

Psalm 12

When we went through the early part of this Psalm, we saw the problems that David was facing, but we didn't find the solution that God was going to offer until we got to verse 6. And so as we've gone over the last few verses of the Psalm, we've spent a lot of time considering the ministry that the words of the LORD have in purifying and trying the people, but I want to now go back and look at the first part of the Psalm again and talk about how the words of the LORD relate to every detail of the problems with the people as David laid them out there. Because the words of the LORD are effectual in combatting every single one of these things, as part of or in addition to that general ministry of purifying the hearts of the people.

Verse 1

So there were two problems here: the godly were ceasing, the faithful were failing. This is actually two different ways of describing essentially the same thing. The godly and the faithful are two different ways of referring to much the same group of people, but they are describing them from slightly different angles.

GODLY

We've already talked a lot, as we were going through verse 7, about how the words of the LORD preserve and keep the godly seed. So we won't go into that in great detail here.

The key passage on that was in Malachi chapter 2, where the godly seed was described using the imagery of the marriage covenant.

The godly seed were compared to children who were born under the marriage covenant, and so reflected the features of their parents.

The ungodly were the the children from whoredom with the daughter of a strange god. They were like bastards, born outside of the marriage covenant, and so not having a resemblance to one of their supposed parents.

And so those that kept the word of the LORD were as his children, they were faithful to his character, and those who did not, weren't.

And so godliness was being as a child of God would be, through faithfulness to him, as one born under his covenant would be.

And so it was only through the words of the LORD that godliness could be produced. Just as outside of the marriage covenant one can only be a child of whoredoms.

And so as David cries out that the godly are ceasing, God offers the needed cure. He offers his words, the words of his prophets, that are so necessary in producing godliness. It is only when they enter into our hearts and conceive within us, making us children of God, that we become the godly seed.

And so by opening up this dispensation of his words, God is providing a ministry that will work in the hearts of the people to produce many more godly men.

FAITHFUL

David also says that the faithful are failing.

The faithful are those who are trustworthy, they're wholly committed to following God, they don't have a double-standard, they are just, they speak constantly, they are of a pure and single heart.

We did a study on faith and faithfulness before we started Psalm 12. And what we discovered was, as silly as it might sound, that faith is the thing that, when you are full of it, makes you faithful. Faith is fidelity. Faith is being fully conformed to something. Like being fully conformed to the truth of God in what you believe, having faith in what God said. Your beliefs then match what God said, there is a singleness there, a faithfulness there.

And so faith is having your beliefs—and also, as a natural result, your thoughts and actions—conformed to the truth of God.

And so when David is lamenting that the faithful are failing, at the most basic level that faithfulness he is talking about is consistency, trustworthiness, standing by your word. But of course the ultimate measure of faithfulness is being faithful to the truth of God, to the covenant of God, to his character. And that is godliness. And so you can see how these two are connected.

And the solution here again, is the word of God.

Because faithfulness, having faith toward God, comes through the word.

We cannot know the truth of God but by his word of truth.

And so it says, in Romans 10:17, “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

And so the solution to the lack of faithfulness, is the word of God.

Because it not only plants the seed of faith in men's hearts, so that they will be faithful to God, but it also as a natural result makes them faithful generally.

In Titus 1:9 it calls the word the “faithful word.” And so because that word is faithful, by them becoming faithful to it, they will also become outwardly faithful, they'll be more consistent in all things.

Because that word is internally consistent, because it is single, as they put their faith in it, they will become single-hearted. They won't gyrate back and forth, serving two masters, but in faithfulness to God's word, they will also become faithful to their fellow man. They'll be more consistent, and more trustworthy.

FAIL

David was concerned that the faithful would fail from among men.

And God's word prevents that, not just by its ability to make men faithful, but because it will do that to all generations; the word itself will not fail:

Luke 16:17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to **fail**.

And so the word is a good preservative of the faithful, not just because it can increase their numbers, but because it is always present, ever performing that ministry.

It cannot fail, and so neither will the faithful.

He says there that it would be easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for the word of God to fail.

