing to the welfare of other needy people.**



**You have not gone up into the gaps
to build a wall for the house of
Israel to stand in battle on the day
of the LORD.**

EZEKIEL 13:5



You have not gone up into the gaps to build a wall for the house of Israel to stand in battle on the day of the LORD. (Ek.13:5)

- Israel's moral walls were ready to collapse, but the false prophets did nothing to help.**
- The Day of the Lord in most OT passages refer to the YHWH's personal presence, and the beginning of God's wrath.**
- But in this passage it seems to refer to the coming judgment by the Babylonians.**
- Building the wall around the house of Israel so it could stand in the battle of the day of the Lord refers to preparing the people for the invasion and siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.**



They have envisioned futility and false divination, saying, 'Thus says the LORD!' But the LORD has not sent them; yet they hope that the word may be confirmed.



EZEKIEL 13:6



They have envisioned futility and false divination, saying, 'Thus says the LORD!' But the LORD has not sent them; yet they hope that the word may be confirmed. (Ek.13:6)

- **The false prophets claimed to represent God, but He did not claim them.**
- **When these prophets claimed to speak a message from the Lord they were only uttering falsehood which is the results of deceptive divination.**
- **The Lord had not sent them, yet they expected their prophecies to come to pass.**
- **They claim to be YHWH's representatives, but they knowingly speak their own messages.**



**Have you not seen a futile vision,
and have you not spoken false
divination? You say, 'The LORD
says,' but I have not spoken."**

EZEKIEL 13:7



**Have you not seen a futile vision, and have you not spoken false divination?
You say, 'The LORD says,' but I have not spoken." (Ek.13:7)**

- **Today there are also many 'false prophets' ministering in religious places, leading people into judgment rather than turning them to Christ.**
- **God rhetorically asks, 'have you not seen false prophecies?' The inferred answer is “yes.” The false prophecies are their “prophecies.”**
- **They had said, “the LORD says” yet the LORD said no such thing.**



**Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
"Because you have spoken
nonsense and envisioned lies,
therefore I am indeed against you,"
says the Lord GOD.**

EZEKIEL 13:8



Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have spoken nonsense and envisioned lies, therefore I am indeed against you," says the Lord GOD. (Ek.13:8)

- **Their lies of necessity provoked God's wrath and rejection.**
- **Such prophets could have no part in the new Israel (v.9).**
- **The new nation would be purified and would reenter the land according to the promises God.**
- **God says there are consequences to prophesying without divine impulse.**



**"My hand will be against the prophets
who envision futility and who divine
lies; they shall not be in the assembly
of My people, nor be written in the
record of the house of Israel, nor shall
they enter into the land of Israel. Then
you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.**

EZEKIEL 13:9



"My hand will be against the prophets who envision futility and who divine lies; they shall not be in the assembly of My people, nor be written in the record of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord GOD. (Ek.13:9)

- God would act against them by removing them from positions of influence among His people, depriving them of the rights of citizenship in Israel.**
- Not being registered prevents them from returning to the Promised Land.**
- The fulfillment of these judgments would prove to them that Yahweh was Lord.**



3 THINGS GOD SAYS TO THESE FALSE PROPHETS

FIRST, they would not belong to the council of God's people.

- **After their prophecies were proved false, they would lose this favor.**

SECOND, they would also not be listed in Israel's records.

- **Their names would not be recorded in the city's list of citizens.**
- **To be excluded from the list would deprive an individual of the rights of citizenship (Ez.2:62).**

THIRD, the false prophets would never again enter the land of Israel.

- **They would die as captives in a foreign land.**

**"Because, indeed, because they have
seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!'
when there is no peace—and one
builds a wall, and they plaster it with
untempered mortar—**

EZEKIEL 13:10



"Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace—and one builds a wall, and they plaster it with untempered mortar— (Ek.13:10)

- The false prophets were saying, Peace, whereas Ezekiel was predicting destruction.**
- They were preaching the destruction of Babylon and the restoration of Israel.**
- Judgment would come on them for misleading the Lord's people by falsely predicting peace when no peace was coming.**



"Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace—and one builds a wall, and they plaster it with untempered mortar— (Ek.13:10)

- **Instead of calling Israel's attention to the serious cracks in its moral foundation (Ek.13:5), these prophets were "dabbing plaster" to hide the deficiencies.**
- **This plaster hid uneven rocks under a smooth surface. The prophets were compounding Israel's difficulties by hiding problems that needed to be exposed.**
- **Their deceptive ministry was like a flimsy wall covered with weak and fake mortar.**



**say to those who plaster it with
untempered mortar, that it will fall.
There will be flooding rain, and you,
O great hailstones, shall fall; and
a stormy wind shall tear it down.**

EZEKIEL 13:11



say to those who plaster it with untempered mortar, that it will fall. There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear it down. (Ek.13:11)

