

## **Seeing God. No Two**

If heaven is our future home, we should spend more time thinking about it. Heaven! What is it?

We are apt to think of heaven as a place where we should be free from pain, misery and sorrow.

But the enjoyment and happiness in heaven is seeing the face of the One we love. The church fathers and the medieval church called it the "beatific vision." It is reserved for those who are able to say: "We know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is"(1 John :2). To long for heaven is longing to see God face to face in all His glory. The vision of God has always been regarded as the greatest good. To "see God" is the purpose of our pilgrimage.

According to the Old Testament, "seeing God" is fatal for human beings on earth. In this present life, God appears to whom He wills but not as He is. There is no one who is ever able to see Him in this mortal body as He is. Remember what happened to Moses. The Lord told him, "You cannot see my face, for no one may see and live" (Ex.33: 20). In the New Testament "seeing God" is main content of our future hope. Jesus Himself puts it into the future when He says in the Sermon of the Mount: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt.5: 8). The apostle Paul also makes it clear that the vision of God cannot be obtained here on earth, but only in the life to come. "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face" ( 1 Cor. 12:13). We are going to see God and bask in His glory.

What does it mean to see God? We shall see Him without the aid of prophets and priests. All the barriers between us and God will be gone. Nothing and no one will be between us and our Creator. Nevertheless, we shall remain dependent on Him. The God we shall see face to face is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, we shall see Jesus Christ in His glorified body, clothed in our human nature, sitting in glory above the angels. Our seeing God will have a transforming effect. We shall be changed into the Lord's image. "We shall be like Him" (1 John 3:2). This does not mean that we shall be absorbed by Him. The distinction between God and us will always remain. We shall not become gods as some eastern religions and cults teach. When Moses was with God on Mount Sinai, his face was radiant (Ex. 34:35). The faces of the saints in heaven will shine, being always in God's holy presence. As we anticipate seeing God, let us approach Him now with awe, respect and reverence.