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The  
Songs

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# PSALMS - The SONGS

Twelve

The LORD's pure promise to give the godly man safety  
from the ungodly man!

## READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the LORD with a read triangle.

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the LORD speaking. Highlight the word or phrase in yellow and then circle all that you have highlighted in red.

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the godly man with a green capital "G".

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the ungodly man with an orange underline.

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the words of the ungodly man with an orange "X".

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to the words of the LORD and their pronouns (such as them) the same way you marked any reference to the LORD speaking.

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every reference to time with a blue box. If the time phrase is referring to the last days or day, fill the box in with blue to differentiate it from a general time phrase.

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal slash, i.e. "black/white".

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every comparison with a pink equal sign. (I usually put the lines of the equal sign directly above, below, and attached to the word I am marking.)

Read through **Psalm 12** and mark every term of conclusion with a pink capital "T".

Read through **Psalm 12** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. The godly man cries to the LORD because of ungodly men
2. God promises to give the godly man safety from ungodly men

## READ AND ANSWER

### Psalm 12:1-4

According to the introduction, who wrote this Psalm?

Who is the speaker in this Psalm?

What is the godly man concerned about?

To what is a godly man compared?



**The psalmist is faithful to God's Word; he is a godly man,  
but he feels like he is practically alone.**

**Why?**

**Because he sees other faithful men disappearing from among the sons of men.**

**Have you ever felt that everyone seems to be turning to the evil side?**

**Romans 11:2-5**

***God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.***

***Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah,  
how he pleads with God against Israel?***

***"LORD, THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS,  
AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE."***

***But what is the divine response to him?  
“I HAVE KEPT for Myself SEVEN THOUSAND MEN  
WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.”  
In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time  
a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.***

***1 Peter 5:9  
But resist him, firm in your faith,  
knowing that the same experiences of suffering  
are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.***

**As we continue through these last days,  
the godly man will be more and more a rare breed.  
However, God has promised that we will not be alone,  
no matter how much it feels like we are.  
God has promised He will always keep a righteous remnant on the planet.  
God has promised there will always be true brethren in the world,  
even if we don’t know where they are...**

**And, according to 1 Peter, true believers are resisting Satan  
by standing firm in their faith.  
I will do the same...**

**Will you?**

What does the godly man do in his distress?

Calling on the Name of the LORD for help is the absolute only thing he can do, and it is the right thing to do. What does the godly man tell God is happening?

1.

2.

Who is the “they” in **verse 2**? (Very carefully keep everything in context.)

What do the vast majority of the sons of men do?

1.

2.

3.

In context, what group did the vast majority of the sons of men associate themselves with?

Do godly, faithful men speak falsehood to one another?

Do godly, faithful men speak with flattering lips?

Do godly, faithful men speak with a double heart?

What does the godly psalmist ask the LORD to do?

1.

2.

What have the tongues of the ungodly, faithless men said?

What have the lips of these ungodly, faithless men said?

What rhetorical question have the godless, wicked men asked?

Who is in charge over all men (and all things)?

Do the ungodly, faithless men agree that the LORD is lord over them?

Who do they obey?

## **Psalm 12:5**

Does God answer the psalmist right away?

What does the LORD say He will do?

- 1.
- 2.



**Scripture interprets Scripture...**

### **Psalm 4**

***Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness!  
You have relieved me in my distress;  
Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.  
O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach?  
How long will you love what is worthless and aim at deception?***

***Selah.***

***But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself;  
The LORD hears when I call to Him.***

***Tremble, and do not sin;  
Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still.***

***Selah.***

***Offer the sacrifices of righteousness,  
And trust in the LORD.***

***Many are saying, "Who will show us any good?"  
Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD!  
You have put gladness in my heart,  
More than when their grain and new wine abound.  
In peace I will both lie down and sleep,  
For You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.***

**On your own, using observation, compare Psalm 4 with Psalm 12.**

**Here are a few suggestions on what to compare:**

**Why the psalmist cries...  
To Whom the psalmist cries...  
The sons of men phrase...  
The words distress (4) and affliction (12)...  
The words worthless (4) and vileness/worthlessness (12)...  
The words deception (4) and falsehood (12)...  
The godly man...  
Safety and where it comes from...**

Why will the LORD arise and set the godly man in the safety for which he longs?

