

Psalm 12

We've been looking at how wicked men have been exalted among the people, and how the people were adopting their wicked speech in order to deliver themselves from oppression. God had given them David, his anointed, to be their deliverer, but they were rejecting him, rejecting the seed of the Savior, in an attempt to bring their own salvation. And so the people had become double-hearted. They were liars and flatters, speaking vanity to their neighbors. The godly and faithful were failing.

And when David saw this, he cried out to God, and asked him to do something about it. To uphold the foundations of salvation, to not allow the godly seed, and the seed of promise, to fail. Because if that were to happen, if the seed that God had said that deliverance would come through, were to be destroyed, then that perfect salvation from every oppressor could never come.

And so David asked God to intervene, and God did. He gave David his pure words of the Psalms, that would perform a ministry of purifying the hearts of the people, and make them godly and upright, and prepare them for salvation. And so through faithfulness to God, and that wisdom and knowledge revealed to them in his word, they would be delivered from the deception of the wicked, and from taking part in what would only be the destruction of salvation. And so God opened up what was to be just the beginning of a dispensation of his words through the prophets, a dispensation of prophecy. And though that the godly seed would be strengthened and preserved until the Savior came.

Today I want to look at how this relates to the time when that Savior ultimately did come. We'll see how the words of the LORD, and their ministry of purification and preservation, was involved there. So we're going to look at some prophetic passages, and some of the things that Jesus said, so that we can understand how these same principles were at work there. How Psalm 12 is prophetic, or is parallel in many ways, to many of the things that were happening in the generation at the time of Christ.

The first passage that I want to look at is Proverbs chapter 30.

Now, in Proverbs 30 verse 5 it says, "Every word of God is **pure**: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him."

And so it talks about the purity of the word of God there, and that fits right in with Psalm 12:6. But I want us to look at the broader context of that, because this is right in the middle of a prophecy, one that I have never really understood before.

And yes, there is prophecy in the book of Proverbs. And this is by no means the only place. We've looked at some prophetic parts of Proverbs 1 as we were going through earlier psalms.

Proverbs 30:1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

So it tells us that this is a prophecy.

Now, when I've looked at that before, I've thought that it must be using a slightly different meaning than the way that we regularly define prophecy.

I figured that what it really meant was that this was some wisdom from God in the form of a parable, not actually prophecy of the future.

But what we have here is in fact a prophecy of Christ.

2 Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.
3 I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

This is a description of Christ.

Christ was not highly educated. He wasn't instructed in the law.

He was the son of a lowly carpenter. And probably called a bastard at that.

He never went to Torah school, or was instructed by the priests. He never even learned to read. John 7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

The people in his hometown didn't understand how he could teach from a book, because they knew that he couldn't read.

So, he was just a backwoods boy from out in the sticks.

There was no reason for the religious leaders to pay any attention to him.

4 Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

Okay, so he's an ignorant. But what do you really know that he doesn't? If you're so smart, tell me this.

Have you ascended up into heaven or descended? Did you create the world? Do you know by whom God made all things? Do you know who it is he was talking to when he said "let *us* make man in *our* image"? Do you know the name of GOD's Son?

Well, if you don't know any of these things, then is this guy so much more ignorant than you?

And if he says he does know these things, then maybe you ought to sit up and listen.

If he has ascended up into heaven, or descended down to earth from heaven, then he doesn't need your knowledge and to be taught the tradition of the elders. He has knowledge straight from God himself.

If he is the one who made all things, he doesn't need your learning. So maybe he is ignorant as a man, but if his name is that name which only God knows, the name of his Son, then he doesn't need to be taught by men.

No matter how ignorant he is as a man, he has the knowledge of God by his Spirit.

5 Every word of God is **pure**: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

So this man doesn't have man's wisdom and knowledge. But he is claiming to have some knowledge beyond that.

If you disagree with him, you're not smarter than he is about that. You don't know more than he does.

So you can't say, "No, you're wrong." Because on these things you're just as ignorant as every other man that ever lived.

And so if you want to know whether he is telling the truth, if you want to know whether he really is who he said he is, then you need to set aside your own wisdom. And take up the wisdom that did descend down from heaven, that did come from the one who made the earth, from the Holy One of Israel.

