**Ezekiel 13** And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, **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!’**3**Thus says the Lord God: “Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! **4**O Israel, your prophets are like foxes in the deserts. **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. **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. **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.” **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. **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. **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*— **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. **12**Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said to you, ‘Where *is* the mortar with which you plastered *it?*’**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.* **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. **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, **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. **17**“Likewise, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, **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? **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?” **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. **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.

**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. **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.”

 The book of Ezekiel is set with the backdrop of the Chaldeans besieging city of Jerusalem. The book is about the judgment and eventual redemption of God’s people. God warned the Israelites and He warns us that He will only put up with sin for so long. Some read this as that God will only put up with the sin of a nation for so long, but the sin of a nation is made up of the sin of the people. No sinful nation is made up of sinless people… it doesn’t work that way. If I take a 50 gallon barrel of water and I put a drop of red food coloring in it, the color probably won’t change. When I put two drops in, it probably won’t change. But when I put five gallons of food coloring in a 50 gallon barrel, the change is immediate, pronounced, visible. My point is that every person’s sin adds sin to the pool we call a nation.

 God will only endure the ongoing sin in our lives for so long. Be it alcohol or gossip or lust or pride or stealing or adultery or murder, God has not turned a blind eye. If He included it in the Bible, He calls us to account just as He has held all generations to account. Be not deceived.

 Ezekiel 13 finds us with three main themes: Judgment of lying prophets, judgement of the prophets insufficient work, and judgment of false prophetesses. Verses 1-9 concern foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, who prophesy out of their own heart – they dismiss what the scriptures says on a subject in favor of what they want to believe. But they’ve seen nothing. God has not spoken to them – they say, Hear the Word of the Lord, but God hasn’t given them a word. They’re prophesying peace and prosperity and saying it’s from God, all the while the Chaldeans are at the gate! But the people love to hear it, because it’s pleasant to the ears. Ezekiel is saying that there will be sword, famine, pestilence and many will die… this isn’t pleasant to hear. Ezekiel is saying, “Look into your heart and do the hard work to change your ways and turn back to God”, but the people like the lies better. They close their eyes and listen to the lies.

That’s how it is today. Christians all over this country are listening to false prophets. Worse yet, they’re acting as false prophets. They call good evil and evil good. They claim Jesus and vote mammon. Our starving widows, homeless orphans, forsaken elderly, forgotten prisoners, and aborted babies testify against us. God hears their cries and He will avenge. Christ is sufficient, but we must repent and turn from the sin. We must correct the situation. We cannot continue to bathe in the cesspool and complain to God that we stink. We must wring the sin from our home, even as we cry for the healing of our nation.

Verses 10-16, God judges the insufficient work of these prophets. The leaders have seduced the people with talk of peace and prosperity. Soft words, condoning spirits – don’t call sin sin… call it exploring, call it individualism, call it diversity, but don’t call it sin. If it feels right, do it. If it feels good, it must be right. But God is saying that this is like putting whitewash instead of tested cement on the wall. When water hits the wall, the whitewash will wash off and the truth will be revealed! When the blast of the breath of almighty God hits the wall these prophets have built, their prophecies of peace will be blown away and the wall will collapse. The truth will be revealed, but it will be too late for the people!! God says – I will smash the wall and I will hold those who whitewashed it accountable.

God will hold those who whitewash the walls in this day and age accountable as well. Prosperity gospels are not Biblical. Name it and claim it is not Biblical. Those who preach that God will just love us no matter the sin in our nation or our home are whitewashing the walls. Preachers, pastors, believing Christians are supposed to be placing mortar in the gap. We’re supposed to be reinforcing the walls through our example, the way we live, what we model to the world. Preaching sacrifice and living indulgently is whitewash. Preaching love and living hate is whitewash. Preaching the Bible and embracing sin is whitewash. No wall is strengthened by a thin coat of paint to make it look pretty.

God finishes with judgment of the false prophetesses in verses 17-23. They too prophesy, saying the Lord said it, but He didn’t. They soothe people with magic charms. They make fine veils for their heads. They reassure them that all they’re doing is just fine with God. They profane God. They take the truth and twist it, because that’s what people want to hear.

We have these women today. We see ministries all over the world that started with a husband speaking the word of God and next thing we see, the wife is suddenly a preacher as well! The husband writes a book and the wife writes a book. I look at Ruth Graham and I see a simple servant. I look at Victoria Olsteen and I see pride, the make up gets thicker as the money piles up. I can’t find the Truth of the Bible in any of her messages and yet, she claims to be what amounts to a prophetess from God.

God wouldn’t have it then and He won’t have it now. Listen to what He says - **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. **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.” God sees them for the bottomless pit of deceit they are. They bring sadness to the righteous and make those on the wrong path believe they’re on the right path. They have aided in the deception.

In the end, Ezekiel teaches us that we must be true to the teachings of the Bible, we must hold fast to our faith, even when what we’re teaching goes against what others want to hear. We must do our work sufficiently, building strong foundations for people to anchor to, we must not be deceived by what we think in our hearts, what we believe in our minds… we must hold fast to the firm foundation of the Bible. If we find ourselves doing what is defined in the Bible as sin, God doesn’t change. He doesn’t make exceptions. The sin of a nation is built one citizen at a time. Before we cry out for God to deliver our nation, we must first cry out to have our heart and our home cleansed. God will answer, but His answer will come one heart, one citizen at a time. `