

# (How to Understand the KJV Bible) 41 Psalm 12

by Keith Simons

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*Psalm 12 highlights the problem of evil words and God's judgment on those who use them, while also emphasizing the purity and preservation of God's word.*

**Duration:** 21:59

**Scripture:** Psalm 12:1

**Topics:** "KJV Bible", "Trust in God's Protection", "The Power of Words"

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## Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 12, emphasizing the contrast between evil words and the pure words of God. David laments the absence of godly and faithful individuals, surrounded by deceitful and flattering speech that takes advantage of others. He calls upon God for help, recognizing that the Lord will rise to defend the oppressed and preserve His people. Simons highlights the purity of God's words, likening them to refined silver, and reassures that despite the prevalence of wickedness, God will protect and sustain the faithful forever. The sermon encourages believers to trust in God's truth amidst a world filled with lies.

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## Transcript

Welcome, today we're looking at Psalm 12 and this psalm is all about words, evil words, good words and the words of God. My name is Keith Symons, I'm a Bible teacher from England and each week I present these talks on how to understand the King James Bible using the psalms. So we begin today as usual with the ancient title of the psalm, to the chief musician upon Sheminit, a psalm of David.

To the chief musician, therefore this was a psalm, a song for use in the worship of God at his temple, his holy place, the house of God in Jerusalem. The chief musician would be the leader of the priests and Levites who were involved in that worship. Upon Sheminit, well that's a Hebrew word which our King James translators have chosen not to translate, possibly because they were unsure of its meaning.

However, the meaning of it is the number eight and that might mean a musical instrument, maybe a harp with eight strings or it might mean the eight notes in the musical octave, the white notes on a piano are organised in a group of eight. Probably it means both of these, means that there were instruments tuned to the eight notes of the musical scale. A lot of ancient music is based not on tunes but on scales.

We have the major and the minor scale which we're familiar with nowadays. A Psalm of David, this is another of those psalms written by King David at one of the difficult times in his life, a time when it seems he felt surrounded by evil people, by people who were trying to take advantage of other people with their

words. And so David begins with an appeal to God, verse one, help Lord for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

Help Lord, we could translate that, save Lord, rescue me, because I'm trying to serve you, I'm trying to be loyal to you. I, King David, I'm trying to establish a right and good rule over Israel where people will respect you and live at peace with one another. But how can I do it when all have turned away, all have turned aside, there's no one who reaches your perfect standards? I look around for a godly man, someone who is kind to other people, someone who respects God and serves God loyally, someone who desires to be good.

And if such men ever existed upon earth, I don't see them. The godly man ceaseth. Everyone, even the ones who I thought were good and godly, are now turning aside because they're trying to use their words to take advantage of people.

I look, says David, for those who are faithful. These are the ones I want to promote in my government. These are the ones, a faithful person means a loyal person, a true person, someone who supports what is right and good, someone who stands firm for what is right and good.

David wanted, he needed such people in his government. But when he looked around for them, what did he find? For the faithful fail from among the children of men. There's no faithful people remaining.

I look around at people everywhere. The children of men doesn't mean just children. I look at the adults too.

They've all been born to people in the past. They're all children of men, whatever their age now. And I'm unable to find godly people, faithful people, people who are right to serve in the government, people who will support the peaceful rule of Israel.

I search for them. I don't find them because, verse 2, they speak vanity, each one with his neighbour. Vanity means destructive words, in particular, lying words.

Wherever I look, says David, I see people who are trying to lie to other people. Their words are not true. They're destroying what is good in the nation.

They are dealing with their neighbours. They're dealing with people who should be close to them. Jesus said, love your neighbours yourself.

But these ones speak vanity. They speak lies, every one with his neighbour. So let's listen closer to their words.

What words are we hearing? Well, says David, with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. Flattering in English means words that are designed to please other people so that you can take advantage of them. In the Hebrew, it means smooth words.

They're speaking smooth, attractive words. They're speaking pleasant words, but they're not speaking genuine words. They're not speaking the truth because with a double heart do they speak.

The heart is deceitful in all things and desperately wicked. With a double heart, double intentions, a double mind, we might say in English. They've got this one thing which they are pretending even to themselves in their hearts that they are.

They're pretending to themselves that they're still right and good people, but their words are different. It's like they've got a second heart. It's like they love what's good and they love what's evil.

And so with double tongues is another phrase we use in English. They're speaking words to other people which are intended to take advantage of them. These people who are supposed to be godly and good people.

These people have convinced themselves they're right and good, but when they see an opportunity to make money out of someone else's weakness, they use it. David is sure about the judgment of such evil behavior. He speaks firmly against them.

The Lord, verse 3, shall cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that speaketh proud things. To cut off was the punishment in Israel for someone who could no longer remain in the nation. There was no place for mouths that spoke flattering words in the nation where David ruled rightly, in a nation which respected God as the real ruler and King David simply as his servant.

There was no room for the tongue that speaketh proud things. Proud really means great. The person who boasts of great things.

These things are the opposite of what God wants and David was sure that God's judgment will be against such people. Those people, verse 4, who have said, with our tongue will we prevail, our lips of our own, who is Lord over us. With our tongue will we prevail.

Our words, in other words, are going to be what gives us success, what gives us wealth, what gives us power. And we think we're great people. We think that we are truly powerful people.

No one can control us because we have the freedom to speak as we please and when we speak as we please we can use our words to control other people. We can go down to the market and lie about the things that we're selling or buying in order to get the price that we want to pay. And we can take someone who's weak and unsure of what to do and we can use our words to force them to work for us like slaves.

