

The False Shepherd

Zechariah 11:15-17

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Those of you who have been with us for our study of this wonderful book are well aware of the tremendous prophetic importance that it carries. And we have really covered so much of the prophetic picture, all the way from the history of the time of Zechariah clear to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and many many events in between. And one of the most significant events that is on the horizon prophetically is the rise of an individual that is commonly known as the Antichrist. Although that it is not specifically his title in Scripture, that title certainly fits him well. And we commonly know him as the Antichrist. John says there are many antichrists but there is one that we tend to think of as the most vehement rebellious Antichrist person who will ever live, apart from Satan himself.

And as we come to Zechariah chapter 11, we come face to face with this human being. He's not a demon and he's not a fallen angel, in that sense, he's not Satan, he is a human being, the most anti-God rebellious human being yet to arrive on the scene. In the context of Zechariah chapter 11, he appears as the false shepherd, the false shepherd. Or, if you'll notice verse 15, he is called the foolish shepherd. In verse 17, he is called the idol shepherd. But he is a false shepherd in contrast to the true shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the theme of Antichrist is not a new theme in the Bible. It's one that appears in many places. In fact, it's most interesting to me that the Apostle John writing in the first century to a wide circle of believers said this remarkable sentence, "Little children, you have heard that Antichrist shall come." Now that's interesting. How had they heard that Antichrist shall come? How had it become common knowledge as that statement seems to indicate that Antichrist should come?

Well, in the first place, it had been distinctly spoken of by the Apostles. For example, in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2, the Apostle Paul writes specifically about the coming of this individual. In verse 8, "Then shall that wicked one be revealed." Verse 3, "That man of sin will be revealed called the son of perdition." So it was apostolic proclamation and apostolic writing that this Antichrist, man of sin, son of perdition, whatever you choose to call him, would come.

Undoubtedly, they also had heard about it because it was distinctly alluded to by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. In John chapter 5 and verse 43, Jesus said, "I am come in My Father's name and you receive Me not. If another shall come in his own name, him you will receive." Now here Jesus is really echoing the thought of Zechariah 11, that Israel will reject the true shepherd and accept the false shepherd. That's what Jesus is saying basically.

And again, I think, in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, again Jesus alludes to the coming of such and one as Antichrist. He talks about the abomination of desolations and He refers to Daniel 9, the time when they will make a covenant with the prince that shall come for one week. He goes on to talk about Tribulation. He says there will be false Christs and false apostles and so forth and the

reference there back to Daniel 9 indicates that Jesus pointed out to them that this that Daniel had said would happen. And it certainly involved the prince that would come, the false Christ that Daniel referred to in chapter 9 verse 27. We'll see that in a moment. So it was not only proclaimed by the apostles, but it was alluded to by Jesus Himself.

Now in addition to that, it was strictly and clearly prophesied in the Old Testament that Antichrist would come. And here we find one such prophecy in Zechariah chapter 11 verse 15, let's look at it. And I'm going to read these three verses to you. "And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd, for lo, I will raise up a shepherd in the land who shall not visit those that are cut off, neither shall seek the young one, nor heal that which is broken, nor feed that which standeth still, but he shall eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hoofs in pieces. Woe to the idol shepherd that leaves the flock, the sword shall be on his arm and on his right eye. His arm shall be completely dried up and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." Now that is one of several Old Testament passages referring to this Antichrist personality, this false shepherd, foolish shepherd, idol shepherd that is to come.

Now let me set the stage for you a little bit so you'll understand the context in which this individual comes. God and Satan have been at war ever since Satan fell. Way back in eternity before the world began, Satan pulled off a rebellion. And he said, "I will be like the Most High, I will ascend and I will be equal with God." And God threw him out of heaven and with him went a host of the angels.

And since that time, Satan and his angels have been in rebellion against God. Now the particular attack that Satan has been most concentrating on since the world began after the fall of Adam has been to attack the seed promised in Genesis 3:15. Because it says in Genesis 3:15 that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. In other words, God says there's going to be someone coming, a seed is going to come that is going to bruise Satan and his dominion. Now Satan knows this. He knows this. And he's doing everything he can throughout all of history to try to stop this seed from arriving. And the seed, of course, ultimately is Messiah. But Messiah to come must come through the nation Israel. So Satan is always trying to stomp out Israel as well as stamp out Messiah. So you see through history Satan's great effort against God's people Israel and against Jesus Christ. And even now that Christ is already here, Satan still attacks Christ and he still attacks Israel.

But initially as you go back in history, you find that Satan's first approach, once he knew the seed was going to come, was to try to corrupt the human race so badly and so devastatingly and so totally corrupt the human race that no such seed could ever be born. And he did it by having demons cohabit with women in Genesis 6. It says, "The sons of God cohabitated with the daughters of men." He tried to produce a kind of a half-breed race demon-man, sort of a Rosemary's Baby civilization and thus corrupt humanity in some kind of a demon-human combination that would preclude the possibility of a seed being born...a Messianic seed, a redeemer. And, of course, you know what happened, God drowned that entire race in the flood, saving only Noah and his family. Satan failed.

In Exodus chapter 1, Satan again tried to destroy Israel. He tried to destroy the possibility of a seed there by trying to wipe out all male children in Israel. And you'll remember that Pharaoh made a decree while Israel was in Egypt that all male children be slaughtered. And again, God preserved the people of Israel. One little baby wasn't slaughtered, it was Moses. And Moses came to be the man who led Israel out of bondage and into the promised land and Satan's effort was thwarted again.

