**An “Expiration Date”**

Jarrod Jacobs

 Much of what we purchase has an “expiration date” somewhere on the item, or its package. For example, food products often come with an “expiration date” somewhere on them. Medicines sometimes have “expiration dates” on them as well. Folks with contact lenses may have noticed that their contacts have an “expiration date” somewhere on the box. Certainly, there are many other products with such dates attached to them.

 Even if we cannot see an “expiration date” somewhere, we recognize that things expire. Cars eventually wear out, as do houses, animals, and even our own bodies! Eventually, things wear out, break down, and expire on this earth. This is the way of things. The book of Ecclesiastes speaks of this truth in great detail. In fact, the world itself has an “expiration date”. This is because this world has only a limited amount of time in which to exist. There will be a day when this world ceases. No, matter is not eternal as some say. Only that which is spiritual is eternal (II Cor. 4:18)! This earth will one day be gone. We just do not know the “expiration date” (Matt. 24:36, 44, 25:13)!

 The Bible tells us that this world will end. Hebrews 1:10-12 describes the end of the world in this manner: “And, You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.” Notice how the Hebrew writer describes the end of the world. It will “wear out like a garment”! Yes, just as our clothes “expire” and are worn out and are unusable, so also this earth will one day be worn out and completed!

 As we said, this “expiration date” is unknown to us. Yet, we know it will happen one day. If we live to see the end of the world, then may we be prepared for its end, for this is the time when the Lord will return to claim His own (I Thess. 4:13-17), and to exact vengeance on those who do not know God, nor obey His gospel (II Thess. 1:7). This world will end in fire (II Pet. 3:10).

 Yet, if we “expire” before the earth does, we need to still be ready. You see, every one of us has an “expiration date” as well. We just do not know when it might be! The Bible gives us a good estimate in Psalm 90:10-12 in speaking about the 70-80 years of man on this earth. However, we know this is an average, for there are folks who live beyond 80, and there are folks who die before they reach 70. Let us “number our days”. Let us make the best use of our time on earth (Eph. 5:16).

 How do we make the best use of our limited time? We do this by becoming a Christian (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38, 11:26). Let us focus on what is ahead and not be focused on the “here and now”. This world is passing away (II Jn. 2:17). It is expiring, and with it everything else related to this world. Therefore, let us take spiritual inventory and make sure we’re prepared for our “expiration”, whenever it may come (Prov. 27:1)!

 *-- Jarrod Jacobs preaches with the Caneyville church of Christ in Caneyville, KY. He can be reached at (270) 589-4167.*