

circumstances into consideration, and the text comes home to us with a solemn force and meaning,—“This I say, brethren, the time is short.”

Thirdly. The time, the brief time of our existence on earth, is short, if compared with many objects around us. The works of art, the ancient castles, the venerable cathedrals, built by hands long since mouldered into dust—still survive! The Pyramids of Egypt, half as old as the world itself, still exist! The same sun which shone on Adam, shines on us! The same stars which glittered in Eden, still spangle the skies! Yea, even our own houses outlast us; and many a hand which cut the trees, and raised the timbers which shelter some of us, is long since still in the grave; and many of these buildings, frail as they are, will still outlast us, and be occupied by other tenants, while we occupy a narrow coffin and a gloomy grave.

Fourthly. The time is short with reference to the great and infinitely important work we all have to do. Yes, brethren, I repeat it,—viewed in this connexion it is fearfully short. For why were we sent into this world? Was it merely to eat, and to drink, and sleep, and build, and plant, and amuse ourselves, and toil, and suffer, and die? Oh no! life is not ended here!—our existence is not confined to, or limited with these particulars; there is not one of us, who is not born to spend a long eternity, either in inconceivable blessedness in heaven; or in tremendous misery and punishment in hell; and the few brief years—or days, bestowed upon us now, are given us to secure the former, and to escape the latter; To work out our own salvation; To lay hold on eternal life; To obtain the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus; a mansion in the skies; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.