

Is your time running out?

You are not alone in your anxiety regarding unredeemed time. In fact it was Archimedes who first coined the expression, 'Your time is running out'. Archimedes (c. 287-212 B.C.) was a mathematician and inventor who developed the clepsydra, a chronometer that measures time by the gradual flow of water.

The clepsydra was an earthen vessel from which water was allowed to escape from a small hole at the base into a reservoir vessel beneath. It was very useful for measuring time for debates in the senate, and in legal arguments in court rooms. When the debate or argument commenced the clepsydra was filled to the brim. When the water had almost emptied from the vessel a clerk of court would utter, "Your time is running out"; then the arguments would be summarised and concluded, and other parties could then contribute for their appointed time.

The continuance of all life is uncertain and unpredictable, so time is our most precious possession. The need to use it wisely is stated by the psalmist: "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (90:12). The fixed duration of time limits our opportunity, therefore we have to exchange the profitless way of the world for spiritually profitable activity (Eph. 5:15-17; Col. 4:5). Solomon in his Proverbs declared: "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (27:1). As Brother Robert Roberts once wrote: "Our time is only once—and never returns. So let us make the best of it while we have it. How to make the best of it? That is the question on which so many make shipwreck" (cited in *Logos*, Apr. 2002, p. 245).

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