

God's Advice to Mankind

"Hear this, all peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, both low and high, rich and poor together...Those who trust in their wealth and boast in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him—for the redemption of their souls is costly, and it shall cease forever—that he should continue to live eternally, and not see the Pit." (Ps. 49:1-2, 6-9)

People today preoccupy themselves with material things such as money, cars, and houses, or may pursue a successful career, seek recognition, or simply live to have fun. However, the word of God in Psalm 49 gives all the inhabitants of the earth important and wise advice. It says:

"Their inner thought is that their houses will last forever, their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names" (v. 11).

Yet all these are fleeting and will one day vanish. Can any amount of accomplishments or wealth save a man from certain death and make him live eternally? No,

"...wise men die; likewise the fool and the senseless person perish, and leave their wealth to others" (v. 10).

God's word shows very clearly that we cannot bring anything with us when we die:

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1. Tim 6:7).

Psalm 49 continues:

"Nevertheless man, though in honor, does not remain; he is like the beasts that perish. This is the way of those who are foolish, and of their posterity who approve their sayings. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them... and their beauty shall be consumed in the grave, far from their dwelling." (Ps. 49:12-14).

All we have accomplished in this world will mean nothing when we die because we will be just *"like the beasts that perish."*

Serious Consequences

Regardless of a person's wealth or status, no one can escape death. The moment we are born, we are already destined to die!

According to God's righteousness, we must die because we all have sin: *"The wages of sin is death..." (Rom. 6:23).*

What happens after death? The Bible says clearly, *"...it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment..." (Heb. 9:27).* When the Lord Jesus Christ returns,

God will execute His righteous judgment. In that day *"...anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire"* (Rev. 20:15). Is this how you would like to spend eternity? No reasonable person would want this! God does not want this for you either. He has provided a way out! The psalmist then says,

"God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me" (Ps. 49:15).

How can God redeem our soul from the power of the grave?

God's Salvation Prepared for Us through Jesus Christ

There is only One who can save us from death, from the power of the grave: Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. He *"made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of man"* (Phil. 2:7). He had *"no beauty that we should desire Him"* (Is. 53:2). In fact, He was *"despised and rejected by men"* (Is. 53:3). Out of His great love towards us and to fulfill all of God's righteous requirements, Jesus Christ was crucified, shedding His precious innocent blood for our sins on our behalf. God *"made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Cor. 5:21).

By His death on the cross He destroyed “*him who had the power of death, that is, the devil*” (Heb. 2:14). Because He was without sin, God “*raised Him up [from the dead], having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it*” (Acts 2:24). Jesus Christ conquered death and took away its power. Then He resurrected after three days! What a victory (1 Cor. 15:54)! Only Jesus Christ is able to save us from sin and death.

How Can I Be Saved?

God made it very simple for us to be saved even though what He accomplished was very profound: “*He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned*” (Mark 16:16). Romans 10:9 says, “*...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*” When you believe in Him and confess His name, the Holy Spirit enters into your spirit and gives you God’s eternal life (John 3:16). You are born again! Then when you are baptized, you enter into Jesus Christ and are joined to Him in His death and resurrection (Rom. 6:4-11). By faith in Him and baptism into Him, you enter into another realm – the kingdom of God (John 3:5) – so that you can begin to live by Him and grow in Him. Then when Jesus Christ comes

again, your name will be found in the Book of Life!

Hebrews 3:7 tells us: “*Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart.*” Do not delay! By faith, accept God’s salvation for us through Jesus Christ. Psalm 49 ends with the charge:

“Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lives he blesses himself (for men will praise you when you do well for yourself), he shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. A man who is in honor, yet does not understand, is like the beasts that perish” (v. 16-20).

What a sad and foolish end for a man, who lives yet neither understands nor receives this wonderful salvation. Do not miss out! Be wise! Believe in the risen Christ today and be baptized without delay. Then you will experience the redemption of your soul and God’s eternal life.

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(Psalms 49:1-3a)*