

Psalms 26:0 ¶ A Psalm of David.

This psalm is another identified as a composition David and it reads as a prayer of commitment to his faith and a plea for God's protection.

Psalms 26:1 ¶ Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide.

Psalms 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

"reins" = "figuratively, the mind (as the interior self)"

Most translations use vindicate rather than judge to begin this psalm; and from the context, this seems to be a better choice from the Hebrew. David is making a case before the LORD that he has acted with integrity and is innocent (from the Hebrew). The reference seems to be concerning a particular time in his life. He has placed complete trust in the LORD and will continue to do so without wavering. He asks the LORD to examine him and test both his mind and his heart.

Spurgeon: "Faith is the root and sap of integrity. He who leans upon the Lord is sure to walk in righteousness."

That he calls for the LORD to examine him is very telling because elsewhere David declares that he knows that God knows what a man is thinking and what is in his heart. He is confident that the examination will prove him innocent before the LORD.

Psalms 139:2-4 "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether."

Psalms 44:21 "Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart."

This truth is both humbling and comforting to this child of God. I am so thankful for God's unconditional love and abundant mercy and grace!

NIV Commentary: "Vindication is not primarily an expression of God's righteous wrath and indignation against the wicked but a reassuring word from God."

Psalms 26:3 For thy lovingkindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth.

Psalms 26:4 I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

Psalms 26:5 I have hated the congregation of evil doers; and will not sit with the wicked.

David testifies that he has witnessed evidence of God's lovingkindness and has purposed to walk in accordance with God's will. (This psalm was obviously written before his time of moral failure.) He declares that he has not fellowshipped with those who had bad morals either in public or private. He counts as his enemy (from the Hebrew for "hated") those that are evil doers and wicked.

Generally, I would use evil and wicked interchangeably. For some reason, I decided to look them both up in Webster's and found that *evil* tends more to reference a morally corrupt character and *wicked* gives more emphasis to actions taken in connection with one's evil character.

"evil" = "Having qualities tending to injury and mischief; having a nature or properties which tend to badness... morally corrupt...."

"wicked" = "Evil in principle or practice; deviating from morality; contrary to the moral or divine law; addicted to vice or sin...."

Thought-provoking comment from Guzik: "We have little or no control over many contacts and associations in life; but of those we do, we are obligated to choose and value with a heavenly perspective, not an earthly one."

I liked Spurgeon's comments on verses 4-5: "So far from being himself an open offender against the laws of God, the psalmist had not even associated with the lovers of evil. He had kept aloof from the men of Belial. A man is known by his company, and if we have kept ourselves apart from the wicked, it will always be evidence in our favour should our character be impugned. He who was never in the parish is not likely to have stolen the corn. He who never went to sea is clearly not the man who scuttled the ship."

Psalms 26:6 ¶ I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

Psalms 26:7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

David declares that his hands are clean because he is innocent before the LORD.

I cannot help but think of how Pilate thought he could cleanse himself of any wrongdoing against Jesus by washing his hands before the people in declaration of his innocence.

Matthew 27:24 "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it."

David valued the altar as the place where he could make sacrifices and offerings to maintain his right standing before God. He did not claim to be sinless, but to be striving to walk in obedience to God's commands.

David declares that he will walk around the altar of the LORD publicly in light of his innocence and declare his praise to the LORD with thanksgiving while giving testimony of his wonderful works.

We should always be ready and willing to testify publicly to the wonderful works of God in our lives—which means that we need to recognize such works and not take them for granted as we are so often wont to do.

Psalms 26:8 LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

David loved to visit the tabernacle of God's presence; he yearned to be in the presence of God.

I so identify with David's heart. I yearn to be in the presence of God because I know that I will then be clothed in a glorious, sinless body and able to enjoy His fellowship like never before. Yes, I know that the LORD is present with me all the time in the person of the Holy Spirit; but weak flesh that I am, I yearn to see Him face to face and experience the culmination of faith.

**Psalms 26:9 Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men:
Psalms 26:10 In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is full of bribes.**

These verses are a prayer for God not to account him among the wicked men who are murderers, who make evil plans and who are ready to take bribes. That he is referencing his soul seems to be a reference to his fate at death.

David lived under the law; he was aware that the Holy Spirit could be taken away from him and was conscious of needing to keep the law to maintain a right standing before the LORD.

Psalms 51:10–11 "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."

We are so blessed to live under grace and to have the seal of the Holy Spirit as evidence that we are in right standing with the LORD because we are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

Ephesians 1:12–14 "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

2 Corinthians 5:21 "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Guzik: "Many who would never think of taking bribes from a businessman still take bribes of a sort; they take bribes from sin. A bribe simply is a reward for doing something morally wrong. Sin may bribe us with momentary pleasure, attention, fame of a sort, excitement, comfort of life, or whatever. We should never be willing to do something morally wrong because it is rewarded in some way."

Psalms 26:11 But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.

David again declares his commitment to walking in integrity to maintain moral innocence. He prays for the LORD to rescue him (from evil would be implied) and be merciful (show him kindness and favor).

Psalms 26:12 My foot standeth in an even place: in the congregations will I bless the LORD.

I think the NLT expressed it well: *"I have taken a stand, and I will publicly praise the LORD."*