

alone is a heaven—to be rid of inbred sin, and the plague of the heart, and to have ended for ever the struggle of spiritual life against the crushing power of the fleshly power of death. They may well see his face when the scales of sin have been taken from their eyes, and they have become pure as God himself is pure.

They surely see his face the more clearly because all the clouds of care are gone from them. Some of you while sitting here to-day have been trying to lift up your minds to heavenly contemplation, but you cannot; the business has gone so wrong this week; the children have vexed you so much; sickness has been in the house so sorely; you yourself feel in your body quite out of order for devotion—these enemies break your peace. Now they are vexed by none of these things in heaven, and therefore they can see their Master's face. They are not cumbered with Martha's cares; they still occupy Mary's seat at his feet. When shall you and I have laid aside the farm, and the merchandize, and the marrying, and the hurrying, which come so fast upon each other's heels, and when shall we be for ever with the Lord—

"Far from a world of grief and sin,  
With God eternally shut in?"

Moreover, as they have done with sins and cares, so have they done with sorrows. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." We are none of us quite strangers to grief, and with some of us pain is an inseparable companion; we dwell in the smoky tents of Kedar still. Perhaps it is well that we should so be tried while we are here, for sanctified sorrow refines the soul; but in glory there is no affliction, for the pure gold needeth not the furnace. Well may they then behold Christ when there are no tears to dim their eyes, no smoke of this world to rise up between them and their Beloved, but they are alike free from sin, and care, and sorrow. They see his face right gloriously in that cloudless atmosphere, and in the light which he himself supplies.

Moreover the glorified see his face the more clearly because there are no idols to stand between him and them. Our idolatrous love of worldly things is a chief cause of our knowing so little of spiritual things. Because we love this and that so much, we see so little of Christ. Thou canst not fill thy life-cup from the pools of earth, and yet have room in it for the crystal streams of heaven. But they have no idols there—nothing to occupy the heart; no rival for the Lord Jesus. He reigns supreme within their spirits, and therefore they see his face.

They have no veils of ignorance or prejudice to darken their sight in heaven. Those of us who most candidly endeavour to learn the truth are nevertheless in some degree blinded and warped by education. Let us

struggle as we may, yet still our surroundings will not permit us to see things as they are. There is a deflection in our vision, a refraction in the air, a something everywhere which casts the beam of light out of its straight line so that we see rather the appearance than the reality of truth. We see not with open sight; our vision is marred; but yonder, among the golden harps, they "know, even as they are known." They have no prejudices, but a full desire to know the truth: the bias is gone, and therefore they are able to see his face. "O blessed thought!" One could almost wish to sit down and say no more, but just roll that sweet morsel under one's tongue, and extract the essence and sweetness of it. "They see his face." There is no long distance for the eye to travel over, for they are near him; they are in his bosom; they are sitting on his throne at his right hand. No withdrawals there to mourn over: their sun shall no more go down. Here he stands behind our veil; he showeth himself through the lattice; but he hides not himself in heaven. O when shall the long summer days of glory be ours, and Jesus our undying joy for ever and ever? In heaven they never pray—

"Oh may no earthborn cloud arise

To hide thee from thy servant's eyes;"

but for ever and for aye they bask in the sunlight, or rather, like Milton's angel, they live in the sun itself. They come not to the sea's brink to wade into it up to the ankles, but they swim in bliss for ever. In waves of everlasting rest, in richest, closest fellowship with Jesus, they disport themselves with ineffable delight.

III. The third part of the subject which commands our attention this morning in THE MATCHLESS PRIVILEGE WHICH THIS VISION INVOLVES.

We may understand the words "they shall see his face" to contain five things. They mean, first, *certain salvation*. The face of Jesus Christ acts in two ways upon the sons of men; with some it is a face of terror—"Before his face heaven and earth fled away." It is written concerning him, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." A sight of Christ's face will be to the ungodly eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord. But if there are some men who shall see his face, who shall sit down and delight themselves in gazing upon the face of the great Judge upon the throne, then those persons are assuredly saved; they are abiding the day of his coming; they are dwelling with the eternal flame without being consumed; they are resting on the bosom of our God who is a consuming fire; and yet, like the burning bush of old, though glowing with the glory they are not consumed by the heat. O happy men, who can live where others must expire; who can find their heaven where a carnal