Check what he is saying against the word of God. Because we know that the word of God is pure. And if what he is saying matches up, if he fulfills the prophecy that is there, then no matter how ignorant he is, no matter how brutish he is, if what he is saying is true, then he has knowledge beyond what any other man has ever had. Not the knowledge of a man, but the

knowledge of God, because his Spirit was not created when he was conceived, but descended down from the bosom of the Father.

So just put your trust in God, put your trust in his words, in his wisdom. Because he is a shield to those that put their trust in him. If you trust in God's words, you don't need to worry about being deceived by a false Christ. If he is lying, your trust in God and his word will be your shield. So stop trying to hide behind your own wisdom, and place your trust wholly in God and his pure words instead.

And they will show whether this man is the Christ or not.

If he isn't they'll show it, and you'll be shielded from his deception.

And if he is, then you just need to trust God, and trust his pure words, which this man fulfills.

And so what we have here is some prophetic advice for the generation at the time of Christ. It is advising them not to reject him out of hand, not to discount him just because they think he is ignorant.

But instead, they need to consider the pure words of the LORD. And if they do that, they'll see whether he is truly the Christ or not.

And this is in fact exactly what Christ admonished them to do.

John 5:39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

So he told them to consider what the word of God says, to judge him by that, whether he was the Christ or not.

But they wouldn't do that. They refused to do that. When they came to him and asked him to prove that he was Christ, they'd ask him to show them a sign from heaven. They wouldn't ask him to show it to them based on scripture.

They simply refused to do that.

Why? Very simple:

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

They simply didn't believe the scriptures. They didn't believe the word of God.

It is hard for us to grasp that. It is hard for us to swallow that sometimes.

These are the scribes, the teachers of the law, how could they not have believed it?

But it's true, they weren't trusting in God, they weren't trusting in his word. They refused to do that.

Just as at the time of David, the people were trusting in their own words, in their own wisdom, instead of the words of the LORD, so were the religious leaders at the time of Christ.

6 Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

They didn't trust in the words of God alone. They trusted in God's word *and* the words of man, God's word *and* the tradition of the elders.

They were warned here not to add to the word of God, that it was pure and they shouldn't add anything to it, just to consider the pure words of God.

They were warned here that if they did add to God's word they might not recognize the Christ when he came. That if they judged him by their own words, by their own wisdom, instead of by the word of God alone, they might reject him.

They were warned here that if they added to his words, he would reprove them.

And that's exactly what happened:

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

So Christ rebuked the religious leaders of that generation for this very thing.

They didn't believe the Bible. They only believed their denominational doctrines. They only really trusted the traditions of men. They didn't trust God alone and his word alone.

And so they ended up rejecting the Christ.

You see how this is very similar to what was happening in David's day?

In Psalm 12, the people were rejecting the LORD's anointed savior. Just as that generation rejected Christ.

And they did that because they wanted to add their own words to God's words. They didn't reject God's word outright, they just didn't trust in it alone for salvation. They trusted in their own words as well. Just as in Psalm 12 the people were trusting in their own words to deliver them, and not trusting in God with a perfect heart.

And as a result of that, in Psalm 12, they were in danger of destroying the seed of the Messiah, the seed through which the Savior would come.

And that is exactly what happened to the generation alive at the time of Christ. Those that didn't trust in the word of God alone destroyed the One who was supposed to bring them salvation.

Just as in Psalm 12, they thought that they could prevail with their own words:

Luke 23:23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests **prevailed**.

And so they prevailed, with their own words. They thought that they prevailed, that they successfully saved the nation of Israel from ruin, as they destroyed their Savior.

And so they did it, just as the people in Psalm 12 were doing it, with the belief that they were actually bringing deliverance.

John 11:47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

And so they believed that by killing Christ, they were saving the nation of Israel.

And they were. But not from oppression.

And so Israel has never been delivered from oppression. Israel has never had peace. And never will, until their hearts are prepared, they cry out to God alone, and he brings their salvation.

We'll get to that next time.

But do you see how similar this is to what was going on in Psalm 12? How the problem was the same.

