

Messages Explaining Divine Judgment (Chapters 13-24)

13:1-23 False Prophets, False Prophetesses, and Magical Charms:

“13:1 And YHWH’s word was / came to me saying: 13:2 Son of Adam / Humanity, prophesy to Israel’s prophets, the ones prophesying! And you shall say to those prophesying from their heart, Hear YHWH’s Word! 13:3 In this way my Lord YHWH spoke: *Hoy* / woe upon the prophets, the foolish / senseless ones who are walking after their (own) spirit, and so that they did not see. 13:4 Your prophets, Israel, were like foxes in the desolations / wastes. 13:5 You did not go up into the broken places, and (did not) repair a wall upon / for Israel’s house, to stand in the war on YHWH’s day! 13:6 They saw emptiness and false divination, the ones saying (It is) a saying of YHWH--and YHWH did not send them forth! And they waited for a word to be confirmed. 13:7 Have you not seen an empty vis-ion? And (have you not) spoken a divination of a lie? And (you plural) are saying (It is) a saying of YHWH, and I, I did not speak! 13:8 Therefore in this way my Lord YHWH spoke: Because of your (plural) speaking emptiness, and you envisioned a lie--therefore look at Me--against you (plural)! (It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH! 13:9 And My hand will be against the prophets, the ones envisioning emptiness, and the ones divining a lie! They will not be in My people’s counsel! And in (the) writing of Israel’s house they will not be written! And into Israel’s land they will not come! And you (plural) will know that I (am) my Lord YHWH! 13:10 Because, and in because they led astray My people saying, Peace--and there is no peace; and he who is building a (thin) wall--and look at them--overlaying it (with) white-wash! 13:11 Say to the ones overlaying (with) white-wash, and it will fall: There was an over-flowing rain; and (upon) you, hail-stones, will fall, and a stormy wind will break out. 13:12 And look ...the wall fell! Will it not be said to you (plural), Where is the coating with which you overlaid (it)? 13:13 Therefore, in this way my Lord YHWH spoke: And I will break out a wind of storms in My wrath, and (there) will be an overflowing rain in My anger; and hailstones in (My) wrath, for a finish / full end! 13:14 And I will throw the wall down which you overlaid (with) white-wash; and I will cause it to touch / reach the earth / ground, and its foundation will be revealed. And it will fall, and you (plural) will be finished in its midst! And you will know that I (am) YHWH! 13:15 And I will finish My wrath on the wall, and on the ones overlaying it (with) white-wash. And I will say to you (plural), The wall is not, and the ones overlaying it are not! 13:16 Prophets of Israel, the ones prophesying to Jerusalem, and the seers / visionaries (announcing) to it a vision of peace, and there is no peace! (It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH! 13:17 And you, Son of Adam / Humanity, Set your face towards / against (the) daughters of your people, the ones prophesying from their heart(s). And prophesy against them! 13:18 And you shall say, In this way my Lord YHWH spoke: Woe to (the) one sewing (magic) bands together upon every joint (wrist / elbow) of my hand, and making the veils upon (the) head of every height, to hunt (for) inner-most-beings / lives. Will you hunt for the innermost beings belonging to My people, and your innermost-beings you will preserve alive? 13:19 And you (feminine plural) have profaned / polluted Me to My people for handfuls of barley and for morsels / pieces of bread / food--to put to death souls which will not be put to death, and to preserve alive souls which will not live, by your lies to My people listening (to) a lie! 13:20 Therefore in this way my Lord YHWH spoke: Look at Me--against your bands / cushions with which you (feminine plural) are hunting inner-most-beings / souls there for flying! And I will tear them from upon your arms, and I will send forth the

innermost-beings / souls which you are hunting--their innermost-beings / souls for flying! 13:21 And I will tear (off) your veils; and I will deliver My people from your hand. And they will not again be in your hand for a *masada* / stronghold. And you (feminine plural) will know that I (am) YHWH! 13:22 Because of (your) disheartening (the) heart of a righteous person (with a) lie--and I, I did not pain him; and to strengthen hands of wickedness, so as not to turn from his way, the evil one, to preserve his life. 13:23 Therefore emptiness you (feminine plural) will not see / envision; and divination you will not divine again! And I will deliver My people from your hand!

13:1¹

1

Reimer entitles **13:1-14:11** “False Prophecy, True Prophecy.” He states that “**Chapters 13-14** express condemnation of speaking false prophecy and of ignoring true prophecy. The subject has already been broached in **12:24** in terms now repeated throughout **chapter 13**. The passage falls into two main sections: the condemnations against false speaking (**chapter 13**) and against false seeking (**14:1-11**).” (P. 1516)

Reimer entitles **13:1-23** “False Prophets.” He states that “Two groups come in for condemnation: male ‘prophets’ who simply prophesy delusions (**verses 1-16**), and women who are prophets by pretense (**verses 17-23**). Each group is addressed twice, so that the broad architecture of **chapter 12** is also seen here (two groups of two oracles). The masculine and feminine references tend to break down toward the end of the chapter. Although the text is difficult, it remains clear that the issue is not gender. The themes developed here appear in concentrated form in **Micah 3:5-7**.” (P. 1516)

3:5 כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה עַל־הַנְּבִיאִים
In this way YHWH spoke concerning the prophets,

הַמְתֵּיעִים אֶת־עַמִּי
the ones leading my people astray,

הַנֹּשְׁכִים בְּשִׁנֵיהֶם
the ones biting with their teeth,

וְקָרְאוּ שָׁלוֹם
and they will cry out Peace!

וְאִשֶׁר לֹא־יִתֵּן עַל־פִּיהֶם
And when one gives nothing for their mouth--

וְקִדְּשׁוּ עָלָיו מִלְחָמָה:
and they will sanctify war against him!

3:6 לָכֵן לַיְלָה לָכֶם מִחִזּוֹן
Therefore, night for you people from (any) vision;

וְחֹשֶׁכָה לָכֶם מִקְּסָם
and it will become dark for you from (any) divination / Divine communication.

(continued...)

¹(...continued)

וּבָאָה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ עַל-הַנְּבִיאִים

And the sun will come / go down upon your prophets,

וְקָרַר עֲלֵיהֶם הַיּוֹם:

and the day will be dark over them!

3:7 וּבִשְׁנוֹ הַחֲזִים

And the seers will be ashamed,

וְחָפְרוּ הַקְּסָמִים

and the Diviners will be disgraced.