Again Satan tried to break the royal line in 2 Chronicles, and you might want to turn in your Bible to 2 Chronicles, I'm going to spend a minute or two there, but in 2 Chronicles chapter 20, 21, 22 and 23 which is right at the heart of the issue I want to point at, and we'll mention several Scriptures here, we find that Satan attempts to break the royal line. Now watch. Once Israel was established as a nation, and God had called out David and David's line was to be the Messianic line, the Messiah had to come through that kingly line. And so Satan tries to break the kingly line to remove all male children so the line comes to a termination. And you have in 2 Chronicles 21, for example, Jehoram killing all his brothers. And Jehoram just slaughters all his brothers which is just wholesale slaughtering and wiping out of the royal line. And it all comes down to one, just one individual is left in the royal line.

But that individual had sons, that individual had sons, we thank God for that. But then the Arabians came, as the story goes through this text, and killed all the sons, but they missed the youngest son. And in chapter 22 verse 1 it says, "So Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah reigned." They...the Arabians in the same verse, they slew everybody but Ahaziah the youngest son, they missed him. And so again the thing was reduced to one individual, he reigned only one year and he was a very, very wicked man. But nonetheless, he was in the Messianic line. He was counseled by his vile evil mother whose name was Athaliah. And he was then wounded severely and now the Messianic line was down to one individual who was severely wounded but he recovered. He was later killed in a war by Jehu but not before he had sons.

Now we go to chapter 22 verse 10 and let's pick up the story. Ahaziah is dead and he was the single thread in the line but he has had his sons. But once he is dead, when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal of the house of Judah. This woman was the tool of Satan to destroy the total royal seed. But watch, "But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him from among the king's sons who were slain and put him and his nurse in a bed chamber so Jehoshabeath the daughter of king Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest, for she was the sister of Ahaziah, hid him from Athaliah so that she slew him not and he was with them hidden in the house of God six years," while this terrible vile woman, his grandmother Athaliah reigned over Israel. One sister, Jehoshabeath, hid one little boy, Joash, who was the last thread in the royal seed. If Joash dies, there's no seed left of the line of David from which Messiah could be born.

So, for six years the hope of Israel was held in the hand of one little boy whose life was hidden. And believe me, that little boy was a little boy that Satan wanted dead. Do you believe that? You know he did.

And then verse 20...chapter 23 verse 1, "And in the seventh year, Jehoiada to strengthen himself and took the captains of hundreds, Azariah the son of Jeroham and Ishmael and all those other names, and they went about in Judah and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers of Israel and came to Jerusalem and all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God and he said unto them, Behold, the king's son shall reign as the Lord hath said of the sons of David." And as it turned out, Athaliah was later killed. And so there was a promise of victory and the little life was spared and the seed went on and Satan was again thwarted.

Satan couldn't stop it with a cross-breed race in Genesis 6. He couldn't stop it by trying to slaughter the male children in Egypt in Exodus 1. And he couldn't stop it by trying to slaughter off all the line under Athaliah in 2 Chronicles.

The book of Esther follows up on the story and how Satan again tried to get the whole of Israel wiped out. But the king couldn't sleep one night, pagan man but he went and asked someone to read to him. And the story that he heard saved the Jews from wholesale slaughter and again Satan was thwarted.

And then when you come into the New Testament, there was Herod who tried to slaughter every male child born but he missed on the Messiah. Then there was Satan who approached Jesus as He began His ministry and tried to thwart Him with temptation. And he failed again. And then there were the people of Nazareth who wanted to push Jesus off a cliff, but they failed again and He passed through the midst of them unseen. And finally Satan got Him and had Him nailed to a cross and locked in a tomb and sealed in a tomb. And that failed because He came out of the grave. And Satan is a loser, folks. He's lost every effort. He's always attacked God. He has always attacked God's people. He has always attacked God's King, Jesus Christ. And he never stops.

And he continues right in this present age to fight. Well, after all, what does it say in Ephesians chapter 6? "We wrestle not against flesh and blood but against...what?...principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness, spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." We're in a battle against the demonic forces and Satan himself. The war is still on. And it says in Matthew 16, "But even in this age, Christ said, I will build My church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." The assumption there is that the gates of hell are trying, see. Satan is still at it. And there's coming a future time when Satan pulls another attack. Not tonight, but sometime read the twelfth chapter of Revelation and in it you'll read about the war that's going to happen in heaven when Satan and all of his demons make war on Michael and all the holy angels. And they pull off a heavenly war. You've heard of "Star Wars," well, this is something far beyond that. This is the demons against the angelic hosts in the heavens.

Now what happens in that war is very interesting. Michael and the angels win. It's already settled. Michael and the angels win, Revelation 12 tells us, and God casts Satan and his host to the earth. And they hit the earth during the period of time known as the Tribulation. And they begin to spawn all their evil during that time period. And when he hits the earth in the Tribulation, he again goes after the same things. He tries to destroy Israel. He tries to destroy God's people. He tries to attack God's Christ, the Messiah.

Now in order to do this during the Tribulation, in order for Satan to pull this whole thing off, one final big shot there, he wants a man. He uses a man to be his tool. This man's task is going to be to try to destroy Israel, try to eliminate God's people, try to set up a world government of evil. And then when Christ returns, to try to knock Christ out of the sky and be victorious. That's Satan's effort. He's got a man in mind. And that man is going to be his tool to set up a worldwide government of evil, to kill the Jews, to slaughter the believers of the Tribulation and then to try to shoot Christ out of the sky when He returns. Satan's banking on the possibility that this can work. He's relentless, I'll say that for him, even though he's lost every other battle.

Now when we start to look at this man that he's going to use to try to fight against Christ in the Tribulation, we find that he's a most amazing man. Let me tell you several things about him. First of all, he will be an intellectual genius. He will be an intellectual genius. That's very clear, and don't try to follow me but just note this, that's very clear in several places but particularly in Daniel 7 and verse 8 where it describes him in this way, "He had eyes like the eyes of a man." Now "eyes" refer to

intelligence. And the idea of the eyes here is that he has great intelligence. And then not only is he...and incidentally, you can compare verse 20 which similarly says that he had eyes. And eyes in an image like this, and this is an image of a beast he sees here, a horn really, the image of eyes in symbolic language has seemingly a primary reference to intelligence. So he'll be intellectually a genius.

