

yet, brethren, this is your marvellous heritage—the awful attribute of your future being. In every bosom here present, there lives and beats the pulse of immortality! Ah! how sad to think of the many who are living as if this earth were their all,—who are virtually indulging in the atheist's annihilation-dream—the sleep of death, and then all is over!—when in truth they shall then be only entering on their being—the great realities of their everlasting lifetime. In the depths of that eternity, how will the reckless squanderer of present fleeting, but golden moments, stand amazed at his own sinful expenditure!

As the knell of another departing year proclaims Time to be waning, and Eternity to be approaching, let us pause, and ponder the magnitude of the undying interests which are at stake. If immortality be indeed my birth-right, then “what is a man profited though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” *Profited!*—It is a loss the wealth of a universe could never repurchase! This world, in comparison with the myriad planets in space, has only “position, but no magnitude,”—Time, in comparison with Eternity, has existence, but no duration! What a befitting new year's prayer, when contrasting the expanse of this mighty ocean, which knows neither bottom nor shore, with the speck of existence from which it is viewed,—“Lord! make me know mine end, and the measure of my days when it is, that I may know how frail I am!”

1. Eternity is *final*.—Our present state we have spoken of as a probation-season. Eternity is *not*. Then the condition of all is fixed, and fixed for ever! The rebel angels' probation state is now over. They, too, had their time of trial, just as we. But the ordeal with them is finished. Their sentence is pronounced—their doom is sealed,—and soon it will be the same with us. Ah! how many indulge the thought of some indefinite exercise of mercy at last, that God will break the trance of this eternity by some new manifestation of grace to those who neglect salvation *now*! Vain delusion! as death leaves us, so will judgment and eternity find us! “As the tree falleth so it must lie!” The Bible announces the two great immutable principles which are to regulate God's procedure with reference to the future,—“Say to the righteous it shall be well with *him*,”—“Say to the wicked it shall be ill with *him*.” And again, “He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.” Yes! solemn thought! the rewards of the future will be regulated according to the transactions of the present; thus, every moment of time is replete with the grandeur of eternity!

Brethren, each of us here is embarked in a great mission for God. Each of us has a great work to perform. For the performance of that work, we have assigned to us a limited time; and truly, that time, even when

most extended, is short enough for the great matter on hand. Let each ask, How far is the work advanced? is it begun? is it progressing? Can it be, that not a stone of the building has yet been laid—that not a nail has yet been fastened in the ark, and that too when the sky is lowering, and the clouds gathering, and the deluge rising? Every hour, as it wings its flight nearer Eternity, is lessening your means of escape, and fearfully increasing your danger of destruction. How can we continue to utter the prayer, “We bless thee for life, and breath, and all things,” if these be but the harbingers of woe? Creation, brethren, is an awful gift; misimprove it, and what God gave us for a *blessing*, we turn it into a *curse*!

Time is again tolling its solemn funeral bell over the grave of the past year. Are we to drown its warning tones, and mock its solemn peals with godless unconcern, and ill-timed merriment? These tones may overtake us again at a time when we cannot so easily dismiss their solemnity—when they shall ring in our ears, “Too late! too late!”

My friend, do not put away the all-important inquiry a new year forces upon thee. We have been now considering Two Momentous Words. Let us graft upon these two momentous questions:—Is *Time*, with thee, redeemed or unredeemed? Is *Eternity*, with thee, provided or unprovided for? *Time* and *Eternity* combine this day in pressing these upon thee. Two heralds, of old, were wont to precede our own monarchs from city to city, demanding, with the blast of a trumpet, the surrender of its keys. The great King seeks an audience of you this day. The two words of our text are meeting at the gates of your heart, and trumpet-tongued demand,—“Lift up your heads, O ye gates! that the King of glory may enter in!” “It is high time to awake out of sleep, for now is your salvation nearer than when ye believed!”

Let the *aged* listen to the summons! There are many now standing on the verge of existence, who can look back to a lengthened pilgrimage. We call upon you, so long as bodily strength and mental energy last, to “redeem the time!” Who can tell how soon the hour may come (this year may bring it) when the tottering step and feeble frame will no longer bear you to the Sanctuary—when memory will become beclouded, the faculties benumbed, and the decay of nature proclaim, that the “earthly tabernacle is speedily to be dissolved!”

Let the *middle aged* listen to the summons! Let them lay up in store for coming age, (if old age be granted.) Let them give to God the best of their strength, and the best of their days, and not mock Him as many do with the mere dregs of existence!

Let the *young* listen to the summons! Let them know by happy experience, that the present time is the “accepted time;” and that early “seeking” is the best security for