וְעָטוּ עַל-שָׂפֵם כָּלֵם

And they will cover over their lip, all of them.

כִּי אֵין מַעֲנָה אֱלֹהִים:

Because there is no answer of God!

Ezekiel 13:1-23 is one of the classic passages (compare **Jeremiah 23:9-40**) that distinguishes between a true and a false prophet for YHWH. The message that is false is one that originates in the prophet's own "heart" or inner-being, rather than in a genuine Divine vision. They are like jackals running around in the midst of the ruins, seeking some scrap of food to devour--they do not go up to the damaged wall, to repair it, and enable the city to stand--which is the proper role of the true prophet for YHWH. When they do go up to the wall to repair it, they simply white-wash it--an ineffective remedy that will quickly be destroyed when the battle (and violent "storm") of the Divine Warrior YHWH's "day" occurs! Compare such passages as **Psalms 18:7-15; 77:16-18; 83:9-18; Isaiah 28:17-19; 30:30-32; Jeremiah 23:19-20** and **30:23-24**.

Ezekiel includes women who were acting as false prophets for YHWH--using magic charms and veils in some form of black magic or voodoo, and doing so in order to make financial gain for themselves--even though the outcome of their practices, with their lying messages, were causing the death of those who did not deserve death.

Matties comments on **Ezekiel 13:1-16** that "The first of two oracles about false prophetic messages of peace and security in the face of Ezekiel's words of judgment (**13:1-7, 8-16**).” (P. 1171)

Darr says, in her "Overview," that "In **12:21-28**, Ezekiel defended the content and the relevance of his doom prophecies in the face of popular opposition to both. Now, he denounces his professional rivals: male prophets of Israel whose self-generated oracles collude [collaborate] with their audiences' self-deluding desire for security (**13:1-16**) and female deportees who 'play the prophet' and whose illegitimate methods of divination not only endanger the lives of their clients, but also undercut Ezekiel's legitimate role as 'watchman' to the exiles (**13:17-23**)....It is Ezekiel's ongoing struggle to convince his audience that he is the authentic spokesman of Yahweh, Whose Word Israel discounts or avoids to its peril...

(continued...)

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

And YHWH's Word was / came to me saying:

13:2 בֶּן־אָדָם הַנִּבְאִים

Son of Adam / Humanity, prophesy

אֶל־נְבִיאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּבְאִים

to Israel's prophets, the ones prophesying!²

¹(...continued)

“Earlier prophets also contended with rival intermediaries and their messages (see, e.g., **Isaiah 28:7** and **Micah 3:5-7**). Particularly in times of crisis, the people exhibited an all-too-human tendency to seek out purveyors of reassuring words (see **Isaiah 30:9-10; Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11; 14:13; 23:16, 28-29; chapter 28; chapter 29**). Jeremiah both confirms the presence of professional prophets and diviners in their midst and counsels the people not to be beguiled by their deceptive messages and methods. But Ezekiel's audience, no less than Jeremiah's own, prefers reassuring words to doom pronouncements.” (P. 100)

2

Rabbi Fisch comments that “There seems a kind of sarcasm in *prophets of Israel*—those whom Israel accepts and delights to regard as prophets (**Micah 2:11**); and a similar sarcasm in *that prophesy*. They prophesied and that without limit: their mouths were always full of the LORD says (**verse 6**)’ (Davidson).” (P. 69)

Yes, there were “prophets” all over the city and country, who claimed to be speaking authentic messages from YHWH. And so it has been ever since. The world is packed full of religious leaders, who claim to have access to the Divine Mind, and claim to be able to speak for God / YHWH / by whatever name they use. But obviously, when they speak opposing messages, messages that conflict with others, they cannot all be true.

And we wonder, how can the ordinary person, judge between the “prophets,” with all their claims? It is not an easy question to answer. Quick, easy answers will not satisfy. We must wait patiently, and then weigh their claims by looking to history. Does what they predict happen? Do the prophets have ulterior motives, such as the desire for wealth, or the gaining of power over others? Does their message center in demands such as “righteousness” and “justice” for all people, or are they only concerned for their particular group? Is the prophet genuinely calling you to God? You can go on and on, depicting what it takes to determine whether or not a “prophet” is genuine or fake. But we say, in the long run it will not be that difficult. True prophets for YHWH will soon be known for their genuine goodness, their truthfulness, their being used to call those who hear to lives conforming to the Divine Will. What do you think? What would you add?

(continued...)

וְאָמַרְתָּ לְנִבְיָאֵי מִלְבָּם

And you shall say to those prophesying from their heart,³

שְׁמְעוּ דְבַר־יְהוָה:

Hear YHWH's word!

13:3 כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

הוּי עַל־הַנְּבִיאִים הַנְּבָלִים

Hoy / woe upon the prophets, the foolish / senseless ones⁴

אֲשֶׁר הִלְכִים אַחַר רוּחָם וְלִבֵּלְתִי רְאִיוֹ:

who are walking after their (own) spirit, and so that they did not see.⁵

²(...continued)

Darr comments that “Prophets whose oracles are their own creations have no legitimate claim to that title, and Ezekiel must herald God’s charges against them.” (P. 101)

³

Rabbi Fisch states, “Their messages are not inspired by God but devised by their own minds. Consequently, their forecast of the future is nothing but wishful thinking.” (P. 69)

⁴

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “vile prophets.” He comments that “The Hebrew for *vile* (נְבָל, **nabal**) denotes a person without perception of ethical and religious claims. He says in his heart *there is no God* (**Psalms 14:1**) Who judges the deeds of man.” (P. 69) We think a better translation of נְבָל is “foolish, senseless person.”

⁵

The last phrase of **verse 3** is translated by **Tanakh** as “without having had a vision.” The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) has καὶ τὸ καθόλου μὴ βλέπουσιν, “and the complete they do not see.”

Rabbi Fisch states that such persons “are victims of self-deception.” (P. 69)

It is a tragic situation. Who knows how it has occurred? Somehow the person has been persuaded that he or she has been called to be a prophet for God—perhaps by a parent, or a mate, whether a wife or a husband. And it seems like an attractive thing—to be looked up to as a religious leader, to have people coming, asking for guidance...

(continued...)

