

EX: “Don’t be afraid, John; for I am the one who’s eternal—not Rome. I am the one who lives (having died), not the new Nero, Domitian. And while your friends and loved ones may have died in my name, I hold the key to their release.”

AP: God doesn’t desire for us to be afraid of Him—for He desires for us to remember His love—His blessings—His grace. And while we should have a respect for who He is and what His power is, we should not fear—for He desires our best!

1JN 4.17-19 ~ *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us.*

CONCLUSION – RV 1.19-20

Jesus bursts onto the scene as John writes this final book in our Bibles. And as He does so, He desires for us to understand His power, His authority, and His might. John **felt** fear at the power and majesty of **what he saw**—but God desired for Him to feel comfort. And He also desired for him to **hear** His message, to spread His message. He desired that so much that He repeated it, again:

RV 1.19-20 ~ *Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. ²⁰ The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.*

At the end of John’s writing, he’s finally come to understand. His fear has gone, and ultimately, it’s been replaced with reverence and a desire to worship (unfortunately, he aims it at the angel, who would quickly correct him).

RV 22.12-15 ~ *“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” ¹⁴ Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.*

In this, we see the message of RV in microcosm: Jesus reminds John and, by extension, all of us, that He’s here: and that He has won. That we can take confidence and react not in fear, but in faith and the power, might, and majesty of the Son of Man. That, should we trust in Him and remain faithful to His commandments, we will have the tree of life and enter the gates of His city.

RV 22.16-17 ~ *“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” ¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.*

INVITATION

#676 [Exp-NTP][2.4]
10/29/2025

A Divine Interruption
PC __ Pchd _____

RV 1.9-20 (NKJV)

QUESTION: How did John react to Jesus’ arrival on the scene in RV?

TRN TO RV 1

INTRODUCTION

BUSINESS/Apple/1997 Macworld Boston Keynote

It was a terrifying day, and no one knew what to expect. Little did they know that Job’s return was imminent, and that a new era would arrive for the company. His interruption on the stage ended up being the highlight of the presentation!

BACKGROUND – RV 1.8

RV begins the same as most other epistles: introducing the author and his audience—setting forward the thesis and primary point of the letter: to address *things which must shortly take place* (**RV 1.1b**). If you’d never heard of or read **RV** before, you’d be forgiven to expect it to be structured like **RM** or **1JN**—but then, we see his message is interrupted: but like with Steve Jobs serving to help focus and highlight back at the Macworld keynote, Christ’s **divine interruption** would serve to focus and highlight the message of the entire letter!

RV 1.8 ~ *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”*

EX: **Α** and **Ω**—the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet. The *“Beginning and the End”*. The speaker here proclaims from the very beginning that He is there from the beginning and will be there at the end. That He is the true **παντοκράτωρ** (*pantokratohr*): **“the ruler of all”**—the *“Almighty”*, *“who is and who was and who is to come”*.

BKGRND: John was going to reveal several seemingly impossible things over the course of the book—the fall of Rome, the failing of the emperor, and the undermining of all of God’s enemies at the feet of the murdered Messiah and His newborn church. That all would seem impossible. For that reason, we have **“the divine interruption”** here as a kind of seal of authenticity—the Lord speaks the opening and closing words of the book as a bookend—verifying the truth of what would be contained within.

And then, John reveals his own personal reaction to the presence of His savior: who stands in support and backing of the vision and message that John was about to bring. And as we close out this chapter, we see John’s recounting of **what he heard, saw, and felt** in the presence of His Savior.

BD1: What John Heard – RV 1.10-11

John could have pointed to his apostleship and his authority. But as he saw the pain and the suffering coming to the church in Asia Minor, he did something else. He appealed to them as one of them: *I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. (RV 1.9)* John equated his faith with their faith—his *“tribulation”* with their *“tribulation”*. The word he uses there is the word, **θλιψις** (*thil-IHP-sis*): it carried the idea of a pressure that built until it, inevitably, burst. They were under pressure—continual

persecution and tribulation. And he was right there, alongside them, alone on “Patmos” an island that was serving as his prison for daring to preach “the testimony of Jesus Christ”.