Secondly, he will be an outstanding orator. And leadership is predicated obviously on the ability to orate and to speak. And he will be an outstanding orator. It says in Daniel 7 verse 8 he will have a mouth speaking great things. And again in verse 20, the same thing again is repeated, he has a mouth that spoke very great things. So he will be an intellectual genius. He will be an outstanding orator.

Thirdly, he will be a master politician. He will be a master politician. And the reason I believe that is because he will be able to take over the whole world. He will be able to move into the slot that has been a great vacuum in human society, the one individual who can bring peace to the world. In fact, in Revelation 6 verse 2 it says, "Without any arrows, he'll come riding with a bow, no arrows, and he'll conquer the world." Which means he'll conquer peacefully through politics. He'll be a political genius. It says in Daniel 11:21, "In his estate shall stand up a vile person--that's the Antichrist--to whom they shall not give the honor of the kingdom, but he will come in peaceably--watch this--and obtain the kingdom by flatteries," Daniel 11:21. He will win the world with his flattery.

So, he will be an intellectual genius, an outstanding orator, and a master politician. Fourthly, he'll be a commercial wizard. He will have his hands on economics and commerce. He will be knowledgeable in that area. In Daniel 8:25, back to chapter 8 here, it says, "And through his policy also he shall cause deceit to prosper in his hand, he shall magnify himself in his heart and by peace shall destroy many. He shall stand up against the Prince of Princes but he shall be broken without hand." Now ultimately he will be broken. But notice, he will have a policy which causes deceit to prosper in his hand. He will be a wizard at building a world system of economics that feeds his own pocket. And if you want to get a glimpse of the economic system that he will build, read the eighteenth chapter of Revelation, it describes it to a tee. It will be commerce like the world has never known...great ships are mentioned there and great trade is mentioned there and all of the...in fact, it even tells many of the things that will be occurring in terms of trade. He will build a world commercial enterprise which is built by deceit unparalleled in history and feeding his own pocket.

So, this is an unusual man, intellectual genius, outstanding orator, master politician, commercial wizard and fifthly, a military genius as well. He will be a military man without equal. He is going to be able, according to Daniel 7:23, to devour the whole earth, tread it down and break it in pieces. He's going to be everything that Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great and all the Caesars were and Napoleon Bonaparte and anybody else all put together in terms of military ability...a tremendous military power. In Revelation chapter 13 in verse 4 we read about him. "And they worshiped the dragon who gave power to the beast--this is the Antichrist, and it says--Who is like the beast, who is able to make war with him?" And it says in verse 7, "It was given to him to make war with the saints and overcome them and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations." He literally conquers the world. He is a military genius unsurpassed.

Sixth, he will be a religious leader. And this is a most interesting combination. He will be a religious leader. In 2 Thessalonians 2 verse 4, I'll show you what his religion is. He's called the "Man of sin, the son of perdition who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped

so that he as God sits in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." So he's religious in the sense that he wants the whole world to worship whom? Himself.

In other words, he will be anti-God, anti-Christ, anti- Christianity, and he will call the world to worship him. Quite a man. This is a human being we're talking about, a man that will come. Satan's final effort to thwart Christ from coming and taking His kingdom will be generated through this man.

Now you say, "This demonic puppet of Satan, does he know who he is?" I don't know the answer to that. "Do we know who he is?" I don't know the answer to that. Don't worry about that. He is who he is and he will be who he will be and it will all happen the way the Bible says. It isn't important that we know that. People always want to add up numbers and come to all kinds of crazy conclusions but that's not the point.

You say, "But how could he ever pull it off? I mean, this is a sophisticated world, there's so much diversity in politics, how could everybody agree on one politician? There's so much diversity in economics and commerce, how could everybody agree on one kind of approach to it? There's so much diversity in religion, how could anybody ever imagine the whole world bowing to this guy? There have been a lot of powerful men, but it's inconceivable that anything like this could literally take over the world." Well, you've never seen a man like this. And what makes it look so easy for him, what makes it appear so very easy to me, it's not going to be hard for him, somehow the world is going to be so ready for him it's just going to all fall at his feet. And the thing that is so amazing to me is that he can even deceive Israel. And Israel is the rebel of the world, you know that. I mean, they do their own thing their own way and don't listen to anybody. And he will even deceive them and at the start of the Tribulation he'll actually bring them right under his power with the rest of the world, look at Daniel 9:26. And here it is, in Daniel 9:26, "At the end of the seventieth week of Daniel, which is the Tribulation, after threescore and two weeks, Messiah shall be cut off," this is the seventieth week, adding all the ones from the previous verses up, the seventieth week, after Messiah's cut off, "the people of the prince that shall come," now here he is, "the prince that shall come" he's called, "the prince that shall come." Then verse 27, "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."

Now here is the idea, and we won't go into too much background on it, but just to say this, this prince that will come makes a covenant with Israel for seven years. That's the period of the Tribulation. During that period of time, Israel falls under his spell and they make a covenant with him. In the middle of the week, verse 27 says, in the middle of the week, he violates it. He commits the abomination of desolation. He desecrates the temple. And then all hell breaks loose. And that's what Jesus referred to in Matthew 24 when He said the thing which Daniel spoke of, the abomination of desolation, where the Antichrist goes along for three and half years allowing Israel a little bit of liberty, and then he comes down and he desecrates the temple, he stops all worship. He says, "Worship me alone." He begins the slaughter that is the last half of the Tribulation. And Jesus said when you see that, grab everything you've got and run...flee. And if the Lord didn't spare, everybody would be slaughtered, it says in Matthew 24.

