

## *Second Baptist Church of Doylestown*

### *Ezekiel Chapter 12 & 13*

*12/2/15*

#### *Ezekiel Chapter 12*

##### The Exile Symbolized

<sup>1</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have eyes to see but do not see and ears to hear but do not hear, for they are a rebellious people. <sup>3</sup> "Therefore, son of man, pack your belongings for exile and in the daytime, as they watch, set out and go from where you are to another place. Perhaps they will understand, though they are a rebellious people. <sup>4</sup> During the daytime, while they watch, bring out your belongings packed for exile. Then in the evening, while they are watching, go out like those who go into exile. <sup>5</sup> While they watch, dig through the wall and take your belongings out through it. <sup>6</sup> Put them on your shoulder as they are watching and carry them out at dusk. Cover your face so that you cannot see the land, for I have made you a sign to the Israelites." <sup>7</sup> So I did as I was commanded. During the day I brought out my things packed for exile. Then in the evening I dug through the wall with my hands. I took my belongings out at dusk, carrying them on my shoulders while they watched. <sup>8</sup> In the morning the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>9</sup> "Son of man, did not the Israelites, that rebellious people, ask you, 'What are you doing?'

12:1-9 Ezekiel played the role of a captive being led away to exile, portraying what was about to happen to King Zedekiah and the people remaining in Jerusalem. The exiles knew exactly what Ezekiel was doing because only six years earlier they had made similar preparations as they left Jerusalem for Babylonia. This was to show the people that they should not trust the king or the capital city to save them from the Babylonian army—only God could do that. And the exiles who hoped for an early return from exile would be disappointed. Ezekiel's graphic demonstration was proven correct to the last detail. But when he warned them, many refused to listen.

<sup>10</sup> "Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: This prophecy concerns the prince in Jerusalem and all the Israelites who are there.' <sup>11</sup> Say to them, 'I am a sign to you.' "As I have done, so it will be done to them. They will go into exile as captives. <sup>12</sup> "The prince among them will put his things on his shoulder at dusk and leave, and a hole will be dug in the wall for him to go through. He will cover his face so that he cannot see the land. <sup>13</sup> I will spread my net for him, and he will be caught in my snare; I will bring him to Babylonia, the land of the Chaldeans, but he will not see it, and there he will die. <sup>14</sup> I will scatter to the winds all those around him—his staff and all his troops—and I will pursue them with drawn sword. <sup>15</sup> "They will know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them through the countries. <sup>16</sup> But I will spare a few of them from the sword, famine and plague, so that in the nations where they go they may acknowledge all their detestable practices. Then they will know that I am the LORD." <sup>17</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>18</sup> "Son of man, tremble as you eat your food, and shudder in fear as you drink your water. <sup>19</sup> Say to the people of the land: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says about those living in Jerusalem and in the land of Israel: They will eat their food in anxiety and drink their water in despair, for their land will be stripped of everything in it because of the violence of all who live there. <sup>20</sup> The inhabited towns will be laid waste and the land will be desolate. Then you will know that I am the LORD.'"

**12:10-12** Zedekiah, Judah's last king (597-586 B.C.), was reigning in Jerusalem when Ezekiel gave these oracles or messages from God. Ezekiel showed the people what would happen to Zedekiah. Jerusalem would be attacked again, and Zedekiah would join the exiles already in Babylon. Zedekiah would be unable to see because Nebuchadnezzar would have his eyes gouged out (2 Kings 25:3-7; Jeremiah 52:10-11).

### **There Will Be No Delay - Verses 21-28**

<sup>21</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>22</sup> "Son of man, what is this proverb you have in the land of Israel: 'The days go by and every vision comes to nothing'? <sup>23</sup> Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am going to put an end to this proverb, and they will no longer quote it in Israel.' Say to them, 'The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled. <sup>24</sup> For there will be no more false visions or flattering divinations among the people of Israel. <sup>25</sup> But I the LORD will speak what I will, and it shall be fulfilled without delay. For in your days, you rebellious people, I will fulfill whatever I say, declares the Sovereign LORD.'" <sup>26</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>27</sup> "Son of man, the Israelites are saying, 'The vision he sees is for many years from now, and he prophesies about the distant future.' <sup>28</sup> "Therefore say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: None of my words will be delayed any longer; whatever I say will be fulfilled, declares the Sovereign LORD.'"