כְּשַׁעֲלִים בְּחָרְבוֹת נְבִיאֵיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל הָיוּ:

Your prophets,⁶ Israel, were like foxes in the desolations / wastes.⁷

⁵(...continued)

And so it begins. But there has been no real call from YHWH, no life-transforming experience, no long years of “eating YHWH’s Word,” of becoming genuinely overwhelmed by the Divine Message. It is just a matter of looking here and there for some message that sounds good, that people will like—you can buy a “book of sermons,” and preach attractive messages, without much work. And the vicious cycle begins, as listeners applaud the one who says what they want to hear, and as the self-made prophet becomes accustomed to developing a message that attracts such hearers. Have you seen it happening? We have. And what a tragedy, what a wasted life! Far better to quit the charade, and get a job selling cars! Quit the self-deception! See **Jeremiah 23:21-22**,

21 לֹא־שָׁלַחְתִּי אֶת־הַנְּבִיאִים
I did not send the prophets,
וְהֵם רָצוּ
And they ran.
לֹא־דַבַּרְתִּי אֲלֵיהֶם
I did not speak to them,
וְהֵם נִבְּאוּ:
and they prophesied.

22 וְאִם־עָמְדוּ בְּסוּדֵי
And if they had stood in My council,
וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ דְבָרֵי אֶת־עַמִּי
and caused My people to hear My words—
וַיִּשְׁבוּם מִדֶּרֶךְ הָרָע
and they would have turned them from the evil of their way,
וּמִרַע מַעַלְלֵיהֶם:
and from (the) wickedness of their deeds.

6

Rabbi Fisch comments that “They are not God’s messengers but the people’s prophets who attune their words to the desire of their hearers.” (P. 69)

7

Rabbi Fisch comments on the phrase “foxes in ruins,” that “The point of the comparison is not certain and is variously explained. If a man enters through a breach in a ruined building, the fox lurking there flees through another breach and does not make a stand against him (Rashi)...

(continued...)

13:5 לֹא עָלִיתֶם בְּפִרְצוֹת

You did not go up into the broken places,

וַתִּגְדְּרוּ גֹדֶר עַל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

and (did not) repair a wall upon / for Israel's house,⁸

לְעֹמֵד בַּמִּלְחָמָה בְּיוֹם יְהוָה:

to stand in the war on YHWH's day!⁹

⁷(...continued)

“As foxes enter a vineyard through ruined walls and destroy its fruits, so the false prophets communicate their falsehoods to the morally weak to the detriment of the whole nation (Kimchi)...

“Possibly the meaning is that foxes find a natural habitat among ruins, and similarly among a people in process of dissolution false prophets discover a sphere of activity, because in an atmosphere of insecurity there is eagerness to listen to an optimistic speech. In this way they intensify national danger and make the approaching doom still more certain.” (P. 69)

Hilmer comments that “Animals that travel in packs and feed on dead flesh—[It is] a powerfully negative image!” (P. 1242)

No, even though many may applaud their message, it is not the source of life. Rather, it is a sorry substitute for the genuine article. It can only bring death, not life! It was true in the time of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—and it is still true!

What do you think? Are there still “false prophets” in our modern world? We say there are, and that the hearers must be very careful as to the voice they are hearing! Seek out that prophet whose life has been transformed by the Divine Message, who is not seeking his own fame or fortune—or your money--but who is seeking to hear and proclaim YHWH's Word! Can you add to these possible explanations?

Reimer suggests, “They are no more than scavengers, when they ought to have been sentinels.” (P. 1516)

8

Rabbi Fisch states that “If they had been true prophets, they would have understood that the need of the hour was to warn the people of the peril in which they stood and advise them what measures to adopt in order to avert it. This they had failed to do.” (P. 70)

9

(continued...)

⁹(...continued)

Rabbi Fisch comments that “A day decreed by God is coming when the nation will have to defend the land against invasion. What have the false prophets done to prepare for this ordeal?” (P. 70) The answer is, Nothing! They have proclaimed “Peace, Peace!” But they have done nothing to prepare the people to meet YHWH in His Anger, or make preparations for the coming war. Nothing! Instead, they have chosen to belittle the prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah and Ezekiel who were doing all in their power to get the people right with YHWH, and ready for His Coming.

Hilmer notes that here in **verse 5** “The function of true prophets is described.” (P. 1242) See: **Ezekiel 22:30**

וְאֶבְקַשׁ מֵהֶם אִישׁ

And I sought from them a man,

גִּדְרֵ-גִדְרָה

one building a wall,

וְעֹמֵד בַּפְּרִץ לְפָנַי

and standing in the breach / broken place before Me,

בְּעַד הָאָרֶץ

on behalf of the land,

לְבַלְתִּי שַׁחְתָּהּ

so as to not destroy it;

וְלֹא מָצָאתִי:

and I did not find (one).

Psalm 106:23,

וַיֹּאמֶר לְהַשְׁמִידֵם

And He said (He was going) to exterminate them--

לוֹלֵי מֹשֶׁה בְּחִירוֹ עֹמֵד בַּפְּרִץ לְפָנָיו

unless Moses, His chosen one, stood in the breach before Him,

לְהָשִׁיב חֲמָתוֹ מִהַשְׁחִית:

to turn back His wrath from destroying.

Darr comments that “The image of Israel’s jackal prophets aprowl, scavenging among the people and contributing to their ruin, is followed (appropriately enough) by an image of Israel as a field whose fence—built to dissuade both human and animal marauders—has fallen to pieces. Israel’s prophets neither ‘go up’ into the gaps to provide immediate defense nor repair the fence in order that it ‘might stand in battle on the day of the Lord’ (**verse 5**)...

“According to **Psalm 106:23**, Moses, Israel’s prophet par excellence, ‘stood in the breach’ when God threatened to destroy the Israelites for worshipping the golden calf. Not so Ezekiel’s prophetic riv-

(continued...)

13:6 חָזוּ שׁוֹא וְקִסָּם כְּזָב הָאֹמְרִים

They saw emptiness and false divination,¹⁰ the ones saying

⁹(...continued)

als. Faced with Israel's disintegration, they resort to falsehood and lying divination, proclaiming their oracles in Yahweh's Name and then expecting the Lord to fulfill them!" (P. 101)

10

Rabbi Fisch notes that "Their visions, which they profess to have received from God, are the fancy of their deluded minds and their predictions about the future will prove to be lies." (P. 70)

Hilmer's translation has "Their visions are false." He comments that "Whether the false prophets had actual visions is unknown, but they claimed to have received revelations from [YHWH] when in reality their messages only proclaimed what their hearers wanted to hear." (P. 1242) See:

Isaiah 30:10, which depicts the people asking for false prophets:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ לְרֹאִים לֹא תִרְאוּ

who said to the seers, Do not see!

