

**A FAREWELL SERMON PREACHED TO
A COAL-MINING CONGREGATION AT
CLANDOWN CHURCH,
SOMERSETSHIRE, ON THE AFTERNOON
OF SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1858**

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A Farewell Sermon Preached to a Coal-Mining Congregation at Clandown Church,
Somersetshire, on the Afternoon of Sunday, January 31, 1858 by Thomas Troughton

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THOMAS TROUGHTON

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Farewell Sermon

PREACHED TO A

COAL-MINING CONGREGATION

AT

CLANDOWN CHURCH, SOMERSETSHIRE,

ON THE

AFTERNOON OF SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1858.

BY THE REV.

THOMAS TROUGHTON, M.A.

LATE INCUMBENT.

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TO THE
INHABITANTS OF CLANDOWN.

MY FELLOW CHRISTIANS,

In the following pages, I give you, with much pleasure, the Discourse which most of you recently heard from my lips.

Many passages in them were not preached: the delivery of all would have detained you too long. Possessing a printed copy of these my parting exhortations, you will be able to consider them, and to compare them with the Bible, at leisure.

They were hastily put together by me, when unfitted for any exertion of mind by the indisposition which has compelled me to resign a beloved charge; and therefore cannot be expected

to satisfy a critical reader. With a blessing from on high, they may, notwithstanding, prove useful *to you*.

Written with the design of being addressed to you, they are applicable to yourselves in particular.

Accept them as a memento of one who, though absent in body, will often be present in spirit with you.

Farewell for Time. That we may all meet in a perfectly holy and happy Eternity, is the prayer and hope of

YOUR LATE PASTOR.

Bath, 1858.

1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

“BUT THIS I SAY, BRETHREN, THE TIME IS SHORT: IT REMAINETH, THAT BOTH THEY THAT HAVE WIVES, BE AS THOUGH THEY HAD NONE; AND THEY THAT WEEP, AS THOUGH THEY WEPT NOT; AND THEY THAT REJOICE, AS THOUGH THEY REJOICED NOT; AND THEY THAT BUY, AS THOUGH THEY POSSESSED NOT; AND THEY THAT USE THIS WORLD, AS NOT ABUSING IT; FOR THE FASHION OF THIS WORLD PASSETH AWAY.”

SHORT, indeed, my friends, does the time appear, which has elapsed since the day when I mounted the steps of this pulpit for the first time, and addressed you upon the following passage, taken from the second chapter of the prophet Malachi:—
“The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity. For the priest’s lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of

Hosts."¹ That sermon I uttered on the afternoon of October 24, 1852. Since that occasion more than five years have passed over each of your heads and mine: we are respectively more than five years older, and nearer to the grave. This period, during which we have known each other as minister and people, appears short indeed to look back upon. Trifling may be the incidents with which it has been occupied by you and me, in the eyes of the world; but *none* of them trifling as regards *ourselves*; seeing that not a word have we exchanged, not a thought have we, directly or indirectly, suggested in each other's breast, which shall not one day be adduced in the presence of an assembled universe, and tell for or against us. And who can calculate how many are the thoughts to which, during this period, we have mutually given rise, and for which we are more or less accountable? Perhaps some one inwardly objects, that a very insignificant proportion of our respective thoughts has been so occasioned in any degree. Be it so: the fact remains, nevertheless, that during every waking hour you and I have been thinking, often vaguely enough, but still thinking, about something; every waking moment a thought of some

¹ Mal. ii. 6, 7.

kind has been passing through our minds ; and also during a great part of each of the one thousand nine hundred and twenty-five days, which have passed since the commencement of my ministry, words have been, more or less, continually proceeding from our lips ; and we know, on authority which we profess implicitly to believe, that every such word, every such momentary thought, every most transient flash of our imagination, instantaneously forgotten by us, is not forgotten elsewhere, and (unless cancelled by our possessing a saving interest in Christ) has its future penalty annexed : it has served in its measure to aggravate our condemnation, and of it we shall in these very bodies immortalised, be experiencing the dismal consequences, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of years after our death ; yea, when this world and all that it contains, shall have been burned up— a fact, solemn when pondered by the best ; reasonably alarming to some, who unwisely choose, ostrich-like, to hide it from themselves ; a fact, nevertheless, which we see can be treated with defiant unconcern by the vast majority of those who profess to believe it : I say *profess*, for they do not, they cannot, believe in truth ; they cannot believe it in any such sense as they believe things relating to this

world only, and still be quite uninfluenced in one way or another. Oh! the power of the prince of darkness, even in privileged England—the modern Israel—despite all our pulpits, all our societies, all our schools, our legally-protected Sabbath, our cheap, and unadulterated, and open Bible!

What effects, then, ought the knowledge of our so stringent accountableness to produce in us? Surely unceasing circumspection, deep prayerfulness, and frequent self-investigation. The thorough sifting of our inner and outer conduct, may well be made a stated business of every day we are permitted to breathe. The leisure of each returning Sabbath should, in part, be devoted to a further sifting of the preceding week. The anniversary of our birthday, or the commencement of a new year, when we are just passing, as it were, another milestone in the journey of life, should be made a special season for a most comprehensive discharge of this great duty. Nay, if resolved with all our soul, by God's help, to be saved, we shall gladly avail ourselves of other and extraordinary occasions to consider our ways. A change of pastors undoubtedly constitutes one of such occasions. In what measure, then, and in what manner, have you and I respectively been influenced during