**12:21-28** These two short messages were warnings that God's words would come true—soon! Less than six years later, Jerusalem would be destroyed. Yet the people were skeptical. Unbelief and false security led them to believe it would never happen. The apostle Peter dealt with this problem in the church (2 Peter 3:9). It is dangerous to say Christ will never return or to regard his coming as so far in the future as to be irrelevant today. All that God says is sure to happen. Don't dare assume that you have plenty of time to get right with God.

## *Ezekiel Chapter 13*

### **False Prophets Condemned**

<sup>1</sup> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are now prophesying. Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: 'Hear the word of the LORD!'<sup>3</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! <sup>4</sup> Your prophets, Israel, are like jackals among ruins. <sup>5</sup> You have not gone up to the breaches in the wall to repair it for the people of Israel so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the LORD. <sup>6</sup> Their visions are false and their divinations a lie. Even though the LORD has not sent them, they say, "The LORD declares," and expect him to fulfill their words. <sup>7</sup> Have you not seen false visions and uttered lying divinations when you say, "The LORD declares," though I have not spoken? <sup>8</sup> "Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because of your false words and lying visions, I am against you, declares the Sovereign LORD. <sup>9</sup> My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will not belong to the council of my people or be listed in the records of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD. <sup>10</sup> "Because they lead my people astray, saying, "Peace," when there is no peace, and because, when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash, <sup>11</sup> therefore tell those who cover it with whitewash that it is going to fall. Rain will come in torrents, and I will send hailstones hurtling down, and violent winds will burst forth. <sup>12</sup> When the wall collapses, will people not ask you, "Where is the whitewash you covered it with?" <sup>13</sup> "Therefore this is what the

**Sovereign LORD says: In my wrath I will unleash a violent wind, and in my anger hailstones and torrents of rain will fall with destructive fury. <sup>14</sup> I will tear down the wall you have covered with whitewash and will level it to the ground so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it falls, you will be destroyed in it; and you will know that I am the LORD. <sup>15</sup> So I will pour out my wrath against the wall and against those who covered it with whitewash. I will say to you, "The wall is gone and so are those who whitewashed it, <sup>16</sup> those prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her when there was no peace, declares the Sovereign LORD."**

**13:1-23** This warning was directed against false prophets whose messages were not from God, but lies intended to win popularity by saying whatever made the people happy. False prophets did not care about the truth as Ezekiel did. They lulled people into a false sense of security, making Ezekiel's job even more difficult. Beware of people who bend the truth in their quest for popularity and power.

**13:2-3** The false prophets had a large following because they comforted the people and approved of their sinful actions. Lies are often attractive, and liars may have large followings. Today, for example, some spiritual leaders assure us that God promises his followers health and material success. This is comforting, but is it true? God's own Son did not have an easy life on earth. Make sure the messages you believe are consistent with what God teaches in his Word.

**13:10-12** These false prophets covered their lies (a "flimsy wall") with "whitewash"—a clean-looking and pleasing covering or front. Such superficiality can't hold up under God's scrutiny. He can always see what's underneath the surface.

#### **Verses 17-23**

<sup>17</sup> **"Now, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who prophesy out of their own imagination. Prophecy against them <sup>18</sup> 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? <sup>19</sup> You have profaned me among my people for a few handfuls of barley and scraps of bread. By lying to my people, who listen to lies, you have killed those who should not have died and have spared those who should not live. <sup>20</sup> "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. <sup>21</sup> I will tear off your veils and save my people from your hands, and they will no longer fall prey to your power. Then you will know that I am the LORD. <sup>22</sup> Because you disheartened the righteous with your lies, when I had brought them no grief, and because you encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil ways and so save their lives, <sup>23</sup> therefore you will no longer see false visions or practice divination. I will save my people from your hands. And then you will know that I am the LORD."**

**13:17** In the Bible, the gift of prophecy was given to women as well as men. Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), and Huldah (2 Kings 22:14) were considered prophetesses. But the women mentioned here are more like the witch of 1 Samuel 28:7, and they are condemned for discouraging the righteous (13:22).

**13:18** These magic charms and veils were used in practicing witchcraft. They were advertised as good luck charms, but they were used to ensnare the people in idolatry.