But the thing that is so incredible is that this individual is going to come and not only be able to set this thing up with the whole world but he's even going to bring Israel in under it as well. And I believe he'll come out of the Roman kingdom. I believe that he'll be a part of that by the indication of the fact that he's called...that it says there, "The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city." And the people that destroyed the city of Jerusalem were the Romans. And this prince will come out

of the Roman world, the revived Roman Empire that comes together in the last days. That's why I believe he'll be a Gentile out of Europe, or at least related closely to that.

So, he makes a pact with Israel. Now stay with me. And he moves into position. The whole world is in his hands. Israel is in his hand. He's got a worldwide organization and army like no other army in history. He has total control and he is going to try to hang on to the kingdom of the world when Christ returns and defeat Christ. That's Satan's whole effort. He thinks if he can just amass the whole world against Christ maybe he can hold it against the returning Christ who comes to set up His kingdom at the end of the Tribulation.

Now Zechariah comes into the picture precisely at this point. Let's look back at Zechariah chapter 11 because Zechariah tells us in these three little verses that Israel is going to accept this false shepherd. Now let me give you a quick review now, it's not going to last long so listen. This is a chapter about shepherds, remember? The first three verses discuss the ravage of the wailing shepherds. The prophet in this chapter is acting. Remember, we told you he's like putting on a play in front of the people in the city. And he's acting out a part. And the chapter begins with the ravage of the wailing shepherds. The first thing you see is some shepherds are crying and wailing. Why? Because he is predicting the destruction of Jerusalem and the ravages and the wailing and the spoil that's going to take place. Desolation is coming, that's the first three verses. In 70 A.D. it came.

And then we saw the rejection of the true shepherd. Not only the ravage of the wailing shepherd, but the rejection of the true shepherd. And from verse 4 to 14, Zechariah acted out the rejection of Jesus Christ. Somehow he played the part of the coming shepherd and dramatized for the people what they were going to do to the Christ. He even discusses the betrayal of Judas in verses 12 to 14. There was a price, 30 pieces of silver, cast in the house of the Lord, ultimately given to a potter. All of that was fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ.

So, Zechariah here is like a play actor. He stands on the stage which is Jerusalem in the time in which he lived, to the people who had come back from the captivity and he says, "Look what's in your future, people. First of all there is the wailing of shepherds who have been ravaged and destroyed. And the reason they have been is because when the true shepherd comes, you won't receive him." And then he goes and acts that very thing out in verses 4 to 14. And then when he hits verse 15, he talks about the reception of the false shepherd. He says what is so strange is that while you have rejected the true shepherd, in the end you will receive a false one. What a mix up. What an exchange.

Now notice this, there's a gap from verse 14 to verse 15 that jumps all the way from 70 A.D. to the great Tribulation. When Jesus came into the world, they refused Jesus. They crucified Him about 30 A.D. About forty years later, 70 A.D., the prophecy of this chapter was fulfilled. The land was wiped out. And that came because they rejected the true shepherd.

Now in verse 15 He says, I want you to act out one more part, Zechariah, I want you to take the instruments of a foolish shepherd. Put on your foolish shepherd costume. You say, "What's that?" I haven't got any idea but they must have known what it was. I'll give you a hint in a minute. And He says you act out the foolish shepherd because that's the one they're going to receive. And that's exactly what they do. Daniel 9:27, they make a covenant with the prince for the time of the Tribulation. They line up with him, Israel does.

And so, the message of the chapter flows very clearly. It says that before the destruction of Jerusalem, God will appear in the person of Christ to shepherd Israel. Only the poor of the flock will receive the word of the true shepherd and the rest will reject Him. And the good shepherd king would be valued no more than a slave and they'd sell Him cheap. And as a result of that, God would come against them in judgment, death, famine, war, civil strife, and their nation would be destroyed. And then shock of all shocks, they've done that to the true shepherd and when the false shepherd comes along, they're going to accept him.

Now as we look at verse 15, it deals with his character. As we look at verse 16, it deals with his work. As we look at verse 17, it deals with his punishment. Let's look at verse 15. "And the Lord said to me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd." Now he's going to play the part of Antichrist. He has just played the part of Christ. He will now play the part of Antichrist. As I told you last time, this is not something uncommon to the prophets. Frequently they acted out a part to illustrate a truth. That's what he's doing.

Now you say, "What are the instruments of a foolish shepherd?" Well, I don't really know that. Maybe a broken staff, it would be pretty stupid to go out and try to shepherd a flock of sheep if your staff was broken. Maybe a big club with metal on it that you'd use to beat the sheep into submission. That would be an instrument of a foolish shepherd, rather than tenderly care for the sheep. I don't know what it is. Some have said it was a great club instead of gentle staff, but whatever it was, he dressed up like a guy who would really be a stupid shepherd to be in those clothes with those instruments. And he says there's coming a foolish shepherd.

Now I want you to know something about the word "foolish." The word "foolish" in the Old Testament is a synonym for "wicked," a synonym for "wicked." And I'm not even going to take the time to show you all of the verses that make those two things synonymous, particularly are they made synonymous in the Proverbs in many many places. It equates the wicked with the fool. "His own iniquities," Proverbs 5:22, "his own iniquities shall take the wicked and he shall be held with the cords of his sin and he shall die without instruction in the greatness of his foolishness he will go astray." So the foolishness and the iniquity are co-equal. The foolish shepherd is the evil one. It's the fool who says in his heart...what?...there's no God. In other words, he lives wickedly in rebellion against God. It doesn't mean that he's, you know, retarded mentally or anything, it doesn't mean that his mind is less than adequate, it simply means he is wicked, he is vile, he is evil, he is unrighteous, he is sinful. And that's the character of this particular shepherd. He is a wicked shepherd.