And the solution was the same too. But many of them rejected it.

But you see, those that had the pure words of the LORD, those that trusted in those words alone, in the wisdom of God alone, they believed in the Christ.

And by those words they were born again, and were saved.

And so there was a godly seed, which did indeed become the children of God.

7 Two things have I required of thee; deny me them not before I die:

8 Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

9 Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Here is what they should ask, here is what they should seek, if they want to be prepared to accept the Messiah when he comes.

First, to be removed far from vanity and lies. Vanity and lies, that's the very same thing that David has talked about in Psalm 12, that the people were speaking. They were speaking vanity. And that precluded salvation from coming. To receive perfect salvation, they needed to stop speaking vanity every one with their neighbor, and speak the pure words of the LORD instead. And that's what the people are being advised to do here, if they want to receive salvation when the Savior comes.

Now at the same time they should seek not to be rich or poor. And this is connected to their speech.

They don't want to be poor, lest they turn from God and seek to bring their own salvation. And they don't want to be rich, lest they turn from God, and oppress, and trust in their riches. In either of those cases, they will be tempted to speak vanity and lies. And if they do that, they won't be able to receive salvation when it comes. They'll trust in man and his wisdom and his words, instead of in the word of God alone, and they'll end up rejecting the Messiah.

And this is exactly what happened to some of them.

You remember the rich young ruler who came to Jesus?

Mark 10:17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

So Jesus tells him to keep the commandments. To trust in the word of God.

But this man doesn't want to do that. Obviously this man doesn't trust in the word of God alone for his salvation. If he did he'd be keeping the commandments *and* waiting for the Savior to come to bring him deliverance. Crying out to God, not seeking to do something himself.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

So the man says, "Yeah, yeah, I've done that, I've kept the word of God. Now what?"

You can see he isn't trusting in the word of God.

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

So Jesus loves this guy, and just lays it out for him real plain. "I'm the Messiah. I'm the one who's going to bring deliverance, and give men eternal life. If you had kept the word of God you'd know that. So if you want it, stop trusting in your riches, and trust in God instead."

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! And so we can see why God admonished them here in Proverbs 30 not to desire riches. Because if they began to trust in riches, instead of in God and his word alone, they wouldn't accept salvation when it came.

Now there were also those who were poor, who wouldn't wait for God's salvation, but wanted to bring it by their own cunning.

Rebels, insurrectionists, thieves and robbers.

Men like Barabbas. The Bible calls him an insurrectionist and a robber. Just as it says here, "lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

And so the poor were also warned not to seek to bring their own salvation, but to trust wholly in God, and in his pure words.

But Barabbas and the other Zealots didn't listen. And because of that they ended up getting the true Messiah killed.

The common people asked for Barabbas instead of Jesus. They exalted that vile man, thinking that he would be better able to bring them deliverance than the man claiming to be Christ would.

So both rich and poor rejected the Christ, rejected the pure words of the LORD, and trusting in God alone, and instead thought that they would bring their own salvation.

And again, that's the same things that were going on, both with the rich and the poor, at the time of David, in Psalm 12.

10 Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.

How many times did the scribes and Pharisees accuse Jesus's disciples to him?

And they were warned not to do that here.

Why? Because it is a foolish thing to do. You don't accuse a servant to his master. What if the servant is doing what his master told him to do? Then it is really his master that you're accusing. And he's probably not going to take kindly to that. So it is better not to meddle.

But the Pharisees couldn't resist.

And Christ cursed them because of it. One of Jesus's best rants is when the Pharisees accused his disciples of not washing their hands before they ate. And Christ went on and on for about five minutes talking about how wicked they were, how they had rejected the word of God in favor of the word of man. And because of that, all of the blood from all of the prophets would be upon them, upon that generation.

And lo and behold, that generation cursed themselves with that blood, when they cried out, "His blood be on us, and on our children."

And so, they accused the servants of the Lord to their Master, and he cursed them, and they were found guilty.

11 There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

This is the exact thing that Jesus pointed out to them when they were accusing his disciples to him:

Mark 7:9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

And so they didn't heed the commandment not to curse their father, and refused to bless their mother. Giving their money to the temple instead of doing their duty to their parents.

