

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 13

It being said in (^{<3524>}Ezekiel 12:24); that there should be no more a vain vision, nor a flattering divination; the prophet is ordered to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:1,2,17); the former are described as prophesying out of their own hearts, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:2); as foolish ones, following their own spirit, and seeing nothing, (^{<3530>}Ezekiel 13:3); they are compared to foxes in the deserts, (^{<3534>}Ezekiel 13:4); and are represented as unconcerned to stand in the gap for the people, (^{<3535>}Ezekiel 13:5); and as seeing vanity and lying divination; wherefore the Lord was against them, (^{<3536>}Ezekiel 13:6-8); what they are threatened with are, that they should not be in the assembly of God's people; nor written in the writing of the house of Israel; nor enter into the land of Israel, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:9); the reason of which was, because they seduced the Lord's people, by speaking peace to them when there was none; which is figuratively expressed by building a wall, and daubing it with untempered mortar, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:10); upon which the wall is threatened to be rent, and caused to fall with a stormy wind; signifying the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army; and the false prophets to have the wrath of God poured on them who doubted it, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:11-16); and then follows the order to the prophet to prophesy against the false prophetesses, and set his face against them, and pronounce woe upon them in the name of the Lord; who are described as prophesying out of their own hearts; sowing pillows to all armholes; and making kerchiefs on the head of all sorts of persons; and which they did for poor small gain, and to the detriment of immortal souls, good and bad, (^{<3537>}Ezekiel 13:17-19); wherefore the Lord threatens to tear off their pillows and kerchiefs, and deliver his people out of their hands, no more to be hunted by them, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:20,21); the reason of which was, because they saddened the hearts of the righteous, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:22); and the chapter is concluded with a resolution that they should see no more vanity nor divine divinations; and that the Lord's people should be delivered from them, and they should know that he was the Lord, (^{<3539>}Ezekiel 13:23).

Ver. 1. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying.*] Giving orders to prophesy against the false prophets and prophetesses, which were either in the land of Israel, of whom the prophet had notice; or rather who were among the captives in Babylon, where Ezekiel now was.

Ver. 2. *Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel, &c.*] Who called themselves so, and were accounted such by others; though they were not true, but false prophets; and so the Targum calls them:

that prophesy; that is, smooth things to the people; promising a speedy return from the captivity; or that Jerusalem should not be taken by the Chaldeans, and the inhabitants of it, and of the land, be carried captive:

and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts; who were not sent of God, nor spake from him; but of themselves, what came into their heads, and was agreeable to their fancies, imaginations, and carnal hearts; such are false teachers, that go forth without being sent, and teach not according to the word of God, but according to their own carnal reasonings; so the Targum,

“according to the will of their hearts;”

what they pleased themselves:

hear ye the word of the Lord; which came from the Lord himself, and not from man, meaning the following prophecy; so the written word of God should be attended to, both by teachers and hearers, as the only rule of faith and practice; (see ^{צרכו} Isaiah 8:20).

Ver. 3. *Thus saith the Lord God, woe unto the foolish prophets, &c.*] The false prophets, as the Targum; who are foolish, as all are who are not sent of God, and furnished by him with wisdom and knowledge, and who prophesy out of their own hearts; for what else but folly can proceed from thence? this must be a great mortification to these prophets to be called foolish, when they reckoned themselves wise men, being vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, and were accounted so by others; but what is wisdom with men is foolishness with God:

that follow their own spirit; or “walk after it”^{f169}; and not the Spirit of God, who leads into all truth; they pretended to a spirit of prophecy, but it was their own spirit and the dictates of it they followed, and not the Spirit of the Lord; and therefore it is no wonder that they prophesied false things,

and led the people wrong; as all such teachers do, who give way to their own fancies and imaginations, and forsake the word of God, and do not implore the assistance and teachings of the blessed Spirit:

and have seen nothing; no vision, as the Syriac version renders it; they pretended to have revelations of things future from the Lord, but they had none; what they saw were vain visions and lying divinations, and were as nothing, and worse than nothing; yea, they said what they never saw.