And so He says you play the part of a wicked shepherd. A wicked shepherd might have a club instead of a staff. I don't know. That's his character, a wicked shepherd.

He comes along, the Antichrist does, like he's going to shepherd the whole world. And they buy it, see. And they turn around one day and it isn't a staff in his hand at all, it's a club and he starts slaughtering them. He lets the false church exist, in Revelation 17, it's called the whore, the prostitute, the false church. The true church is gone. He lets the false church go along and finally he devours it and slaughters it. He lets Israel go along for three and a half years, then he moves in and starts to slaughter the Jews. And he kills two out of every three. He is a wicked godless shepherd.

Let's look at his work in verse 16. And I want you to notice a very interesting note here, "For lo, I will

raise up a shepherd in the land." Did you note that? Who is it that permits this shepherd to even arise? It's God, isn't it? Nothing ever happens outside the plan, the sovereignty of God. God is no victim. God is not biting his nails hoping that nothing goes awry. God is not second guessing Satan. God is even allowing those things to occur. You go right back to the book of Job for this, don't you? And everything that Satan ever did to Job, he did because God allowed him to do it and drew the boundaries on it. And God allows Satan his final fling and He allows this guy to come.

And when he comes, look at the character, look at the kind of shepherd he is. "He will not visit those that are cut off." Now what this basically means in the Hebrew, without going into a lot of detail, is sheep who are in the process of dying because they're cold, because they're separated from the flock, because they've been attacked by an animal and they're wounded and they're way off somewhere else, they're in the process of dying. He doesn't bother to go out and take care of them. If they're not right there, he had no concern. The true shepherd, what does he do? He goes and finds that little sheep that's cold. He goes and finds that sheep that's lost. He finds that sheep that's wounded. He finds the sheep that somehow got separated from the flock and is around the back of a hill. But this one does not. He isn't even interested at all in saving the wounded and the cold. He doesn't even look for them.

Secondly, he doesn't seek the young one. He has no concern for the little lamb who are the ones who gets lost. No concern for the little lamb who can't quite make it over the little hedge that every other sheep was able to go over, no concern. The true shepherd leaves the ninety and nine to find the little lamb that's lost. Not this shepherd...he doesn't care about the wounded in the cold and he doesn't care about the young.

Further, he doesn't heal that which is broken. One of the concerns that a shepherd had was broken limbs. Frequently a sheep would break a leg. A good shepherd would make a splint to provide for the broken leg. Not this shepherd. The shepherd isn't interested in binding the broken leg. He isn't interested in salving the wounds. Not at all.

Further, "Nor feed that which stands still." Now most commentators feel that "that which stands still" refers to the firm strong sheep. They're just standing still. They require a minimum of help. They don't have to be chased. They don't have to be found. They don't have to be mended. Nothing needs to be done except to just feed them. And he doesn't even do that. To the strong who need the least help, he is no help at all. To the weak and the wounded in the cold and the dying, he is absolutely indifferent...totally unconcerned. Well, by this time if you were in Zechariah's day and you were sitting there and you were watching Zechariah doing this little act, you'd say, "This is some crummy shepherd." This would be...you wouldn't buy this shepherd. This is all the opposite of every shepherd you ever knew. "You've got to be kidding. Who ever heard of such a shepherd who doesn't go out and find those that are cold and wounded? What kind of shepherd doesn't help little lambs? What kind of shepherd doesn't fix broken bones? What kind of shepherd doesn't even feed the strong sheep that are no trouble at all? Well what kind of a shepherd is this?"

Well, he does do some things. Well, you say, what does he do? Look at the end of verse 16. "He eats the flesh of the fat sheep." What? What kind of a shepherd is this? He eats his own flock? Yeah, the fat ones. He is greedy. He is selfish. He feeds on the fat of the sheep rather than feeding the sheep, he eats them. Listen to this, when the Antichrist comes it's all hearts and flowers for three and a half years. And then the abomination of desolations and he begins to eat Israel. He begins to feed on Israel. He begins to slaughter Israel. And Jesus said in Matthew 24, "Run for the mountains when

it happens." There is a slaughter like no slaughter ever before.

"It shall come to pass," Zechariah 13:8, "two parts in the land shall be cut off and die, the third shall be left and even the third shall go through fire and refine as silver and gold." He's going to kill two out of every three. He's going to slaughter Gentile believers, every one that doesn't take his mark, he'll slaughter them from one end of the world to the other. Only God in His mercy spares one third of Israel, hiding them away in Edom, securing them. But he begins to eat the sheep.

And then there's a most unbelievable phrase, "And tear their hoofs in pieces." The translation is "claws," but really refers to hoofs in case of the sheep. And you say, "Well, what is this doing?" Well, have you ever eaten spare ribs when you're really hungry? And you want every morsel? Have you ever eaten a pork chop the same way or a T-bone steak and you're bending the bone, you're getting it there? You're scraping in there. Your wife has just told you there's no dessert and you're going to get everything. And you...you literally are tearing the bones apart. Sometimes you do it with chicken. You watch people, you give them a wing and they'll spend a half an hour on it. That's this guy. He is not only eating the flesh of the fat, but he's tearing the hoofs to pieces to get every morsel, to consume every last bit.