12 There is a generation that are **pure** in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

They are pure in their own eyes, but they refuse to be truly cleansed by the pure words of the LORD. Instead they pollute themselves with the words of men.

Luke 18:9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

So they thought that they were pure. But Christ told them this:

Matthew 23:25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

So they thought that they were clean, but they weren't. On the outside they were, but not on the inside.

They didn't think that they were extortioners. That's what the Pharisee prayed in the story that Jesus told: "I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners." But Christ said that they were full of extortion on the inside.

So they thought that they were pure, but they weren't. And if they had taken heed to the pure words of God, and not polluted themselves with the words of men, they'd have known that, and been tried and purified. But they refused.

13 There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

Jesus said that when the publican prayed, he "would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven." So the Pharisee must have lifted up his eyes when he prayed.

They were proud and lofty. Their eyes were lifted up.

(That's why they asked Christ for a sign from heaven, they wouldn't have been able to see it otherwise.)

14 There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

Mark 12:38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

And so again they were proud, and they tried to destroy the poor from off their earth. They devoured widows' houses.

They didn't seek their deliverance, but just how they could extort what little they had out of them.

And so there you have a prophecy of what Christ would be like, and what the generation at that time would be like.

And we see that that generation had the very same problems that the people had at the time of David. Because they refused the pure words of the LORD, and wanted a mixture of man's words instead, they were not washed from their filthiness. And so in their great wisdom they rejected their Savior, in favor of bringing their own deliverance through man.

And so what is happening in Psalm 12 is prophetic of what would happen at the time of Christ. The godly and faithful were again failing.

The people were experiencing oppression and were attempting to bring their own deliverance. Something that could only bring the iron fist of Rome upon them, and result in their destruction. But God provided one man that was free from all oppression, that no man could destroy until the time appointed of the Father.

And through that man the LORD opened up a new dispensation of his words, his pure words, to make men godly. To enter into their hearts and born them again, and make them his children, the seed of promise that would receive the eternal inheritance.

And so the godly didn't fail. They were preserved by the word of God. And the faith continues to this day in the church, unto all generations.

And so just like David opened up a new dispensation of the words of the LORD to purify the hearts of men, so did Christ.

David opened up a dispensation of prophecy, the prophetic cannon. Christ opened up the apostolic cannon of the NT.

Christ is the last Prophet, and first Apostle.

Remember that Moses told Israel that a great prophet was coming one day, that God would speak with mouth to mouth just as he had spoken with him:

Deuteronomy 18:15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

So there was a prophet like Moses coming, who would declare to them all the words of God.

Numbers 12:6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7 My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8 With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold...

And so that prophet, being like Moses, would get his words directly from God, having seen God talking with him, face to face.

And of course that was fulfilled when Christ, the Son of God, came to us from the bosom of the Father, and declared unto us his word.

And so it says:

Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son...

And so the prophetic cannon was closed, and a new dispensation of the words of the LORD opened up, by the Son.

And so Christ is the ultimate and final prophet.

There are no prophets receiving new canonical revelations after Christ. Not in the age of the church.

There are seers, prophets who can foretell the future by a ministry of the Spirit, but they don't receive this kind of revelation about a coming new work of God, the way that those prophets did.

There are apostles in the NT, but no prophets. Even John, when he received the Revelation, didn't prophesy in the former manner. It was Jesus himself who came and revealed all of that to John.

It was:

Revelation 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

And so Christ was the prophet who was revealing that to the church.

When Paul was ordained, he was ordained by Jesus Christ. It was Christ who told him the truth of the gospel, and who revealed that doctrine unto him.

Paul also did receive some knowledge of future events, but again that was through Christ. And in fact, God told him that he wasn't allowed to tell anybody about some of it, it wasn't lawful for a man to utter. And it wasn't revealed until later, by Christ in the Revelation. And some of it hasn't been revealed yet at all, like the seven thunders. But it currently isn't lawful for a man to reveal these things. Christ is the only one who can. He is the only prophet. The only one who could loose the seals of the book. There are no other prophets of that sort in the church.

So Christ is the final prophet. And he's also the first apostle:

Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;

2 Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house.