- **There are two interpretations of the references to whitewashing, the LITERAL and the METAPHORICAL.**
- **The literal interpretation understands God to be saying that when the residents of Jerusalem built their walls and houses, believing that they were secure, the false prophets supported their efforts by adding the whitewash.**
- **They should have warned them to prepare for coming judgment rather than helping them beautify the walls of their homes.**
- **The coming divine judgment would descend on Jerusalem like a rainstorm with hailstones and violent winds and destroy their beautifully whitewashed walls.**



say to those who plaster it with untempered mortar, that it will fall. There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear it down. (Ek.13:11)

- The metaphorical interpretation understands God to be saying that these false prophets were putting a good front on the situation in Jerusalem, saying peace rather than judgment was coming.**
- They were compounding Israel's difficulties by hiding problems that needed to be exposed and corrected.**
- Ezekiel was to tell them that invasion would come, like a rainstorm with hailstones and violent winds, and that their facade of a future for the people would then come crashing down (Mt.7:24-29).**



say to those who plaster it with untempered mortar, that it will fall. There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear it down. (Ek.13:11)

- **Since the false prophets had deceived the people by plastering over an unsafe wall (Ek.13:10), they would be blamed when the wall collapsed.**
- **Then the people would ask the prophets, Where is the untempered mortar you covered it with? The “mortar” was their false prophecies; and when Jerusalem was destroyed, this would be revealed.**
- **An attractive external appearance is no substitute for intrinsic soundness.**



**Surely, when the wall has
fallen, will it not be said to
you, 'Where is the mortar
with which you plastered
it?' "**

EZEKIEL 13:12



**Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said to you,
'Where is the mortar with which you plastered it?' " (Ek.13:12)**

- **Since the false prophets had deceived the people by plastering over an unsafe wall (Ek.13:10), they would be blamed when the wall collapsed.**
- **Then the people would ask the prophets, Where is the untempered mortar you covered it with? The “mortar” was their false prophecies; and when Jerusalem was destroyed, this would be revealed.**



**Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I
will cause a stormy wind to break
forth in My fury; and there shall be
a flooding rain in My anger, and
great hailstones in fury to consume
it.**

EZEKIEL 13:13



Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in My fury; and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and great hailstones in fury to consume it. (Ek.13:13)

- **When wind, hailstones, and rain would cause the wall of Jerusalem to fall (Ek.13:11), the prophets would be destroyed in it, for God's wrath would be against them.**
- **These descriptions are all images belonging to the illustration of the wall.**
- **The Babylonians were the actual destroyers of Israel's hypocritical, false spirituality.**



**So I will break down the wall you have
plastered with untempered mortar, and
bring it down to the ground, so that its
foundation will be uncovered; it will
fall, and you shall be consumed in the
midst of it. Then you shall know that I
am the LORD.**

EZEKIEL 13:14



So I will break down the wall you have plastered with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. (Ek.13:14)

- The Lord promised to send a violent storm of judgment on His people in Jerusalem because of His anger against them.**
- God will destroy the people's homes and the false prophets' vision of the future.**
- The foundations of their homes and the false prophets' vision would lie exposed for all to see.**
- The false prophets themselves would perish in the judgment. Then they would know that the Lord was God.**



**"Thus will I accomplish My wrath
on the wall and on those who
have plastered it with untempered
mortar; and I will say to you, 'The
wall is no more, nor those who
plastered it,**

EZEKIEL 13:15



"Thus will I accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered mortar; and I will say to you, 'The wall is no more, nor those who plastered it, (Ek.13:15)

- **The Lord would destroy both the people's homes, or the false vision of the future that these prophets painted.**
- **This is a proverb that God directs to these false prophets.**
- **No lasting results! Their words and they themselves are no more!**



**that is, the prophets of Israel who
prophecy concerning Jerusalem, and
who see visions of peace for her
when there is no peace,' " says the
Lord GOD.**



EZEKIEL 13:16



that is, the prophets of Israel who prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace,' " says the Lord GOD. (Ek.13:16)

- **Those false prophets who promised peace to Jerusalem when no peace was coming would also be destroyed (Mt.18:7).**
- **When church leaders encourage their people in sub-Christian standards or unbiblical ways they make themselves doubly guilty.**
- **Judah will fall and become a vassal nation to Babylon, but the exiles who trust and obey will be restored.**



"Likewise, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them,

EZEKIEL 13:17



"Likewise, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, (Ek.13:17)

- **Although women are rebuked by Isaiah (Is.3:16-4:1; 32:9-13) and Amos (Am.4:1-3), this is the only OT text where false prophetesses are mentioned.**
- **Sorcery was practiced mainly by women. Jezebel is called a false prophetess in Revelation 2:20.**
- **True prophetesses ministered in both Old and New Testament times (Ex.15:20; Jg.4:4-5; 2Ki.22:14; Ac.21:8-9).**



"Likewise, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, (Ek.13:17)

