



Psalm 12

To the Chief Musician. On An Eight-Stringed Harp.
A Psalm of David.

¹ Help, LORD, for the godly man ceases!

For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.

² They speak idly everyone with his neighbor;
With flattering lips and a double heart they speak.

³ May the LORD cut off all flattering lips,
And the tongue that speaks proud things,

⁴ Who have said,
"With our tongue we will prevail;
Our lips are our own;

Who is lord over us?"

⁵ "For the oppression of the poor,
for the sighing of the needy,
Now I will arise," says the LORD;
"I will set him in the safety for which he yearns."

⁶ The words of the LORD are pure words,
Like silver tried in a furnace of earth,
Purified seven times.

⁷ You shall keep them, O LORD,
You shall preserve them from this generation forever.

⁸ The wicked prowl on every side,
When vileness is exalted among the sons of men.

Developments that make Yahweh's poor ones cry out, v1, 8.

The godly man ceases (v1a). The faithful disappear from the sons of men (v1b). The wicked prowl on every side (v8a). Vileness is [worthless and shameful] exalted among the sons of men (v8b). There is no greater grief to a biblical believer than that the church would be at a low ebb. Yet, how very many believers in every age have been alarmed to make this observation! And indeed, we must note with grief that such is the case in our day. But, we may rejoice to say with David, "Save, Yahweh!"

Even the godly and the faithful are but men. They cease and disappear—if not by moral decline, then simply by their mortal nature, they will die (cf. Ps 146:4). But Yahweh is. He is always there, always powerful, always working, always with us. And this always overrules what the sons of men are doing.

This is the theme for the rest of the psalm, in a contrast between the words of the wicked (v2-4) and the words of Yahweh (v5-7)

The words of the wicked, v2-4.

- Idle words, v2a. Too much talking ("everyone with his neighbor"), but to no real usefulness ("they speak idly")
- Flattery, v2b, 3a. Smooth talk that gets others addicted to being puffed up. Words that manipulate by feeding others' pride/vanity.
- Double heart, v2b. Literally "with a heart and a heart." Mixed intentions and mixed understandings.
- Speaking proud things, v3b. Literally, "speaks great things." Self-confident and self-seeking
- Tactical speech, v4b. Not tactical for serving God or men, but for the aims implied in v3b.
- Immoral speech, v4c. "Our lips are our own." Rather than recognizing that their lips belong to God, and are subject to His law, they declare their lips to be their own.
- Rebellious speech, v4d. "Who is lord over us?" They've declared their independence, but now they positively reject the Lord's own claims.

The words of Yahweh, v5-7.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will cause Yahweh to rise up in my behalf! The Lord created using words. The Lord brings His redemption by His Word. God the Son Himself is called the Word. How great a power the Lord has invested in words (cf. Prov 18:21). So when the wicked seek to employ their words for evil, and the Lord's needy ones cry out to Him, the Lord Himself mobilizes. We are never without help, so long as God lives.

- Pure words, v6. Nothing wrong or even useless in them. Every word exactly what is needed. Perfectly reliable. True. Authoritative. Sufficient.

The solution to surviving the onslaught of the wicked's words, and even thriving despite it, is found in the Lord's own words. Not only in our study of them, but in His own working by them. He keeps us through His Word. He preserves them by His Word, in the midst of their generation. Cf. John 17:6-19.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

Psalm

12.

To the chief musician. I want an eight-string tarp a psalm of David. Help Yahweh for the godly, man thesis. For the faithful disappear from among the sons of men. They speak idly everyone with his neighbor. With flattering lips and a double heart they speak. May also cut off fall flattering lips and the tongue that speaks proud things.

Who have said with our tongue we will prevail our lips are our own who is lord over us. For the oppression of the poor for the sighing of the needy now. I will arise says Yahweh, I will set him in the safety for which he earns. The words of Yahweh are pure words.

Like silver tried in a furnace of earth. Purified seven times. You shall keep them know your way you shall preserve them from this generation. Forever. The wicked prowls on every side. When violence is exalted. Among the sons of men.

So for the reading of God's inspired and an errant word the situation in Psalm 12 seems pretty similar to the situation in Psalm 11 Psalm 11, you remember the godly were crying or had counseled David to flee because the foundations were being destroyed and here David is crying out help y'all way for the godly man ceases for the faithful disappear.

From among the sons of men. This is made David to cry out very interesting. David as perhaps king at this time, perhaps not. And it wouldn't make that much of a difference for him to qualify as the poor or the needy in verse 5, one of the things that believers always remember or ought to remember is a before.

God we are poor and needy we need his help. And so in verse one is as if he is looked around and there are no godly laughed there are no faithful ones left there are only wicked on every side verse eight. And the way that this happened was that violence was exalted the word violence there meaning that that which is both worthless and shameful and so that which is worthless that which was shameful was exalted was lifted up admired by others and raised into power and influence each of authority and when that happens you get more of what popular and you get more of what's in control.

