

Psalm 49:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

The stark limitation: 'None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him.' No amount of money can purchase exemption from death or entry to God's presence. The Hebrew padah (redeem) and kopher (ransom) are commercial terms--wealth cannot transact with mortality.

Historical Context

The concept of ransom was familiar from slave redemption and blood-money payments. But no financial transaction could satisfy death's claim or purchase standing before God.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. Why is it significant that wealth cannot 'redeem' from death?
2. What can accomplish what wealth cannot regarding our ultimate destiny?

Interlinear Text

אֲחֵךְ	לֹא	אֲשֶׁר	לֹא	בְּכֹל־
his brother	H3808	by any means	by any means	None of them can
H251		H6299	H6299	H376
				H5414
לְאֱלֹהִים	כַּפְרָה	לְאֱלֹהִים	כַּפְרָה	
to God	a ransom	to God	a ransom	
H430	H3724	H430	H3724	

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 16:26 (Parallel theme): For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 20:28 (Redemption): Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Matthew 25:9 (Parallel theme): But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

1 Peter 1:18 (Redemption): Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

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