

2 Chronicles 6: 1, 2

J. G. Bellett.

Article 28 of 47 **Short Meditations**

(Cavenagh, 1866.)

It was no common moment in the experience of a man of God, when Solomon uttered these words, "The Lord hath said that He would dwell in the thick darkness; but I have built an house of habitation for Thee, and a place. for Thy dwelling for ever."

A wondrous thought it was, that anything done or erected on the face of this defiled earth, in the midst of this revolted world, should solicit the God of glory forth from that distance into which sin had forced Him, as I may express it. For sin had estranged Him from this scene of His creation. Immeasurable distance, impenetrable darkness, lay between Him and the world that had rebelled — and wondrous, surely, was the thought, the consciousness of this, that He had been brought back to have His tabernacle with man again.

But so it is; and so the spirit of Solomon was given to taste it and know it on this great occasion.

It was a passing, a momentary anticipation of *the Kingdom*. Solomon was then in the combined glories of King and Priest. He was as a priest upon the throne. The ordinary priests had been set aside, and he, as the royal Priest, was about to bless the people, and worship the Lord, as in the days of the Kingdom that is still before us.

For so will it be then. The tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with them. The Glory will then be returned to the earth.

But this coming forth from the thick darkness, or the infinite distance, to which sin had separated God, is known in another way. In spirit, we are called to walk in the full, cloudless light of the Divine presence now — in *circumstances*, we shall do so, in the Kingdom by-and-by.

He is now brought back from this distance, or out of the darkness into which sin had forced Him, by the Gospel, which is His own provision for a sinner. And our faith in that provision brings Him back. — His grace has thrown up a highway whereby He can come to us — and when faith uses that way, He comes very near to us, finds His place, His habitation, His home with us again. "We have known and believed the love that God has to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John 4: 16)

But there is another darkness in which God still dwells. I mean that which broods or settles over the whole scene around us of circumstances or of providence. In that place, God works unseen; at least, commonly so. In that place He says, as I may express it, "What I do thou knowest not now "and we must still walk by faith, where God still dwells in darkness. We shall know hereafter. We shall see face to face then, though now it be but darkly. "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain." And as faith in His provisions of grace in Christ now draws Him forth from the distant darkness in which He had righteously hid Himself away from sinners, so by-and-by, the Glory will bring Him forth from the darkness in which He now orders providence for His saints. "There shall be no night there;" as now in *spirit*, though not in *circumstances*, we say, "The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth." (1 John 2: 8; Rev. 22: 5)