And so David has looked up as it were in verse one and seen there was no one left. So is he without help. No he is not even if you are the only Godly one left one with God and yes a majority that's requires out save the word that's translated help here is word that almost always means save or deliver.

There's no greater grief to a biblical believer then that the church would be at a low end and for David the nation was the church and there have been many who have looked up looked around in the church whether in a particular congregation, sometimes meet someone who has God was converting them or perhaps bringing them to reformed doctrine, they felt more and more lonely at church.

They were the only ones holding to the doctrines of grace, there were the other ones holding to the inspiration authority of the Bible. You think of Martin Luther who at the diet of verbs or was it the Leipzig dissipation one of those two he says that the most alarming thing to him was can it possibly be that I alone am right and his conclusion was well God is always right and God has given us the Bible so if God is right then I just have to agree within and one with God is a majority.

And so we see that in in Psalm 12, which thankfully God has given us in this congregation fellowship with many playing to his gospel and submit to his word and. Walk by faith carried by the grace of God. And so we have some fellowship on earth, but if you should ever find yourself in a situation where you feel that you are alone that there are no godly left and sometimes it is the intention of the wicked to make try to make you feel that way.

Like our brothers some of them who are imprisoned and part of their torturers to tell them lie to them. That the church has all apostasized and all their labor and ministry has been for nothing and yet you cannot have God taken from you. So that is the development that is making David cry out here and the scripture warns us not to put our confidence and princes from talks about the godly man ceasing and the faithful disappearing from among the sons of many think of Psalm 146 verse 4.

Don't put confidence in Princess who will return to the dust. His spirit will depart his plans will perish. And so the rest of the Psalm then in that section from verses 2 through 7 that is sandwiched between the situation in verse 1 and verse 8 has to do with the words of the wicked through which the the church has come into such a.

Degenerate season in verses 2 through 4 and then the preserving purpose of God in verses 5 through 7 and he uses his word and so it's kind of like a God's word versus the words of the wicked contest. So the words of the wicked, how are people speaking that has caused?

David to say? That the godly have ceased in the faithful have disappeared. Well, first they speak idly emptily quite literally and sometimes that means deceitful either is that shade of meaning there, but the the words aren't what they seem to be. And they aren't worth anything. Too much talking.

It's not just a few it's everyone speaks idly with it with with his neighbor. Words are no longer being you. Use drug. Lee how very much God emphasizes for the godly how we are to use our words you think of Ephesians and you think of James you think of how much there is about it in proverbs the description of wise man, of course.

Christ being the ultimate example scripture calls him the wisdom of God and so we should pay careful attention to. The how we use words that are our words would always be seasoned with Christ that they would always be calculated to edify to build up that we wouldn't as the Corinthians said about a few different things in first gren in whatever prompted first Corinthians to be written to them, there's nothing wrong with speaking this way, well don't focus on what you're permitted focus on what you're called to do but.

With this on what has helped and what builds up. So the the uselessness and deceitfulness also. Of the words that people are using prompted. David to think this flattery they with flattering lips literally smooth lips and the heart and the heart literally in the Hebrew it says, you know, they've cleaned it up a little bit a double heart but they seem to have good intentions at one point and then the same person seems to have wicked intentions it's impulse.

Able to tell who's your friend it's a possible to tell what's accurate. You know, we have a massive multiplication proliferation of available words to us through internet and social media and.

You know, a myriad of anonymous experts on every side of every issue so that you can indulge yourself with somebody who's saying what you suspect is the case or what you'd like to believe. And so the the more that words have been multiplied the more we've found ourselves finding someone who will smoothly say, you know, whatever we want to hear and you can get addicted to that kind of thing those who are good at flattering actually kind of count on it they want you to feel like they are for you and they are with you and that they are experts providing you with what you need to know.

And so watch out for the the smooth talk remember. And I'm not necessarily commending the way it was said it was a young child but we had been going we had been emphasizing proverbs in family worship for some time and one of the children got on a Skype call with a grandparent and the grandparent who had listened a much Christian talk radio over the course of a lifetime was trying to build up the self-esteem of the grandchild and granted outside you're a flatterer we're learning about you from the Bible.

Not respectfully said. But there is something about recognizing that the Bible teaches us of the danger of people saying what we want to hear. And not always just biting onto the hook and taking the bait there is something about taking the warnings of scripture and and heeding them the double heart the the way it's said is you know, a heart and a heart and it may not be just the flattery or the one who's being flattered who is deceived by this double heart, you know.

Of course the Holy Spirit says in Jeremiah that the heart is deceitful above all things and the word there is a word that comes from hunting and tracking well the heart is tracked over that if you say enough things with enough purposes and you come back and you look at the tracks there's footprints going in all the directions and you can't figure out can't make heads or tails of all of the apparent purposes and all of the directions of.

