

## All Things New: *The First Two Woes – Revelation 9*

### 1. “How are we all doing?” (*High, Low & Buffalo*)

- i. High – What was a high point in your week? What was good or went well?
- ii. Low – What was a low point in your week? What was a challenge, disappointment, or struggle?
- iii. Buffalo – What was something interesting, random, or different that happened this week?

### 2. “Revelation 9 continues what was happening in chapter 8, so let’s skim chapter 8 quickly. What comes to mind about the first four trumpets?”

### 3. “With that in mind, let’s read about the next two trumpets! We know it was meant to be read out loud. Can one or two people read Revelation 9? Try to read a little *slower* than usual. For the rest of us, try to imagine what John saw as we listen. Can we “see” what we hear?”

### 4. “What images stick out to you from this chapter? What questions does it bring up?”

### 5. “If you heard the sermon this week, what helps you understand or apply this passage?”

### 6. “Revelation is closely connected to the Old Testament. We saw the connection between Revelation 8 and Exodus last week. Revelation 9 is also connected to Exodus but introduces a very strong connection to Joel. Can someone read Joel 1:2-8 and 2:1-10?”

*What similarities and differences do you see between Joel and Revelation 9?*

### 7. “People have explained the trumpets in Revelation 9 in different ways: World War 1 & 2, interdimensional beings, zombies, Apache attack helicopters, demonic creatures, the Parthian empire, or a large Asian army. History has proven that we can spend a lot of time debating what the images mean and still not agree. The goal of Revelation 9 (and all Revelation) is less about trying to achieve *perfect interpretation* and more about *faithful application*. Like the army in Joel or the plagues in Egypt, the trumpets were intended to call people to repent.

*Read Joel 2:11-13. How does this help us understand the point of Revelation 9?*

*How could terrible circumstances bring people to repent?*

*Have you seen or experienced tragedy causing someone to change for the better?*

**8. Just like Pharaoh's heart was not truly changed after the plagues in Exodus, 'the rest of mankind<sup>1</sup> still did not repent' after the plagues caused by the trumpets (Rev. 9:20-21).**

*Why would God go through all the trumpets if they weren't going to be successful?*

**9. "It's important we remember that the audience for the message of Revelation was the church. Revelation 9 would have been read in a worship service to a community of people following Jesus. In other words, the message of Revelation was *first* for the 7 churches in Revelation 2 & 3 and is also for us. Can someone read Revelation 2:14-16? Can someone else read Revelation 2:20-23?"**

*What similarities are there between the warnings to the churches and the events of Revelation 9?*

*How does this call to repent shape your view of what church is and who church is for?*

### **Optional: Break into smaller groups for this section**

**10. Not all suffering or tragedy is because of sin, but suffering and tragedy are opportunities to repent. Can someone read Luke 13:1-5?"**

*Jesus said these things didn't happen because they were 'worse sinners,' but he then invites everyone listening to repent. How do you personally figure out whether suffering in your life is an invitation for you to repent?*

*Revelation 9 is for those who need to repent but have not. Take a moment to reflect: do you need to repent? Is there an idol in your life, whether an object you trust or pray to, or 'a good thing that has become an ultimate thing?' How do you see the value of human life? Do you engage in any kind of magic arts or spirituality (e.g. spells, crystals, tarot cards, Ouija boards)? Is there sexual immorality in your life (online or in real life)? Are you taking, or have you taken, something that does not belong to you? If so, this is an opportunity to repent – to admit to God what's been going on and change your direction.*

**11. "Thanks for sharing \_\_\_\_\_. Can I pray for you?" Take time to pray for each other.**

**12. "Thanks everyone! Same time next week? Who will lead / host / bring**

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<sup>1</sup> "The rest of mankind" refers to those who are not the sealed people of God (Revelation 7:4, 9).