**Revelation 1**

**1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant John, 2who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. 3Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.**

**Verse 1: The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants:**

**Book of Revelation has the form of a letter from Christ to His Church.**

* Divine authority (of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him)
* Certainty (‘that *must* soon take place’)
* Crucial relevance (vs 3, who keep what is written, for the time is near).

**Revelation to His servants: not a mystery, but clear message!**

* To show His servants.
* Revelation hard to understand?
* Good knowledge of the Bible important! Lots of connections.
	+ Exodus, Daniel, many other prophecies.
	+ For the plagues: both Exodus and Deut. 27+28

reference to God’s punishment and curse.

**the things that must shortly take place:**

Shortly / Soon: it is the last hour.

End time: 1000 years in Revelation 20.

* Beginning (Genesis),
* Time of Shadows (OT): preparing the world for salvation
* End time (NT): preparing the world for judgment.

**1 John 2:**

**18**Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+john+2&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-30569d)] Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

**Acts 2:**

**16**But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

**17**‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God,
That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh;

**things which must shortly take place**

God is preparing the world for His judgment.

Before He does so, He prepares His church (2-3).

Warnings: seven seals: threats, causing fear, confusion: depriving the world of their hope and their trust, to make them trust in God. (6:15)

**Two responses:**

1. **The 144,000 sealed, the multitude that no one can count: see 7:10**
2. **The world: No repentance, but continuation in rejection of God.**

Questions for discussion:

* Looking at the situation in which we are now, how are we different from this world, in our response to God’s warnings? (read Deuteronomy 28:28 and 2 Timothy 1:7 as two contrasting texts)
* How can the world see that we are different?
* How did the church in the past respond to disasters and plagues, and can we learn from that?

*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

*2 Timothy 1:7*

*(Part of God’s curse over disobedience:)*

*28 The Lord will strike you with madness and blindness and confusion of heart.*

*Deuteronomy 28*

Then: Seventh seal 🡺 preparation for the next series: the seven trumpets.

increase in intensity.

11:15 : seventh trumpet. The coming of the kingdom. Return of Christ. Day of judgment.

12-14 : Summary of the Great Battle, which started with Genesis 3:15.

15-16: God’s judgment: the seven plagues, angels with seven bowls.

17-18 : God’s judgment over the world powers

19: God’s vindication of His people

2 suppers:

* the marriage supper of the Lamb
* the great supper of God (19:17-21)

**Verse 2: Testimony of Jesus Christ**

Testimony must be passed on:

* Christ sent His angel to John
* John bore witness: he wrote it in this book, sent it to the churches
* The Churches read it out loud, the members hear it.