

# Understanding Revelation



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## A. Directions in Rev. 1:1-3

# Revelation is Introduced (1:4a)

John to the seven churches that  
are in Asia:

# Revelation is a Letter

Modern style

“Dear Mary,  
I am writing  
...”

=

First century  
Greek style

“John,  
to the seven  
churches ...” (1:4)

# Revelation Includes an Introduction

Prologue  
1:1-3

Letter  
1:4-  
.  
.  
.  
22:21

# Clues and Encouragements from the Prologue

The books reveals (1:1)

Jesus Christ is the key to understanding  
(1:1)

God promises blessing for reading (1:3)

# Revealing (1:1)

God's  
plan



unveiling, disclosure

Christ knows  
our need

show, not  
keep in the dark

to his servants (you!)

made known

The revelation of  
Jesus Christ,  
which God gave  
him to show to his  
servants the things  
that must soon  
take place. He  
made it known ...

# God as Source (1:1)

God

exalted,  
holy

merciful,  
near

God's Message

Exalted, deep  
message

Understandable  
message



# Jesus Christ as Key (1:1)

God

exalted,  
holy

merciful,  
near

through  
Jesus Christ


God's Message

Exalted, deep  
message

Understandable  
message

# Blessing for Reading (1:3)

“Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it.”



Explicit blessing for reading. Extra encouragement.

“Keep” means it’s practical.

Strengthening the heart, not tickling the fancy.

## B. Central Theme of God's Rule in Rev. 4:1-11

# Revelation 4:1-11

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this." <sup>2</sup> At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. <sup>3</sup> And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

## Revelation 4:1-11 (2)

<sup>4</sup> Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads.

<sup>5</sup> From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, <sup>6</sup> and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:

## Revelation 4:1-11 (3)

<sup>7</sup> the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight.

<sup>8</sup> And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

## Revelation 4:1-11 (4)

<sup>9</sup> And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever,

<sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

<sup>11</sup> "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."

# Certain Future from God

“must” (1:1)



God controls the future

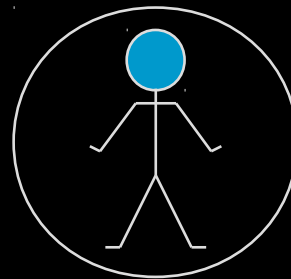


God is glorious King (4:1-11)

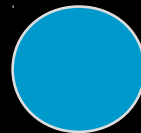
**When God appears, you know that you live in a God-centered world.**



