

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation 6:3-11 – Compared With the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24)

7/9/17

When the antichrist establishes his covenant of “peace” with Israel, we see war (the sword [the second seal]), famine (the third seal), and harmful beasts (the fourth seal) upon the earth which demonstrate that the antichrist’s covenant of peace is a counterfeit!

Eze. 34:25-30 regarding what will occur when God will establish His covenant of peace with Israel in the Millennial Kingdom - *I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.* ²⁶ *I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.* ²⁷ *Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.* ²⁸ *And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid.* ²⁹ *I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore.* ³⁰ *Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people,” says the Lord GOD.’*

The coming of the first rider, the antichrist, on the white horse correlates to Jesus’ “Olivet Discourse” when Jesus speaks to the disciples about the end of the age:

Matt. 24:4-5 - *Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.*

⁵ *For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.*

In His “Olivet Discourse,” Jesus went on to say

Matt. 24:6-7 - *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* ⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom*

And, so we read...

Rev. 6:3-4 - *When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, “Come.”* ⁴ *Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.*

- The second living creature, an angelic being, calls the second horse to come forth!
- So, this is the aftermath of the antichrist’s peaceful emergence??!! Some say the seals are the result of Satan’s wrath – but WHO is breaking the seals?
- Matt. 24:6-7 - *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.* ⁷ *For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom.*
- Perhaps these next three horses speak to the impact of the peace treaty – the counterfeit peace treaty.

- The second horse is fiery red. Some have proposed that the color red is symbolic of war and bloodshed. Some have likened the color red to Satan who is noted as the *great red dragon* in Rev. 12:3. Gk – *purros* – having the color of fire.

and it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.

○ How do we understand the taking of peace from the earth and the *granting* of people killing one another, and the *giving* of the sword to the second rider? Ultimate power rests with God.

○ REMEMBER, God's desire is that NONE would perish (II Pet. 3:9). GOD has provided the way to Himself through Jesus! BUT, we also see when mankind has rebelled, sinned, rejected GOD, He has given them up to uncleanness, vile passions, debased minds (Rom. 1:18-20, 24 - *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*¹⁹ *because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.*²⁰ *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ... THEREFORE God also gave them up....*

○ The Gk. word for "kill" means "to slaughter," "killing by violence," "butchering." This will be a time of unprecedented bloodshed.

○ We have seen in Scripture where God, in judging nations, people groups, causes people ambushing people within their own ranks (Eze.38:21 – *every man's sword will be against his brother* – War of Gog and Magog)

Moving on in continuing to compare Jesus' words in the Olivet Discourse/Matt. 24 with Rev. 6 and Jesus' unleashing the judgments...

Matt. 24:7b - *And there will be famines,*
Rev. 6:5-6 - *When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, "Come." So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.*⁶ *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine."*

- Worldwide war (second rider) can destroy the food supply which would lead to global hunger through the third rider.
- *Scales* - used to weigh food which indicates a great scarcity. No weighing in times of abundance.
- *A quart* – the amount necessary to sustain one person for one day.
- *A denarius* – one day's average wage. One day's work will provide food for one person – for one day.
- *Three quarts of barley* – barley was considered to be lower nutritionally. Cost: only another denarius (one day's work) more.

- *Oil and wine* –in the midst of common commodities being scarce, luxury items, oil and wine, will remain available for the upper class...it appears.

Matt. 24:7b - *there will be...pestilences*, (fatal epidemic diseases)

Rev. 6:7-8 - *When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, 'Come.'* ⁸ *So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power (authority) was given to them (Death and Hades) over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.*

- *Pale* – an ashen green color – characteristic of a corpse.
- The name of the rider – *Death*.
- And, *Hades* (the grave) followed perhaps on foot. Death and Hades are inseparable; death comes first and the grave follows.
- *Power was given to them* - we see God allowing the judgment for His purposes.
- *Power over a fourth of the earth* (today's global population – 7.4B; one fourth equates to 1,850,000,000). With dying bodies scattered over the earth, we can understand a pandemic outbreak.
- Those who survive the sword, and hunger will be weakened and will become prey for beasts. What a reversal! Man had been given dominion over the beasts (Gen. 1:26-28; 9:2-3) and now in this judgment man is given into the hand of beasts.

NOTE: We see God's wrath poured out through the first four seals, well in advance of the sixth and seventh seals. In Eze. 14:21 God speaks of His four severe judgments that he had brought upon Jerusalem and will bring upon the earth. Those severe judgments: the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence.

Jesus speaks of wars, famines, pestilences and...

Matt. 24:7b - *And there will be...earthquakes in various places.*

Matt. 24:8 - *All these are the beginning of sorrows.*

- Beginning of birth pangs. "Nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom" was a Jewish idiom of a world preceding the coming of the Messiah. A Rabbinic writing on the coming of the Messiah (from a Rabbinic commentary [Bereshit Rabbah XL11.4] on Genesis written between 200 and 500 AD) states, "If you shall see kingdoms rising against each other in turn, then give heed and note the footsteps of the Messiah." In likening the beginning of sorrows to birth pangs, intensifying contractions, we realize there is NO ESCAPE!