And so Christ, as the final prophet, and first apostle, transitioned from the prophetic to the apostolic dispensation of the words of the LORD.

Just as God opened up a new dispensation of his words though David, he again did that through Christ.

And there are many similarities between them. They perform similar ministries. Both of them reach around the veil that was upon the law, and reach into the hearts of men. They can both purify the hearts, and make men godly.

And if you will recall, when the apostles came together in Acts 15 to consider whether the Gentiles needed to keep the law, James compared this new dispensation to the one that David had opened up. And he quoted from Amos chapter 9 where it says:

Amos 9:11 In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old:

And so this was a new dispensation that purified the heart, just as the words of the Psalms that God gave to David did. And they did that without the deeds of the law.

And so the NT rebuilds that old prophetic ministry, upon a new foundation of Christ and his apostles.

Now if we look earlier, in Amos chapter 8, we find this prophecy:

Amos 8:4 Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, 5 Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit?

6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?

So they were oppressors, who were destroying the poor. They were causing the them to fail. But you'll remember that when God opened up the dispensation of prophecy, he did that to set the poor and needy in safety, and prevent the godly from failing.

7 The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. 8 Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.

9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day:

That last is exactly what happened when Christ was crucified:

Matthew 27:45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And so the earth was darkened in the middle of the day.

10 And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.

And of course that is what happened. The disciples and the followers of Christ were very sorrowful, mourning for the only begotten Son of God.

Luke 23:48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.

So they were very sorrowful and distressed.

Now here is the interesting part:

11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:

12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

So it predicted that there would come a period of time where there would be no prophecy. The ministry of the words of the LORD by the prophets would end.

And of course that is exactly what happened. After Malachi Israel went for hundreds of years without a prophet. Without any new words from the LORD.

The tabernacle of David was fallen down. It was in disrepair. The dispensation that God had first opened through David was closed.

But God then also told Amos that there would come a day when the tabernacle of David would be rebuilt, and set up again, and the dispensation of the words of the LORD reopened.

God wouldn't let the poor of the land fail by oppression, as he mentioned in verse 4. He would open another ministry of his pure words, to keep and preserve a godly seed upon the earth.

And thus that apostolic dispensation of the word of God was opened, through the Son.

And so God preserved the poor and needy.

But he would destroy the wicked:

13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.

14 They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.

And so the wicked would be cut off. And he specifically mentions Dan and Ephraim here.

Samaria was the capital of Ephraim, of the northern kingdom.

And of course that's exactly what happened, in 70 AD judgement came upon Israel.

And so when Christ later gave the Revelation to John, he omitted Dan and Ephraim from among the tribes of Israel in chapter 7. They fell, and would never rise up again.

It talks about these same things in Zechariah 13. Zechariah is one of the last prophets, just before Malachi.

Zechariah 13:1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

And so that is a picture of cleansing for sin being obtained through Christ.

2 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.

It talked about the names of the idols being destroyed in Amos 8 as well.

Here it says the same thing. And it also says that the prophets will cease.

3 And it shall come to pass, that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, Thou shalt not live; for thou speakest lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesieth.

4 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive:

5 But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman; for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.

And so just as in Amos, it says that there will come a day when there would cease to be prophets in Israel.

6 And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

So it speaks of the wounds that Christ would receive at that time.

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

8 And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.

And so as it said at the end of Amos 8, judgement will come. There will be those who will faint for thirst, and will be cut off, and fall, and never rise up again.

Now, when it said that they would faint for thirst in Amos, that was figurative of the fact that the fountain of the words of the LORD by the prophets would be closed.

There would be a famine, a thirst, for the words of the LORD, and they would not be found in any prophet.

And so without those words to cool their tongues, they would faint for thirst, and be cut off. They would be destroyed in God's judgment against his people.

And so two parts would be cut off and die. Like Dan and Ephraim, as it said in Amos 8.

But it says here that there would be some who wouldn't be destroyed. A third that wouldn't be cut off and die. That wouldn't faint for thirst.

Why? Because they would drink of that fountain that would be opened up for sin and for uncleanness. They would drink of the fountain of the words of the LORD opened up by his chief Shepherd of the flock, the great Apostle of our faith.

