

命にまさる恵み
(詩49：16)

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Abstract Nobuyoshi KIUCHI, “Grace Beyond Life” (Ps 49:16)”. The question whether Psalm 49:16 addresses afterlife or not has divided exegetes. The problem revolves partly around the question whether the Masoretic accent that divides the verse at **לְשׂוֹל** is original, and partly around the nature of the language used. i.e. if the ‘redemption from Sheol’ refers to prevention from death in this world, or to the afterlife.

In this study, the terms used in v.16 (**לְקַח**, **פְּדָה**) and v.16’s relationship with v.8 are examined from the viewpoint of the two verse divisions.

It is argued in this paper that more justice can be done to the reading that divides the verse at **נִפְשׁוֹ**, than to the Masoretic reading. Seeing that **לְקַח** in v. 16 can be a counterpart of **נָתַן** v. 8, the idea of ‘giving/taking a ransom’ operates also in v. 16. However, since in v. 16 the idea of ‘giving a ransom’ is included in the concept of **יְפַדְהָ**, **יְקַחֵנִי** could better be connected with **מִיַּד־שְׂוֹל**. The immediate context (v. 15) as well as the psalm as a whole (emphasis on eternity) indicates that what is referred to here is what happens to the psalmist after his death. The following translation is proposed:

Yet God redeems my life

from the hand of Sheol does he receive me.

This interpretation also fits well with the parallelistic balance, and the emphatic use of **כִּי**, which corresponds to the Ugaritic use of *k*.

The idea expressed here is that in contrast to v. 8, God receives the psalmist and not his ransom from the hand of Sheol; all of which emphasizes God’s grace that continues beyond the psalmist’s life.