Ver. 4. *O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes of the deserts.*] The false prophets, as the Targum; these are called Israel's prophets, because received, embraced, and encouraged by them; not the Lord's, for they were not sent by him, nor had any messages from him; and such are comparable to foxes, for their craftiness and cunning, and lying in wait to deceive, as these seduced the Lord's people, (²⁶³¹⁰Ezekiel 13:10); and such are false teachers, who walk in craftiness, and handle the word of God deceitfully, and are deceitful workers; and to foxes in the deserts, which are hungry and ravenous, and make a prey of whatsoever comes within their reach, as these prophets did of the people, (²⁶³¹⁹Ezekiel 13:19). Kimchi interprets "deserts" of breaches and ruinous places in the walls of a vineyard, where the foxes lie, or through which they enter into the vineyard and spoil it; as these false prophets entered in among the Israelites, like to a vineyard, and did them much hurt and damage, by insinuating themselves among the weak, and those of little faith, which the above writer compares to breaches in vineyards; (see ²⁶¹¹⁵Song of Solomon 2:15). It may be the deserts may have respect to the land of Chaldea, where Israel was carried captive, and where these foxes, the false prophets, could play their part to advantage; not being under the notice and restraints of the sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

Ver. 5. *Ye have not gone up into the gaps, &c.*] Or "breaches"^{f170}; so the Targum. The allusion is to breaches made in the walls of a city when besieged; at which time those within gather together in great numbers to meet the enemy, and prevent his entrance by the breaches. These words are either spoken to the princes of Israel, the civil magistrates; or to the prophets, who seeing the sins of the people, like a mighty torrent, opening a breach for the wrath and judgments of God to pour in upon them, should have called them, and importunately pressed them to repentance and reformation, and to have put up their prayers, and made intercession to

God for them; neither of which they did, and therefore are here blamed; (see ^{<3221>}Ezekiel 22:30 ^{<3473>}Psalms 107:23);

neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel; or a “fence”, a fortification. The Vulgate Latin renders it, “a wall”; a new wall, which is generally made by the besieged within, when a breach is made upon them: it signifies the same as before. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret it of repentance and good works; and so the Targum, which paraphrases the words thus,

“neither have ye done for yourselves good works, to deprecate for the house of Israel, to stand to pray for them:”

to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord: when he came forth in battle array against them, with great wrath and indignation, in the way of his righteous judgments. The Targum is,

“when warriors come up against them in the day of the wrath of the Lord;”

when the Chaldeans came against them by the will of God, he being angry with them.

Ver. 6. *They have seen vanity, and lying divination*, &c.] The visions the false prophets pretended to see were nothing but the fruit of their own fancies and imaginations, and had nothing real in them; and what they divined or foretold should be were all lies, and never came to pass, and never would:

saying the Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them; they came to the people with a lie in their mouths, giving out that the Lord spoke by them; when they had no mission from him; nor any commission to say what they did; or any warrant from him for their prophecies:

and they have made [others] to hope that they would confirm the word; or, “that the word would be confirmed”^{f171}; that what was said by them would have its accomplishment; and that their prophecies would be fulfilled. By their solemn way of speaking; by the use they made of the name of the Lord; by the strong assurances they gave, and by their frequent repetition of their predictions, the people were brought to hope and believe that the event would answer to what they said; wherefore, instead of bringing them to a sense of their sins, and repentance for them, whereby the judgments of

God would have been prevented, they hardened them in them, and hastened their ruin.

Ver. 7. *Have ye not seen a vain vision, &c.*] A vision only in pretence, and not in reality; the effect of their own fancy, and not anything shown them by the Lord:

and have ye not spoken a lying divination; delivered out a known lie, saying they had it from the Lord, when they had it not; or a prophecy that will deceive, and be without effect, and in the issue prove a falsehood:

whereas ye say, the Lord saith [it]; albeit I have not spoken? this is a proof that what they gave out for a vision and prophecy was a vain and false one; seeing they pretended they had it from the Lord, when he never spoke a word to them, or by them.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] This is what he says, and it may be depended on will come to pass; though the other he said not, they said he did, but was a lying divination:

because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies; which will in the issue prove so, lying and deceitful; what never came from God, but from themselves and the father of lies, and would never be accomplished:

therefore, behold, I [am] against you, saith the Lord God; or, “I unto you”; which may be supplied thus, “I come”, or “will come, unto you”^{f172}; in a way of providence, and chastise and punish you; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁶ Revelation 2:16); or I will be your adversary; and a sad thing it is for any to have God to be against them; there is no contending with him; none ever hardened themselves against him, and prospered; men are but with him as stubble, or as thorns and briars to a consuming fire.

