

SERMON GUIDE

Christ the Ransom for Sinners

Psalm 49:7-8



12.17.2023

SCRIPTURE:

Psalm 49:7-8

SERMON NOTES:

As we continue turning over this diamond and looking at the different facets of the Incarnation, one of the least thought about beauties of Christ's Incarnation is the purpose of being our ransom.

The idea of ransom implies a captivity or hostage situation. We don't often think about the need for ransom or being hostage with Christmas, but this is absolutely the root cause and reason for why God became flesh. The Second Person of the Trinity, God the Son, came into the world to pay the price to set hostages free. Jesus even says this in Luke 19:10:

Luke 19:10 -- *For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.*

Jesus, the Son of Man, came (into the world) to seek and save the lost (the hostages). His purpose of entering the world was to bring rescue to those who could not rescue themselves.

Scripture Exegesis:

Psalm 49:7-8 -- *7 Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, 8 for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice,*

Notice in the psalm, we read that "truly no man can ransom another or give to God the price for his life." No person has the ability to pay the ransom price of his life. Notice two things: 1. we cannot ransom ourselves and 2. no other man can ransom us. This is massively important. We can't pay the ransom for our own release, and no other man can pay it for us.

Now this leads to the natural question: why do we need ransom? Why are we hostages to begin with?

We are hostages due to sin. We are rebels. This rebellion against God and His Word puts us in a debt we cannot pay off. We are captives to sin, and to Satan. The record of debt that stands against us is not something we or another person can pay for us. This is why the Scriptures say we are at enmity with God. The reason we can't pay the ransom fee, nor another for us, is because we can't pay the price to overcome our sin. The reason we struggle with understanding this is because we fail to recognize the holiness of God and the sinfulness of sin. We think we are better than what we really are because we always measure ourselves against other people, not against God -- the standard.

Jesus makes this clear in Matthew 5:17-48 when He shows the standard is perfection (explain this). James 2:10 reminds us that whoever keeps every law except for one is guilty of all of it. Why? Perfection is the standard. And beyond simply not keeping every law, we don't understand what sin truly is. It isn't only messing up or failing to uphold a command. Sin is much deeper. John Piper defines sin this way:

"What is sin?

It is the glory of God not honored.

The holiness of God not revered.

The greatness of God not admired.

The power of God not praised.

The truth of God not sought.

The wisdom of God not esteemed.

The beauty of God not treasured.

The goodness of God not savored.

The faithfulness of God not trusted.

The commandments of God not obeyed.

The justice of God not respected.

The wrath of God not feared.

The grace of God not cherished.

The presence of God not prized.

The person of God not loved.

That is sin."

Seen through that light, we begin to recognize we are far more sinful than we imagined. We do not meet the standard. We owe a debt we cannot pay. We are hostage to sin. We are captive to Satan. We need a rescue and Redeemer, and we are not it, and neither is another person capable of being it. The psalmist tells us in verse 8 that the reason we or others can't pay it is the price is steep and costly, and nothing we do can ever suffice.

This is bad news. It is disheartening. But it is reality. You can't save yourself. We are hostages by our own actions, and unable to rescue ourselves by our own actions. But the psalmist tells us where our hope can be found.

Psalm 49:15 -- *But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me.*

Listen to this good news: God will pay the ransom Himself. He receives us back to Himself by ransoming our souls from the power of death (Sheol). The ransom is owed to God, but the ransom is supplied by God. How? Through Jesus Christ. The Son God came into the world to ransom us. This is a part of the Christmas story and message. Listen to Paul's words in 1 Timothy 1:15-17:

15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. 16 But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Jesus came into the world to save sinners. His Incarnation was to rescue those who could not rescue Himself. Jesus was born into the world to ransom sinners. How did He ultimately do that? He lived the perfect life we could not and did not live. And He died a sinner's death we deserved. This payment was received by God the Father, and sufficient to pay our debt and release us from our captivity. How do we know? He rose from the dead. The payment for sin was accepted.

Mark 10:45 -- *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

Galatians 4:4-5 -- *But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

This is what leads Paul to rejoice as he shares this good news and go into a doxology of sorts.

Paul, the chief of sinners, received mercy from God, though he did not deserve it, so that other sinners would see and recognize that God's grace must be available to people like them too. Maybe today it would be a grace and mercy you receive. You can be ransomed today by the One who came from Heaven to Earth for this very reason.

LOOK BACK

- How was your week? What is one thing you're grateful for and one thing that challenged you?
- How did you GROW in obedience to Christ over the last week?
- Where did you GO to share the gospel or have a spiritual conversation with someone?

BUILD UP

- **REVIEW:**

- Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23 and then have someone else in the group read it again, preferably from a different version.
- What big takeaways did you have from the teaching?
- Additional Scripture:
 - Genesis 3:17-19
 - Genesis 3:23-24
 - Romans 5:12
 - Romans 3:10-12
 - 1 John 3:4
 - John 8:34
 - Romans 6:16
 - John 8:33
 - Isaiah 14:13-14
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4
 - Ephesians 2:2
 - 1 John 2:16
 - John 6:44
 - Romans 6:23
 - Hebrews 9:22
 - Ephesians 1:7
 - Revelation 5:9
 - 1 Timothy 1:15-17
 - Exodus 19:5
 - Deuteronomy 28:1
 - Mark 12:30-31
 - Galatians 5:14

- **REFLECT:**

- How did we become hostages?
- Who is holding us captive and how does he keep us that way?
- Why can't we save ourselves?

- What did our ransom require?
- **RESPOND:**
 - What should we do with our freedom?
- **MEDITATE:**
 - Psalm 49:7-8 -- *7 Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, 8 for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice,*
- **MEMORIZE:**
 - 1 Peter 1:18-19 -- *18 Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.*

SEND OUT

- **GROW:** How will you abide in Christ this week and grow in your love and understanding of Him?
- **GO:** Who in your sphere of influence needs to hear this story or the gospel?
- **PRAYER:**
 - Pray over any request from your group members.
 - Kids Pastor - **Nick Judd**
 - Ministry - **Kids Ministry**
 - **Pray for our long-term families on the field:**
 - The Wilsons
 - The Grays
 - The Starks
 - **Pray for our mid-term sent ones on the field:**
 - Kaesi
 - **Pray for the lost - Unreached People Group (UPG):** Kurdit Jewish in Israel



- **Population in country:** 9,600
- **Global population:** 9,600
- **Christian Adherent:** 0.00%
- **Evangelical:** 0.00%

- **Primary Religion:** Ethnic Religions
- **Primary Language:** Lishana Deni
- **Summary:** The Kurdit (Kurdish background) Jews are from the parts of the Middle East where ethnic Kurds live and Kurdish customs thrive. Most have migrated to Israel where they join other Jewish communities. Kurdit Jews have unique origins, cultural traditions, professions and beliefs.
- **Prayer Focus:** Pray for opportunities for the gospel to reach the hearts of Kurdish Jews in Israel. Pray for open hearts and minds, and for doubts and questions to be addressed through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Pray for a movement toward Christ among the Kurdit Jewish community. Pray for more church planting opportunities among them. Pray for Jewish leaders in Israel to recognize their Messiah.
- Want to keep up with other Unreached People Groups? Download the Unreached of the Day App <https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday/app>