וְלַחֲזִים לֹא תַחְזוּ-לָנוּ נְכֹחֹת

And to the visionaries, Do not give visions of upright things for us!

דְּבַר-וּלְנוּ חֲלָקוֹת

Speak smooth things to us--

חֲזוּ מִהַתְּלוֹת:

envision deceptions!

Jeremiah 23:9-17,

9 לְנִבְאִים

To the prophets:

נִשְׁבַּר לִבִּי בְקִרְבִּי

My heart is broken within me;

רָחַפוּ כָּל-עַצְמוֹתַי

all my bones tremble.

הָיִיתִי כְּאִישׁ שָׂכֹר

I have become like a drunken man,

וּכְגֹבֵר עֲבָרוּ יַיִן

and like a man overcome by wine--

מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה וּמִפְּנֵי דְבַרֵּי קִדְשׁוֹ:

from before YHWH and from before His set-apart Words!

10 כִּי מִנְאֲפִים מְלֵאָה הָאָרֶץ

Because adulterers / sexually immoral people filled the land;

(continued...)

¹⁰(...continued)

כִּי־מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים אֲבָלָה הָאָרֶץ

because from before a curse / oath the land mourned.

יִבְשׂוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָּר

Pastures of the desert dried up,

וַתְּהִי מְרוּצָתָם רָעָה

and their course was evil,

וּגְבוּרָתָם לֹא־כֵן:

and their greatness was not so.

11 כִּי־גַם־נְבִיאִים גַּם־כֹּהֵן חֲנָפוּ

Because even prophet, even priest were polluted;

גַּם־בְּבֵיתִי מֵצָאתִי רַעְתָּם

even in My house I found their evil--

נֹאם־יְהוָה:

(it is) a saying of YHWH.

12 לָכֵן יִהְיֶה דְרָכָם לָהֶם כַּחֲלָקְלָקוֹת

Therefore, their way will be for them like the slipperiness;

בְּאִפְלָה יִדְחוּ וְנָפְלוּ בָּהּ

in the darkness they will be thrust down and they will fall in it.

כִּי־אָבִיא עֲלֵיהֶם רָעָה

Because I will bring evil upon them,

שָׁנַת פְּקֻדָּתָם

a year of their visitation (for punishment).

נֹאם־יְהוָה:

(It is) a saying of YHWH.

13 וּבְנְבִיאֵי שָׁמְרוֹן רָאִיתִי תְּפִלָּה

And among Samaria's prophets I saw an unseemly thing--

הַנְּבִאִים בַּבַּעַל

they prophesied by the Baal,

וַיִּתְּעוּ אֶת־עַמִּי

and they led My people astray--

אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Israel!

14 וּבְנְבִיאֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם רָאִיתִי שְׁעֵרוּרָה

And among Jerusalem's prophets I saw a horrible thing--

(continued...)

¹⁰(...continued)

נֹאֲרָף

committing adultery,

וְהִלְךְ בְּשֶׁקֶר

and walking in the lie / falsehood,

וַחֲזָקוּ יְדֵי מְרָעִים

and they strengthened (the) hands of evil-doers,

לְבַלְתִּי-שָׁבוּ אִישׁ מִרַעְתּוֹ

so that a man would not repent / turn from his evil!

הָיָו-לִי כָלֶם כְּסֹדֹם

They were to Me—all of them—like Sodom!

וַיִּשְׁבִּיָּהּ כַּעֲמֹרָה:

And her (Jerusalem's) inhabitants like the Gomorrah!

15 לָכֵן כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עַל-הַנְּבִאִים

Therefore in this way YHWH of Armies spoke concerning the prophets:

הִנְנִי מֹאכִיל אוֹתָם לְעֵנָה

Look at Me, causing them to eat wormwood,

וְהִשְׁקֵיתִים מִי-רָאשׁ

and I will cause them to drink poison water;

כִּי מֵאֵת נְבִיאֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם יֵצֵא חֲנֻפָה

because from Jerusalem's prophets has gone forth profaneness / pollution,

לְכָל-הָאָרֶץ:

to all the land!

16 כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת

In this way YHWH of Armies spoke:

אַל-תִּשְׁמְעוּ עַל-דְּבַרֵי הַנְּבִאִים

Do not listen to (the) words of the prophets,

הַנְּבִאִים לָכֶם

the ones prophesying to you—

מִהַבְלִים הֵמָּה אֲתֶכֶם

they are fooling you!

חֲזוֹן לִבָּם יְדַבְּרוּ

They are speaking a vision of their heart--

לֹא מִפִּי יְהוָה:

not from YHWH's mouth!

(continued...)

נֹאמְרֵי־יְהוָה

(It is) a saying of YHWH--

וַיְהִי־לֹא שְׁלַחֵם

and YHWH did not send them forth!

וַיַּחֲלוּ לְקַיֵּם דְּבַר:

And they waited for a word to be confirmed.¹¹

¹⁰(...continued)

17 אֹמְרִים אִמּוֹר לְמִנְאֲצֵי

Saying to say continually to those spurning Me,

דְּבַר יְהוָה שְׁלוֹם יִהְיֶה לָכֶם

YHWH said Peace / Welfare will be yours!

וְכָל הַלֵּךְ בְּשָׁרְרוֹת לְבוֹ אִמְרוּ

And, (to) everyone walking in (the) stubbornness of his heart, they say,

לֹא־תָבוֹא עֲלֵיכֶם רָעָה:

Evil will not come upon / against you!

2 Timothy 4:3-4,

3 Ἔσται γὰρ καιρὸς ὅτε τῆς ὑγιαίνουσης διδασκαλίας οὐκ ἀνέξονται

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching,

ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας

but rather, according to their own desires

ἐαυτοῖς ἐπισωρεύουσιν διδασκάλους κινήθμενοι τὴν ἀκοήν
they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,

4 καὶ ἀπὸ μὲν τῆς ἀληθείας τὴν ἀκοήν ἀποστρέψουσιν,

and will turn away from listening to the truth

ἐπὶ δὲ τοὺς μύθους ἐκτραπήσονται.

and wander off into myths.