And so it says here in Zechariah:

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as **silver** is refined, and will try them as **gold** is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

And so that third would drink the words of the LORD, and be refined by them. And they'd be tried by them, and the gold of faith would be worked in their hearts.

And so through the silver of those words, those people that would accept them, those that would drink of that new fountain, that would not despise the lowliness of the LORD's Apostle, through those words they would be tried, purified, and preserved.

And so even when Messiah was cut off, God preserved a faithful and godly seed, through his words.

A congregation of saints against which the words of man could not prevail. And indeed against which nothing could prevail:

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not **prevail** against it.

And so the wicked, the words of man, would not prevail against the godly seed.

Now, to round things off, I want to go back and look at Malachi.

Malachi is the final prophet in the OT. And it describes the people at that time as being very similar to the way that they were when Christ eventually came. They were proud and oppressors, and wouldn't heed the words of the LORD.

We've looked several times at Malachi 2, because there it gives us a picture of who the godly are. And of course the godly are a key part of Psalm 12.

Now Malachi begins by describing their unjustness and oppression, and refusal to seek God. Chapter two begins this way:

Malachi 2:1 And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you.

2 If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings: yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.

Remember that it was ultimately the priests that killed Christ.

3 Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it.

4 And ye shall know that I have sent this commandment unto you, that my covenant might be with Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

5 My covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name.

6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

7 For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

8 But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts.

9 Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.

So they've been partial in the law, and corrupted the covenant.

They haven't done justice, they've been unfaithful to him.

Then he goes on to describe their ungodliness, and give them a picture of what godliness is:

10 Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?

11 Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god.

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.

13 And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand.

14 Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the LORD hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.

15 And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

16 For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away: for one covereth violence with his garment, saith the LORD of hosts: therefore take heed to your spirit, that ye deal not treacherously.

So he told them that they were unfaithful to their wives, and they were also unfaithful to him. They were unfaithful to his covenant, just as they were unfaithful to the marriage covenant. And as a result they are like bastards, born out of wedlock. Children of the daughter of a strange god, and not the godly seed.

So just as in Psalms, the people were turning from God, and the godly were failing. And just as in Psalms, he also finds fault with their speech:

17 Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?

So they've said, "Where is the God of judgement? His judgement's not coming." They've given up on his salvation, and have become oppressors. They've said that those that do evil are good in the sight of the LORD.

Psalms 10:11 He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.

And so they have become just like that, thinking that God doesn't see the wickedness of the wicked, and will never bring them deliverance.

But here's what God says in reply to that, in the next verse:

Malachi 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

So God's salvation will come. He will send his deliverer.

And he will refine and purify them, like gold and silver.

He will be a refiner of silver, bringing the words of the LORD out of the furnace. And if they refuse to hear those words, and continue to cling to their wicked words, judgement will come upon them.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years.

5 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts.

And so again, among their iniquities was oppression.

They forsook the hope of God's salvation and his pure word, spoke their own wicked words, and became oppressors.

Skipping now to Malachi chapter 4:

Malachi 4:4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

So God reminds them of his words, that teach them judgement and justice, that they might not oppress.

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

And so just as in Psalms, there was a problem in the heart of the people. They weren't upright in heart. They were double in heart. Claiming to serve the LORD, but not trusting him and his words for salvation.

They were prepared in heart, prepared to receive his deliverance.

And so it didn't come, and didn't come, for hundreds of years, as there was a famine in the land, a famine of the words of the LORD.

But he would send Elijah the prophet before the day of the LORD, and he would prepare their hearts, or else God would smite them with a curse.

And so that generation at the time of Christ was going to be unprepared for salvation.

Many of them were going to have given up on the LORD's salvation, and turned to their own words of wickedness instead, becoming unjust oppressors.

The godly would be failing.

But God was going to refine and purify their hearts with his pure words.

There would be two parts that would refuse that. But there would be one part, that would be pure in heart, that would have taken heed to the pure words of the LORD, and would be trusting in them alone for salvation. And they would recognize the LORD's Christ when he came, and they would believe him, and by his words, they would be born again, and be saved.

And thus the godly seed would be preserved, and continue to all generations.