

HOW THE RESURRECTED BODIES WILL BE TRANSFORMED AT THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS

by SAINT SIMEON THE NEW THEOLOGIAN

This is the revelation received by Saint Simeon the New Theologian from God while in ecstasy. It reveals to us how our material bodies will be transformed and become incorruptible at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.



“One day, while I was praying to God with purity of heart, a breeze came upon me and enlightened my mind. I was in my cell and yet I felt as if I was outside in the open. It was night fall. Then suddenly, like the colors of the rising sun—oh the fearful vision of a man—the building and everything else seemed to vanish. I was completely overwhelmed while in spiritual ecstasy. My mind clearly saw a Light that appeared to me. The Light was slowly—slowly intensifying and made the area around me more translucent and I felt that my whole body was outside of the earthly realm.

As the Light continued to increase in intensity, It appeared to me like the brilliant sun at high noon. I felt as if I was standing in the middle of this Light and I was filled with the joy of tears. The tears flowed because of the sweetness of the presence of that Light. While looking at the Light, it miraculously came into contact with me and it slowly permeated my whole being. The astonishment of this vision detracted me from the previous one and it appeared that this wondrous event was also happening inside of me. It entered my heart, my innermost organs and my whole being. I became as of fire and light. And just like it happened in my monastic cell; it now made me feel like I lost my human form; time and space. I became weightless and then I stopped crying. I then heard a voice coming from the Light saying to me: “This is the way it has been determined that those who are still alive when the Lord returns will be transformed when the final trumpet is sounded. Then, just as St. Paul has said they will be snatched up into heaven.

For many hours the blessed one found himself in this state; continuously praising God in the Spirit and very aware of the glory that enveloped him. He became aware of the eternal blessedness which will be given to the Saints (believers). He started to ask himself: “Will I return to the previous state that my body had or will I continue to live like this?” As soon as I had that thought, I felt as if my body was moving about like a shadow or like a spirit. I understood that I became, as I said before, immersed completely in light without form, without shape, immaterial and spirit like. I couldn’t understand how I felt like I was bodiless. And then the Light that was speaking within him, as it did before said: “This is the way all the Saints (believers) will be after the resurrection of the dead in the age to come. All the Saints (believers) will be transformed into bodies that are spiritually refined, heavenly and weightless. And yet other human beings will continue to have human form, feeling their weight, more earthy. This condition will be determined for each person according to the relationship and intimacy they had with God.

This is what the heavenly visionary of God Symeon heard and saw. And after he saw this inexpressible Divine Light, he thanked God for glorifying man in this way. He thanked Him for making him a partaker of godliness and His Kingdom. He then was returned to his human form. He found himself once again in his monastic cell as he was before the vision began. He then revealed these mysteries of God to those whom he trusted. He told these people that for days he felt weightless without ever feeling tired, hungry or thirsty. And because he was immersed in the Holy Spirit and was filled with Divine Grace, his mind was cleansed. As a result of this experience he now had visions and unbelievable revelations of the Lord just like the Prophets did of old.

He now had an apostolic mind, since he was guided and motivated by the Holy Spirit. The words that flowed from his lips were filled with the Grace of the Word of God. And even though he was uneducated like the Apostles, he was able to write God-inspired texts. These writings taught the faithful the proper way to live a devout life. Arriving at such a high spiritual state of being, he began to write whole chapters about the ascetic life in reference to human virtues and the human passions. Whatever he learned from his personal ascetic life and the divine knowledge that was given to him, he wrote about with accuracy. He did this for those who live this life. He became for the spiritual elites, the monastics, the river of God filled with spiritual waters.

A free translation by: +Fr. Constantine J. Simones, October 15, 2012, USA

A BIOGRAPHY OF SAINT SYMEON

Saint Symeon was born in Paphlagonia, Asia Minor in 942 and died on March 12, 1022 in Chrysopolis near Constantinople. He was a Byzantine monk and mystic, termed the New Theologian to mark the difference from two key figures in the Orthodox Church, St. John the Evangelist and the 4th century theologian St. Gregory Nazianzus. Through his spiritual experiences and writings Symeon prepared the way for Hesychast mysticism, a 14th century Eastern Orthodox movement in contemplative prayer. Oriented early toward monastic contemplation, Symeon became abbot of the Monastery of St. Mamas, near Constantinople, about 980. He was compelled to resign this office in 1009 and retire to Chrysopolis because of his austere monastic policy and a dispute with the Patriarch of Constantinople over methods of spirituality, especially his devotion to his former monk tutor, Symeon the Studite.

Symeon the New Theologian's writings consist mainly of doctrinal and moral instructions; sermons preached to his monks at St. Mamas; a series of short rules, and the Hymns of the Divine Loves, describing his spiritual experiences. Symeon's mystical theology is a distinct phase of an evolutionary process in Orthodox Spirituality that began in the late 2nd century. Its central theme is the conviction that, by applying the classical methods of mental prayer, one experiences a contemplative "vision of light," a symbolic term denoting the intuitional illumination that the mystic realizes in his encounter with the Divine Unknown. Symeon emphasized that such experience is attainable by all who earnestly immerse themselves in the life of prayer and is essential to interpreting sacred Scripture.