A lazy man was dreaming of money when the devil appeared and offered to make him rich. The devil said “Do you see that bridge? Just walk across it and I will double the money you have now. In fact, each time you cross the bridge I will double your money.” “Wow!” said the lazy man. “This sounds like easy work.” “But since I am so generous you must give me $24 after each crossing” added the devil.

The lazy man agreed. He crossed the bridge and his money doubled. He threw $24 to the devil and crossed again. His money doubled, he paid another $24, crossed a third time. Again his money doubled. But now he had only $24, and he had to give it all to the devil. The devil laughed and vanished.

How much money did the lazy man start with?

Could the lazy man have made money from this scheme if he started with a different amount?