

## Resolve: Week 5

**Takeaway:** Bear witness boldly

**Read:** Revelation 8:6-11:19

*What stood out to you in this passage?*

### Things You Need To Know

- As you are reading through this section, understand that John really ramps up the symbolism of what he is seeing. Most of what you will see here is not literal, but symbolic.
- The plagues that occur in 8:7-12 are echoes or closely resemble the plagues God sent upon Egypt in Exodus 7-11. Also echoing Exodus, God's people are protected when the plagues hit.
- Judgements are always used by God to get our attention.
- The fifth trumpet is symbolic of a number of angels' moral fall (could be a reference to Satan's fall. For more on that, see Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:11-19)
- The description of the Locusts comes from the book of Joel but the army it symbolizes is more likely of a demonic nature. Again, in 9:4, God's chosen people will be spared.
- From 9:17, when John refers to what he sees as "my vision," in regards to the sixth trumpet, we must be prepared for a more symbolic view of things rather than literal.
- Essentially, the sixth trumpet portrays an invasion of symbolically terrifying monsters.
- This judgment, as with others in Revelation and the Bible at large, strikes one-third of the population, leaving the possibility that the rest will repent. As we see in 9:20, those who remain still do not repent, echoing Pharaoh in Exodus.
- The angel in chapter 10 is more powerful than any we've encountered so



- far. The ensuing imagery speaks to that.
- In Daniel 12, he is told to seal up what is revealed to him for a later time. Most of what is revealed to John is not sealed up but chapter 10 is a rare instance in which what is revealed is kept hidden.
  - The contents of the little scroll are not told, but that it is bitter in John's stomach probably means it involved judgement. That it tasted like honey refers back to Ezekiel's message that he ate and tasted like honey (See Ezekiel 3:3).
  - In Chapter 11, the inner temple seems to be symbolic of those who faithfully follow Jesus while the outer court represents Christians who compromise with the world.
  - The olive trees and lamp stands in 11:3 are references to kings and priests from Zechariah 4:11-14 (Joshua and Zerubbabel).
  - The identity of the two witnesses in 11:3-13 has been highly debated. These are the most likely, though none are certain:
    - Moses and Elijah (The Law and the Prophets)
    - Elijah and Enoch (Both taken up to heaven instead of naturally passing)
    - Zerubbabel and Joshua (From the book of Zechariah)
    - Peter and Paul (who were executed under Nero, who we'll learn more about next week)
    - Israel and the Church
    - The Witnessing Church
    - Two people in the spirit of Moses and Elijah
  - It is difficult to say for certain, and scholars are divided, but it seems probable that the last option is most likely based on the description of what the witnesses will do and from patterns found throughout the Scripture.
  - The locations are symbolic; Sodom was destroyed way back in Genesis. Egypt was symbolic of oppression (going back to Exodus) and the "Great City" is used as a description of Babylon, a symbolic contrast to the "Holy City" which is Jerusalem.



**Questions:**

1. How should we pray for God’s judgment? Should we seek to carry out that judgment ourselves?

---

---

---

2. How do you see God’s authority over agents of evil in Revelation 9? What confidence does that give you in the present age?

---

---

---

3. What does it mean that “idolatry is at the core of an unrepentant heart?” How would you explain that to someone?

---

---

---



4. When have you experienced some bitter times in sharing the gospel? When have you experienced sweet times?

---

---

---

5. Should every Christian expect to be persecuted? Should every Christian expect to be martyred?

---

---

---

6. Why does the world rejoice at the death of the two witnesses? Do you see the same spirit today?

---

---

---



7. How does the certainty of the coming of God's kingdom shape the way we live now?

---

---

---