Our lips are our own. We're the masters. We're the powerful people because we speak with clever, deceitful words.

And who is Lord over us? The word Lord means a master, a ruler. No one can control us, they say. We have power because of the power of our words.

The power of our words enables us to take advantage of poor people. The power of our words enables us to control everyone. Everyone.

Who is Lord over us, they say. And they expect the answer. No one rules over you.

Do as you like. Do what pleases you. You are the now.

But what about God? What about the true Lord? What about the God whom they should respect and who has commanded them that they should care about poor and needy people in their nation that tells them that it's wrong to put a stumbling block in front of the blind or to take advantage unfairly of the poor and the fatherless and the widower? Well, God will now speak and these proud, rebellious, blasphemous words. Who is Lord over us? The true Lord, the God of heaven and earth will now answer. Verse five.

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord. I'm going to rise up just as a soldier who sits in his chair and relaxes is not fighting. But when he sees a trouble and when he is determined to deal with it, that soldier will stand up and take his weapons and go to fight against the enemy.

And God says, now will I arise. I'm going to act against these evil people. I'm going to act because I care about what they're doing.

I care about the fact that they are oppressing the poor. In other words, they're dealing cruelly with the poor. I care about the burdens that needy people are in.

They're sighing, they're weeping, they're sorrow because of the great cruelty of these powerful people. God says, I will arise on behalf of the poor and the weak and the needy. And I will defend them.

I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. Puffeth, blows. How does God characterize these words of these proud people? These proud evil doers said, we're the masters who is Lord over us.

And God hears their words and says they're puffing, blowing. All they're doing is blowing with their mouths. How weak that is.

I, almighty God, stand against these people who are opposing me by blowing. How weak. I can defend the poor people.

I can defend the needy people. I will put them in a place of safety. David hears these words, these wonderful words that God has spoken.

And he responds with instinctive praise to God for the words that he has said. David says in verse six, the words of the Lord are pure words. As silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times.

Pure words, perfect words. He's spoken about the evil words as if words spoken from a double heart. But God's words are not spoken from a double mind or a double tongue or a double heart.

No, they are pure. They are sincere. They are perfect and true and right.

They are like a silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times. A furnace is a very, very hot fire. And it's a fire that is used to purify silver.

You put it in in its state as all and that hot fire burns it until pure silver comes out. Now, I've been looking into the ancient process for purifying silver to try and understand it a little better. And the process was this.

They would take the silver ore, the ground up rocks which contained the silver, and they would put it in a very hot heat with lead. And at a certain heat, the lead melts and dissolves the silver. And then that mixture of lead and silver is taken to the second process where the workman has to heat up a fire much, much hotter even than that first fire because it needs to oxidize the lead to separate it from the silver.

Then at last you have the pure silver when it's been through that second process. And each time the material is returned to the fire again and again in order that more silver can be extracted and in order that the resultant silver can be as pure as is possible. I don't suppose they managed to get it very perfect in the ancient furnaces.

But David thinks here of the purest silver. He says seven times it's been purified or made pure. He thinks of this process over and over again in order to get the purest and the best silver.

And he says that, that is what God's word is like. It is pure. It is perfect.

There is no fault with it. It contains nothing that is untrue or wrong. God's word comes straight from his mouth as pure words.

Nothing imperfect in them. And so knowing that, David has confidence. In this evil world, David says in verse seven, thou shalt keep them, O Lord.

Thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever. You're looking after your people, Lord. You're defending them and protecting them.

And now that I know that you rise up to defend the poor and the needy, I know that you will look after those who trust in you. You will keep them safe in danger. Thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever.

This generation seems to mean the generation of evil people. In other words, a generation means all the people born at one time, all the people who are living on the earth at the same time. Yes, there is a generation of evil people.

Yes, all around us there are evil people. Yes, it seems as if those who serve God are so few. But they, the evil people, are only there for a generation, for a time.

And the time will come when the time for evil people to be powerful has ended. The time will come for Messiah's rule. And when King Messiah rules, then there will not still be evil people in this world.

Because God is preserving his people forever. And notice that contrast between this generation, the people now, and the people who are forever. The people now will come to an end, but the people who are forever, God's people, the people who have his everlasting life, the people whom he is preserving, will live always.

And then in verse 8, it almost seems as if nothing has changed in David's world. We could be back at the beginning of the psalm now. The wicked walk on every side when the vilest men are exalted.

The vilest are the most evil men. The most evil people have positions of power and authority. And the result is that wicked people can walk freely in the land that David rules.

They ought to be locked up in jail. They ought to be punished for their crimes. But they have freedom to do their evil acts because of the power of evil people.

Yet there were times in ancient Israel, there was times in David's rule, when evil was suppressed, under David's government, and good people gained positions of authority in the government, and evil people were opposed and imprisoned. And David looks forward to the Messianic Kingdom, the time when King Messiah was, when the defeat of evil people will be complete. It was never complete in David's rule.

It never has been complete in the centuries of people's rule on this earth. There's always been evil people in power, but that must end because God is preserving his people forever. Please write to me.

My email address is 333kjb at gmail.com. If you haven't written yet, it would be lovely to hear from you. 333kjb at gmail.com. Now let me read to you the whole of Psalm 12. To the Chief Musician upon Sheminith, a Psalm of David.

Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men. They speak vanity, every one with his neighbour, with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak. The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things, who have said, with our tongue will we prevail, our lips are our own, who is Lord over us.

For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith Lord, I will set him at safety, I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him. The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever.

The wicked walk on every side when the vilest men are exalted.

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