Now, if that happened, if heaven and earth were to pass, that would mean that all life on this planet would be destroyed.

And yet he said that the law would not be destroyed. Not one tittle of it.

If this entire planet and everything on it were destroyed, somewhere, somehow, the words of God would be preserved.

You say, "Well of course, it would be up in heaven." Well, I don't think that's what he's talking about. I think he's talking about a copy of the word of God being preserved somewhere in this physical universe. That would somehow escape from the destruction of earth, and continue to give witness to the Creator.

But if that were to happen, there'd have to be somebody who was keeping it, who was preserving it, right? There'd have to be some faithful people out there, who were keeping the word of God, and somehow escaped the destruction of earth.

And so I think that what he's saying here, is that if heaven and earth were to pass; if there were to be a super-atomic explosion, and the planet was turned into a fire-ball; if an asteroid impacted the earth and this whole planet was destroyed; somewhere, somehow, God would preserve some faithful and upright people, who were keeping his words, and they'd escape the destruction, and the words of the LORD would be preserved.

Because you see, one day, that's exactly what God is going to do. He's going pour out his wrath on this earth, and utterly destroy earth, and heaven, and all the elements. And they will melt and pass away.

And yet the godly seed will continue. They will not be destroyed. And the words of the LORD, which they keep, will continue for ever.

And so the faithful, and the word which they keep, and which keeps them, will not fail. Even when heaven and earth pass away.

In Isaiah 57 it speaks of how God would use the word to heal Israel. He would do that instead of pouring out all his wrath, lest man should fail from before him:

Isaiah 57:13 When thou criest, let thy companies deliver thee; but the wind shall carry them all away; vanity shall take them: but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain;

14 And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should **fail** before me, and the souls which I have made.

So God is not going to pour out all his wrath, because if he did he'd end up destroying the souls that he had made, and they'd fail from before him.

But he's going to hold back, and so there will be some that will be preserved. Those that put their trust in him will possess the land, and inherit his holy mountain.

Those are the faithful.

Now he explains how he's going to do this, how he's going to cut off his wrath, and preserve man, despite the wickedness that has made him so angry:

17 For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him: I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart.

This is right in line with these last few Psalms. God was angry because of their covetousness and their froward heart.

That's like in Psalm 10, where it talked about how the wicked blessed the covetous, and the people's hearts weren't prepared for salvation yet, they were froward.

Well, God was angry with them for that, and wanted bring punishment and destroy them.

But he said he's not going to do that, right? Instead he's going to somehow cut off his wrath and preserve a godly seed that will dwell with him in eternity.

18 I have seen his ways, and will heal him: I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners.

So he's going to heal them somehow. Now here's how he'll do it:

19 I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.

That's very like Psalm 12 isn't it? God get's all set up to give the solution to the problem, the cure for the people's wickedness, and then he doesn't say how he'll do it. He just talks about his words.

But you see, the words are the solution. The words are the cure. The words of the LORD is how God takes these people with lying tongues and froward hearts, and transforms them into his children.

Just as he's set out to do that in Psalm 12, God was doing the very same thing in Isaiah.

That's the ministry that he gave to the prophets.

And so instead of pouring out all his wrath, God supplemented it with his words. And as a result all the souls of men didn't fail. A faithful people would be preserved.

And preserved for ever. Even when heaven and earth shall pass away.

20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

And yet the wicked who walked on in the way of the ungodly would perish. There would be no peace for them, God would pour wrath upon them, and they'd be destroyed.

And that ending again reminds us of Psalm 12, doesn't it? After describing God's work of preservation through his word, Psalm 12 ends with a declaration of the wickedness of the people in exalting vile men.

And so here too it ends with a warning to the wicked, to heed the words of the LORD, be tried and purified by them, and made the faithful children of God, or else they would be destroyed.

So the words of the LORD are the cure for the failing of the faithful. The word of God creates faithfulness, both general faithfulness and faith toward God, faithfulness to him.

And it doesn't just do that today, but it prevents the faithful from ever failing, because it is always there, in every generation, performing that ministry. And it cannot be destroyed. Not even by destroying this earth.