Ver. 9. *And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies, &c.*] Meaning, by his hand, not the true spirit of prophecy, attended with a divine power and energy, as in (³⁰⁰⁸ Ezekiel 1:3 3:14); but the wrath and power of God seizing on them and punishing them. So the Targum,

“and the stroke of my power shall be upon the false prophets, &c.”

The sense is, that they should feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm with the indignation of his wrath, by inflicting punishment upon them:

they shall not be in the assembly of my people; shall have no place in the church of God, nor fellowship with the saints; they shall not join with them in religious worship here; but either shall be left by the righteous judgment of God to separate themselves from them, or shall be excluded their communion; and much less shall they stand in the congregation of the righteous hereafter: or, “they shall not be in the secret”, or “council of my people”^{f173}; shall not be consulted by them on any account, civil or religious; or not be let into the secret counsels of the Lord, as the Lord’s people be, who are his favourites and his friends; (see ~~1254~~ Psalm 25:14). The Targum is,

“in the good secret which is hidden for my people they shall not be:”

neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel; their names shall not be in the roll or register of those that return from captivity, as in Ezra it but shall die in their exile; they shall not be in the list and catalogue of the citizens of any city in the land of Israel, particularly of Jerusalem, the chief city; (see ~~2048~~ Isaiah 4:3); and it should appear that their names were never written in the Lamb’s book of life; or that they ever were among the number of God’s elect, the true and spiritual Israel of God. So the Targum,

“and in the writing of eternal life, which is written for the righteous of the house of Israel, they shall not be written;”

(see ~~1918~~ Psalm 69:28);

neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; should not return to the land of Israel, when the captives should at the end of the captivity; nor enter into the land of Canaan, the heavenly rest, which remains for the people of God; for into the New Jerusalem state shall nothing enter that makes an abomination, or a lie, as these prophets had done; (see ~~1617~~ Revelation 21:27 22:15);

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord God; omniscient, omnipotent, true and faithful, holy, just, and good.

Ver. 10. *Because, even because they have seduced my people, &c.]* Who were so by profession; otherwise such who are truly the people of God, though they may be deceived in civil things, yet not in religious matters, at least not totally and finally; in this sense it is impossible to deceive the elect

of God; but as false teachers are deceivers, they lie in wait, and use all means to deceive them, and do deceive nominal professors, which is resented by the Lord; and this is given as a reason of their punishment; and which is doubled, as in (~~1386~~ Leviticus 26:43); to show the heinousness of their sin, and the certainty of their punishment:

saying, peace, and [there was] no peace; giving out that peace would be made with the king of Babylon; that the captives would return to their own land, where, with those that were in it, they would enjoy great prosperity; when no such thing came to pass, nor would; but the contrary was certain, by the predictions of the true prophets sent by the Lord:

and one built up a wall; one of the false prophets, and of the chief of them, gave out that Jerusalem would continue a walled city, and abide firm and impregnable against the Chaldean army, and would never be taken:

and, lo, others daubed it with untempered [mortar]; others of the false prophets, observing that what the first had delivered out was pleasing to the people, not only assented to it, but strongly affirmed it; and, with colourings and specious arguments, made it look more plausible and probable; when, alas! the whole was no other than like putting a parcel of loose stones or bricks together, and throwing some slushy stuff upon them, as, moistened sand without lime, or clay without straw, as the Targum and Vulgate Latin versions render it; which would never cement the bricks or stones together. R. Joseph Kimchi interprets it of bricks not burnt: so false teachers imitate the true ministers of the word, in preaching peace; but then they do not direct aright where it is to be had, which is only in Christ; or the proper persons, sinners pressed with the guilt of sin, and seeking for ease and peace in a right way; but publish it to those to whom it does not belong, for there is no peace to the wicked; and put them upon making peace themselves by their own works of righteousness, and their legal repentance, and outward humiliation; or promise it to them, though they have no faith in Christ, and are not sensible of their sin and danger: these men are builders, but not wise master builders; they do not build upon the foundation Christ, but build up a wall without him; leaving him out of the building who is the chief corner stone; deliver out some loose and unconnected doctrines, that are not according to the Scriptures, nor consistent with each other; and encourage the people to perform some loose duties and cold services, without the cement of faith and love; and which is no other than building upon the sand, or with it; though they fancy

it to be a wall, a shelter, and protection to them, from the wrath and justice of God, and by which they shall climb up to heaven; which will prove a bowing wall, and a tottering fence; and in these mistakes they are buoyed up by false teachers, and are flattered as being in a fair way for eternal happiness.

