

I. The Character of False Prophets (23:16-18)

A. They operate in their flesh (16) – “Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD.”

B. They manipulate with flattery (17) – “They say continually to those who despise the word of the LORD, ‘It shall be well with you’; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, ‘No disaster shall come upon you.’”

C. They communicate in flippancy (18) – “For who among them has stood in the council of the LORD to see and to hear His word, or who has paid attention to His word and listened?”

II. What is Missing in False Prophets (23:21-22)

A. No true calling [21a] - “I did not send the prophets, yet they ran.”

B. No true communication (21b-22a) – “I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied. 22a But if they had stood in My council, then they would have proclaimed My words to My people...”

C. No true convictions (22b) – “...and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.”

III. The Tools of False Prophets (23:25-32)

A. Spiritual deception (25) – “I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’ [26] How long shall there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies, and who prophesy the deceit of their own heart...”

B. Scriptural dilution (27-29) – “...who think to make My people forget My name by their dreams that they tell one another, even as their fathers forgot My name for Baal? (28) Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, but let him who has My word speak My word faithfully. What has straw in common with wheat? declares the LORD. Is not My word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?”

C. Unauthorized substitution (30-31) – “Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who steal My words from one another. (31) Behold, I am against the prophets, declares the LORD, who use their tongues and declare, ‘declares the LORD.’ **Tagging God’s name to their self-invented messages**

D. Thoughtless victimization (32) – “Behold, I am against those who prophesy lying dreams, declares the LORD, and who tell them and lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness, when I did not send them or charge them. So they do not profit this people at all, declares the LORD.”