

Revelation - Chapter 1

Revelation 1:17

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead.

Again, this verse contains the continued description of the glorified person of Jesus begun in verse 10. Jesus' glory (see on Revelation 1:14-16) causes John to lose strength and fall prostrate (Joshua 5:13, 14; Ezekiel 1:27, 28; Daniel 10:6-10; Matthew 28:2-4; John 18:4-6; Acts 9:3, 4). Doubtless, the terrible splendor of such incredible majesty was more than the apostle could bear, and he fell down wholly deprived of his senses.

And he laid his right hand upon me,

While the right hand can represent strength, ability, and sustenance (see on Revelation 1:16), it is also the hand of approval (Matthew 25:32-34; Acts 5:31; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 8:1, 2; Galatians 2:9). Jesus gives John an assuring, strengthening touch (Daniel 8:18; Daniel 10:9, 10). Such a gesture, expressive of the Savior's divine love and mercy for fallen humanity, was designed to give comfort and encouragement to John, thus enabling him to behold the fantastic vision which was about to dramatically unfold before his wondering eyes. This was the same hand which Jesus had raised up to bless (Luke 24:51), reached forth to heal (Matthew 8:1-4), and extended to raise (Matthew 14:31) and restore (John 18:10; Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:51) during his earthly ministry. To all of us, as well as it was to the aged John and has always been to the persecuted Church throughout the centuries, it is no less extended today. To forget this is to forget one of the essential messages found throughout the whole of the Book of Revelation.

saying unto me, Fear not;

Jesus compassionately assures John that He has come to bless him and not to cause anxiety or harm (Judges 6:22, 23; Judges 13:20-23; Jeremiah 29:11; Luke 2:10; compare Matthew 14:27). The fact that it was the Savior of the world, though he appeared in this form of overpowering majesty, was a reason why John should not be afraid.

I am the first and the last:

Again, John is reminded of Jesus' eternal and timeless attributes (see on Revelation 1:4, 11). He is in the presence of One who has always been committed to man's benefit and redemption (Isaiah 41:1-10; Isaiah 44:1-8) –and, therefore, it appears clear from the context that it is one of the reasons why John, or any other

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believer, should not fear. Jesus is eternal. He will always live—that is, he has lived through all the past, and will live through all of that which is to come, and is infinitely able to and accomplish all his promises and purposes toward those who put their trust in him.



"to shew...things which must shortly come to pass;"

Revelation 1:1