# Greek Worldview

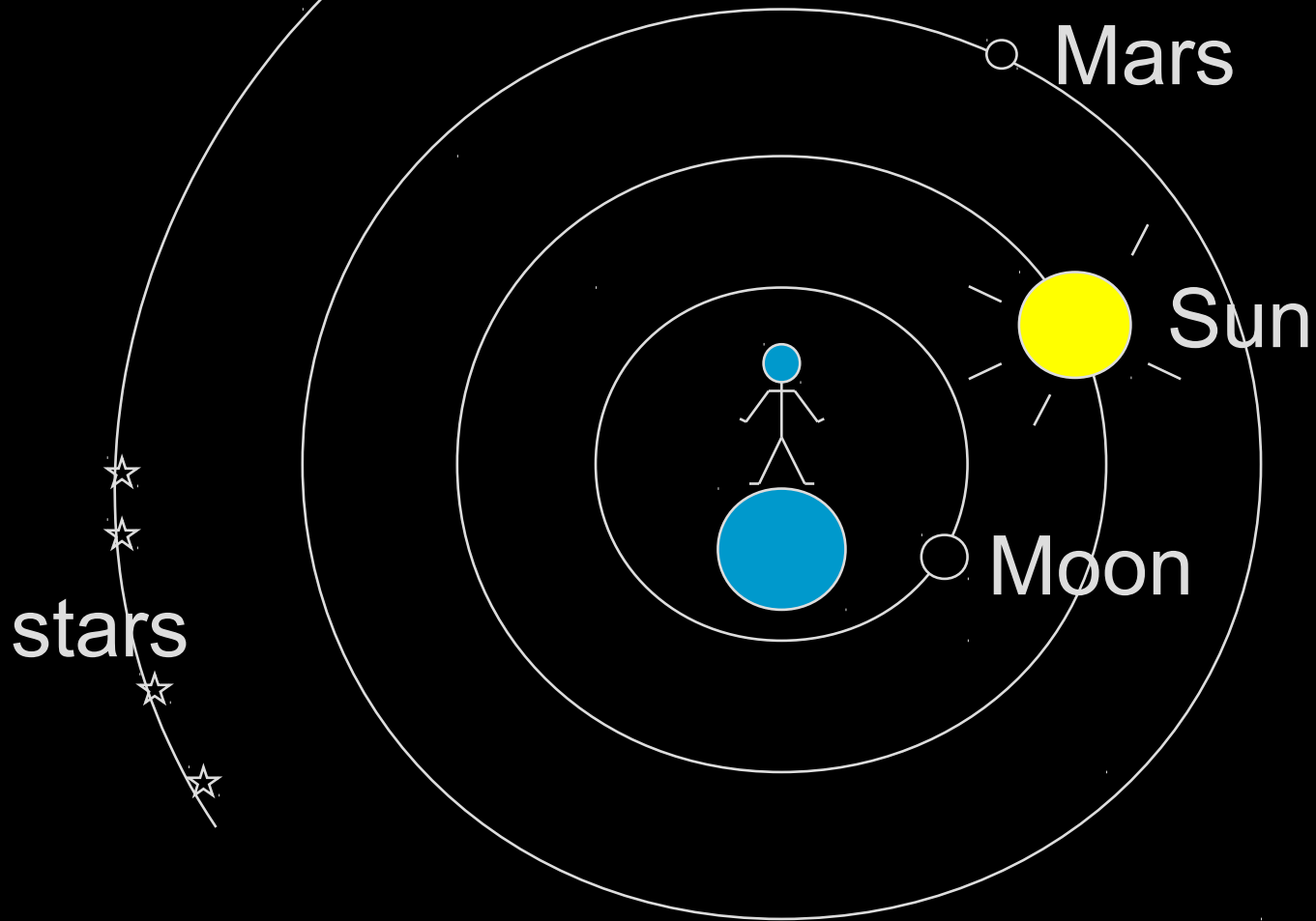


man



on earth

# Ptolemaic Worldview



# Modern Materialist Worldview



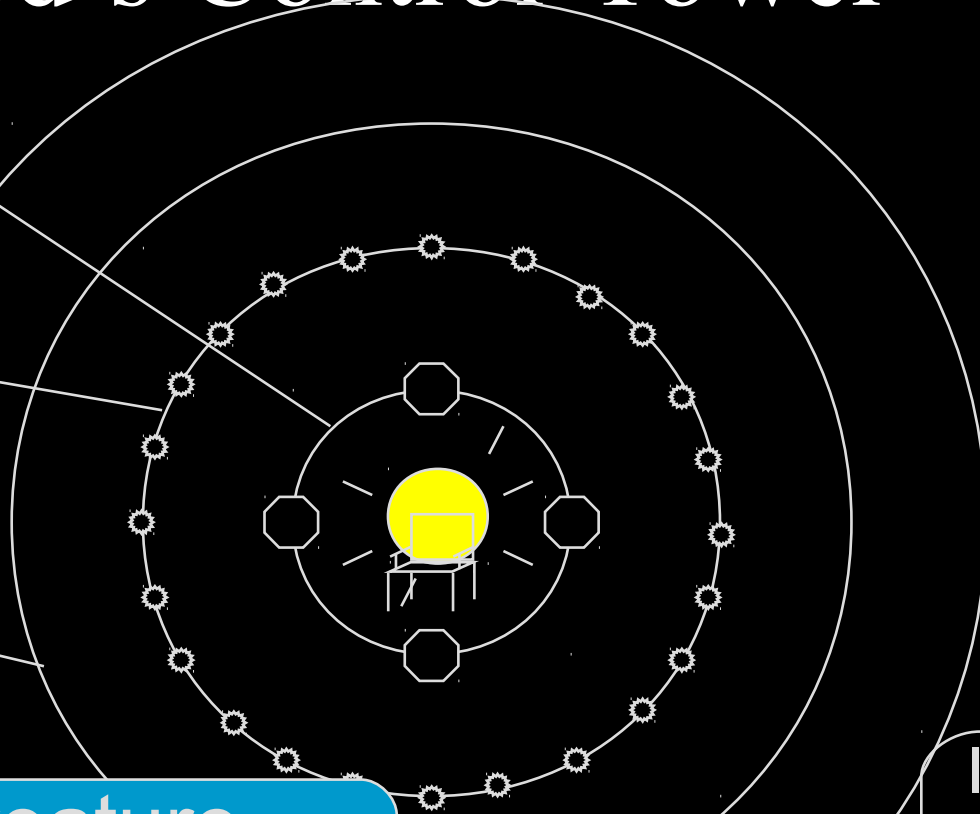
# God's Control-Tower

4 living  
creatures

24 elders

myriads  
of angels

every creature  
in heaven, earth,  
under the earth, sea



I can see  
what's  
important.



**“Blessed Are the Eyes That See”**

**Vision of God’s victory**

**1 John 5:4-5; Rev. 17:14; Rev. 