

Psalm 49 (ESV)

Why Should I Fear in Times of Trouble?

49 TO THE CHOIRMASTER. 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 shall speak wisdom;

the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

⁴ I will incline my ear to a proverb;

I will solve my riddle to the music of the lyre.

⁵ Why should I fear in times of trouble,

when the iniquity of those who cheat me surrounds me,

⁶ those who trust in their wealth

and boast of the abundance of their riches?

⁷ Truly no man can ransom another,

or give to God the price of his life,

⁸ for the ransom of their life is costly

and can **never** suffice,

⁹ that he should live on forever

and never see the pit.

¹⁰ For he sees that even the wise die;

the fool and the stupid alike must perish

and leave their wealth to others.

¹¹ Their graves are their homes forever,

their dwelling places to all generations,

though they called lands by their own names.

¹² Man in his pomp will not remain;

he is like the beasts that perish.

¹³ This is the path of those who have foolish confidence;

yet after them people approve of their boasts. *Selah*

- 14** Like sheep they are appointed for Sheol;
death shall be their shepherd,
and the upright shall rule over them in the morning.
Their form shall be consumed in Sheol, with no place to
dwell.
- 15** But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me. *Selah*
- 16** Be not afraid when a man becomes rich,
when the glory of his house increases.
- 17** For when he dies he will carry nothing away;
his glory will not go down after him.
- 18** For though, while he lives, he counts himself blessed
—and though you get praise when you do well for
yourself—
- 19** his soul will go to the generation of his fathers,
who will never again see light.
- 20** Man in his pomp yet without understanding is like the
beasts that perish.

What wise words...

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

Do you know what that means? “Self-confidence – no matter
what it’s based on – if it’s based on strength; or wealth; or
inheritance; or position; or power... **Self-confidence** –
ends in death...

- 19** his soul will go to the generation of his fathers,
who will never again see light.

And the Sons of Korah – who put a proverb to music, understood this very well... No matter what we manage to accumulate in this life, as far as God's concerned, it's never enough to pay the ransom for a soul.

*In our world today, kidnap and ransom, has become big business. And you can see the threat of Kidnap and Ransom on that map there. And businesses pay big money to insure their staff working in the Red zones... And what is the cost of ransom? Well, basically it depends upon the ability of the person to pay – 10's of thousands; 100's of thousands; Millions... When a family is desperate, they'll pay whatever they **have**, to get their loved one back...*

But when it comes to death, there is **no** ransom that **anyone** can pay...

No matter how well off we are – no matter what our resources, those who have foolish confidence - even though other people look up to them – they're still destined to what the Hebrews called "Sheol" – the land of the dead...

But the Sons of Korah, also understood this:

**¹⁵ But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol,
for he will receive me. Selah**

Alright, so if no man can ransom another – if there's no price we can pay to God, for life,,,, Where does the ransom come from? Well, God pays the ransom Himself...

The Lord Jesus Christ, said this:

Mark 10:⁴⁵ **For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."**

And that's what Good Friday is all about. Jesus Christ died – He gave His own life – as a ransom for many.

Often, when someone dies, those who admire them, want to leave some kind of legacy for them (or they might organise their own legacy)...

- *A plaque somewhere that someone can read*
- *Maybe a street named in their honour – or if you're really rich, a hospital wing named in your honour*
- *Maybe songs will be sung to remember them; or*
- *A foundation set up in their name....*

But V17 says:

¹⁷ For when he dies he will carry nothing away;
his glory will **not** go down after him.

¹⁸ For though, while he lives, he counts himself
blessed

—and though you get praise when you do well for yourself—

¹⁹ his soul will go to the generation of his fathers, who will never again see light.

That, is the lot of whoever dies, without understanding.

The message today's really short and really simple:

Understand. Be a man (or a woman) of understanding. Be a boy (or a girl) of understanding.

Understand this – the Lord Jesus Christ died – He gave His life as a ransom for you.

And whoever is believing in Him, and whoever is trusting in Him,
shall have life.

Amen.