Verse 2

VANITY

Now it says that they speak vanity every one with his neighbor. That brings us back to a related passage that we looked at when we were first going through these earlier verses in this Psalm.

Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

So they are asking why the LORD has not brought them salvation. And God gives them the reason.

David asked that same question in Psalm 10. And God gave him much the same response.

David asked why God was standing afar off in times of trouble. Why he didn't hear their cry and bring perfect salvation to all of the oppressed.

And David's conclusion was:

Psalms 10:17 LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear...

The oppressed thought that God didn't hear their cry. But he did.

The reason that he wasn't responding wasn't because he didn't hear.

As it said here in Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear...

But it was because their hearts were not prepared, that God did not hear them.

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Now, one day God would cause his ear to hear, but not until they cried out to him with a perfect heart.

And so here in Isaiah they have the same problem. They are calling out to God, but not with a perfect heart. And because of their iniquities he will not hear.

3 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness.

4 None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in **vanity**, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.

And so just as in Psalm 12 it said that they spoke vanity with their neighbors, they're doing the same thing here in Isaiah.

Even while they call out to God, asking why he hasn't saved them, they are still trusting in the lying and vain words of man to deliver them.

And that's why they're not being saved.

Now skipping down to verse 11:

11 We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us.

So again, they are crying out before God, but he isn't bringing salvation, because they are still trusting in vanity.

12 For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them;

13 In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood.

So they had departed from the LORD, and were speaking oppression and revolt, and words of falsehood. That sounds a lot like the description that David gave of his oppressors in earlier Psalms, doesn't it?

14 And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.

15 Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.

So those that became upright in heart, those that departed from evil, were being destroyed. Just like in Psalm 11.

And God says that he *is* indeed very displeased by this. He *is* very displeased that there is oppression instead of judgement.

So why then doesn't he deliver them yet? Why does he wait?

Well, he explains that:

16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

Why hasn't he delivered them? Because it is *him* that will deliver them. And they aren't seeking him alone, they aren't crying out to him with a perfect heart. They are still trusting in vanity and lying words. And so his salvation cannot come yet.

If it did come right now, he'd have to destroy many of them as well, because they have all become oppressors. And he cannot bring them deliverance.

But God will bring perfect salvation. As it said in Psalms 10, "LORD, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear: To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress."

He is going to bring salvation, he will prepare them. But they aren't prepared yet.

Now he describes what it will be like when he does that, when he brings salvation:

17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

18 According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies; to the islands he will repay recompence.

19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

20 And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD.

And so he will bring judgement, and they will be redeemed.

And so there will be those that turn from transgression in Jacob. There will be those who cease to trust in vanity, and who cry out to God with a perfect heart for salvation, and then he will hear. But what about the mean time? What do the oppressed do until that day comes? How will their hearts be prepared?

He answers that question:

21 As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.

And so God has made a covenant here with all of the oppressed of Israel, with all those who were crying out to him for judgement.

And that covenant is that he will preserve the words that he has put in their mouth to their seed from generation to generation, from henceforth and for ever.

And so just as in Psalm 12, God has given them his words to keep them until the day of salvation.

And he will preserve those words, until one day the people's hearts have been fully prepared, and all of the oppressed call out to him with one heart for salvation. And then he will hear, and bring his deliverance.

And so when the people were trusting in the vanity of lying words for salvation, God gave them his own words, so that they might trust in them alone, and might call out to him alone for salvation will all of their hearts.

Those words would turn them from transgression that they might be delivered from judgment.

And that's exactly what was needed here in Psalm 12. The people needed to be turned from their words of vanity unto godliness, so that the foundations of salvation would be upheld.

NEIGHBOR

It said, in Psalm 12, that they had been speaking that vanity every man with his neighbor.

And what that meant was that they weren't even speaking the truth with their own neighbors, with their own brothers.

The people couldn't even trust their own neighbors. And yet through their lying words they hoped to procure salvation.

But nothing good could come of that. In the end they'd just receive destruction instead.