What do you think? Do you think these warnings against false prophets are still relevant in our modern world? We think that they are tragically most appropriate!

11

The last line of **verse 6** is given varying translations:

King James, “and they have made *others* to hope that they would confirm the word.”

Tanakh, “and then they waited for their word to be fulfilled.”

New Revised Standard, “and yet they wait for the fulfillment of their word!:

(continued...)

13:7 הָלוֹא מַחְזֵה-שׁוֹא חֲזִיֹתָם

Have you not seen an empty vision?

וּמִקְסָם כָּזַב אִמְרָתָם

and (have you not) spoken a divination of a lie?

וְאִמְרִים נְאֻם-יְהוָה

And (you plural) are saying (It is) a Saying of YHWH,

וְאֲנִי לֹא דִבַּרְתִּי:

and I, I Did Not Speak!¹²

13:8¹³

¹¹(...continued)

New International, “and expect him [the Lord] to fulfill their words.”

Rahlfs, καὶ ἤρξαντο τοῦ ἀναστῆσαι λόγον, “and they began to cause a word to stand.”

Rabbi Fisch comments that “In fact they know nothing of what the future holds for the nation since they receive no enlightenment from God; all they do is to hope that their forecast will be confirmed by events.” (P. 70)

¹²

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Their prognostications must prove false, since they are given in the name of God without His authority.” (P. 70)

¹³

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 8-16** “Punishment of the People’s Misleaders.” He comments that “At present these prophets possess influence, they are counselors and leaders; when Israel is again a nation upon his own land, they shall have no place in the council of the people. Now they occupy a high place in the roll of citizens and bear distinguished names; then their names shall not be written in the writing (i.e. the scroll or register-roll) of the house of Israel (compare **Isaiah 4:3**; **Ezra 2:62**). And finally, they will not have a place in the land at all; Israel will return while they will perish.” (P. 70) Compare **Jeremiah 29:32**,

Therefore in this way YHWH spoke:

Look at me, visiting (punishment) upon Shemayah the Nechemite and upon his descendant(s).

There will not be for him a man dwelling in this people’s midst;

and he will not look on the good which I am doing for My people—

(it is) a saying of YHWH—

because he spoke apostasy from YHWH!

לְכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

Therefore in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

יֵעַן דִּבְרֵיכֶם שׁוּא

Because of your (plural) speaking emptiness,

וַחֲזִיתֶם כָּזָב

and you envisioned a lie--

לְכֵן הִנְנִי אֵלֵיכֶם

therefore look at Me--against you (plural)!

נֵאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה:

(It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH!

13:9 וְהִיְתָה יָדִי אֶל־הַנְּבִיאִים

And My Hand Will Be against the prophets,

הַחֲזִיִּים שׁוּאִים

the ones envisioning emptiness,

וְהַקְּסָמִים כָּזָבִים

and the ones divining a lie!

בְּסֹדַר עַמִּי לֹא־יְהִיוּ

They will not be in My people's counsel!

וּבְכַתָּב בֵּית־יִשְׂרָאֵל

And in (the) writing of Israel's house

לֹא יִכְתָּבוּ

they will not be written!¹⁴

¹⁴Darr comments that the names of the false prophets “will not be registered in the roll of Israel’s citizens (see **Ezra 2:62; Nehemiah 7:64; Jeremiah 22:20**).” (P. 101)

וְאֶל-אֲדָמַת יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יָבֹאוּ

And to / into Israel's land they will not come!¹⁵

וַיִּדְעֻם כִּי אֲנִי אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה:

And you (plural) will know that I (am) my Lord YHWH!

13:10¹⁶ יֵעַן וּבִיְעַן

Because, and in because¹⁷

15

Hilmer notes that it will be “a threefold punishment, resulting in total exclusion from the community.” (P. 1242)

16

Following the first judgment announcement in **verses 8-9**, Darr comments that “A second judgment announcement, consisting of three parts, follows in **verses 10-16**...Here, a different (though related) metaphor appears. When the people build a weak wall assembled without benefit of mortar, their weal-speaking prophets daub it with whitewash, a thin veneer that lends to it the appearance of a more substantial structure. But when a mighty storm—driving rains, large hailstones, violent wind—strikes, the wall falls. So Yahweh's wrath, like a great storm will level the whitewashed wall, exposing its faulty construction...Israel's prophets will perish in the rubble.” (P. 101)

17

The strange two-fold יֵעַן וּבִיְעַן, literally “Because and by / in because” is either overlooked or given varying translations, from “Because, even because,” to “Inasmuch,” to “Because, in truth.”

Rabbi Fisch holds that “The repetition of the conjunction solemnly emphasizes the offense and the impending judgment of the false prophets.” (P. 71) Compare:

Ezekiel 36:3,

Therefore prophesy, and you shall say:

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

Because in / on because of making desolate and trampling you (plural) all around,

to cause you (plural) to become a possession of a remnant of the nations

and you were brought up on (the) tongue's speech,

and an evil report of people.

Leviticus 26:43,

And the land will be deserted from them;

and it will make pleasing its times of rest by its being left desolate from them;

and they will make their guilt / iniquity pleasing / acceptable

(continued...)

הִטְעוּ אֶת־עַמִּי

they led astray My people

לֵאמֹר שְׁלוֹם וְאֵין שְׁלוֹם

saying, Peace—and there is no peace;¹⁸

וְהוּא בִּנְה' חֵיץ

and he is building a (thin) wall--

וְהֵנָּם טָחִים אֹתוֹ תַּפְּלִ:

and look at them—overlying it (with) white-wash!¹⁹

¹⁷(...continued)

on account of, and on account of they refused My judicial-decisions,
and My statutes their innermost being abhorred.

18

Rabbi Fisch notes that this is “a reminiscence of **Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11** (compare also **Micah 3:5**).
The Hebrew noun *shalom* denotes in such passages national prosperity and security.” (P. 71)

Jeremiah 6:14,

And they would heal my people’s brokenness by trifling,
saying Peace! Peace! And there is no peace!

Jeremiah 8:11,

And they healed (the) daughter of my people’s brokenness superficially,
saying, Peace, Peace!

And there is no peace.

Micah 3:5,

In this way YHWH spoke concerning the prophets,
the ones leading my people astray,
the ones biting with their teeth,
and they will cry out Peace!

And when one gives nothing for their mouth--
and they will sanctify war against him!

