

By David.

PSALM 26: 1 Judge me, LORD, for I have walked in my integrity. I have trusted also in LORD without wavering.

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The psalmist appeals to God for his integrity, and desires to be brought to the Divine test in order to have his innocence proved, Psa 26:1-3; shows that he had avoided all fellowship with the wicked, and associated with the upright, Psa 26:4-8; prays that he may not have his final lot with the workers of iniquity, Psa 26:9, Psa 26:10; purposes to walk uprightly before God, Psa 26:11, Psa 26:12.

This Psalm, and the two following, are supposed by Calmet to be all parts of one ode, and to relate to the time of the captivity, containing the prayers, supplications, complaints, and resolutions of the Israelites in Babylon. This is probable; but we have not evidence enough to authorize us to be nice on such points. See on Psa 26:1 (note).

Verse 1

Judge me, O Lord - There are so many strong assertions in this Psalm concerning the innocence and uprightness of its author that many suppose he wrote it to vindicate himself from some severe reflections on his conduct or accusations relative to plots, conspiracies, etc. This seems to render the opinion probable that attributes it to David during his exile, when all manner of false accusations were brought against him at the court of Saul.

I have walked in mine integrity - I have never plotted against the life nor property of any man; I have neither coveted nor endeavored to possess myself of Saul's crown.

I have trusted - Had I acted otherwise, I could not have been prosperous, for thou wouldst not have worked miracles for the preservation of a wicked man.

I shall not slide - I shall be preserved from swerving from the paths of righteousness and truth.

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PSALM 26: 2 Examine me, LORD, and prove me. Try my heart and my mind.

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Verse 2

Examine me, O Lord - To thee I appeal; and feel no hesitation in wishing to have all the motives of my heart dissected and exposed to thy view, and to that of the world.

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PSALM 26: 3 For your loving kindness is before my eyes. I have walked in your truth.

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Verse 3

For thy loving-kindness - A sense of thy favor and approbation was more to my heart than thrones and sceptres; and in order to retain this blessing, I have walked in thy truth.

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PSALM 26: 4 I have not sat with deceitful men, neither will I go in with hypocrites.

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Verse 4

I have not sat with vain persons - מְתֵי שָׂוָא methey shav, men of lies, dissemblers, backbiters, etc.

Neither will I go in with dissemblers - נֶעְלָמִים naalamim, the hidden ones, the dark designers, the secret plotters and conspirators in the state.

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PSALM 26: 5 I hate the assembly of evildoers, and will not sit with the wicked.

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Verse 5

I have hated the congregation of evil doers - I have never made one in the crowds of discontented persons; persons who, under pretense of rectifying what was wrong in the state, strove to subvert it, to breed general confusion, to overturn the laws, seize on private property, and enrich themselves by the spoils of the country.

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PSALM 26: 6 I will wash my hands in innocence, so I will go about your altar, LORD;

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Verse 6

I will wash mine hands in innocency - Washing the hands was frequent among the Jews, and was sometimes an action by which a man declared his innocence of any base or wicked transaction. This Pilate did, to protest his innocence of the mal-treatment and death of Christ. I will maintain that innocence of life in which I have hitherto walked; and take care that nothing shall be found in my heart or life that would prevent me from using the most holy ordinance, or worshipping thee in spirit and truth.

So wilt I compass thine altar - It is a mark of respect among the Hindoos to walk several times round a superior, and round a temple.

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PSALM 26: 7 that I may make the voice of thanksgiving to be heard, and tell of all your wondrous works.

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Verse 7

That I may publish - I have endeavoured to act so as always to keep a conscience void of offense towards thee and towards man. I have made a profession of faith in thee, and salvation from thee, and my practice gives no lie to my profession.

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PSALM 26: 8 LORD, I love the habitation of your house, the place where your glory dwells.

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Verse 8

Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house - I have carefully used thine ordinances, that I might obtain more grace to help me to persevere. And I have not been attentive to those duties, merely because they were incumbent on me; but I have loved the place where thine honor dwelleth; and my delight in thy ordinances has made my attendance as pleasant as it was profitable. This verse would be better translated, Jehovah, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place of the tabernacle of thy glory. The habitation must mean the holy of holies, where the Divine Presence was manifest; and the place of the tabernacle must refer to the mercy-seat, or the place where the glory of the Lord appeared between the cherubim, upon the lid or cover of the ark of the covenant. From his dwelling there, מִשְׁכַּן mishkan, the place and the appearance were called שְׁכִינָה shechinah; the dwelling of Jehovah, or that glorious appearance which was the symbol of the Divine Presence.

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PSALM 26: 9 Don't gather my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloodthirsty men;

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Verse 9

Gather not my soul with sinners - As I have never loved their company, nor followed their practice, let not my eternal lot be cast with them! I neither love them nor their ways; may I never be doomed to spend an eternity with them!

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PSALM 26: 10 in whose hands is wickedness, their right hand is full of bribes.

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Verse 10

Their right hand is full of bribes - He speaks of persons in office, who took bribes to pervert judgment and justice.

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PSALM 26: 11 But as for me, I will walk in my integrity. Redeem me, and be merciful to me.

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Verse 11

But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity - Whatever I may have to do with public affairs, shall be done with the strictest attention to truth, justice, and mercy.

Redeem me - From all snares and plots laid against my life and my soul.

And be merciful unto me - I deserve no good, but thou art merciful; deal with me ever in thy mercy.

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PSALM 26: 12 My foot stands in an even place. In the congregations I will bless the LORD.

Verse 12

My foot standeth in an even place - On the above principles I have taken my stand: to abhor evil; to cleave to that which is good; to avoid the company of wicked men; to frequent the ordinances of God; to be true and just in all my dealings with men; and to depend for my support and final salvation on the mere mercy of God. He who acts in this way, his feet stand in an even place.

I will bless the Lord - In all my transactions with men, and in all my assemblings with holy people, I will speak good of the name of the Lord, having nothing but good to speak of that name.