Proverbs 11:9 An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his **neighbour**: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

And so God is giving wisdom and knowledge to the just here in his word in these Psalms, so that they will not take heed to their hypocritical neighbors.

They won't trust in their neighbors' words of vanity, and won't partake in their rebellion against the kingdom.

And so they'll be delivered from their neighbors' deception, and from taking part in, not the salvation, but the destruction, of the kingdom.

And so the words of the LORD will give the just knowledge, and save him from turning from his uprightness aside into the way of the ungodly.

This same thing was taking place in the time of Jeremiah.

In Jeremiah chapter 23 it talks about how there were those that claimed to be prophets, who would try to deceive the people with lying words. They would speak lies and vanity every one to their neighbors.

Jeremiah 23:25 I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.

26 How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart;

27 Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his **neighbour**, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.

So these false prophets would tell dreams every one to their neighbor, to try to cause the people to forget the name of the LORD.

They were prophesying lies, the deceit of their own heart, to deceive the people and turn them from God.

28 The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

So God says, "No, no. You don't speak words of vanity in my name. You don't speak lies in my name. Because that won't compare with the true words of the LORD."

He compares the words of these false prophets to chaff. And in Psalm 1 it said that the ungodly were like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

God is telling them that their words are going to be shown for what they are. They aren't going to endure. They are going to fade away.

But not his word. His word is like the wheat, that is preserved, and is planted, and brings forth fruit, generation after generation.

So those that know the true words of the LORD, won't be fooled by these false prophets.

Because their words will not compare with the true words of God, and they'll ultimately perish.

29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

God says his word is like fire. Maybe like the fire that burns up the chaff.

Or like the fire of the furnace of earth, that the tried and pure words of God proceed from.

30 Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his **neighbour**.

These prophets were stealing their words from their neighbor. They weren't getting the words from God himself, they were just repeating what somebody else said.

But it was all just lies. "They speak vanity every one with his neighbor."

31 Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith.

32 Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.

And this won't profit the people. They won't be saved by the words of these prophets, just because they prophesy it. They're speaking vanity out of their own heart, not out of the mouth of the LORD.

And in the end, the people who follow them will be like the chaff, just like those words which their prophets have spoken. And when salvation comes, they'll be driven away.

But those that know the true words of the LORD will be delivered. They won't partake in this deception, or be fooled by these false prophets.

Because the knowledge of the true words of the LORD will demonstrate to them that these prophets are speaking lies.

They'll compare the chaff to the wheat, and they'll see the difference.

They've known the word out of the furnace, and they'll know that the words spoken by these liars are not from the mouth of the LORD.

And so God's word will keep them from being fooled by their neighbors, or repeating their words of vanity. They'll speak the true words of God instead.

And that's exactly what God's word needed to do for the people here in Psalm 12, as they were speaking vanity every man with his neighbor.

They needed to be delivered from their neighbor's deceptions, and from partaking in that deception.

And so God gave David his pure words, tried in the furnace, that would expose the wicked words of the people for what they were: vanity, that wouldn't profit them at all.

It also talks about that in Jeremiah 9. That's another passage that we've looked at before, but we'll take a quick look at it again:

Jeremiah 9:1 Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

2 Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men.

3 And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.

4 Take ye heed every one of his **neighbour**, and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every **neighbour** will walk with slanders.

5 And they will deceive every one his **neighbour**, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity.

6 Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD.

7 Therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?

8 Their tongue is as an arrow shot out; it speaketh deceit: one speaketh peaceably to his **neighbour** with his mouth, but in heart he layeth his wait.

9 Shall I not visit them for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

So every man would deceive his neighbor and his brother. And because they've become so wicked God has no choice but to try them.

And he's going to remove all of the dross, by the wicked being slain and destroyed.

Skipping down now to verse 22:

22 Speak, Thus saith the LORD, Even the carcasses of men shall fall as dung upon the open field, and as the handful after the harvestman, and none shall gather them.

So he's going to take all the dross and slay it.

But remember, this is a trying, a purifying. And so he isn't going to kill them indiscriminately. He is only going to slay the dross.

