

The End Times & The Seven Seals

Session Two

The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

Mt 22:1-11 - And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a marriage feast for his son, ³ and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast; but they would not come. ⁴ Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, Behold, I have made ready my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves are killed, and everything is ready; come to the marriage feast.’ ⁵ But they made light of it and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶ while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. ⁷ The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. ⁸ Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹ Go therefore to the thoroughfares, and invite to the marriage feast as many as you find.’ ¹⁰ And those servants went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment;^[a] ¹² and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. ¹³ Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.’ ¹⁴ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

**Seven Seals from Chapter 6 in the Book of Revelation.
Here is what the Book tells us:**

“Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say, as with a voice of thunder, “Come!” ² And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and its rider had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

³ When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” ⁴ And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that men should slay one another; and he was given a great sword.

5 When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, “Come!” And I saw, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a balance^[b] in his hand; **6** and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a denarius,^[c] and three quarts of barley for a denarius;^[d] but do not harm oil and wine!”

7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” **8** And I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him; and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth.

9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; **10** they cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?” **11** Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been.

¹² When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, ¹³ and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; ¹⁴ the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. ¹⁵ Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, ¹⁶ calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; ¹⁷ for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?”

Interestingly, in between the sixth seal and the seventh seal there is a pause in description of the seals when John mentions the 144,000, the people on earth, in particular, the people of Jesus’s Church, Jesus’ believers. Then the sixth seal is described by John from Chapter 8:

“When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. ³ And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; ⁴ and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God. ⁵ Then the angel took the censer and filled it with fire from the altar and threw it on the earth;^[a] and there were peals of thunder, loud noises, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake.”

So what do the seals mean?

The first seal, the first horseman, was riding a white horse. This has been interpreted to mean the “false messiah”, or the “anti-Christ”. These are those who come to lead people astray from believing in Jesus Christ. Those who lead people from believing in the truth of Jesus’ teachings or even water down what we need to believe with our faith in Jesus Christ. They could even be bishops, priests, even so-called scholars of our faith, or lay people.

There are four references in the Bible to the Anti-Christ and they all come from John. John makes the Anti-Christ appear to not be one individual but a group of individuals. These individuals deny that Jesus is Divine. They deny that Jesus came from God. Keeping this in mind the deniers of Christ could be former Christians. They could be Muslims who deny Jesus Christ as the Son of God but just a prophet. One of the most evil people in the history of the world was Adolf Hitler who was baptized a Catholic by his mother but never grew to live his faith. Could he have been the beginning of the Anti-Christ? The fascism he brought forth was anti-Christian and the elements of fascism deny those under that ideology the freedom's that the United States was founded on. This is probably the hardest seal to see if it has been broken because it has not clearly been seen by many people.

Certainly elements that this seal has been broken exist today with the rise of socialism in this country and many states today in our union.

The second seal, the second horseman, is riding a bright red horse. This horse has been interpreted to be bringing persecution and civil unrest to the world. Coincidentally, the color red is often associated with communism which is on the rise everywhere today.

The Bishop of Truro has made a review of the persecution of Christians in the world. He found that one in three people in the world suffer from religious persecution. In fact, Christians were the most persecuted group. The “political correctness” that has grown in recent years is seen as a part of this persecution which really hasn’t been confronted. We also have China which doesn’t allow the free worship of the Catholic faith. Christianity has been wiped out of many parts of the Middle East. And this is leading to Christianity disappearing from different parts of the world.

Civil unrest, or “lawlessness”, has been increasing as certain groups have resorted to physical violence to make their political points. We saw that with the protests on college campuses against conservatism. So we can see the “red horse” has clearly spread its effects around us.

The third seal, the third horseman, was riding a black horse. Scholars say the symbol of “a balance”, or scales, is being used as a symbol for famine. People are living day to day, barely surviving. But the famine, while severe, is viewed as not lasting a whole year. And, interestingly, the sacramental elements of our faith are left untouched like bread, wine and oil by this famine.

Today about 30 million are experiencing alarming hunger, severe levels of food insecurity and food malnutrition exist in Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and even in our major cities in the United States like San Francisco, Seattle, New York and etc. In 2018, 11% of families in the US were food insecure, or they had the lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life. In 2019, it was up to 12.3%. Probably with the pandemic of today that figure has gone up more. We need to pray for some relief for these people and for the increase of our food supply.

In the fourth seal, we hear the fourth horseman and last horseman riding a pale, or “sickly green” horse. This rider had a name called “Death” followed by Hades. This rider is seen as a combination of the first three riders. This horse would only have power over a fourth of the earth leaving the balance to be destroyed by the trumpets, and the bowls, or “Chalices” whose description follows the seals.

Death because of the breaking of the first three seals has been increasing. 21,000 people die every day around the world because of lack of food. In the last decade over 900,000 people were martyred for their Christian faith or one every six minutes. Deaths that could be avoided.

Next we hear the fifth seal with the image of the disembodied souls under the altar as they cry out for the judgment of their murderers. They are under the altar because they offered their lives in sacrifice to God. Through the description we learn that judgment on murderers will only come after the full number of martyrs are killed. The white garments symbolize the “righteous deeds” of these saints, just as in the Gospel we heard at the beginning of this conference, and they are connected to the twenty-four elders who have offered their lives as priestly sacrifices.

Before we get to the break in the description of the seven seals, we hear the sixth seal is the wrath of the Lamb. With the destruction of the sun, moon and stars, and because in old times they were used to tell time, their destruction means everything in this world is now finished. The barren fig tree, as has always been, is a symbol of people not living their faith which leads to the end of faith among people on earth.

The final, and seventh seal, is silence which lasts for about a half an hour.

There is a priest out of Canada, whose name is Fr. Michel Rodrigue, who is one of a few priests receiving messages from Jesus, Our Lady and others.

In a message from Our Lady in 2019 while he was visiting Knock in Ireland, he received these words
“Joseph, myself, and my Son, the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, are your models as the faithful family of the Eternal Father. Open the teachings of the Holy Tradition of the Church in regard to the transmitted teachings of John, my adoptive apostle. Open his letters and the book of Revelation. Soon you will understand what was written and seen in his vision.” Meaning the vision John received in writing the Book of Revelation are very important to us today. More importantly, it was also St. Joseph, St. John, Our Lady and the Lamb of God that appeared in the apparition at Knock, Ireland.

The Book of Revelation is our instruction book in how to understand what is happening to us now. As things continue to happen in the world around us, I believe the Book of Revelation will make much more sense to all of us. And especially how we can better prepare ourselves for what is coming including why the Mass is so important to us today!