Ver. 11. *Say unto them which daub [it] with untempered [mortar], &c.]* The false prophets, that flattered the people with peace, prosperity, and safety:

that it shall fall; the wall they have built and daubed over; the city of Jerusalem shall be taken and destroyed; the predictions of the prophets shall prove lies; and the vain hopes and expectations of the people fail:

there shall be an overflowing shower; that shall wash away the wall with its untempered mortar; meaning the Chaldean army, compared to an overflowing shower of rain, for the multitude of men it, and the force, power, and noise, with which it should come, bearing down all before it; (see ^{<388>}Isaiah 8:7,8);

and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; upon the wall, and break it down: or, “ye, O great hailstones, shall cause [it] to fall”^{f174}; or, “I will give great hailstones, [and] it shall fall”^{f175}. The word “elgabish”, which in some copies is one word, and in others two, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, is either the same with “gabish”, which signifies a precious stone, and is rendered pearl in (^{<388>}Job 28:18); or it may be, as it seems to be, an Arabic word; and Hottinger^{f176} takes it to be “gypsus”, or lime, or the “lapis laminosus”, or slate; so the Lord threatens to rain down lime or slate upon them from heaven, which should destroy the wall built with untempered mortar:

and a stormy wind shall rend [it]; this seems to signify the same as the overflowing shower, the Chaldean army, compared to a strong tempestuous wind; (see ^{<388>}Jeremiah 4:11-13); as the hailstones, may signify the king of Babylon, with his princes, nobles, and generals.

Ver. 12. *Lo, when the wall is fallen, &c.]* Jerusalem is taken:

shall it not be said unto you; the false prophets, by the people who had been deceived by them:

where [is] the daubing wherewith ye have daubed [it]? what is become of all your promises of peace, and assurance of safety and prosperity; your smooth words and plausible arguments; your specious pretences, and flattering prophecies? thus would they be insulted by those they had deceived, as well as laughed at by such who disregarded their predictions, and believed the prophets of the Lord.

Ver. 13. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, &c.*] Confirming what he had before bid the prophet say, (^{<1911>}Ezekiel 13:11);

I will even rend [it] with a stormy wind in my fury; stormy winds sometimes rend rocks asunder, (^{<1191>}1 Kings 19:11); and much more feeble tottering walls; what is before ascribed to the stormy wind is said to be done here by the Lord himself, making use of that as an instrument; stormy winds fulfil his word, (^{<1818>}Psalms 148:8); the cause of which is his wrath, which made the dispensation, or the invasion of the Chaldean army, the more terrible; and this is mentioned in all the following clauses:

and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger, and great hailstones in [my] fury to consume [it]; which, coming from the Lord, and attended with his wrath and fury, must needs bring on utter ruin and destruction. The whole is paraphrased by the Targum thus,

“and I will bring a mighty king with the force of tempests; and a destroying people as a prevailing rain in my fury shall come; and kings, who were powerful as hailstones, in wrath to consume.”

Ver. 14. *So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered [mortar], &c.*] Which is repeated and expressed in these words, both for the sake of confirmation and explanation of what is before said:

and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered; meaning the city of Jerusalem, and by these phrases declaring the utter destruction of it; whereby also would be discovered the vain assurances and lying predictions of the false prophets, and which would appear to be entirely groundless: so the Targum,

“and I will destroy the city in which ye have prophesied false prophecies; and I will cause it to fall to the ground, and its foundations shall be discovered.”

and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst of it; the false prophets perished in the destruction of Jerusalem, and not one of them escaped:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; who is true to his word, and able to accomplish it, whether of punishment or of threatening.

Ver. 15. *Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, &c.]* Or upon the city, as the Targum; pour out all his indignation, and inflict just punishment upon the city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants:

and upon them that have daubed it with untempered [mortar]; the false prophets: so the Targum,

“and the false prophets that prophesy in it false prophecies:”

and will say unto you, the wall [is] no [more], neither they that daubed it; neither the city of Jerusalem, nor the prophets that prophesied of its safety; nor their false prophecies; nor the vain hopes of the people they fed them with: so the Targum,

“there is no city, nor false prophets.”

Ver. 16. *[To wit], the prophets of Israel, which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, &c.]* This explains who are meant by those that daubed with untempered mortar:

and which see visions of peace for her; not in reality, but in pretence; they boasted that they had visions and revelations from the Lord, and assured the people they should enjoy great peace and prosperity; but these, as they are before called, were vain visions and lying divinations: there seems to be in this an allusion to the name of Jerusalem, which, according to some, signifies,

“they shall see peace:”

and [there is] no peace, saith the Lord God; not to the wicked; nor to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who listened to the false prophets; nor to the false prophets themselves.

