

MOUNT SINAI MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Psalm 26

Walking in Integrity

Quote

“No greater injury can be inflicted upon men than to wound their reputation.”

John Calvin

I. Introduction

Those who live godly lives can expect to receive persecution in this fallen world.

Often this occurs in the form of a verbal attack by unbelievers. When attacked, believers must be certain that the persecution comes because of their commitment to the Lord and not because of some personal flaw. Such was the experience of David as he reigned as the king of Israel. False charges called into question his ability to lead the nation, challenging his spiritual fitness to approach God in the temple (cp. Pss. 15; 24). What is worse, these charges against David were brought by “deceitful men” (v. 4) and “hypocrites” (v. 4) who were “bloodthirsty” (v. 9), seeking his abdication and death. They would stop at nothing, even resorting to bribery to bring about the king’s downfall. The goal was to destroy David and to bring him down.

In the face of such personal attacks, David went to the house of God (vv. 4–6) to focus on the glory of God (v. 8) and to appeal for God’s defense. This psalm “of David” is the first of three psalms (Pss. 26–28) which centers on David appearing in the house of the Lord to admire God’s glory.

II. Commentary

MAIN IDEA

David asks God to vindicate and rescue him if, after examination, the king is found to be blameless of the accusations made by his foes.

A A Prayer for Vindication (26:1)

26:1. This psalm begins with David's cry for exoneration: Vindicate me, O Lord, meaning "judge me" in order to prove his innocence of the false accusations made by his foes. He was convinced that he had led a blameless life of moral integrity. By a **blameless life**, he meant a sincerity of purpose and single-hearted devotion had characterized his life, not sinless perfection.

He claimed to be innocent of the charges against him, having lived above reproach. He knew the vicious rumors and charges against him were untrue. His life flowed from the fact that he had **trusted in the Lord without wavering**. In the face of men's slanderous charges, David appealed to heaven for God's final verdict, which was all that mattered.

B A Prayer for Examination (26:2–8)

26:2–3. David invited God's close scrutiny of every aspect of his life. Test me, try me, and examine my heart and my mind, he declared to God, believing that such a spiritual inventory would prove him to be blameless. He was confident that such a thorough investigation by God would clear him of his enemies' charges because the Lord's love was always before him, motivating him to **walk continually** in the **truth** of God's Word.

26:4–5. David pointed to his separation from all the practices of sinners as further proof of his innocence. He pleaded, **I do not sit with deceitful men**. Neither did he seek their worldly advice or **consort with** evildoers. In no way was he identified with the lifestyles of sinful men (cp. Ps. 1:1). David testified, **I abhor the assembly of evildoers**. He rejected their sinful ways and detested everything they stood for.

26:6–8. In contrast to his rejection of sinners, David stated that he loved **the house of the Lord**, where God's people gathered to **worship**. He washed his hands in innocence before the **altar**, the place where God's people came to exalt the Lord's name. His greatest delight in worshiping God was **proclaiming aloud God's praise in the place where the Lord's glory dwells**. God's glory was the revelation of his divine attributes and perfections to these worshipers.

C A Prayer for Salvation (26:9–11)

26:9–10. Finally David prayed, asking God **not to take away** his life in the **judgment of sinners**, referring to the same men whom he had rejected (vv. 4–5). These were **bloodthirsty men** who sought to take his life. They were men **full of bribes** who sought to influence others to harm him. David pleaded for God to spare him from their condemnation.

26:11. In contrast to these sinners, David confessed, **I lead a blameless life**, one of moral purity and integrity. He asked the Lord to **redeem** (Heb. *pada*, “to rescue”) him from the false accusations and personal attacks of **evil** men.

D A Prayer of Confirmation (26:12)

26:12. David concluded, **My feet stand on level ground**, or a place of firm footing in the Lord, a place from which he could not slip, as he took his position **in the great assembly** of public worshipers. There, in the house of God, he had sure footing as he vowed to stand strong in order to **praise the Lord**.

III. Conclusion

The importance of living a life of personal integrity cannot be overstated. A believer's life should always be lived as in the presence of God, as under divine scrutiny. Only by living as before the Lord can a person live without hypocrisy and duplicity. There must be a consistency between a person's convictions and his character. What would such a divine investigation of your life reveal? Could most Christians invite such a thorough examination of their lives by the Lord? David could, and so must Christians today. Perhaps many need to change their ways or restore some part of their life to full integrity. May the study of this psalm be a time of personal restoration to holiness.

When facing difficulties and troubling circumstances, the believer should focus on the glory of God. Corporate **worship** with like-minded believers is a source of strength for the troubled soul. No greater inner fortitude exists than loving and longing for the glory of God.