

Psalm 49:1-20

What is the greatest problem of life?

Psalm 49:12 "Man in his pomp will not remain, he is like the beasts that perish."

The ultimate problem of life is NOT a lack of health or wealth or liberty or happiness but that for each one of us, life comes to an end and we must face death.

Summary

Psalm 49 is a wisdom psalm, in which the author cries out to all the inhabitants of the earth to receive the instruction of God, which gives the ultimate answers to the fundamental issues of life.

1. Futile Riches vv. 5-9

The first piece of heavenly wisdom in Psalm 49 is that money is unable to preserve us from the great problem of death.

The psalmist soberly points out the futility of trying to buy our way out of death (**Psalm 49:7-9**).

2. Certain Death vv. 10-12

The psalmist turns next to the universal inevitability of death.

Whether we are prepared or not all "alike must perish" (**Psalm 49:10**).

Not only will riches not save us from death, but when we die, we also leave all our riches to others. The psalmist highlights the folly of seeking eternal glory in a world that they will soon be leaving (**Psalm 49:11**).

3. Great Contrast vv. 13-15

Everyone is exactly the same with respect to death, except for the decisive difference between the "foolish and the upright."

The difference is that for those who are prepared for death, there is redemption, even though it is something that money and riches cannot buy.

First, the psalmist presents the dismal end of those who trusted in riches or other worldly hopes (**Psalm 49:13-14**).

Secondly, the psalmist speaks of those who escape death's darkness into light (**Psalm 49:14-15**).

The key to facing death without fear is to commit your soul into the hands of God in the name of Jesus Christ.

4. Fearless Faith vv. 16-20

Having understood how to face death, the remaining verses of this psalm instructs believers how to live.

Once we have learned life's greatest problem, and its answer, we learn that the key to life is no longer to fear man but instead to trust God (**Ps. 49:16-17**).

Having understood death and eternity, the Christian understands life and is freed to face its reality without envy or fear.

What a tragedy it is for someone to live without this understanding of death (**Psalm 49:20**).

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life," (**John 11:25**).

He then asked, "Do you believe this?" (**John 11:26**).

If you do believe, committing your salvation into his hands, you may say for yourself the words of **Psalm 49:15**: "God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me."