"Well," you say, "were the people in Zechariah's day shocked?" Of course, this was absolutely opposite of everything they ever knew about a shepherd. It's inconceivable that a shepherd would ever behave this way. But this is the shepherd that they will receive. They turned their back on the real one and this is the one they wanted and this is the one they're going to get. You know, when I think about that it's really a sad thing. You know, I have great love for Israel. I tell Jewish people all the time that my best friends in the whole wide world are all Jewish. That's right, all of them are Jewish, my best friends, Moses, Abraham, David, Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, John, they're all Jewish. And I wish I was Jewish for one good reason, I would like to live and go..if I was Jewish..and I could make it through the Tribulation and be one of the one third. But that's not going to work because I'm already saved and I've got to go in the Rapture. But if it was possible, see, if it was possible I'd like to be Jewish and not get saved till the Tribulation. And then I could live in the kingdom in my physical body and then I could really see what it would be like to be a physical person in the kingdom. As it is, I'm going to be a glorified person in the kingdom. I'm not complaining, God, I'm going to be there.

But, you know, when I think about Israel and the love I have for Israel and the...I love to go there. In fact, I'm trusting the Lord that I'll be able to go soon again. And I think about the fact that Israel is going to be saved. But before the day of their salvation comes there's going to come this terrible day when they line up with the wrong ruler...the wrong one. And you know what's so sad about it is they're going to have such great hope and such great anticipation and such great expectation and such great confidence that this is the guy and this is it, see. And it isn't. And who they think is a shepherd is none other than one who is going to devour them down to the very hoof.

So, we see his character and his work, and then his punishment in verse 17. This is what the Hebrew says, "Woe, worthless shepherd, forsaker of the flock, woe worthless shepherd, forsaker of the flock." Woe? Now there's that term. That has to do with a curse again. Curse you. "Woe to you worthless shepherd, forsaker of the flock, God will judge you." And look how it happens. "The sword shall be upon his arm and on his right eye. His arm shall be completely dried up and his right eye utterly darkened."

Now this is interesting. The arm refers to strength. The right arm is always a symbol of strength. God is going to come with a sword of judgment and is going to cut off his right arm. And it's going to wither and shrivel. It's going to be severed and it's going to shrivel into nothing which means his power will be torn away. And his eye, what did I say the eye refers to? Intelligence, his intelligence will be turned into idiocy, as it were, utterly darkened. He won't know right from wrong, up from down, in from out. The sword of God's vengeance will fall.

Now this indication is also prophesied, this judgment, in many other passages. Back in Daniel again, look with me at chapter 7. And in Daniel 7 we find again a reference to the coming judgment on this individual. This is most interesting. The Antichrist is going to get this great power. He's going to start to tear and shred the people of God. And then the Lord is going to come in judgment on him. We find this judgment indicated in many places, really. But I think Daniel 7:9 will give you a little bit of picture to start with. "And I beheld till the thrones were places and the Ancient of Days did sit whose garment was white as snow and the hair of His head like pure wool, His throne was like the fiery flame and His wheels as burning fire. Fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him."

Now here is the idea of God and he's just seeing all of His majesty and His wonder and His glory and he sees it like pure wool and flames and wheels burning and fire coming out and all this majesty of God's holiness. "A thousand thousands ministered to Him and ten thousand times ten thousands stood before Him," this is the angelic host, "the judgment was set and the books were opened. And I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spoke," the horn being the Antichrist, "I beheld even till the beast was slain and its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. And as for the rest of the beast, they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time."

There were four beasts in Daniel's image, you remember that? There was the Babylonian Empire, the Medo-Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire. There was a time when all four of those were really conquered, but they had a little life left. They went on. Some of their power was still retained. But in the case of this fourth, the beast who rules the revived Roman Empire, the Antichrist, he will be destroyed and there will be no thing remaining. There will be nothing left. No little bit of dominion remaining after. His case, it says, the beast will be slain, its body destroyed and given to the burning flame. Not like the others whose dominion was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged. He will lose his power and his life at the same time.

Now as you go over in the same chapter to verse 24, it's the same thing again. The ten horns, I'm not going to go into all of this, out of this kingdom are ten kings. These are the revived Roman Empire nations, ten-nation confederacy. Incidentally, today a parallel to that is the European Common Market. And out of this is going to arise the Antichrist. Verse 25, he will speak great words against the Most High. He'll wear out the saints by slaughtering them as the shepherd that eats the fat of the flock. And he'll do this for a while, a time, times and dividing of a time. A time would be one, times would be two, a dividing would be a half, three and a half years he'll do this.

But something's going to change. The judgment shall sit, they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy him unto the end. Destruction is going to come. And then, of course, Christ is going to reign. God is going to reign.

Chapter 8 of Daniel, verse 23, "In the latter times of their kingdom when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance." Now incidentally, that's another name for Antichrist. In

Daniel he is called many things, the little horn, the willful king, the king of fierce countenance and the prince that shall come. All four of those refer to the same individual. And the king of fierce countenance shall stand up. His power shall be mighty, not by his own power. Who's behind him? Satan. He shall destroy wonderfully. In other words, he shall create wonder and awe at his destruction. He shall prosper, continue, destroy the mighty and the holy people. Through his policy shall cause deceit to prosper and so forth and so forth. But the end of the verse, "He shall..." when he stands up against the prince of princes--who's that? Well, it's the same as the King of Kings, the Prince of Princes, King of Kings and Lord of Lords is all Jesus Christ..."he shall be broken without hand."

In other words, there won't even be a struggle. He'll just be shattered, broken. In Revelation chapter 19, listen to this, "And the beast was taken," it's the same individual, Antichrist, "and his cohort, the false prophet and they were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Chapter 20 verse 10, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the same lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Now he's going to be destroyed in the sense of his dominion and sent to hell forever with Satan and all those who occupy Satan's kingdom. It's going to happen.

Now that's what Zechariah 11:17 is saying. God is going to judge this false shepherd severely. Now you might be wondering in your own mind, and I'm going to do something, just digress a little bit, you might be wondering in your mind, you can close your Bible for a second...you say, "John, I can't believe this could happen. How could such a person come along, sweep over the world, gain the power, bring Israel in and then begin to slaughter and devour, how could people be so stupid as to let a person do this?" You know something? I used to wonder that until I understood the power of Satan. And many years ago here in the church, I don't know how long it's been, maybe four or five years ago, I shared with you something that was a result of research that I did and I figured if I had time tonight, I'd share it again that to me is a perfect parallel of how this can happen. And it happened one other time in history with a man named Hitler. And this is a most fascinating study that I want to share with you.