- **The “prophetesses” Ezekiel denounced were like mediums or sorceresses (Is.3:16; 4:1).**
- **The “face” symbolized the person and thereby one's personal attention to someone or some thing.**



**and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD:
"Woe to the women who sew magic
charms on their sleeves and make
veils for the heads of people of every
height to hunt souls! Will you hunt the
souls of My people, and keep
yourselves alive?"**

EZEKIEL 13:18



and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the women who sew magic charms on their sleeves and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? (Ek.13:18)

- **The Hebrew word for “magic charms” occurs in the Old Testament only in this passage (Ek.13:18, 20).**
- **This practice probably came from Babylonian magic rituals, in which magical knots and bands were bound to various parts of the body to ward off evil spirits or to heal diseases.**
- **These “good-luck charms” supposedly had magical powers.**



and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Woe to the women who sew magic charms on their sleeves and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive? (Ek.13:18)

- **The “veils” were long drapes that were placed on “their heads” and that covered the prophetesses’ bodies, possibly to convey the impression of mystery.**
- **They used these aids to impress people and to cast spells on (to influence) people to bring them under their power.**
- **Religion can be superstitious and destructive!**



And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?"

EZEKIEL 13:19



And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?" (Ek.13:19)

- **The purpose for the magic charms and mysterious veils was to ensnare people.**
- **Especially in times of uncertainty and turmoil, frauds and charlatans seem to prey on the fears of the gullible.**
- **These sorceresses would “tell the future” or provide a “good-luck spell” for a few handfuls of barley and scraps of bread.**
- **They were making a living off the fears of others. They were simply lying to people.**



And will you profane Me among My people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, killing people who should not die, and keeping people alive who should not live, by your lying to My people who listen to lies?" (Ek.13:19)

- The prophetesses should have exposed and denounced evil practices in Jerusalem (2Ki.22:13-20). But instead they let the wicked ("those who should not live") go free.**
- In some cultures barley was used in occult practices either as an offering to the spirits or as a means of trying to determine the future.**
- It seems improbable that this refers to the payment that these false prophetesses will receive because it is so meager.**
- It appears handfuls of barley and bread were used as a means of divination and this seems to be the possible historical allusion.**



**'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD:
"Behold, I am against your magic
charms by which you hunt souls
there like birds. I will tear them from
your arms, and let the souls go, the
souls you hunt like birds.'**

EZEKIEL 13:20



'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against your magic charms by which you hunt souls there like birds. I will tear them from your arms, and let the souls go, the souls you hunt like birds.(Ek.13:20)

- God said His anger would be vented against the false prophetesses and that He would neutralize their power.**
- He would tear their magic charms from their arms and would set free the people they ensnared like birds.**
- The Lord promised to oppose their practice of using magic bands to hunt down innocent lives.**



**I will also tear off your veils and
deliver My people out of your hand,
and they shall no longer be as prey
in your hand. Then you shall know
that I am the LORD.**

EZEKIEL 13:21



I will also tear off your veils and deliver My people out of your hand, and they shall no longer be as prey in your hand. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. (Ek.13:21)

- **God would tear off their veils and save His people from their hands.**
- **These sorceresses would then be exposed as charlatans, and their gullible clients would desert them.**
- **God would tear these bands from their arms and release the people that these false prophetesses had snared like birds.**
- **Then these false prophetesses would know that the Lord was God.**



**"Because with lies you have made
the heart of the righteous sad, whom
I have not made sad; and you have
strengthened the hands of the
wicked, so that he does not turn from
his wicked way to save his life.**

EZEKIEL 13:22



"Because with lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and you have strengthened the hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn from his wicked way to save his life. (Ek.13:22)

- **The prophetesses had disheartened the righteous with their lies and encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil ways.**
- **This directly opposed God's purposes for the people.**
- **Here it assumes that the superstition or magic had some psychological effect!**



MODERN-DAY FORTUNE TELLERS

- **Modern-day fortune tellers are rather similar to the women described in this passage.**
- **Fortune tellers, interestingly, are usually women, and they tend to dress in a rather elaborate manner.**
- **They tend to give their advice in darkened rooms, where the attitude of the inquirer is influenced in an eerie way.**
- **They are paid for what they do, and their advice is always dangerous because it leads people astray.**
- **They are frauds because their predictions are fabrications made up from their own minds (Ek.13:17).**

**Therefore you shall no longer
envision futility nor practice
divination; for I will deliver My people
out of your hand, and you shall know
that I am the LORD.**

EZEKIEL 13:23



Therefore you shall no longer envision futility nor practice divination; for I will deliver My people out of your hand, and you shall know that I am the LORD. (Ek.13:23)

- **When God would judge the prophetesses the people would then realize that these women had lied.**
- **The prophetesses themselves would be forced to admit their sin.**
- **God would banish false visions and divination from Israel and save His people from their terrible deception.**



FUTILITY OF FALSE OPTIMISM

EZEKIEL

13