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

Because none of these things will deliver them in the day of the trial:

24 But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

And so what *will* deliver them is knowledge and understanding.

As it said in Proverbs 11:9 An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through **knowledge** shall the just be delivered.

Now God's going to describe this a second way, so that it is clear for us:

25 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will punish all them which are circumcised with the uncircumcised;

26 Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the children of Ammon, and Moab, and all that are in the utmost corners, that dwell in the wilderness: for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in the heart.

And so God is going to punish all of the uncircumcised in heart, and only those whose hearts have been circumcised, only those that know and understand the LORD, will be delivered.

And so, we see that the words of the LORD are what is needed there. Because what is needed is purification of the heart, for something to be removed. And that's the ministry that the words of the LORD have, a ministry of purification.

And so the words of the LORD can circumcise the heart, by purification through the knowledge of God.

And through that the just will be delivered. Delivered from the deceit of their neighbor, delivered from walking with their neighbor in the way of the ungodly, and even delivered and brought through the trial of affliction when it comes.

And so the words of the LORD are the solution to the words of vanity that the house of Israel was speaking every one to his neighbor, in Psalm 12.

LIPS

It says also that they were speaking with flattering lips.

Proverbs 17:3 The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.

We've seen in Psalm 12 how God gives the tried silver of his word, to try the hearts of men and produce the gold of faith.

Those that take heed to the words of the LORD will be tried by them, and made pure.

But he contrasts that with this:

4 A wicked doer giveth heed to false **lips**; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

So those who haven't been purified by the words of the LORD, but walk in a wicked way, they will give heed to false lips. They'll be deceived by a vile man and his wicked words. But those that have been tried by the words of the LORD will not be fooled by false lips.

So the words of the LORD are what is needed to purify the people, so they won't take heed to the false lips of these vile men that are being exalted here in Psalm 12.

Now what kind of things would these false lips be saying, to try to deceive the people? Well, it talks about that later in Proverbs:

Proverbs 24:1 Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.
2 For their heart studieth destruction, and their **lips** talk of mischief.
3 Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:
4 And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.
5 A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.
6 For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

So Solomon admonishes his son not to take heed to the lips of evil men, not to be envious of them or to be with them. Because the end result of that, and their end goal, is not to make the kingdom strong and rich, it is actually to take power to themselves by mischief and destruction. The only way to increase the strength and riches of the kingdom is by the wisdom and knowledge of God.

And so the words of the LORD can establish the kingdom, and save it from destruction by those whose lips talk of mischief.

Proverbs 26:23 Burning **lips** and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with **silver dross**.
24 He that hateth dissembleth with his **lips**, and layeth up deceit within him;
25 When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for there are seven abominations in his heart.
26 Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the whole congregation.
27 Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.
28 A lying tongue hateth those that are afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

So those with burning lips have seven abominations in their heart. They are like silver dross. And what they need is to go through seven purifications, and get the dross of those abominations removed, right?

And that's exactly what the word of God can do for them, because it is purified seven times, as pure silver, with no dross.

And so those pure words can purify the people, and remove the dross of their wicked words from them.

And so they will cease from their burning lips, and not end up being destroyed and brought to ruin by their lying tongues.

And so again the word of God is the cure for what ails Israel in Psalm 12.

DOUBLE HEART

So he said that they speak with flattering lips and a double heart. Now, having a double heart is the opposite of having an upright heart. It is the opposite of faith. Faith is single. It is wholly conformed to one thing. But the faithful are failing from among men, and the people are becoming double-hearted. And we've already seen the solution for that. It's the words of God. The words of God produce faith.

Do you remember that passage in Deuteronomy 32, that was a song that God gave Moses to teach the children of Israel? And God did that so that when the children of Israel rebelled against him and were carried captive, that song would still be remembered by them, and it would show them their wickedness and turn them back to him. In one place in that song it talks about how they became children in whom was no faith. They stopped following the LORD wholly and went after strange gods. But this song was able to restore faith to them once more, and bring them back. And so listen to what Moses said when he gave the song to them:

Deuteronomy 32:44 And Moses came and spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and Hoshea the son of Nun.