- 1.
- 2.

Why is the godly man longing for safety? What is his situation?

What, or who, has caused his situation?

How is the godly man described?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Who is causing the godly man to be devastated?

Who is causing the affliction of the faithful man?

Why is the faithful, godly man groaning? What does he need?



**The phrase spoken by God, “Now I will arise” is used only one other place in the Bible—Isaiah 33:10.**

**The context of Isaiah 33 is the end of the time of distress—the time when God will destroy the anti-Christ and exalt Himself.**

**Read through Isaiah 33 and note any similarities to the time period in Psalm 12.**

**Could Psalm 12 be written about the small righteous remnant during the time of the Great Tribulation—the last 3 1/2 years of Daniel’s 70th week?**

**If so, what internal context from Psalm 12 would help verify this supposition?**

#### **Psalm 12:6-8**

How are the LORD’S words described?

Is this a description about all of God’s words, or just the words of God’s answer to the godly man (from **verse 5**), or both?

Just how pure are God’s words? To what are they compared?



**Silver has the idea of all that is pure and precious.**

**The purpose of refining silver was to purify it, to remove all dross, or impurities.  
The process of refining silver was usually repeated a few times to make sure all the remaining dross was removed after the first smelting.**

**The process involved a crucible which held the silver.**

**Heat from a fire was used to smelt the silver.**

**The impurities, or dross, would rise to the top and the silversmith would remove them from the silver.**

**The silversmith would repeat this process until the silver was pure enough to reflect a picture of the silversmith when he looked down into the crucible.**

**The psalmist says that God’s words are refined seven times, which is more than any common number of times the process was used to purify silver.  
The number seven signifies completeness.**

**In other words, God’s words are completely pure, even beyond pure—  
they are spotlessly clear.**

**They contain no falsehood, flattery, or double-speak,  
contrary to the words of the ungodly faithless men.**

**God’s words are 100% pure truth.**

**God’s words can be counted on.**

**When God answered the godly man’s cry for help—it was a done deal!  
The godly man would (and will) be delivered and brought into safety.**

Do you see the contrast the psalmist is making between God’s words and the words from the lips of ungodly, faithless men?

What is the “them” referring to in **verse 7**? (Be careful. Go back to the most recent antecedent. In other words, follow the sentence backward to let it determine what the “them” is.)

What will the LORD do with His words?



**The Hebrew word for “keep” is *shamar* and means to keep, watch, and preserve.**

**God will keep His words.**

**God will watch over His words.**

**God will preserve His words.**

**God tells us in Jeremiah 1:12 that He will watch over His Word to perform it!**

Who is the “him” in **verse 7**?



**The Hebrew word for “preserve” is *natsar* and means to watch, guard, and keep.**

**God will watch over the godly man.**

**God will guard the godly man.  
God will keep the godly man.**

Who will preserve the godly man?

From what, or who, will the godly man be preserved?

For how long will the godly man be delivered and saved from ungodly men?

Until the final times when God's Messiah comes to save His people from their tribulation, what promise holds true?

Why does God's promise to watch, guard, and keep the godly man hold true?

Why does the promise need to hold true? In other words, what is going to continue right up until Messiah comes to judge the earth?

Who will walk about unopposed on this earth until Messiah comes to judge it?

What will the wicked do on the face of the earth until Messiah comes to judge?

Where will the wicked be on the face of the earth then?

Where are the wicked on the face of the earth now?

When will the wicked strut about everywhere on the face of the earth?

What is vileness?