19

Rabbi Fisch notes that “The word חֵיץ, *chayits* is chosen by Ezekiel because it signifies a wall consisting of stones heaped one upon another which are not cemented together...and conjures up a very forceful metaphor. Instead of giving the people sound advice in a time of crisis, the false prophets have created in them a spirit of complacency and unwarranted security. They have not built for them a wall which will withstand the storm, but something which will collapse at a touch and leave them exposed.

(continued...)

13:11 אָמַר אֶל-טְחֵי תַפֵּל וַיִּפֹּל

Say to the ones overlaying (with) white-wash, and it will fall:

הִיְהִי גֶשֶׁם שׁוֹטֵף

There was an overflowing rain;

וְאַתָּנָה אֲבִנֵי אֶלְגִּבִּישׁ תִּפְלֹנָה

and (upon) you, hail-stones,²⁰ will fall,

וְרוּחַ סְעָרוֹת תִּבְקַע:

and a stormy wind will break out.²¹

13:12 וְהִנֵּה נָפַל הַקִּיר

And look...the wall fell!

¹⁹(...continued)

“[They have coated that flimsy wall with] whited plaster...a covering of whitewash [that] conceals the unstable character of the wall, and when the test comes, that will be made evident.” (P. 71)

Hilmer notes that “The Hebrew for this word [תַּפֵּל, **taphel**] is used only by Ezekiel... A similar-sounding Hebrew word means ‘unsatisfying things,’ and Ezekiel may have chosen the word he did because of its similarity to the other one.” (P. 1242) We think he is referring to the adjective תַּפֵּל, spelled exactly the same way, which means “tasteless,” “unseasoned.”

20

Rabbi Fisch notes that “The hailstones are addressed as God’s agent for the destruction of what the false prophets had erected.” (P. 71)

In the Hebrew, the phrase אֲבִנֵי אֶלְגִּבִּישׁ, ‘stones of *elgabish*’ occurs again only in **verse 13** and **28:22**. **Brown-Driver-Briggs** states that the noun אֶלְגִּבִּישׁ means “hail,” and is equal to the Aramaic *’algibsuu*, gypsum.

21

Hilmer comments that “The violent thunderstorm of [YHWH’s] judgment (imagery frequently used in the **Old Testament**) was about to sweep them away (see, e.g., **Psalm 18:7-15; 77:17-18; 83:15; Isaiah 28:17; 30:30; Jeremiah 23:19; 20:23**).” (P. 1242)

הֲלוֹא יֵאמַר אֲלֵיכֶם

Will it not be said to you (plural),

אֵיךְ הִטַּיִח אֲשֶׁר טַחַתְּם:

Where is the coating with which you overlaid (it)?²²

13:13 לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱדַנִּי יְהוָה

Therefore, in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

וּבִקְעָתִי רוּחַ-סִעָרוֹת בַּחֲמָתִי

And I will break out a wind of storms in My wrath,

וְגִשָׁם שֹׁטֵף בְּאַפִּי יְהוָה

and (there) will be an overflowing rain in My anger;

וְאֲבָנֵי אֶלְגָּבִישׁ בַּחֲמָה לְכֻלָּהּ:

And hailstones in (My) wrath, for a finish / full end!

13:14 וְהִרְסֹתִי אֶת-הַקִּיר

And I will throw the wall down

אֲשֶׁר-טַחַתְּם תִּפֹּל

which you overlaid (with) white-wash;

וְהִגַּעְתִּיהוּ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ

and I will cause it to touch / reach the earth / ground,²³

וְנִגְלָה יְסָדוֹ

and its foundation will be revealed.

22

Rabbi Fisch says that this means “Where is the assurance of safety from invasion which you gave to us?” (P. 72)

23

The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) of this difficult Hebrew phrase is καὶ θήσω αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῆν γῆν, “and I will place it upon the earth.”

וְנִפְּלָה׃

And it will fall,

וְכִלִּיתֶם בְּתוֹכָהּ

and you (plural) will be finished in its midst!²⁴

וַיִּדְעֻתֶם כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה׃

And you will know that I (am) YHWH!

13:15 וְכִלִּיתִי אֶת־חֲמָתִי בַקִּיר׃

And I will finish My wrath on the wall,

וּבַטָּחִים אֲתוּ תִפְּלֹ

and on the ones overlaying it (with) white-wash.

וְאֹמַר לָכֶם׃

And I will say to you (plural),

אֵין הַקִּיר

the wall is not,

וְאֵין הַטָּחִים אֲתוּ׃

and the ones overlaying it are not!

13:16 נְבִיאֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנְּבִאִים אֶל־יְרוּשָׁלַם׃

Prophets of Israel, the ones prophesying to Jerusalem,

וְהַחֲזִים לָהּ חֲזוֹן שָׁלֵם

and the seers / visionaries (announcing) to it a vision of peace,

וְאֵין שָׁלֵם׃

and there is no peace!

נֹאם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה:

(It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH!

13:17²⁵ וְאַתָּה בֶן-אָדָם׃

And you, Son of Adam / Humanity,

שִׁים פְּנֶיךָ

Set your face

אֶל-בָּנוֹת עַמֶּךָ׃

towards / against (the) daughters of your people,

הַמְתַּנְבְּאוֹת מִלְבָּתָן׃

the ones prophesying from their heart(s).

וְהִנְבֵּא עֲלֵיהֶן׃

And prophesy against them!

Matties comments on **13:17-23** that “The second oracle concerns female prophets whose manipulative words and magical actions result in death to the righteous and life to the wicked...Like the male prophets (**13:2**), the women are also self-inspired (*out of their own imaginations*)...They seek to exploit and control the lives of others by means of magical acts...By magic and violence, they seek to manipulate the Divine realm against vulnerable people and for their own advantage.” (P. 1172) It is an old trick, practiced commonly by shamen / ministers / medicine men throughout history.