45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel:

46 And he said unto them, Set your **hearts** unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law.

47 For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

And so Moses told them to set their hearts to the words of that song. Because it would produce faith in them. It would make them faithful in heart, instead of double in heart. And through that their days would be prolonged on the land, and their seed would be preserved.

And so the word of God would turn them from being double-hearted, and make them faithful. And that would happen through a song. And so now God is giving David many more songs, that through them once again Israel's hearts can be made faithful.

Verse 3

So God is going to cut off lips that speak like this. In Malachi chapter 2 where it talked about how many of the people weren't being godly, how even the prophet and the priest weren't producing a godly seed, how they were committing adultery, God warned them:

Malachi 2:12 The LORD will **cut off** the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts.

And so God would cut off those that refused to be faithful to his covenant, who refused to be faithful to their wives. Those who refused to produce a godly seed. And they would be destroyed.

And that's what will happen to all those that rebel against the LORD's anointed, and seek to bring their own salvation. Their wicked lips will be cut off.
But there is a solution for that.

2 Samuel 23:1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,
2 The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my **tongue**.

And so God gave his words to David, and put them in his tongue.
And through that God provided pure words that the people could take up into their lips, and speak with their tongue, instead of speaking words that would get their tongue cut out.
And because the people did that, the kingdom was preserved, instead of them being cut off.

3 The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.
4 And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.
5 Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

And so David relates this to the covenant of God to preserve his children on the throne of the kingdom, and bring the people salvation.
It is only because of the words that David was given by the Spirit of God that that covenant was upheld and made sure.

6 But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands:
7 But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place.

And so the kingdom was preserved by the purifying of the tongues of the people by the words of the LORD, which he gave to David.
But those sons of Belial who refused those words, and continued to rebel against the kingdom, would eventually be destroyed, and burned up with fire.

So God responded to the proud tongues of the people, and their flattering lips, by giving them his words. And when they spoke them instead of their own wicked words, they were delivered from the wicked, and their kingdom was preserved.

Proverbs 10:20 The **tongue** of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

So here he compares the tongue of the just to silver. In Psalms 12 verse 6 it compared the words of the LORD to silver.
So if the tongue of the just is as silver, then they must speak the words of the LORD. The just speak words of the LORD's wisdom, the silver of the word of God, not the words of the wisdom of men.

So he says that the tongue of the just is as choice silver. It is valuable, it is profitable. It speaks words that profit.

But as for the wicked, their tongues don't speak profitable words, they don't speak the wisdom of God.

In fact, he says that not only is that not in their tongue, but the root cause of that is that it isn't in their heart. He compares the tongue of the just to silver, but then says that "the heart of the wicked is little worth."

Now he explains what he means by that:

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.

Righteous lips, lips that speak wisdom, that proclaim the words of the LORD, they feed and preserve many.

But fools, when they refuse to hear it, when they refuse wisdom, refuse the word of God, perish. They are not preserved. Their foolishness will destroy them.

Do you see how important it was for Israel to take up God's words into their mouths? It was literally a life or death situation.

Either the lips of the righteous would speak the wisdom of God, and the kingdom and the people would be preserved, or if they became fools and took up the speech of the wicked, they would die. The kingdom and the godly seed, and the hope of salvation, would perish.

22 The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

If they are seeking riches and wealth and prosperity, the way to get that is not by seeking riches. It is by seeking the LORD, by seeking the words of the LORD, and walking in them, that they may be blessed.

As it said in Psalm 1, blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates in it day and night.

And if they do that, if they meditate on the words of the LORD, they will have his wisdom, and receive his blessing, and have riches without sorrow.

But if they seek riches without the LORD's blessing, through the foolish words of the wicked, they may end up with riches, but in the end they'll have sorrow as well, and they'll perish.

23 It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

You see, even once they get the riches, they'll continue to be fools, they'll continue to do mischief. It is like a sport to them. They just like to get into mischief. And sooner or later that will catch up with them, and they'll have sorrow with their riches.