Ver. 17. *Likewise, thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people, &c.]* The false prophetesses; for as there were women in some ages, who had the true spirit of prophecy, as Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah, (^{<0250>}Exodus 15:20 ^{<0004>}Judges 4:4 ^{<0224>}2 Kings 22:14); so there were

some that pretended to it, who had it not, as Noadiah in the times of Nehemiah, (^{f1664}Nehemiah 6:14); and such there were in the times of Ezekiel; against whom he is bid to set his face, and look them out of countenance, and make them ashamed; who, contrary to the modesty of the sex, had impudently taken upon them to prophesy to the people; and such have been since in the times of the Gospel, as Jezebel, (^{f1621}Revelation 2:20); and Prisca, Maximilia, Quintilia, and others:

who prophesy out of their own heart; as the men did, (^{f1630}Ezekiel 13:2); what their own hearts suggested to them; what came into their minds, and their own fancies and imaginations led them to; what was according to their carnal affections and desires, and agreeable to those that heard them:

and prophesy thou against them; declare their prophecies false; warn the people from giving heed to them; and foretell what shall befall them for deceiving the people.

Ver. 18. *And say, thus saith the Lord God, woe to the [women] that sew pillows to all armholes, &c.*] Or, “put pillows to all elbows”^{f177}; thereby signifying that they might be at ease, and rest secure, and look upon themselves as in the utmost safety, and not fear any enemy, the invasion of the Chaldeans; or that their city would be destroyed, and they carried captive, as the prophets of the Lord had foretold:

and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature; whether taller or lower; the word stature, according to Kimchi, is used, because the people stood when they inquired of these prophetesses whether they should have peace or not, or good or evil should befall them: or, “of every age”, as the Septuagint version; young or old; they put these kerchiefs, or “veils”^{f178}, as some render the word, upon all sorts of persons (for they refused none that came to them they could get any thing by), upon their heads, either as a token of victory and triumph, signifying that they should have the better of their enemies, and rejoice over them; or to make them proud, and suggest to them that they should never be stripped of their ornaments; or else, as the former sign shows that they lulled them asleep upon pillows, and led them on in a carnal security, so they kept them in blindness and ignorance: and this they did,

to hunt souls; to bring them into their nets and snares; to catch them with their false prophecies, and deceive them by their fallacious signs, and superstitious rites and ceremonies, and so ruin and destroy them^{f179};

will ye hunt the souls of my people; that cleave to me, and regard my prophets; will ye endeavour to ensnare those, and seek to destroy their peace and comfort, and even their souls? ye shall not be able to do it:

and will ye save the souls alive [that come] unto you? and inquire of you how things will be, and listen to your lying divinations; can you save them from the ruin and destruction that is coming upon them? no, you will not be able to do it; and what wickedness is it in you to attempt the one or the other? The Targum is,

“the souls of my people can ye destroy or quicken? your souls, which are yours, can you quicken?”

the sense is they could neither do the one nor the other; and yet such was their iniquity, that they sought to do both.

Ver. 19. *And will ye pollute me among my people*, &c.] Defile the name of the Lord, by abusing it, to cover their wicked designs and practices, pretending they were sent by him, when they were not; that what they said came from him, though he spoke not by them; and that it was his will they declared, when it was their own, and what came out of their own hearts and heads: so the Targum, “will ye pollute my will among my people”; to profane his name among the Gentiles was a great sin, but to pollute it among his own people was greater; attempting to draw them aside from his fear and worship, and that for gain, for small gain too:

for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread; which shows them to be abandoned creatures, that were ready to do or say anything for the meanest trifle; their consciences were seared; they gave up themselves to work wickedness with greediness, and for filthy lucre’s sake, and for a small portion of that; which exaggerates their sin and folly; (see ^{
}Proverbs 28:21 ^{
}Micah 3:5);

to slay the souls that should not die; by threatening the captives in Babylon, who had surrendered themselves in Jehoiachim’s time, with destruction and death; who ought to have been comforted in their exile, and whom the Lord in his own time would deliver:

and to save the souls alive that should not live; by promising the inhabitants of Jerusalem long life, safety, and prosperity; when they should either die by the sword, famine, and pestilence; or be carried captive, which

was as death; for so they did, or attempted to do, both the one and the other, by their false prophecies, as follows:

by your lying to my people that hear [your] lies? their false prophecies, which some hearkened to, and believed; and others were intimidated by, and feared that so it would be.

