

other hand, neither is it all gloom and sorrow: there is light amidst the darkness. Job for a time enjoyed much prosperity and peace; and it was an affecting view he took of it afterwards, when he said, "Oh that I were as in months that are past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head; and when by his light I walked through darkness." The dispensations of providence with which he was visited were very gloomy and dark, so that he was brought to exclaim, "He hath brought me into darkness and not into light." All was obscurity: he could not see why God had so grievously afflicted him, nor could he see any prospect of an end to his afflictions; all was shrouded in mystery. Sorrows and suffering abounded towards him—yet light was sown for him, it sprang up and bare fruit even in this dark world: gladness and peace once more took possession of his heart; and such was his subsequent prosperity that it exceeded all he had known before.

Is it darkness with any of the Lord's people present? Are his dealings mysterious? Are their state and prospects full of gloom and obscurity? Child of sorrow, strive to bow with submission to the will of your Heavenly Father.

"Whate'er thy lot, whoe'er thou be,
Bow to affliction; kiss the rod:
And in thy circling sorrows, see
The hand of God."

"The bruised reed he'll never break;
Affliction all his children feel:
He wounds thee for his mercy's sake,
He wounds to heal."

Let patience have her perfect work."—
"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." "Why art thou cast down oh my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me?" "Hope in God, for thou shalt yet praise him who is the health of thy countenance." "At evening time it shall be light." Yes, then, when you are expecting the darkness to increase—when the sun of enjoyment seems to have set for ever,—then, "at eventime it shall be light." "Who is among you that feareth the Lord and obeyeth his servant: that walketh in darkness and hath no light; let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." "Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness."

There are also spiritual and eternal lights, with their opposite states of darkness.—
"With thee is the fountain of life," said the sacred writer, and "in thy light shall we see light." While we are in the darkness of natural corruption and alienation from God, we know nothing aright, nothing of the evils of sin, nothing of the astonishing love of Jesus, we have no just conceptions of the amazing and stupendous work of redemption, or of the work of the Holy Spirit upon the soul of man. But when infinite compassion Jehovah enlightens the understanding and touches the heart, we see and feel the reality and vast importance of eternal things—we see at what an awful distance sin has placed us from a God of spotless purity—we feel how deeply we are steeped in the poison and pollution of iniquity—we adore the infinite wisdom manifested in the plan of redemption, that stupendous plan, which while it redeems, pardons and sanctifies the sinner: satisfies also the high claims of divine justice, magnifies the divine perfections, and brings "Glory to God in the highest." Some of us, we trust, have been made partakers of this spiritual light; it has shewn to us our need of salvation and of sanctification, it has revealed to us the Redeemer—his suitability to our soul's need, the preciousness of his blood, the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, and the utter worthlessness of any remedy but this for the woes of a sin-stained world.

Permit us to ask each of you, has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon your soul? If so, his bright beams have chased away the night of sin, of error, of rebellion, and of unbelief. "Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

Need we inform you what spiritual darkness is? Alas! it is to be feared that in most assemblies there are some who are living in darkness, with souls dead to the experimental knowledge and enjoyment of spiritual things; and a state of death is a state of darkness—we say dead to all *experience* and *enjoyment* of spiritual things, because there may be a theoretic