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 17-23** “Denunciation of False Prophetesses.” He comments that “Just as true and false prophets were to be found in Judea, so were also true and false prophetesses. Ezekiel now condemns the women who, like their male counterparts, were misleading the people. By their magical arts they pretended to be able to foretell the future; and what was worse, their oracles brought dismay to the righteous and assurance to the wicked.” (Pp. 72-73)

Reimer states that “Attention now turns to women who give prophecies of their own designing. The term ‘prophetess,’ usually found with genuine agents of [YHWH] (e.g., Miriam in **Exodus 15:20**; Deborah in **Judges 4:4**; Huldah in **2 Kings 22:14**), is avoided with reference to these impostors. Focus shifts resolutely onto magical practices that are very difficult to clarify any further. The striking language of *hunt for souls* (**Ezekiel 13:18, 20**) identifies this generally as illicit spiritual manipulation. Such behavior is forbidden (e.g., in **Leviticus 19:26, 31**; **Deuteronomy 18:10-14**).” (P. 1516)

13:18²⁶ וְאָמַרְתָּ

And you shall say,

כֹּה־אָמַרְא אֲדַבֵּר יְהוָה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

הוּא לְמַתְפְּרוֹת כְּסָתוֹת

Woe to (the) ones sewing (magic) bands together²⁷

26

Darr comments that “The following accusations (**verses 18b-19**), their technical terms drawn from the world of sorcery and witchcraft, shroud these women in the magical practices of ancient Mesopotamian society. See Sue Rollin, ‘Women and Witchcraft in Ancient Assyria,’ **Images of Women in Antiquity**, ed. Averil Cameron and Amelie Kuhrt (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993, pp. 34-45.

Darr adds that “within the literatures of ancient Assyria and Babylonia, we find many references to witchcraft and sorcery. But one need not look that far afield to discover that such activities played a role in popular religion.” (P. 102) See **Leviticus 20:6**, and especially the story of Saul and the Endor medium, **1 Samuel 28**. “Especially in periods of crisis, people turned to every possible means by which to secure some sense of control over their lives. Although males participated in such practices, women especially were associated with them. Their ‘arts’—both feared and sought after—promised protection from the spells enlisted by one’s enemies, on one hand, while holding out the possibility of harming one’s foes, on the other hand. Amulets and incantations functioned to release persons who believed themselves to be victims of witchcraft.” (P. 102)

“Bowen, “The Daughters of Your People,” pp. 422-33, suggests, on the basis of biblical and extra-biblical evidence, that these women may have functioned, at least in part, as medical and religious professionals whose services were important during childbirth and other sorts of ‘illnesses.’ In any event, Ezekiel condemns them because, in continuing the practices of the past (and present), they perpetuate Israel’s ‘old identity,’ which must perish in order that Ezekiel’s understanding of its new, post-judgment identity become reality...Yahweh will strip away their magical appurtenances, releasing human ‘prey’ from their power and forcing these women to acknowledge God...God will bring an end to their false visions and divinatory practices, rendering them incapable of plying their trade...When God saves ‘my people’ from these ‘prophet players,’ they will be forced to know Yahweh—that is, to confess the unparalleled power of Israel’s Lord.” (P. 103)

27

Hilmer comments that “Exactly what the women were doing is not known, but that it was some kind of black magic or voodoo is clear. The **Bible** consistently avoids explicit description of occult practices.” (P. 1243)

(continued...)

עַל אֵל-אַצְבְּלֵי יָדַי

upon every joint (wrist / elbow) of my hand,

וְעָשׂוֹת הַמִּסְפָּחוֹת עַל-רֹאשׁ כָּל-קוֹמָה

and making the veils upon (the) head of every height,²⁸

לְצוּרֵד נַפְשׁוֹת

to hunt (for) innermost-beings / lives.²⁹

הַנְּפֹשׁוֹת הַצּוֹרְדָּנָה לְעַמִּי

Will you hunt for the innermost beings belonging to My people,

וְנַפְשׁוֹת לְכִנָּה תַחֲיִינָה:

and your innermost-beings you will preserve alive?³⁰

²⁷(...continued)

We doubt that this is the case. The present text is an example of an attempt by Ezekiel to depict the occult practices of these prophetesses—sewing magic bands for him to place upon his hands / wrists, and veils for people to wear. And for a much more explicit and longer text, see **1 Samuel 28**, with its story of Saul and the female medium at En-dor.

28

Rabbi Fisch comments on **verse 18** that “The details of their [the prophetesses] practices are obscure, although they must have been familiar to Ezekiel’s contemporaries. *Kesathoth* means cushions in the Hebrew of the **Mishnah** [post-Christian years], but here it probably signifies ‘fillets, bands,’ a form of charm. *Mispachoth*, translated ‘pads,’ almost certainly denotes a kind of veil which, as stated here, corresponded to the height of the person and covered the whole body.” (P. 73)

29

Rabbi Fisch quotes McFadyen (Christian Hebraist) as writing, “The professed object of these superstitious practices is the capture and control of souls—more plainly to slay and to spare, i.e. to determine their fate by a solemn prediction of death or good fortune, as the case may be.” (P. 73)

30

Translations of **verse 18** vary:

King James, “And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe to the *women* that sew pillows to all armholes, and make kerchiefs upon the head of every stature to hunt souls! Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you?”

Tanakh, “and say: Thus said the Lord GOD: Woe to those who sew pads on all arm-joints and make bonnets for the head of every person, in order to entrap! Can you hunt down lives among My
(continued...)

13:19 וַתַּחֲלֵלְנָה אֹתִי אֶל-עַמִּי

And you (feminine plural) have profaned / polluted Me to My people

בְּשַׁעְלֵי שְׁעָרִים וּבַפְתּוֹתַי לֶחֶם

for handfuls of barley and for morsels / pieces of bread / food--³¹

³⁰(...continued)

people, while you preserve your own lives?"

New Revised Standard, "and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Woe to the women who sew bands on all wrists, and make veils for the heads of persons of every height, in the hunt for human lives! Will you hunt down lives among my people, and maintain your own lives?"

New International, "and say, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the women who sew magic charms on all their wrists and make veils of various lengths for their heads in order to ensnare people. Will you ensnare the lives of my people but preserve your own?"

New Jerusalem, "Say, "The Lord Yahweh says this: Disaster is in store for women who sew ribbons round each wrist and make head-cloths for people of all sizes, in their hunt for souls! Are you to hunt the souls of my people and keep your own souls safe?"

Rahfs, καὶ ἐρεῖς τάδε λέγει κύριος οὐαὶ ταῖς συρραπτούσαις προσκεφάλαια ἐπὶ πάντα ἀγκῶνα χειρὸς καὶ ποιούσαις ἐπιβόλαια ἐπὶ πᾶσαν κεφαλὴν πάσης ἡλικίας τοῦ διαστρέφειν ψυχὰς αἱ ψυχὰι διεστράφησαν τοῦ λαοῦ μου καὶ ψυχὰς περιεποιούντο, "and you will say, So then Lord says, Woe to the female sewers of pillows / cushions upon every hand-joint, and making coverings upon every head of every height, in order to distort / pervert souls! The souls of the people of Mine they distorted / perverted, and souls they preserved / acquired."