He is a perfect example of what can happen when Satan possesses an individual and how the power of Satan can actually dominate an entire culture of intelligent people. Now any given nation, take Germany for example, post World War II Germany, Germany is, in a sense, a microcosm of the whole world. In other words, all the kinds of people there are would be the people who make up the German population, in kind at least. They would have a good cross-section of all the kinds of people...poor people, rich people, educated, non-educated, medium intelligence, low intelligence, high intelligence, genius category, people who are great leaders who weren't leaders, they have all the kinds of people in any given nation, such as Germany would have. And yet one man was able to con that entire society into believing the biggest lie imaginable and to send them down the primrose path to slaughter and war that's inconceivable.

How? Well, because you have to remember the Satan behind Hitler. And you see in Hitler just a little glimpse of what this Antichrist is going to be, only he won't have the impact of Hitler, he'll have the impact of a hundred Hitlers rolled into one. Let me show you what I mean.

Satan's effort is always to destroy God's people, always. And who was Hitler particularly involved in killing? Jews. That's a typical approach of Satan...very typical. Now there's some interesting things about Hitler that I found in a book called "The Morning of the Magicians...The Morning of the

Magicians." It was published by Avon books in 1969, it was written by Lewis Powells and Jacque Bergier(?). They are not Christians. They are simply analysts, historians writing from a perspective of research.

They present their case which is in a non-Christian book, as I say, they have taken their records from the Nuremberg Trials, thousands of sources, thousand of books, eyewitness accounts, and this is what they say. Quote: "It is impossible to understand Hitler's political plans unless one is familiar with his basic beliefs and his conviction that there is a magic relationship between man and the universe," end quote.

In other words, you can't just treat Hitler historically, you've got to get behind the scene. Hitler, for example, was fascinated by the ideas of mysticism. And he was immersed in them. He saw the miracle of his own destiny as the action of unseen forces, the same forces responsible for his preaching a new gospel to humanity. In other words, he knew he was a man that was commissioned to do something by forces other than himself.

They go on in the book to say this, "The Aeneids of Platonius were read during the war in the little mystical societies of pro-German intellectuals together with ancient Hindu texts, Nietzsche and Tibetan magicians," end quote. Now all of that stuff is occult. And in the little mystical societies of pro-German intellectuals, they were up to their necks in studying the occult.

Again the authors say, "The probable explanation for Hitler's deeds is the existence of a magical puzzle, a powerful and Satantic mystical current. We shall never be safe from Nazism," they say, "or rather from certain manifestations of the Satanic which through the Nazis cast its dark shadow over the world until we have roused ourselves to a full understanding of the most fantastic aspects of the Hitlarian adventure."

Now what they're saying is obvious. In their study of Hitler, they find that it isn't just Hitler, it's Satan. And it's the occult. And it's mysticism. Hitler was a man out to conquer the world. But he was more than a man.

There's another book entitled "The Hollow Earth." And any of you who know anything about the occult or mysticism have heard of "The Hollow Earth." That is the belief that in the center of the earth there's a hollow place. And that hollow place is occupied by beings, the beings of the hollow earth. And these are the beings, demon beings, who with whom you make contact in mysticism and in the occult and you draw on their power. Now in Eric Norman's book, "The Hollow Earth," he says there was a macabre hollow earth mystery that was involved with the Nazi society. They were up to their necks in the hollow earth, Tibetan occultism, black magic and etc.

The Nazi Secret Society during Hitler's reign was convinced that there were advance beings in the hollow earth with powers far beyond the human. In time they planned to emerge out of the hollow earth and take over the world. And Hitler was part of the procedure to gain them the world. These creatures were called "the lords of the universe." And everybody living on the surface either had to ally with them or get wiped out when they arrived. And Hitler determined he was going to be on their side when they got here. Eric Norman writes, quote: "Nazi records seized after the fall of the Third Reich indicate that Hitler and his henchmen launched several expeditions into the hollow earth."

I don't know how they did it cause there isn't any. By the way, it is the Hollow-earth concept and is the Hollow-earth occultic teaching that gave Hitler the concept of using little children in his German youth program. He formed corps of what he called adolescent werewolves with black uniforms and death's head insignias on the sleeves, little children. And so you could see by just a couple of incidents there that Hitler's Third Reich was welded to the occultism. They were all members of what was called "The Society of the Golden Dawn," founded for the practice of black magic. They were in contact with super beings and in this society they believed these beings, as I said, came out of the hollow earth.

Karl Haushofer(?), you remember the name, was one of Hitler's very famous generals. He was one of the charter members of what was called "The German Golden Dawn." And it was he who advised Hitler to write "Mein Kampf(?)." And this Haushofer had visited India, China and Tibet. He had adopted Buddhism, he was initiated into a secret Buddha society and he was dealt a mission by these demon beings. And if he failed, he was to pay with his life.

Studying Haushofer we find out that Haushofer could actually predict the future and had amazing psychic powers. And according to Powells and Bergier(?), so could Hitler. According to Norman, Eric Norman in the Hollow Earth, Hitler successfully predicted when Nazi troops would conquer Paris, the German occupation of the Rhineland and he even predicted the death of Roosevelt. Strange black power.

Norman also points out that Hitler's birthplace, Broumenamin(?) had a reputation as an area where mediums were born. And other writers confirm this. It appears that Haushofer was the black magician who controlled Hitler. After his flight to England, Rudolf Hess is supposed to have told British Intelligence that Haushofer was the power, the magician behind Hitler and his demonic legions, says Eric Norman. So you have Haushofer, the magician, and Hitler the medium. Now there's no question about the fact that Hitler was a medium. He was in constant contact with demons.

