

TRUTH B-P CHURCH
Adults Sunday School

PSALM 12 – THE WORDS OF MEN AND THE WORD OF GOD

I. INTRODUCTION

To the Chief Musician upon Sheminith. Sheminith is an instrument with strings. This instrument contributes to the mournful tune that would match the expression of the psalm very well.

A Psalm of David. David is the author. Indeed God's people have benefitted much from the psalms that he had written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. A psalm a day keeps the soul awake, alive and enthusiastic. The psalms also have healing power over the soul especially when it is under attacks by men's words. But God's word will protect His people and will sustain them to the end.

II. THE POWER OF WORDS OF MEN

A. The Weakness of Faithful Men

Verse 1, “Help, LORD; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men.”

The time at hand seems to be at such height of great desperation that the psalmist has to begin with the cry of help unto the Lord. The word “help” means to save or deliver. The psalmist is crying to God based upon the covenantal relationship that he had with Him that He may save and deliver him. The exact occasion in which this psalm was written is unknown. It could be during the many different periods of his life that he had experienced the betrayal by his friends or loved ones.

The psalmist described himself as the godly man in the third person. He said that he ceaseth which means that he is about to die. The threat of death is not due to sickness or old age, or any accidental causes. It is because of the great wickedness and darkness of the time that he is living in.

Those who used to stand together with the psalmist had proven themselves to be unfaithful in the end. The reason could be due to the threat of death for anyone who is trying to stand on the same side with the psalmist. As the cost is too high to bear, his trusted friends one by one fall away and choose to save themselves.

No wonder the psalmist desperately cried out to God for help for there is no other help available for him. Only God can save him now.

B. The Evil Words of Men

Verse 2, “They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.*”

These unfaithful friends speak as if it is the truth in their lies. The word “vanity” means emptiness. Their words are full of empty promises. They promise to help, but no true help is seen from them. They probably boast of how much resources they had and surely there is nothing to worry about and that they could be counted on. But the day comes when their help is needed, they could not be found at all. All their promises fall on the ground. Indeed it is with a double heart that they promise in the first place.

There are those who call him their friend, but when the time comes that he needed their help, they suddenly turn their back on him, giving 101 excuses that they could not help. They may even push the blame on him that he did not deserved to be helped at all.

C. The Confidence in God to Judge

Verse 3, “The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things:”

While those who are not true with both their intents and words that they had spoken, it is important for the psalmist to keep his focus on the Lord. He must know that the Lord is still in control. And here it is the confidence of the psalmist in God that He will judge. The psalmist speaks with no hesitation at all that surely and truly the Lord shall cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that speaks proud things.

Those who had boasted about how powerful and resourceful they are and that they can be counted on when you encounter any problem, and when the call for help comes, they were no where to be found. They may escape from men but they will not escape from God. God will cut them off. How is God going to do it? He will shame them. He will expose their lies and hypocrisy. Truth will out, and all their lies will be uncovered. This is the Lord's judgment.

Verse 4, “Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?”

Truly every man must bear the consequences of their own words. No man is to let free until restitution is made, even if the damage is due to verbal cause. Restitution can come in words form such as an apology. But those who thinks that it is their right to say what they want to say and not accountable to anyone, they are absolutely wrong. They obviously do not want to submit to God's authority above them. They live as if God is dead. Many are living such godless lives. That is why they do not fear God and therefore will see no need to control their behaviours whether they are pleasing God or not.

“Who is lord over us?” Such a statement stems from a heart that refuses to submit to God and His authority. He counts himself as supreme and believes that no one is above him to dictate what he should do with his life. He is the master of his own destiny. Is that true?

Verse 5, “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set *him* in safety *from him that* puffeth at him.”

Those who are proud will not care for others. And here the psalmist is specific in focusing on the victims of such proud behaviours. The poor are being oppressed. The word “oppressed” means violently opposed. The poor are being stamped upon and being weak, there is nothing that they can do to help themselves. The needy cried out in suffering because they were kept out of any form of welfare.

In the midst of such terrible plight, God came to their rescue. He says, now will I arise. I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. God Himself will be their help. And God will judge them accordingly. This is the assurance from God to always do that which is right in His sight. For those who choose to do otherwise and rebel against Him will be judged accordingly.

It is at such difficult moments that God's people must look to the power of God's Word. Men's words may be powerful to destroy but God's Word is even more powerful. In fact, the power of God's Word is profoundly manifested in the manner that it works in the heart of men, even the unbelievers. If men's words are powerful, God's word is even more powerful many times over.

III. THE POWER OF THE WORD OF GOD

A. The Perfection of God's Word

Verse 6, “The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.”

God's Word is perfect. Perfect means without mistake and error. Every word is deliberately chosen to be part of the Bible which God is pleased to reveal Himself to us. The word of God is so pure that it is likened to silver tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times. Seven is the number of perfection.

What apt description of God's Word that is to be regarded as perfectly pure, with not a slightest of error or falsehood contained in it! Compared to men's words, God's Word shines the brightest due to its perfection and purity. As for men's words, they paled in comparison with God's Word as they are full of lies and hypocrisy.

B. The Preservation of God's Word

Verse 7, “Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.”

Verse 7 must be understood together with verse 6. The relationship between these two verses is what we call the synthetic parallelism. It means the second verse adds or expands on the teaching mentioned in the first verse. In other words, not only God's word is perfectly pure, it is also perfectly preserved.

The word “keep” means to guard. God will guard His Word from being tempered with or lost! The word “preserve” means also to guard, however in the original Hebrew language, this word in the action form is emphasized with an energetic nun, meaning to say God's Word will surely be guarded by God forever. And it is from the generation in the time of David onwards. God ensures that His Word will be perfect and preserved forever.

C. The End of Sinful Men

Verse 8, “The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted.”

It seems like an abrupt end to this psalm. Not only that, on the surface, it may seem like those who indulged in evil words are not affected by the warning of the coming divine judgment. And because of this, it seems like a sad conclusion for this psalm.

I believe this is a realistic conclusion of what is actually happening. God's Word, though powerful, does not mean that every man who is warned by it will repent and return to God. Many will hear and still harden their heart against the very Word that warns them of the coming judgment.

Evil men still want to walk on every side. This every side is opposite of the way of the Lord. It is every way except God's way. That's the rebellious nature of every sinful man. And all these other ways are ways when the vilest men are exalted.

Instead of seeking to glorify God, they glorify men. They chose to exalt men rather than God. That again shows how their soul is bent on going against God. This is what the real picture of one who chose to walk in contrary to God's Word. Are you one of them?

IV. **CONCLUSION**

God's Word never fail to reach our heart, in the form of instruction, rebuke, correction, or encouragement. When words of evil men try to influence you to follow their evil ways that are contrary to our faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, may we remember the perfect and preserved Word of God that will deliver us from the hour of temptation.

Our confidence is always on the Word of God. For God means what He says and says what He means. Let us take time each day to study His Word diligently. It is more than increasing our Bible knowledge. We study so that we will be wise unto salvation according to the knowledge of Jesus Christ according to the revealed will of God. May God help us. Amen.