Ver. 20. *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, behold, I [am] against your pillows, &c.*] Not only had an abhorrence of them, but was determined to destroy them, detect their fallacies, and expose the folly of such actions, and them to shame and contempt:

wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make [them] fly; to the places where they prophesied; into the toils and nets they spread for them, in order to catch them with their divinations and prophecies, and make a gain of them: or, “into the gardens”, or “groves”^{f180}; there to commit idolatry, (^{28B}Isaiah 65:3);

and I will tear them from your arms; by which it seems that those pillows were not only put under the arms of those that came to inquire of these female prophets or fortune tellers; but they put them under their own arms, and lay upon them as if they were asleep, and in a trance or ecstasy; and so the kerchiefs or veils were upon their heads, which covered their faces, to show that they were quite retired from the world, and wholly attentive to the visions and revelations they pretended were made them by the Lord; and which they gave out, in this superstitious way, to the credulous people that flocked about them:

and will let the souls go, [even] the souls that ye hunt to make [them] fly; which were captivated with their superstitions; drawn into their nets and snares; decoyed into the gardens, where they were prevailed upon to sacrifice to idols, and were taken with their soothsaying and lying divinations; these the Lord promises to break the snare for them, and set them at liberty, and preserve them from that ruin and destruction they were ready to come into; (see ^{84D}Psalms 124:7).

Ver. 21. *Your kerchiefs also will one tear, &c.*] From their heads; discover their tricks, and expose them to the contempt of the people, and destroy both them and their works:

and deliver my people out of your hand; from being hunted, ensnared, and deceived by them:

and they shall be no more in your land to be hunted; but should either flee into Egypt, and other countries, for shelter, or be carried captive into Babylon:

and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; (see ²³³³Ezekiel 13:9,14).

Ver. 22. *Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad,* &c.] By polluting the name of the Lord; by hunting and decoying souls into their destructive nets; and by threatening such who would not give heed to their superstitious rites, lying divinations, and false prophecies: so false teachers make the hearts of such sad, who, having seen the insufficiency of their own righteousness, trust in the righteousness of Christ, and are justified by it; by teaching such doctrines as depreciate the love and grace of God the Father; making his love dependent on the creature; his covenant conditional, and salvation to be by works, and not by grace; as detract from the person, offices, and grace of Christ; denying his deity and divine sonship; making light of his blood, and setting up man's righteousness against his: and such as are injurious to the Spirit's work; ascribing regeneration and conversion to man's free will; giving such marks and signs of grace as are not to be found in any, and representing it as what may be entirely lost:

whom I have not made sad; nor would he have them made sad by others; neither by false prophets and their lies, nor by any other means; neither by anything within them, nor anything without them; not by any or all of their spiritual enemies: he would have them comforted; the covenant of grace, and the promises of it, are made for such a purpose; the Scriptures are written for this use; ordinances are designed for this end; ministers are appointed for this work; and this is the office of the divine Spirit; and the Son of God himself was sent on this account:

and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way; by repentance and reformation; and so far were the wicked from returning from it in this way, that they were emboldened in sin, and hardened in it; and were more frequent and open in the commission of it; and that through the prophecies of these false prophetesses; as wicked men are by the doctrines of false teachers: and particularly

by promising him life; or that he should live long, and enjoy much peace and prosperity in the land of Israel, and not be carried captive into Babylon; and so false teachers harden men in sin, by giving them hopes of

eternal life, though they continue in their evil ways; or upon the foot of universal redemption, and upon their repentance, as the fruit of their own free will; and therefore take their swing of sin, as believing that Christ died for all men, and so for them, and therefore shall be saved, live as they will; and that it is in their power to repent when they please, and therefore procrastinate it to the last.

Ver. 23. *Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations, &c.]* They should not be suffered any longer to impose upon the people; and they should be so sufficiently exposed, that the people would not give heed to their vain visions and lying divinations any more; and no gain coming to them hereby, they would not be disposed to make pretensions to them, as they had done: or the sense is, that they should perish in the siege and destruction of Jerusalem; and so they and their false prophecies would cease together:

for I will deliver my people out of your hand, and ye shall know that I [am] the Lord; (see ^{עזקל}Ezekiel 13:21).