By the way, the swastika was a powerful occult symbol that was taken out of Asia. By 1925 a group of Tibetan monks had moved to Berlin. They were members of the Black Order and had sword allegiance to the power of darkness. From that time on, funds were made available by the Nazis to finance this Black Order from Tibet, to finance further expeditions to Mongolia and Tibet and they went on for 20 years financed by the Nazis, to dig deeper into the occult. When Germany fell, several hundred volunteers in the S.S. death-head uniforms were found to be Himalayan orientals with no ID. They had been brought in from Tibet. They were mediums. They were the last of the black monks who were to help Hitler in his dark menacing scheme.

In March of 1946, Haushofer killed his wife. Then before a Buddhist altar, he killed himself as a sacrifice. His son said he knew his father had been the original magician behind the Nazi monster. This is what Powells and Bergier said of Hitler, "A self-taught madman surrounded by a handful of megalomaniacs, rejects spurned the whole humanist culture, trampled on reason, involved Lucifer, conquered Europe and nearly conquered the world," end quote. Amazing.

Listen to the record of an eyewitness. Quote: "A person close to Hitler told me that he wakes up in the night screaming and in convulsion. He calls for help and appears to be half paralyzed. He is seized with a panic that makes him tremble until his bed shakes. He utters confused and unintelligible sounds, gasping as if at the point of suffocation. Hitler was standing in his room swaying

and looking all around as if he were lost. 'It's he...it's he...it's he...he's come for me,' he groaned. His lips were white. He was sweating profusely. Suddenly he uttered a string of meaningless figures, then words and scraps of sentences. It was terrifying. Then suddenly he screamed, 'There...there, over in the corner, he's there.' And all the time he was stamping his feet and screaming," end quote. That's Hitler.

By the way, have you ever heard of the Rosicrucians? They have a place right down here. They're tied to the same thing. Same Tibetan occultism. So are the people who belong to a system called theosophy, you may have seen that.

By the way, further, the seven founders of Nazism were all involved in the occult. They promised to commit suicide if they ever broke their pact and they promised also, according to Haushoffer, to perform human sacrifice which Haushoffer did in the sacrifice of his wife, which amounted to a sacrifice to Satan. And because of their magical reasons, they exterminated 750,000 gypsies as a part of the occultic activity.

Further, Powells and Bergier say, "One cannot help but think of Hitler as a medium, for most of the time mediums are ordinary insignificant people. Suddenly they are endowed with what seems to be supernatural power, something outside their own personality. It was in this way beyond any doubt Hitler was possessed by forces outside himself, demonical forces of which the individual named Hitler was only the temporary vehicle," end quote.

And you know what's most interesting as I read about this, I found that his eyes were the eyes of a person in a trance, and his face turned bizarre and people said that when he spoke in public and gave speeches, the voice that he used was not the voice that was his own. Hitler said, "What will the social order of the future be? Comrades, I will tell you," he said. "Over all will reign a new and exalted nobility of whom I cannot speak." And what he was talking about was demon rule. He was Satan's man to bring about Satan's dominion. Satan convinced Hitler he was the leader of a new race of beings, man-God beings, the super race he kept talking about. He became obsessed with it. And he started slaughtering anybody who got in his way.

Hitler asked Himmler to exterminate the Jews, six million of them. He had become convinced that every Jew on earth must die. Hitler said this, "There's another species of humanity which doesn't deserve the name, left as a relic of some baser form of life, created along with hideous crawling creatures: Gypsies, Negroes and Jews," end quote. That was Hitler.

He went on to say, "They are as far removed from us as animals from humans. I don't mean I look on Jews as animals, they are much further removed from animals than we are. They are creatures outside nature. Our revolution is a new stage, the final stage in an evolution which will end by abolishing history," end quote.

So, who was Hitler? Satan's man. And he's a perfect illustration of what Satan can do when he gets a hold of the right man to con a whole society of intelligent people into believing this is the way to go. Incredible. Will there be an Antichrist? Don't doubt it. Hitler may have been a good shot at Satan's effort to make one then. But God had other plans. But there's coming a day when this man is going to come. And he's going to be like a hundred Hitlers put together. Thanks be unto God that even though Israel does listen to him and Israel hears, watch this, that at the same time he begins to tear

into Israel, at that same hour God begins to redeem Israel and call them out. And it doesn't end with Antichrist, listen to this, the faithful shepherd, the true shepherd, the despised shepherd, the rejected shepherd is going to come back and Zechariah says, "They will look on Him whom they pierced and they'll mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son." And they'll look up and they'll see Christ and they'll say we made a mistake, this isn't our shepherd, He's our shepherd. And He'll save them and He'll take them into His Kingdom. Let's pray.

Father, we're so glad that the true shepherd will be back, that the devastation of Armageddon will end when the Son of righteousness rises with healing in His wings. It's sad to say that the darkness can never be removed from the hearts of those Jews who have already rejected Christ and died. But there's always a faithful remnant and there were some when Jesus lived and there were those few poor who accepted the true shepherd and there are some today, some in this auditorium tonight, all around the world there are few and they know the true shepherd and they're not going to accept the false shepherd. Thank You for the remnant. Help us to reach out to the lives of those who aren't yet saved because, Father, they must be reached. Cause if they die, it's too late for them. May we do all we can to tell Israel that their true shepherd still loves them and wants them as His sheep. And thank You, Father, that in the future that generation of those Jews living in that time, though they align with the false shepherd, that will not be the end. The true shepherd will come again, save His people. Such grace, such grace that saves us...thank You for it. In Jesus' name. Amen.

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