

THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND

BIBLE TEXT : Psalm 49:1-20

LESSON 471 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious...)" (Psalm 49:7, 8).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Psalm 49:1-20

1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

Hear this, all *ye* people; give ear, all *ye* inhabitants of the world:

2 Both low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart *shall be* of understanding.

4 I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.

5 Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, *when* the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about?

6 They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches;

7 None *of them* can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

8 (For the redemption of their soul *is* precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)

9 That he should still live for ever, *and* not see corruption.

10 For he seeth *that* wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

11 Their inward thought *is, that* their houses *shall continue* for ever, *and* their dwelling places to all generations; they call *their* lands after their own names.

12 Nevertheless man *being* in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way *is* their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah.

14 Like sheep they are laid in the

NOTES:

The Saviour of the World

The writer of this Psalm asks all people to listen to an important message. He calls the high, the low, the rich and the poor to hear what he has to say. Certainly, there is a message for boys and girls of junior age in this chapter.

Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the world and He is the theme of this lesson. "For the redemption of their soul is precious." It cost something for the way to be made so that man can have his sins forgiven and be made clean and pure in heart so he can go to Heaven someday. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

How did God give His Son? Jesus came to this earth in the form of the Babe of Bethlehem; He grew to manhood. He was shamefully treated, and crucified upon the Cross; His Blood was shed; He was laid in the grave, and the third day He arose again. He did it all willingly for the salvation, or redemption, of mankind.

The meaning of the word "redeem" is to ransom or rescue from captivity or bondage by paying a price to recover or regain. Jesus, the Great Redeemer, was the One who came to rescue and deliver man from sin and eternal death.

The Enemy

Did you ever see a "swap shop" or "hock shop"? That is a store where merchandise is pawned, or left for an amount of money, until the owner can buy it back, or in other words, "redeem" it. Often people who need money will take some of their belongings -- almost anything -- out of their house and take it to a swap shop and get cash for it. Often a traveller out of money will "hock" his suitcase, his guitar, or even some of his clothing for much needed funds to complete his journey. There is a time limit and if, before the expiration of the time, the owner of the goods has the money, he can return to the store and redeem his things.

Let us think of a sinner as such a person. He is in the "pawnshop" or clutches of Satan; he has given himself over to the enemy of his soul. In return, the devil gives him sin, condemnation and misery. He cannot be set free without paying a high price, and it is impossible for him to pay that price. Jesus Christ, through His death on Calvary, paid the price for man's redemption. Jesus has done all that is necessary to set man free from the clutches of Satan, the one who holds him in sin's bondage, and drives him on and on, doing the will of the wicked one. He even does things he does not want to do because Satan is his master.

How can a sinner get free from the devil's pawnshop? Simply by coming unto Jesus in true repentance for sin, confessing and forsaking his wicked ways, and asking for pardon. "Jesus' Blood can make the vilest sinner clean."

Riches, True and False

"They that trust in their wealth, and boast them-selves in the multitude of their riches;

"None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."

Many people believe that if they have enough wealth, they can buy anything they desire. "Money talks," they say, and it does. But the really important things in life cannot be bought with money. The

grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling.

15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. *Selah*.

16 Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased;

17 For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

18 Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and *men* will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

19 He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light.

20 Man *that is* in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts *that* perish.

wealthy cannot go to God and buy salvation; neither can they secure salvation for someone else.

Another thing that money cannot buy is health. Good health is one of the greatest blessings in life. Doctors have learned much about the human body, and sometimes helped sufferers; however, even cuts on one's finger cannot be healed by man. God has so wonderfully made the human body that the little blood vessels and the tissues, which form there will heal those little cuts and bruises. God heals sickness and disease, and He is doing it today. Many people through the prayer of faith have been instantly healed of serious diseases.

A Living Soul

Of much more importance than the body, is the soul of man. That living soul, which God breathed into man, shall "still live for ever, and not see corruption." The writer of this chapter explains that eventually wise men die just as the fool or "brutish" person, and no matter how wealthy they may be, they die and "like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; . . . and their beauty shall consume in the grave. Even the most handsome man and the most beautiful woman lose their beauty in the grave. The body goes back to dust, out of which it was formed in the beginning. It has been learned that every element found in the human body is found also in the soil.

Men of great wealth build houses and own much property The Psalmist says: "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names." Even in spite of all this wealth and great honour, when death calls, man is "like the beasts that perish." Although man's body perishes in the grave, his soul shall never die. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). The Psalmist said: "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."

Paul said, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin" (I Corinthians 15:55, 56). This teaches us that those who are prepared to meet God do not fear death; their sin has been washed away by the precious Blood of Jesus, so the "sting" and dread of death is gone.

Jesus the Conqueror

The body of Jesus was in the grave three days but it did not decay in the tomb. Many years before Jesus was born, David wrote of Jesus: "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). Jesus was the Great Conqueror of death, hell and the grave. He was the first to rise from the dead. When Jesus comes at the Rapture, all the dead in Christ shall come forth from the grave and rise to meet Him in the air.

Great Men

Men who have been considered great men of the world have had to die just as surely as the unknown person. A few whose names are still remembered for their deeds are Washington, Einstein, Rockefeller, Ford, Kreisler, Longfellow and many others such as kings and presidents. Some of their names appear on buildings, on products, which they manufactured and in literature; cities and streets are named for them. But when death calls, all the honour or wealth amounts to nothing.

Dying Words

The all-important thing is to prepare to meet God before leaving this world. Here are the words of an infidel as he was about to die: "I know the day of grace is past -- gone, gone -- never to return. God has said of such, 'I will laugh at your calamity and mock

when your fear cometh.' Oh, the hell -- the burning flame! The pain I feel! Oh eternity! Eternity! To dwell forever with devils in the burning Lake must be my portion, and that justly."

In contrast, let us read a few dying words of Christians: "The next time I sing it will be when Jesus folds me in His arms." "I am sweeping through the gates, washed in the Blood of the Lamb." "Can this be death? Why, it is better than living! Tell them I died happy in Jesus." Oh, what a difference from the death of the sinner! We read in the Bible of one man who asked that he might "die the death of the righteous," and that his "last end be like his."

The Only Hope

"For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." Some religions teach that there may be a chance to get saved after death, and some pray for the dead. But the Bible teaches, that, "where the tree falleth, there it shall be." We have the account of the rich man who died and in hell he lifted up his eyes in torment; the poor beggar died also and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. When the rich man asked that someone go to his five brothers and warn them so that they, too, would not go to that place of torment, Abraham said that there was a great gulf fixed between them. He said that it was impossible for anyone to go from one place to the other.

Oh, that men, women, boys and girls would avail themselves of the great plan of redemption, turn unto God, repent of their sin and find pardon and peace, before death calls them or before Jesus comes for His own! Then they can say with the Psalmist, "Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil?"

QUESTIONS

1. To whom is this chapter addressed?
2. What is said to those who trust in their wealth?
3. What difference is there between the death of the wise man and the fool?
4. What difference is there between men and the beasts?
5. What advantage is great wealth to one at the time of death?
6. What power does the grave have over the body? Over the soul?
7. Do you think the person who is ready to meet the Lord fears death? Why not?