

PSALM 49

Here is a psalm exposing the folly of those who place their confidence in power or wealth. Neither of these can ransom a man's soul from the penalty of sin or his body from the grave. The man who lives in outward honor and yet lacks true wisdom to know himself and God, may be said to live as a beast that perishes. Let us be diligent in preparing for eternity. Let us not set our affections on earthly things but use them as entrusted to us by the great Lord of all. And let us work the works of God while it is day, seeing that the night comes when no man can work.

For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

- 1 Hear this, all peoples; Give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
- 2 Both low and high, rich and poor together.
- 3 My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart *will be* understanding.
- 4 I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will express my riddle on the harp.

- 5 Why should I fear in days of adversity, when the iniquity of my foes surrounds me,
- 6 even those who trust in their wealth and boast in the abundance of their riches?
- 7 No man can by any means redeem *his* brother or give to God a ransom for him—
- 8 For the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease *trying* forever—
- 9 That he should live on eternally, that he should not undergo decay.

- 10 For he sees *that even* wise men die; the stupid and the senseless alike perish
and leave their wealth to others.
- 11 Their inner thought is *that* their houses are forever
and their dwelling places to all generations;
They have called their lands after their own names.
- 12 But man in *his* pomp will not endure; He is like the beasts that perish.

- 13 This is the way of those who are foolish,
And of those after them who approve their words. Selah.
- 14 As sheep they are appointed for Sheol; death shall be their shepherd;
and the upright shall rule over them in the morning,
and their form shall be for Sheol to consume so that they have no habitation.
- 15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me. Selah

- 16 Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased;
- 17 For when he dies he will carry nothing away; his glory will not descend after him.
- 18 Though while he lives he congratulates himself—
and though *men* praise you when you do well for yourself—
- 19 he shall go to the generation of his fathers; they will never see the light.

20 Man in his pomp, yet without understanding, is like the beasts that perish.

PRAYER

O God, out of your infinite love toward mankind you sent your only Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Through him you have opened the gates of everlasting life. Make us, we beseech you, devoutly thankful for all the mercies of redemption. Make us careful in the use of the good things which your bounteous providence has supplied in this world. Let us use them with temperance and moderation, for such is our responsibility. Enable us to resist temptations and to walk circumspectly, not as foolish men but as wise, redeeming the time. Keep us steadfast in faith, immoveable in hope, and abounding in love for your word, so that we may pass through things temporal and fail not to obtain the things eternal, which have been provided to us through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.