When Messiah comes to judge earth, He will be exalted by God, the Father. Does mankind exalt Him now?

Who, or what, does mankind exalt now?

If mankind exalts himself, and if mankind exalts vileness, or worthlessness, what does that say about all of humanity currently existing at this time?

## READ AND REASON

This Psalm is like so many of the others...

At first glance many Psalms seem to simply and easily apply to the individual reader.

Can Psalm 12 be talking about our present day?

After taking a second glance, many Psalms reveal themselves to be much more complex, often identifying the audience or speaker with the nation of Israel. This information can send us back to the past—to the specific times of ancient Israel.

Can Psalm 12 be talking about a past time, perhaps the very day David wrote it?

Upon much closer examination many questions need to be asked of the text of each Psalm—interrogative questions can sometimes result in a specific historical placement for a particular Psalm.

Is Psalm 12 ultimately talking about a time in the not so distant future; perhaps the time of the Great Tribulation?

Like so many other of the Psalms, Psalm 12 seems like a possible candidate for each of the time periods: past, present, and future.

If Psalm 12 was just an open poem or song for any person, from any age or persuasion, to use when they feel distressed about their own personal situation, it would contradict the whole of Scripture which tells us there is no peace for the wicked. Psalm 12, itself, delineates between two groups of people—godly and ungodly. This Psalm cannot be for just anyone.

Does that mean this Psalm can only refer to David and is only valid as an historical document in the Bible?

The answer is, “no”.

If Psalm 12 relates to a situation that David went through (and it most certainly does), does that mean this Psalm can *only* refer to the time of its writing—the days of David?

Once again, the answer is “no”.

The Psalms are God’s Word, and therefore, many times are prophetic in nature, as well as empirical in timing. Yes, David wrote this Psalm and it applied to him and his situation at that time, but it does not end there. This Psalm, like so many of the other Psalms, and, like most of the prophecies in the Bible, is layered—in other words, it can answer, “yes”, to more than one of the time periods in question.

While we can know that David viewed himself as a godly man and definitely perceived that godly men seemed to be disappearing from the face of the earth in front of his very eyes, he could have been writing prophetically (perhaps without even knowing it) of a time of Great Tribulation ahead. In addition, if Psalm 12 is referring to the time of the Great Tribulation, we can know the godly ones are the chosen righteous remnant of the nation of Israel.

So, how do we know which is the proper interpretation? How do we know for sure? Sometimes we can find out through a repetitive process, eliminating one thing at a time of what it cannot mean, and other times we can find out through a more thorough or in-depth observation of the text.

One thing we must never do, though, is to “make” the text say what we want it to say for our own purposes.

For example, we cannot make the text refer to all people in general, when it is not. We cannot make it refer to ourselves if it is referring to the nation of Israel, or Israel’s last days righteous remnant. We cannot make any Psalm, or any part of Scripture, refer to mankind in general if it is speaking of true believers.

We also do not have the authority to decide which time period God had most in mind. We must let Scripture interpret Scripture. Sometimes we will be able to discern the timing or the audience from the text, while other times we will need to lay down our conclusions for awhile and just continue studying.

We must let the text have the first, foremost, and final say. If a time phrase suddenly rips the Psalm out of our present day “personal” reading to a distant time past, or a not too distant time future, we must not resist—instead, we must listen to it...

In this Psalm we must listen to God declaring His promise, “Now I will arise.” We must hear God saying that He will set the godly man in the safety for which he longs *now*. We cannot ignore the word *now*.

#### **Luke 24:44-45**

***Now He said to them,***

***“These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me***

***in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”***

*Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures...*

## ~ Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.  
Ask God to help you.**

**Verses 1-5**

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**Verses 6-8**

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## ~ Purpose of Psalm 12

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 12.  
The purpose simply states “why the psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

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## ~ Theme of Psalm 12

**Try giving Psalm 12 a title by identifying its theme.  
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**

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