



## Psalm 49

A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

- Psalm 49 is a wisdom Psalm concerning riches.
- The Psalm addresses “all peoples” with a theme of common interest to all humanity
- The Psalmist affirms confidence in God in the face of the apparent good fortune of the unjust rich.

I. A Solemn invitation to listen (Psa. 49:1-4)

- The Psalmist summons “all peoples” to listen.
- The psalmist will teach what God revealed to him. He will *speak* what he *heard*. The words for wisdom and understanding (insight) are in the plural.

- *Wisdom*

Life was viewed in a simple manner -the person who followed the path of wisdom would prosper, while the person who ignored wisdom would fail. The first was wise; the second was the fool -there was no middle ground.

- *Understanding* (insight)
- *Proverb, Parable* (theme)-primarily means a comparison.
- *Riddle* (lesson) – an enigma

II. A Good Question: “Why Should I Fear in Days of Adversity?” (Psa. 49:5-6).

The Problem: Why do the ungodly prosper? “The prosperity of the godless was one of the great “enigmas of life to the pious Israelite, demanding a solution which could only be partially given before the fuller revelation of Christ” (Kirkpatrick).

The injustice of his wealthy neighbors, dogs the psalmist’s footsteps and threatens to trip him up.

A Wise Answer: (Psalm 49:7-20)

- Riches cannot redeem the soul (Psa. 49:7-9). In certain cases, according to various texts, a human might take a ransom to redeem a person from a capital offense (see Exo. 21:30; Prov. 6:35); but even the great wealth of the rich cannot buy them eternal life from God.
- The Ungodly Rich cannot Escape Death (Psa. 49:10-20)
  - death is universal
  - their fate is like that of the beasts (see Psa. 49:12, 20).
  - despite their riches ungodly people will not endure (Psa. 49:10-14)
  - but God will redeem the soul of the psalmist from the Sheol (Psa. 49:15; see Psa. 49:8)
  - The rich cannot take their wealth to their graves (Psa. 49:16-

IV. Read *The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus* in Luke 16:19-31; and *The Parable of the Rich Fool* in Luke 12:13-21.