

Psalm 12 – Preservation of God’s Word, the basis for Preserving Saints

Introduction

The word of God is more important to God than His people. His Word is His bond. God cannot lie. He always keeps His promises. Wisdom was there from the very beginning of time before He created Adam and Eve, our first parent. To say that God would preserve His people and not His Word is foolishness to the nth degree. It is to elevate man to a position that he does not have in the sight of God! The Word of God is even more important than God’s own name! **Psalms 138:2** (KJV) “I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” [Emphasis added]

Psalm 12 is a psalm that also demonstrates this same truth! This is a psalm of David. It reveals David’s comfort in times of mockery that he derives from the preservation of God’s holy and perfect Word. Taunting and mockery coupled with threats of bodily harm or loss of property are methods employed by evil men throughout the ages to stop God’s servants from doing God’s will. David experienced such a threat. He was not the last and neither will we be the last as long as there is God’s work to be done and Satan and his minions remain on earth, these methods will be employed to frighten and discourage God’s servants. Psalm 12 was a psalm penned by David to encourage us as he wrote from his personal experience. The encouragement he received that saw him through his trial of mocking words can be our encouragement as well.

The Verbal Assault (12:1-2) – David did not minx his words because of the urgency of the situation. He dispensed with all the initial preliminaries, went immediately to his LORD, and cried with the imperative, “Help!” David was overwhelmed by the verbal abused of his enemies. It is not true to say that “sticks and stone can break bones but words cannot hurt!” Words can wound the soul in ways that sticks and bones can never touch. David appealed urgently to his LORD based upon the covenantal relationship that he has in Christ Jesus. This is the only basis to cry for help. There is no other!

David described himself in the third person as “the godly man”. He said that he has ceased i.e. about to die. This understanding is affirmed by the synonymous parallelism used in this verse. The verbal assault by his enemies was so severe that death was imminent. David described himself as the godly man with reference to one who has received grace and mercy from God and that he has not done anything sinful against his God to deserve such an attack from his enemies.

Everyone speaks vanity with his neighbor implying that there is no truth in all that people spoke to him. David could not trust anyone. If this period described David’s life as a fugitive in the days of King Saul then David has no friends left that he could trust King Saul threatened everyone who helped David with death! It is a sad day when our friends could not be trusted to speak to truth at all. They flatter with their lips but their flattery originates from a heart with double motives. In front of David, they might call him their friend but behind his back, they planned to betray and kill him! David hid in Philistine

territory when he ran out of places to hide and people to turn to for help. During his fugitive years David could not touch the LORD's anointed to shorten his plight for that would be sin. He had to endure patiently whatever Saul might hurl at him as from the LORD who has allowed it because his LORD is always sovereign. Crying to the LORD for help is the best and only way to draw closer to God in times like these!

The LORD's Assault (12:3-5) – David knew in his heart that the LORD will triumph at the end. The LORD will cut off all flattering lips including the tongue that speaks proud things. The LORD cuts them off in mid sentence. He does not need to ask them for permission. The LORD stops them all immediately at His sovereign convenience and in His time when He believes that His children has learned their lessons and their faith has increased. The manner in which He cuts them off is not stated, However, the methods would include, death or sickness or any form of physical deprivation as He see fit! The LORD will turn their boasts to naught! The arrogance of these proud tongues include, “With our tongue will we prevail; our lips *are* our own: who *is* lord over us?” These proud tongues boast of their strength and power. Their words have power to prevail all who stand against them! They would probably do so with money and the arm of the flesh! They command armies and evil men who will do their bidding including hurting and killing all of God's people. Their lips are their own. No one can stop them from saying what they want! They are like God in their boasts! They command and control absolutely like all despots. There is no law above them for they are above the law of their own land!