Those footprints and it may be that the flatterer himself and verse two has lost the ability to recognize what his own heart is doing with those smooth lips so I alerts flattering words this double heart speaking proud things and this isn't just speaking proud things of yourself, it's really speaking great things children one of the things that you need to watch out for if you are going to use your mouths and your words to serve the Lord Jesus is this temptation.

To always have a better version of what the other person is saying so they're saying one thing and you're thinking of that thing you saw or that thing you thought of that will yeah that will be you know, I see your story and I raise you my story probably should not use poker wagering illustrations.

Instructing the children. But always wanting to one up seeing conversation as an opportunity to shine your star just a little bit brighter than the last person who spoke. And so this speaking great things. Each one trying to be a little bigger with what he says even if he's speaking not necessarily about himself, but what he's speaking about can make him a little bit bigger.

And that's because they are using words not to love. God not to love neighbor, but to exalt themselves to manipulate the situation. So not to serve the Lord and others, but to defeat others or to manipulate get them to do whatever they want with our tongue we will prevail.

Why? Because they've refused to recognize the Creator. Our lips are our own. Who is Lord over us? Now, we might have fought well empty speech. It doesn't seem like a big deal. Smooth speech. Yeah, okay. Yeah, double-heartedness. Manipulation. These are all things that that we know people do and we shouldn't do them, but when you realize.

That when we use our words to serve ourselves or to manipulate others, we are actually rejecting the kingship of God. Our lips are our own who is Lord over us. Now, that's an infinitely big deal, isn't it? To reject the kingship of God. No wonder David cries out as he's praying here in verse three.

May Yahweh cut off all flattering lips and is not like cut off like sniff off with scissors, although that sounds pretty awful. It's even worse. He means may he wipe out the person to whom those lips belong. Cut them off from his people. And so you have the words of the wicked and yet.

You have the words of God against the wicked for the oppression of the poor for the sighing of the needy. Now, I will arise says Yahweh verse five. So the godly men of disappeared the faithful have disappeared verse one. God will never disappear. Few times a few times in the scripture.

There is the image given of the Lord looking to the right and looking to the left and seeing no undeliver. No one there to deliver and says I myself will deliver. Now God doesn't actually function that way does he? All his works are known to him from the beginning.

He speaks that way for our sake. So that when we look to the left and we look to the right and there's none to deliver we will not despair because there's always the Lord to deliver. And so that we will not when we are in the position of a caregiver you have people who are entrusted to your care that you don't want to be the one who provokes the Lord by failing.

Independence upon him to carry out your duty to those entrusted to you. Well, the Lord says he's going to answer this prayer that that David has cried out with from verse 1 and he answers his David's prayer against the words of the wicked with his own words verse 6 the words of Yahweh are pure words.

That's not a heart and a heart. They're not smooth words. A lot of people quote. Bible verses out of context to put smooth words and God's mouth about how wonderful we all are and and.

They'll they'll tell themselves lies and put that in the Lord's mouth God preserve us from committing such blasphemy because God's word is honest to us about what we are like, isn't it? His his words are pure, but we are not and so his word does not flatter us and it does not puff us up.

It exalts him. So the words of Yahweh are pure words, like silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times. That is their exactly the opposite. Of everything that we saw. The Lord sends out his word to do good. He doesn't manipulate us. He speaks words that are always worthy and worthwhile.

They are effective. His Word is authoritative and sufficient. Everything that that David was worried about from the words of the wicked the words of the Lord. Can can undo and defeat. Indeed when the Lord Jesus is praying for his people and John 17. And then one of the main themes of the prayer is you have given me these people.

You love them. You gave them to me. I have loved them. I have kept them. And now he's he's praying. I'm leaving please keep keeping them. What did Jesus do to keep us? What did Jesus do as he gave us as words? What does he ask the father to use to keep us as he gets ready, not just to die and rise again but to ascend.

He asks the father to use his word. The word of God is this marvelous divinely appointed preservative. And so he says, you shall keep them. Oh you always You shall preserve them from this generation forever. So there's that purity of the Lord's word, which is Tripoli mentioned in verse 6.

And it's something that we can we can marvel at you think of 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 that God has appointed the same thing by which he created. He said let light shine into the darkness and he is appointed that to be that by which we are saved and preserved and conformed to the glory of the Lord Jesus himself.

And so the solution to surviving the onslaught of the words of the wicked is found in the Lord's own words, not only in our study of them, but in his using them to preserve us and if you have used the, If you've used the hope at home to prepare for the second half of second Samuel 7 the coming Lord's Day you can see how God's Word formed David's praises and God's word formed David's prayers and then in the middle there, it wasn't in the written devotional but it also formed David's priorities.

He marvels not just at God himself, but he marvels at Israel. That that here is a people that is not great and in of themselves but God separated them for himself and God glorifies himself in them. And so what a wonderful thing is the word of God that forms our praises and our priorities and our prayers and through which here in Psalm 12, he preserves us.