

you, 16 "The wall is no more, neither they who plastered it over—the prophets of Israel, who prophesy visions of peace to her though there is no peace," saith the Lord Jehovah!

But false prophets were not the only enemies with whom their faithful brethren had to contend. While these deceived the people as a whole, false prophetesses misled individuals, and snared souls by unholy arts, promising life and prosperity where God had denounced death. They, therefore, are next assailed.

17 Likewise,¹ thou son of man, set thy face against the daughters of thy people who prophesy after their own heart, for gain, and with heathen spells. Prophesy thou against them, 18 and say, Thus says the Lord Jehovah; Woe to the women that sew together magic ornaments for every joint of the hand,² and make magic coverings for the heads of persons of every age, to snare their souls.³ Will you thus hunt down the souls of My people to preserve your own souls alive, 19 dishonouring Me before My people for a few handfuls of barley and for bits of bread, for your

¹ Ezek. xiii. 17-19.

² In verse 20 they are said to be on the *arms*.

³ De Wette and Ewald seem to have hit on the most reasonable explanation of this passage—Smennd agreeing with them. De Wette fancies magic bands and fillets are meant. Ewald thinks the magic ornaments were mirrors (very probably small in size), which these female dabblers in the black arts carried, as he supposes, on their arms or in their hands, as other women carried their ordinary mirrors. Ewald, *Die Propheten*, vol. ii. p. 261. Rosenmüller has anticipated this solution in his wonderful Scholia. Some, says he, think the words refer to the magic rites of these women—by which, through placing such ornaments or things (whatever they were) on the person of those consulting them, they wished to make them more fitted to receive their divinations. Theodoret supposes pillows are mentioned as a figure for smooth and seductive discourse; soft pillows inducing quiet and ease, and soft words, though false, pleasing and soothing in a similar way, while instilling every kind of perversion into the mind.