It is only right that the LORD cuts down these proud ones to size! After dealing with these proud ones, the LORD turns His attention to assure and help the oppressed poor and incline His ears to hear the sighing of the needy. He will arise, which means that He will now act and deal swiftly with these proud ones who believed that they are untouchable. The LORD will set in safety His righteous ones from these who puff themselves with pride. The LORD described them as ones who are inflated with hot air! A tiny needle can easily puncture the largest balloon filled with hot air!

These are the words of the LORD assuring David and all righteous ones not be overwhelmed by the words of these proud ones. David and all of God's children have to believe either the Word of God and be comforted or cowed by the words of these proud ones who wielded some degree of power on earth!

The Words of the LORD vs. the words of the wicked (12:6-8) – The faith of God's people always hinge on the words of evil men against the very Word of God. Here the LORD revealed this truth in very vivid and pictorial terms. In addition, these verses of the Bible have come under attack by the evil one to undermine the veracity of God's holy and perfect Word.

The LORD made no apology by stating very clearly that His words are pure and perfect! It is so pure and so perfect that it is liken to silver tried in a furnace of earth and purified seven times. The number seven is often used to describe perfection and in this instance to the highest limit. The silver will be without dross and it is of the purest kind. The Word

of God is pure and contains not even the slightest error or falsehood unlike the words of these evil proud men who words are all flattery and full of lies!

Verse 7 is known as a synonymous parallelism where the second line restates what is mentioned in the first, but using different words. As mentioned before, the use of the energetic “nun” emphasizes the act of preservation. This preservation is forever. The relationship between verses 6 and 7 is what we call synthetic parallelism where the second verse adds or expands on the teaching mentioned in the first verse. These two verses combined together teach that the Words of God which are perfect like silver purified seven times, and will be preserved by God forever! The LORD promised that He will keep i.e. guard His perfect and purified Word. No one will be able to destroy it or tamper with it as He is the guardian of it. Furthermore He declared that He will preserve all of it perfectly and not one jot or tittle of it will ever be allowed to be lost. With the LORD as the sentry or His own Word how can the Word of God ever be lost or fail? This is done from this generation onwards. This does not mean that it is only from this generation of David onward that the LORD will guard and preserve His perfect Word. What it means is that from the generation of David, He has revealed clearly that His perfect Word will never be lost at all as He will guard and preserve it personally forever.

The wicked are found everywhere when the vilest men are exalted (v8). The world continues to exalt these vile and proud men. They will be allowed to get away with murder and all kinds of crimes and sins. However, God’s children must trust in the Word of the LORD and His promises and not the words and deeds of these evil men. The bottom line is that the children of God must believe in God’s Word and not men’s. The LORD will protect and keep His children from all harm and danger from these evil men into eternity even when they lose their lives on earth. They will know these by fact that the LORD never breaks His Word and His words are always perfect and true.

The contrast within the entire psalm would be the words of these evil men pitted against the Words of the LORD. These evil men speak vanity and flattery (verse 2) and boast that their words will prevail and no one is lord over them (verse 4). The Words of the LORD counter that. It is the Lord’s Word that will prevail over the words of the evil ones. This is the assurance and comfort that the LORD gives to His people. Do not fear the words of these evil flatterers and boasters; trust in the Words of the LORD that is purified seven times as opposed to the words of the evil men which are vain, proud and stem from a double heart (verse 2). God will keep (guard) His Holy Words and preserve (action is emphasized by the energetic nun) them from this generation forever. The LORD gave this verbal assurance to that generation and after because He knew they needed it. God’s people were plagued by the many wicked words that came from evil men to confuse and confound them. God now gave His calming assurance of His perfect and pure words that they will be preserved forever.

Conclusion

The faith of the believers was put to the test, they had to choose to believe and trust in the inerrant, infallible and divinely inspired Word of God Almighty or the errant, impure, and

fallible words of sinful men. The same decision is asked of every Christian today on the issue of the doctrine of preservation of God's Holy, inerrant, infallible Word. "Faith in the perfect Word of the Most High God or in the imperfect word of depraved sinful men" has always been the challenge for mankind throughout the ages. Is it not the same today?

Hebrews 11:6, *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*