What was so special about that day? *I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, (RV 1.10)* He’s in a spiritually receptive state: much like the apostles would have been in when writing inspired words or preaching inspired lessons. And in that moment, we see **what John heard**—a sound like a trumpet.

EX: The **KJV** and **NKJV** include a rephrasing of the earlier proclamation: “*I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,*” This isn’t present in most older manuscripts—it was likely a scribal duplication of the earlier language (and if it wasn’t, it doesn’t add anything or contradict anything). What matters here is the pronouncement: the declaration and proclamation: “*What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.*” (**RV 1.11**) **REVELATION/Revelation 1/Order of the Churches**

AP; In these churches, we see a specific audience that was also representative of the church, universal. The church would have been familiar with the travel route—and they would have understood that these individual churches might have been the people the letter was **to**, but it wasn’t the only people the letter was **for**. And today, the command to spread the message continues. In the closing chapter of **RV**, we see how the text loops back around to the same command, extended not just to these 7 churches, but to all of the church, universal: *Then he said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ⁷ “Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”* (**RV 22.6-7**)

Just as Jesus commanded John to spread the message to the 7 churches, He now commands the church to keep spreading it—and that command is given to us, as well! We also must remember **what John heard**: *And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.* (**MT 28.18-20**)

BD2: What John Saw – RV 1.12-16

RV 1.12a ~ *Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me.* Next, we see **what John saw**: *And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, (RV 1.12b-13a)*

EX: “**The Son of Man**” would have immediately made the early 1st Century Christian think of **DN 7.13**—where Daniel also saw one “*like a Son of Man*”—then, in a prophecy speaking of the fall of Babylon and the rise of God’s forever kingdom. John’s language is powerful and simple: **what John saw** was a reminder that God had defeated Babylon and saved His people. And He would do the same, now!

He sees Him *clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; (RV 1.13b-15)* His clothing was that of royalty. His white hair spoke to His purity as the lamb of God (a reference to **DN 7.9**). He eyes “*like a flame of fire*” would point to His all-knowing vision, while His feet being “*like fine brass*” would show His strength and endurance, and his voice being “*as the sound of many waters*” showed the power and might of His word (all of these, also, reference to **DN 10.6**)

He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. (RV 1.16) The point of all of this was simply to show the power, majesty, authority, and might of the God He worshipped. This “**Son of Man**” was not a broken and dead son of a carpenter: He was the raised and almighty Son of God—the same “*Son of Man*” who’d spoken and prophesied of the fall of Babylon was now about to speak to the fall of Rome. **How could they fear? How could they doubt?**

AP: Today, we sometimes simplify and sanitize our God. We think of Jesus as the calm, kind teacher: the infant child in the manger. And while He is those things, He is so much more. He is pure. He is mighty. He is wise. His words are powerful. His power is awe-inspiring! So, **what can man do to me?**

PS 27.1-3 ~ *The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? ² When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell. ³ Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident.*

BD3: What John Felt – RV 1.17-20

RV 1.17a-20 ~ *And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. Why would he react in this way? Shouldn’t he have reacted in joy? In celebration?* Instead, we see **what John felt** when faced with the Son of Man: he was afraid.

To be fair, that’s understandable. The Bible is filled with example after example of people being afraid when faced with the true glory of angels or divinity. And the Bible encourages a healthy fearful respect of God: *Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! ⁹ For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. (PS 33.8-9)*

Does this mean that God wants us to be fearful of Him? It’s complicated. We should have respect and honor for Him. But that should be paired with an understanding of who He is and how He cares for us!

MT 10.28-31 ~ *And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

Christ’s intent wasn’t to terrify John, but to encourage him: *But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. (RV 1.17b-18)*