

A graphic featuring a large, gnarled tree trunk in the center, with two glowing circular openings. The word "GENESIS" is written in small, gold, all-caps letters above the tree, and "REVELATION" is written in small, gold, all-caps letters below it. The word "BOOKENDS" is written in large, white, serif, all-caps letters across the middle of the tree trunk.

# GENESIS BOOKENDS REVELATION

## THE HARLOT AND THE BRIDE

*REVELATION 19*

### SYNOPSIS

As America marks its 250th anniversary, John Hancock's bold signature on the Declaration of Independence illustrates courageous allegiance without knowing the outcome. Christians, however, live with greater certainty, because Revelation 19 shows how history ends. Babylon, the seductive world system opposed to God, will be fully and finally judged, prompting heaven's Hallelujah as God's glory, justice, and eternal joy are revealed. At the same time, the Church's hope is spectacularly fulfilled in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where Christ welcomes His purified bride into everlasting fellowship. Since this future is certain, believers must refuse Babylon and instead prepare daily for Christ's return through holiness, repentance, and obedience, boldly and unashamedly signing their lives to King Jesus.

### SERMON OUTLINE

**Main Idea:** Why should we not be afraid to pledge ourselves to Christ boldly?

- 1. Because Babylon's Will Be Utterly Defeated (1-5):** These verses are an angelic hymn to the utter destruction of Babylon, the culture that dared to seduce the saints to fall away from God. Babylon must fall because
  - a. God's glory cannot share the stage (1)
  - b. God's justice cannot be mocked (2)
  - c. Heaven's joy cannot begin until evil ends (3)
- 2. Because the Church's Hope Will be Utterly Fulfilled (6-10):** The image of a wedding is used to describe the celebration that will occur in heaven when Christ returns.

## REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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. When you honestly consider Revelation 19, what stirs more in you right now: joy at Christ's victory or discomfort at Babylon's judgment? Why do you think that is
3. In what practical ways does "Babylon" still compete for your love, attention, or trust during an ordinary week?
4. How does the image of the Church as the betrothed bride of Christ reshape the way you think about your daily choices, habits, and priorities?
5. Jesus warns in Matthew 25 about being ready for the Bridegroom's return. What are some signs that someone is actively preparing for Christ versus merely assuming they are ready?
6. If your life were a public "signature" like John Hancock's, what would it currently declare about who or what you are ultimately loyal to?

### FOR FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP

**Question:** If Jesus came back this week, what in your life would you be glad you were doing, and what would you want to change before He comes?