Rabbi Fisch comments that "These practices demoralized the Judeans and weakened their character, so contributing to their destruction...They are actuated by the profit motive; all they are concerned about is receiving their fees." (P. 73)

31

Rabbi Fisch comments that "By inducing the people to give up their trust in God and put faith in lying divinations, the women caused His name to be profaned...They accepted [handfuls of barley and crumbs of bread] such trifling payment for their services. Others think that the barley and bread were employed by these women as materials in their magical art." (P. 73)

Hilmer states that this is an example of "involvement in religious matters of any kind for mere gain," something "consistently condemned in the **Bible** (see, e.g., **Jeremiah 6:13; 8:10; Micah 3:5, 11; Acts 8:9-24; Titus 1:11**). For the proper attitude and motivation see **2 Corinthians 11:7; 2 Thessalonians 3:8; 1 Timothy 3:3**.

לְהַמִּית נַפְשֹׁתַי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תָמוּתָנָה

to put to death souls which will / would not be put to death,

וּלְחַיֵּית נַפְשֹׁתַי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תַחֲיֶינָה

and to preserve alive souls which will / would not live,³²

בְּכִזְבְּכֶם לְעַמִּי שְׁמָעִי כָזָב:

by your lies to My people listening (to) a lie!

13:20 לָכֵן כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל

Therefore in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

הֲנִנִּי אֶל-כַּסְתוֹתֶיכֶן

Look at Me—against your bands / cushions

אֲשֶׁר אַתְּנָה מְצַדְרוֹת שָׁם אֶת-הַנַּפְשֹׁתַי לְפָרְחֹת

with which you (feminine plural) are hunting innermost-beings / souls there for flying!

וְקָרַעְתִּי אֹתָם מֵעַל זְרוּעֹתֶיכֶם

And I will tear them from upon your arms,

וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי אֶת-הַנַּפְשֹׁתַי אֲשֶׁר אַתְּנָה מְצַדְרוֹת

And I will send forth the innermost-beings / souls which you are hunting--

אֶת-נַפְשֵׁי לְפָרְחֹת:

their innermost-beings / souls for flying!³³

32

Rabbi Fisch comments that “They foretold death for the righteous and promised life to the wicked.” (P. 73) Hilmer states that “The women had used their evil powers to unjust ends, involving even matters of life and death.” (P. 1243)

33

Translations of **verse 20** vary somewhat:

King James, “Wherefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against your pillows, wherewith ye there hunt the souls to make *them* fly, and I will tear them from your arms, and will let the souls go, *even* the souls that ye hunt to make *them* fly.”

(continued...)

13:21 וְקָרַעְתִּי אֶת־מִסְפָּחֹתֵיכֶם

And I will tear (off) your veils;

וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶת־עַמִּי מִיַּדְּכֶן

and I will deliver My people from your hand.

וְלֹא־יִהְיוּ עוֹד בְּיַדְּכֶן לְמִצְוֵהָ

And they will not again be in your hand for a *masada* / stronghold.

וַיִּדְעֶתֶן כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:

And you (feminine plural) will know that I (am) YHWH!

13:22 יַעַן הַכְּאוֹת לִב־צַדִּיק שֶׁקָר

Because of (your) disheartening (the) heart of a righteous person (with a) lie--

וְאֲנִי לֹא הִכְאַבְתִּיו

and I, I did not pain him;

³³(...continued)

Tanakh, “Assuredly, thus said the Lord GOD: I am going to deal with your pads, by which you hunt down lives like birds, and I will tear them from your arms and free the persons whose lives you hunt down like birds.”

New Revised Standard, “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: I am against your bands with which you hunt lives; I will tear them from your arms, and let the lives go free, the lives that you hunt down like birds.”

New International, “Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against your magic charms with which you ensnare people like birds and I will tear them from your arms; I will set free the people that you ensnare like birds.”

New Jerusalem, “Very well, the Lord Yahweh says this: Look, I am now against your ribbons, with which you hunt souls like birds, and I shall tear them off your arms and free those souls whom you hunt like birds.”

Rahlfs, διὰ τοῦτο τάδε λέγει κύριος κύριος ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐπὶ τὰ προσκεφάλαια ὑμῶν ἐφ’ ἃ ὑμεῖς συστρέφετε ἐκεῖ ψυχὰς καὶ διαρρήξω αὐτὰ ἀπὸ τῶν βραχιόνων ὑμῶν καὶ ἐξαποστελῶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἃς ὑμεῖς ἐκστρέφετε τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς διασκορπισμόν, “For this reason then, these things says Lord Lord: Look, I (am) upon / against your pillows, upon which you people gather up innermost-beings there! And I will tear them from your arms; and I will send them out, the innermost-beings / souls, which you turn aside / pervert their innermost-beings, for a dispersion.”

וּלְחַזֵּק יְדֵי רָשָׁע

and to strengthen hands of wickedness,

לְבַלְתִּי-שׁוּב מִדְרָכּוֹ הָרָע לְהַחֲיִיתוֹ:

So as not to turn from his way, the evil one, to preserve his life.³⁴

13:23 לֵכֵן שׂוּא לֹא תַחֲזִינָה

Therefore emptiness you (feminine plural) will not see / envision;

וְקִסָּם לֹא-תִקְסַמְנָה עוֹד

and divination you will not Divine again!

וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶת-עַמִּי מִיַּדְּכֶן

And I will deliver My people from your hand!

וְיָדַעְתֶּן כִּי-אֲנִי יְהוָה:

And you will know that I (am) YHWH!³⁵

34

Rabbi Fisch states concerning the false prophetesses that “Their crime was twofold: they disheartened the righteous and seduced them from the right path, and they reassured the sinners and confirmed them in their wickedness.” (P. 74)

35

This sounds like a very positive future for the false prophetesses. They will cease their divination and visions of emptiness; YHWH will deliver the people whom they have captivated, and the false prophetesses will come to know YHWH! Rabbi Fisch comments that “God will abolish their profession in so forceful a manner that even these women will have to acknowledge that He has done it.” (P. 75)

If that is all coming to know YHWH means, it is not such a positive development. We think it means much more than that!