

Leader's Notes
Week of February 28, 2010

Psalm 49

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 Hear this, all you peoples;
listen, all who live in this world,
2 both low and high,
rich and poor alike:

These verses are used as an utterance for **all** to listen; that is, this isn't for a particular class of people, but for all "who live in this world"

3 My mouth will speak words of wisdom;
the utterance from my heart will give understanding.
4 I will turn my ear to a proverb;
with the harp I will expound my riddle:

This Psalm is directing as a proverb for it is calling the believer to follow the author as he/she turns to wisdom.

5 Why should I fear when evil days come,
when wicked deceivers surround me
6 those who trust in their wealth
and boast of their great riches?

This Psalm is ridiculing the "wicked...who trust in their wealth" because the author sees this fake-sense of trust as their downfall.

7 No man can redeem the life of another
or give to God a ransom for him-
8 the ransom for a life is costly,
no payment is ever enough

This articulates that life is worth more than any person can pay. No amount of wealth can pay for the price of life.

9 that he should live on forever
and not see decay.
10 For all can see that wise men die;
the foolish and the senseless alike perish
and leave their wealth to others.
11 Their tombs will remain their houses [a] forever,
their dwellings for endless generations,
though they had [b] named lands after themselves.

Death is inevitable. Following one's death, everything we own gets passed to another. Thus, for those who trust and brag about what they have, they will all lose in their own games because everything they won will just go to another in the end. Their eternal house will be their tomb.

12 But man, despite his riches, does not endure;
he is [c] like the beasts that perish.

13 This is the fate of those who trust in themselves,
and of their followers, who approve their sayings.
Selah

14 Like sheep they are destined for the grave, [d]
and death will feed on them.
The upright will rule over them in the morning;
their forms will decay in the grave, [e]
far from their princely mansions.

With that said, the author is warning people to not chase after riches.

15 But God will redeem my life [f] from the grave;
he will surely take me to himself.

It is not riches, but God who redeems one's life. No man can pay for life, but God can give it.

16 Do not be overawed when a man grows rich,
when the splendor of his house increases;
17 for he will take nothing with him when he dies,
his splendor will not descend with him.
18 Though while he lived he counted himself blessed—
and men praise you when you prosper—
19 he will join the generation of his fathers,
who will never see the light of life .
20 A man who has riches without understanding
is like the beasts that perish.

Thus, the author concludes it is useless to trust in riches, for it will not save anyone.

The Psalm charts a logical path to lead one to distrust in riches. This Psalm, if exegeting carefully, will lead one to understand the act of "not trusting in riches" as an act of worship; for, it depicts two things one can trust in: the world, and God. If man trusts in the world, he will plant his home in a tomb, but if man trusts in God then he will be "redeemed." At the end, an individual is left with a decision in what to trust. If he trusts riches, he forsakes God; if he trusts God, he forsakes riches. In essence, an ultimatum is presented. If one forsakes riches and trusts God, one is worshiping God by putting his/her one's own hope not in what they can accomplish, but in their submission to God. In this way, we worship God by hopping for his redemption.

Jim:

Excerpts from the textual abstract:

III. A. 4. "a generous response as an act of worship"

IV. A. "Not talking about our addiction to money is like not talking about a relative's addiction to alcohol. The whole family falls apart while everyone looks away."

VII. B. "Sometimes we say that we believe in God,
but then we live like he's not there. We lose perspective even of the things we say we believe in."

D. 5. "If you believe in God, you don't spend your life chasing money. If you spend your life chasing money, you probably don't believe in God."

In a world without God...

Money is all that we have to hold on to, so we better hold on to it.

X. F. "But for we who believe, give if you need a reality check. Give because you can't take it with you."

General Plot:

If we believe in God, we have no reason to trust in worldly possessions, so that we are left with the act of trusting God. When we hold tight to our possessions and expect them to satisfy us then we are not living as if we believe in God, but living as an atheist.

Thus, as an act of worship and demonstration that we believe in God, we should forsake our possession, by not holding on to them tightly, and instead trust in God's word, that is his promise, alone.

Lisa (Psalm 19):

Tithing as worship: The act of giving becomes an act of worship. Lisa understands "her check book" to be the "Lord's." In this way, she worships God by submitting what she owns to Him, and she gives all that she has to Him. In order to physically do this, she makes a well practiced habit of tithing. Thus, to her, tithing becomes an act of worship, for it demonstrates her belief that all she owns belongs to God.