Jesus told the disciples while speaking to them on the Mt. of Olives...during the Olivet Discourse...

Matt. 24:9 - *Then* (after the birth pangs we see a progression in the events during the seven years of Tribulation) *they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.*

It appears that after the loosing of the four seals, we have arrived at the middle of the Tribulation – 3.5 years into the Tribulation. The deceptive peace treaty brokered by

the antichrist has been broken by the antichrist. Persecution runs rampant (cross reference Rev. 12). The beginning of sorrows has past. Martyrdom increases which we realize at the loosing of the fifth seal. There has always been martyrdom within Christianity. We see unprecedented martyrdom in the Tribulation. AND SO...

Rev. 6:9-11 - *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 testimony which they held.* ¹⁰ *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"* ¹¹ *Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, (martyred) was completed (according to God's plan)*

- *Under the altar* – Some suggest that this altar is the altar of incense in the Temple from where prayers go up. And, we do see the souls of the martyrs are crying out to God. Some suggest that this is the altar of burnt offering in the outer court of the Temple. The blood of the martyred Tribulation saints can be considered an “offering” before God.

- The picture of these souls in God's presence after death is in harmony with II Cor. 5:8 – *absent from the body, present with the Lord.*

- *The souls* (no glorified bodies are noted) – these martyrs are not yet resurrected. They will be resurrection at the end of the Tribulation (Dan. 12:1-2). They hadn't been raptured. The rapture is a resurrection – body and soul united.

- Though the physical lives of these Tribulation saints were terminated, they are very much alive! The Apostle John “saw” them and heard them crying out with a loud voice.

- *They had been slain for the word of God* – It's difficult to determine exactly when these saints were martyred. However, because of the INTENSIFIED persecution of believers at mid-Trib (Rev. 12), this fifth seal seems to mark mid-Trib.

Concerning the judgment on earth during the Tribulation, we read of 7 seals, 7 trumpets, and 7 bowls. How do we understand the unfolding of these judgments? This is important for us to grasp.... We need to know that the seven seals essentially encompass the entire period of the Tribulation culminating with the return of Jesus. How does that work?

The seventh seal appears to contain the seven trumpets (Rev. 8:1-11:19) – the seven trumpets proceed from the seventh seal.

The seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15) appears to contain the seven bowl judgments (Rev. 16:1-21) – the seven bowls proceed from the seventh trumpet.

Thus, the seven seals contain all the judgments to the end when Jesus returns. When the seven seals are all open (which include the trumpets and the bowls), the scroll is completely open and the earth is REDEEMED.

Continuing with the *being slain for the word of God* – note that they *had been slain* which appears to indicate that this was prior to John's seeing them. John saw their disembodied souls. Therefore, Jesus' breaking the fifth seal did not prompt their deaths.

AND, their death wasn't due to war, famine, pestilence or beasts. They were slain for the word of God!

How long, O Lord – we see God's ownership of these Tribulation saints. *until You judge and avenge our blood..* When will God judge and avenge their blood? At the end of the Tribulation when Jesus avenges their death (Isa. 63:3-4 – Jesus comes from Edom/Petra perhaps – with bloodied garments as He is treading the winepress of His wrath. Jesus is the GOEL – the Blood Avenger/Kinsman Redeemer. One of the duties of the *Goel*, the kinsman redeemer, who, in a family is the nearest of kin was to avenge the blood of the family member who had been murdered? Jesus is the *Goel*, the Kinsman Redeemer, the Blood Avenger!

Then a white robe was given to each of them – these are the white robes promised to the overcomers (I Jn. 5:45) (Rev. 3:5, 18 – he who overcomes will be clothed in white). This is the righteousness of God which is obtained not by works, but by faith alone (Rom. 3:21-26; II Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9).

- *They should rest a little while longer* – their afterlife is seen as rest! Altho' we do hear their emotional cries. (Rev. 21:4 – in the Eternal State God will wipe away every tear)

- *...until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed* – here is a difficult reality. God, Who has the power to step in and end this butchery at any moment, instead chooses to allow it to play out in all its gruesome detail. Although we will never fully comprehend God's divine patience, we know that it is explained in part by His great mercy toward those who have not yet turned. If God were to move immediately in vengeance mode at the time of the martyrs' request, what does that say about those who were yet to become believers? They would be eternally lost. But that will not happen in God's plan!

- *Killed as they were* – these fellow servants and brethren of the martyred saints whose souls are under the altar, according to God's plan, must be killed - for their testimony also (just as these martyred souls were killed)! Why? For God's glory. That must be our answer!

What will be the effects of the first four seals? You might say that they could be explained as merely an intensification of what history already records: conflicts, war, death, famine, disease, and martyrdom. BUT, these four seals are not a “merely” occurrence as they have a global impact!

I'm suggesting that by the loosing of the fifth seal brings us to the middle of the Tribulation.

With the opening of the sixth seal, however, what spills out is unique!