

“THE HIGH COST OF REDEMPTION”

Psalm 49:1-12

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INTRODUCTION

So you think you can save yourself? You think that your good works, your sincerity, your keeping of commandments, your religious efforts, your baptism, your observing the holy communion, or your charitable contributions can earn God’s favor?

Or, worse yet, do you think that you can buy your way out of the power of death and into Heaven?

There were people in the days of the psalmist who believed the same thing; there have always been people who have thought that they can contribute toward their salvation. They must somehow deserve God’s favor, and by their own efforts they can win out over the power of death-- both physical and eternal!

God tells us that we cannot.

You cannot redeem yourself for deliver yourself from the power of death – the cost is too high!

- I. THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS SUBJECT (1-4)
 - A. The address to the entire world and its inhabitants (1)
 - B. The Address to all classes of people (2)
 1. “Man” in his weakness—*Adam*—and in his strength—*ish* (and every shade in between).
 2. Rich and poor (and even shade in between)
 - C. The Topic is profound (3)
 1. Wisdoms—plural of amplification—**the highest and most important kind.**
 2. Understandings—plural of amplification—**the highest and most important kind.**
 3. Such comes not only from my mouth, but also from the meditation of my heart.
 - D. The source is not human
 1. I “incline my ear”—I get this from God Himself! **This statement shows the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.**
 2. The words are Proverbs—wise comparisons stating truth about human circumstances from the divine perspective.
 3. The words are the “opening up”—solving, explaining—of life’s most significant **riddles.**
- II. THE REASON WE NEED NOT FEAR POWERFUL AND RICH OPPONENTS (5-9)

Why should I fear? is the question he answers in the following passage.

 - A. The troubled times (5)
 1. **Evil** days—trouble and adversity and moral evil
 2. The Believer surrounded by **iniquity**—that which goes astray from God’s true path.
 3. The foes are those who would supplant like Jacob of old; “those who would take insidious advantage of me.”
 - B. The Trust in Wealth (6)
 1. “In **gold** is their trust”

2. Their “boast”—same word meaning **praise**—is in the abundance of their riches; they have so much that they can do whatever they want!
- C. The Tragedy of their trust (7-9)
1. There is no way possible—very emphatic construction!—that a man can redeem his *brother*—emphatic in position. (7)
 2. He cannot cover over, make propitiation to God for another—his “ransom price.”
 3. The ransom price of a person (soul) is **COSTLY**.
 4. He must cease trying forever—HE CAN NEVER DO IT!
 5. He cannot live on forever; **he will see the Pit—Sheol—the place of death and ruin**. He can do absolutely nothing to prevent that from happening!

IF THE RICH AND POWERFUL HAVE NO WAY TO SAVE/REDEEM THEMSELVES OR OTHERS, WHO ELSE CAN DO SO? Remember Jesus’ statement to His disciples—easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven. Disciples’ question: **Then, who can be saved?**

III. THE ULTIMATE FUTILITY OF WORLDLY MEN—WHO ARE LIKE THE BEASTS THAT PERISH (10-12)

- A. All men perish /die and in the process leave their wealth to others!
1. The *stupid* (mentally and spiritually “thick, plump, fat”) and *senseless* (“brutish”—dumb as the beasts)
 2. Even the worldly “wise”—the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God (I Cor. 1:18-31).
- B. Rich and Successful men act and think like they will live forever (11)

Their inner thoughts are

- Houses are forever
 - Dwelling places from generation to generation
 - They name their lands after themselves—as if by doing so they won’t have to relinquish them!
- C. Man in his Honor (“pomp and circumstance”) has no advantage
1. He will not endure—even as an overnight lodger, temporarily.
 2. He has no advantage over the “beasts that perish”
 - He is lost.
 - He is hopeless.
 - He loses everything.
 - He can take nothing with himself.

CONCLUSION

How high is the cost of redemption? See I Peter 1:18-19.

The price of payment for sin is beyond the power of any human being; only God Himself could pay it.

God sent His only Son to pay the price!

How bad is sin? Bad enough to crucify Jesus Christ—the Holy and harmless Son of God.

You do grave insult to God if you think you can save/redeem/ransom yourself.

John 3:16-17; Titus 3:5-7