12:10**

## 1 John 5:4-5

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

## Revelation 17:14

They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.

## Revelation 12:10

And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God."



# **“Blessed Are the Eyes That See”**

**Vision of God’s victory**

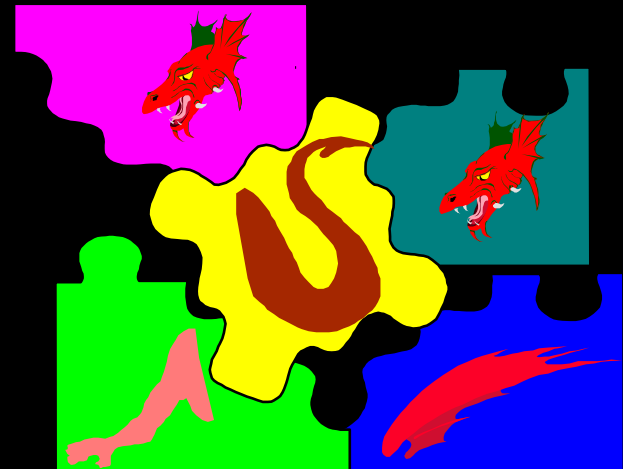
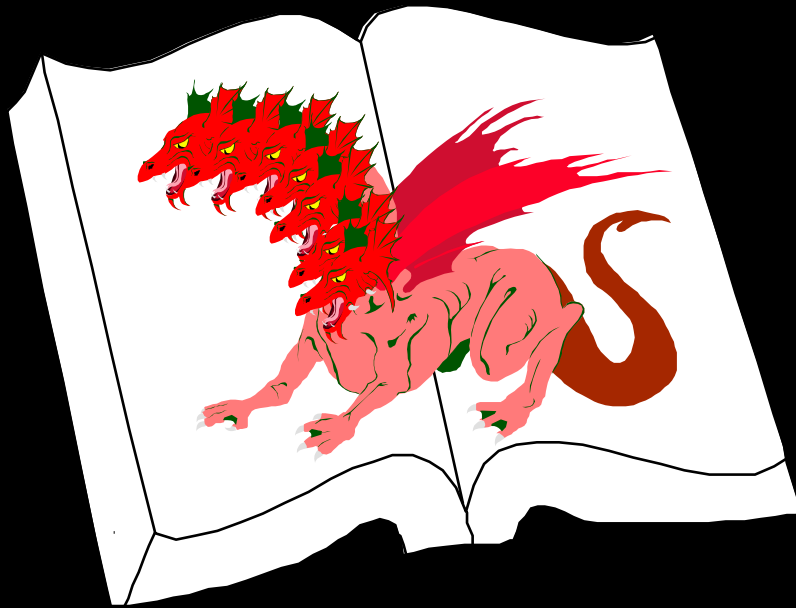
**1 John 5:4-5; Rev. 17:14; Rev. 12:10**