24 The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

There is coming a time when God's salvation will come. The wicked won't seek that, they don't want that. In fact, they fear it.

But the righteous desire it. For them it is salvation. But for the wicked, it is judgement.

Becoming an oppressor, becoming wicked, to secure their own salvation, would turn the LORD's salvation from a desire to a fear, when it comes.

25 As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.

The ungodly perish, but the godly are preserved.

And he calls the righteous here the everlasting foundation, just as it did in Psalm 11.

The wicked tried to destroy those foundations, but they couldn't. Because those foundations are everlasting, kept by the words of the LORD.

It goes on to say in verse 31 that:

31 The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward **tongue** shall be cut out.

So the tongue of the righteous is like choice silver, it speaks the words of the LORD. But the froward tongues of the wicked will be cut out.

Just as it says here in Psalm 12, "The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things."

So the cure for the wicked tongues of the people, was to make them like choice silver, by them speaking the words of the LORD. The silver words of the LORD.

And through that, instead of dying for lack of wisdom, they'd be preserved through the knowledge of God.

Verse 4

PREVAIL

So the people are saying that they will be able to prevail with their own tongues. That they will win the battle over their oppressors, and bring themselves deliverance.

They think that they will prevail with their flattering lips, and that nothing can stop them.

But if that were true, that would be very bad. If that were true it would mean that they would be unstoppable in their quest to destroy the seed so vital to their salvation.

But it wasn't true. There was something against which they could not prevail.

Again, Jeremiah had a similar experience.

Here is what it says in Jeremiah 15, where the prophet cries out to God that it seems like men with wicked words are going to overcome him, and God gives him a response.

Jeremiah 15:15 O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

So there are those who are persecuting and speaking against Jeremiah.

And he fears that they are going to destroy him.

16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

But Jeremiah has the words of the LORD. God gave him his word, and he has eaten it, and rejoiced in it.

How could God let such a man be destroyed by his enemies?

17 I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation.

Jeremiah didn't walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful, the assembly of the mockers. He delighted and rejoiced in the word of the LORD.

18 Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?

Will God forsake him?

19 Therefore thus saith the LORD, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me: and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them.

20 And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not **prevail** against thee: for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

21 And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

And so God tells Jeremiah that he will not fail. His enemies will not prevail over him. As long as he continues to perform the ministry that God has given him, God will be with him, and deliver him.

And so it was in the days of David.

David had many enemies that fought against him, but God promised him that he would deliver him from them all.

And he gave him a ministry of his words, against which the words of ungodly men could not prevail.

And so the people were made upright. And taking those words up into their own mouth, they were established, and preserved, and the wicked could not prevail against them.

And so the foundations were upheld.

So in conclusion, the ministry of the words of the LORD was the cure for what ailed the people. The godly were ceasing—and it's the word that reaches into your heart, conceives within you, and makes you godly, as a child of God.

The faithful were failing—and the word, itself being faithful, produces faith toward God in men, and makes them faithful, trustworthy and consistent. And it will never allow them to fail, because it cannot fail, but endures for ever, even when heaven and earth shall pass away.

The people were speaking vanity, words that would not profit them—but God gave them his words, which could profit them. Which could prepare their hearts to cry out to him alone for salvation. And then they would be delivered.

They were speaking these lying words every one with his neighbor—but the wisdom and knowledge of God in his words would deliver them. Deliver them from taking part in this, from speaking these lying words, and from being deceived by the flattering words of those around them.

They were speaking with flattering lips—but the word of God can purify their hearts, and take away the dross from their lips.

They were double-hearted—but the word of God could try them, and make them faithful and single in heart.

Their proud tongues were to be cut off—but God gave them the silver of his words, that they might speak, to make their tongues like choice silver. And so instead they, and the kingdom, were preserved.

The people were attempting to prevail with the words of the wicked—but God stopped them by giving his words to the righteous, against which the ungodly could not prevail.

And so in the words of the LORD, God gave to David in a single package all that was needed to uphold the foundations, purify the people, preserve the seed, establish the kingdom, and maintain the promise of perfect salvation.