

A graphic featuring a large, glowing tree with two bright circular lights at its base, set against a dark, atmospheric background. The word "GENESIS" is written in small, light-colored capital letters above the tree, and "REVELATION" is written in similar letters below it. The word "BOOKENDS" is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the center of the tree.

# GENESIS BOOKENDS REVELATION

## GOD'S HEAVENLY TEMPLE ON EARTH

*REVELATION 11*

### SYNOPSIS

Revelation 11 tells the story of the Church as God's heavenly temple on earth. Measured by God, the Church belongs to Him and is secured by His care. As God's temple, the Church is sent into the world to proclaim His Word with power and authority. Yet the witnessing Church will also suffer, because the world hates the convicting light of truth. Still, the enemies of Christ will not prevail forever. One day the trumpet will sound, Christ will return, and the hidden temple will be revealed in glory. At the center of heaven stands Christ, whose blood has redeemed His people forever.

### SERMON OUTLINE

**Main Idea:** The Church is God's heavenly temple on Earth.

1. **The Temple is Measured (Revelation 11:1-2):** God measures His temple, showing that true believers are known, loved, and protected by Him. Though many associate with the Church outwardly, only genuine worshipers truly belong to Christ.
2. **The Temple Witnesses (Revelation 11:3-6):** God's temple proclaims His truth to the world through the Ministry of the Word. Empowered by Christ, believers boldly shine His light, warning of judgment and announcing grace through Jesus.
3. **The Temple Suffers (Revelation 11:7-10):** As the Church faithfully proclaims God's Word, the world and the powers of darkness rage against it. The witnessing temple is hated because truth exposes sin and calls people to repentance.

4. **The Temple Revealed (Revelation 11:11-19):** Though the Church suffers now, Christ will ultimately vindicate and reveal His temple in glory. At His return, the kingdoms of this world will fully belong to Christ forever.

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Special Leader's Note:** *Please remember that we are getting into heavily debated passages of scripture. Some will likely disagree with Pastor Raef's choice of interpretation on various symbols in this and coming chapters. That is okay! But be careful to not let the group discussion become a debate on symbol interpretation. Get to the practical heart level discussions around the principles of the text.*

## GROUP REFLECTION & APPLICATION

1. **Observing the Text:** First, make sure to have your group spend time looking at the text, and observing the text without reflecting on the sermon. You want the group to get familiar with the text, and the words, and the flow of thought. Keep making observations until you feel the group has a solid grasp of the entire text.
2. **The Church as God's Temple:** The sermon described the Church as a temple where heaven and earth overlap, meaning Christians are meant to visibly display God's kingdom in the middle of a hostile world.
  - a. In what environments do you most feel the tension between God's kingdom and the world's values?
  - b. What would it practically look like for you to live more consciously as "God's temple" in those places this week?
3. **Measuring the Temple (1-2):** In the sermon we discussed the imagery of God "measuring" His temple, meaning that true believers are known, loved, and protected by Him. We also discussed the "outer court," (verse 2) representing those who outwardly associate with the Church but lack genuine faith.
  - a. Have you experienced people who have "walked away" from the faith?
  - b. In hindsight, what signs were present that could have served as warning signs that all was not well with their faith?
4. **Ministry of the Word (v. 3-6):** In the sermon we discussed that every believer is called to participate in the Ministry of the Word, where we take the word and proclaim, or teach, or instruct, or communicate it to somebody. One does not need to be a Pastor to communicate God's Word, one must only be a Christian.
  - a. How are you participating in the Ministry of the Word currently?

- b. What roadblocks do you experience when thinking about engaging in the Ministry of the Word more directly?
  
- 5. **Seeker Sensitivity (v. 7-10):** Revelation 11 describes the witnessing Church as a “torment” to the unbelieving world because God’s Word exposes sin and calls people to repentance. The sermon contrasted this with a “seeker sensitive” approach that tries to avoid offense.
  - a. Have you noticed areas where you are tempted to soften, avoid, or hide biblical truth in order to be accepted by others?
  - b. How can Christians speak truth boldly while still reflecting the compassion and grace of Christ?