**God rules history, and will bring it to its  
consummation in Christ.**

**You can understand.**

## C. Clarity of Revelation

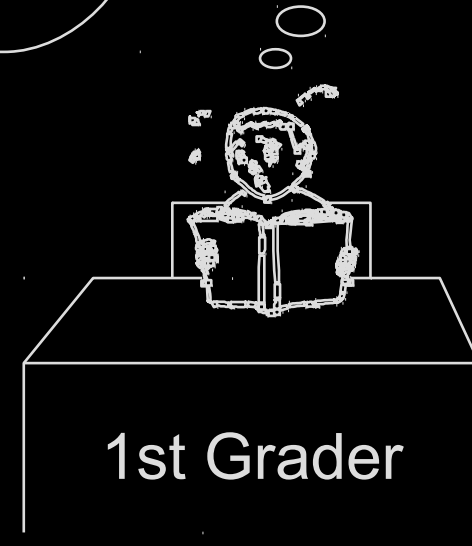
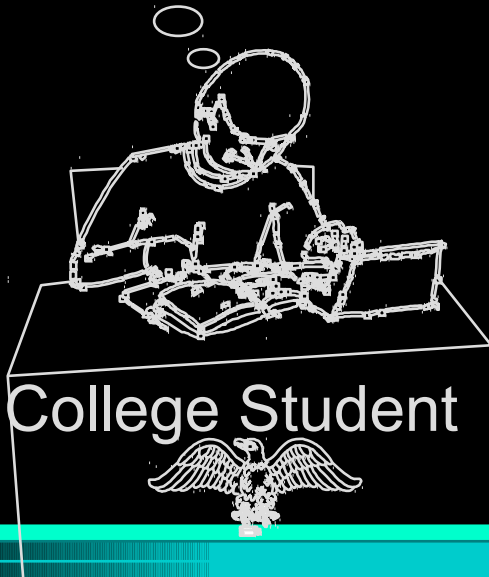
It's Simple  
A picture book, not a puzzle book.  
For children also.



# See the Whole

Hmm.... Let's see now. What does the "locust" of Rev. 9 mean? The "horse" part must refer to one of the months of the Chinese calendar. "Crowns of gold" must refer to Babylonian kings. "Women's hair" surely suggests that it is women who will bring about the final downfall of mankind. "Scorpion tails" ... hmm... Now let me see.

Awesome!  
It's a **monster!**



# The Majesty of Christ

Christ is our friend (John 15:14-15).  
He is also our majestic, awesome king!

Not a tame lion!



## D. Themes

## God Appearing (22:3-4)

<sup>3</sup> No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. <sup>4</sup> They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

# The Majesty of Christ (5:8-10)

<sup>8</sup> And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, <sup>10</sup> and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."



# Honor to Christ (1:5b-6)

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

# Faithful Witness

and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness,  
the firstborn of the dead, (John 1:5a)

"I know where you dwell, where Satan's  
throne is. Yet you hold fast my name, and  
you did not deny my faith even in the  
days of Antipas my faithful witness, who  
was killed among you, where Satan  
dwells. (2:13)

# Holding Fast (22:7-10)

<sup>7</sup> "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." <sup>8</sup> I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, <sup>9</sup> but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." <sup>10</sup> And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.

# Perseverance (14:12)

Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.

# Hope (22:20)

He who testifies to these things says,  
"Surely I am coming soon." Amen.  
Come, Lord Jesus!

## E. Sing Revelation

# Song from Rev. 19:6-7

**Hallelujah! For the Lord our God  
the Almighty reigns. (2X)**

**Let us rejoice and be glad and give  
the glory unto him.**

**Hallelujah! For the Lord our God  
the Almighty reigns.**

## Song from Rev. 4:11

**Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy,  
Thou art worthy, O Lord.**

**Thou art worthy to receive glory,  
glory, and honor, and power.**

**For Thou hast created--  
hast all things created,**

**For Thou hast created all things.**

**And for Thy pleasure they are created;  
Thou art worthy, O Lord.**



# Song from Rev. 5:9-14

**Thou art worthy, Thou art worthy,  
Thou art worthy, O Lamb.**

**Thou art worthy To receive glory  
And power at the Father's right hand.**

**For Thou hast redeemed us,  
Hast ransomed and cleansed us,  
By thy blood setting us free;**

**In white robes arrayed us, Kings and priests  
made us, And we are reigning in Thee.**