

Psalms 26:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide. This bold opening requests divine examination and declares personal integrity—a striking contrast to many psalms that plead for mercy. David invites God's scrutiny, confident that his case will be vindicated when examined by the divine Judge.

"Judge me" (shofteni, שופטני) uses shafat (שְׁפָט), meaning to judge, govern, vindicate, decide a case. This isn't plea for mercy but request for judicial verdict. David doesn't fear God's judgment but invites it, confident that investigation will prove his innocence. The context suggests false accusations from enemies—David appeals to heaven's court for vindication against slanderous charges.

"For I have walked in mine integrity" (ani betummi halakhti, אָנִי בְּתוּמִי הַלְּקָחָתִי) uses tom (תּוֹמֵן), meaning integrity, completeness, innocence, blamelessness. The perfect tense indicates completed action with ongoing results: "I have walked and continue walking." Halakh (הַלְּקָח, to walk) suggests consistent lifestyle, not isolated actions. Integrity is the path David has traveled habitually.

"I have trusted also in the LORD" (uvaYahweh batachti, וְבַיָּהֶה בְּתַחְתִּי) provides the foundation for integrity. Batach (בַּטָּח) means to trust, be confident, feel secure. Trust in Yahweh (covenant name) produces integrity—not self-righteousness but faithful dependence that results in righteous living. Trust and integrity are linked: genuine trust in God produces obedient living.

"Therefore I shall not slide" (lo em'ad, תְּעַמֵּד אָלַ) concludes with confident assertion. Ma'ad (תְּעַמֵּד) means to slip, totter, stumble, falter. Those who trust God and walk in integrity maintain sure footing—circumstances may shake, but their foundation remains stable. This isn't claiming sinless perfection but asserting that fundamental life direction remains faithful despite struggles.

Historical Context

Psalm 26 is attributed to David and reflects situations where he faced false accusations. Saul accused David of rebellion (1 Samuel 24:9-15). Enemies slandered David during Absalom's conspiracy (2 Samuel 15-17). Shimei cursed David, claiming he was guilty of bloodshed (2 Samuel 16:7-8). In such contexts, appealing to God as judge who knows hearts made sense—human courts might be deceived by false witnesses, but God sees truth.

The declaration of integrity must be understood carefully. David wasn't claiming sinless perfection—Psalm 51 shows his profound awareness of sin after Nathan confronted him about Bathsheba. Rather, David asserts his innocence regarding specific charges and his general life direction. He hadn't rebelled against Saul as accused; he hadn't sought to steal the kingdom; he hadn't been a man of violence toward God's anointed. On these specific matters, he could appeal to God's judgment.

The language of divine judgment runs throughout Scripture. Abraham appealed: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18:25). Psalm 7:8: "The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness." Paul wrote: "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Corinthians 4:5).

The connection between trusting God and maintaining integrity reflects covenant theology. Those who trust Yahweh walk in His ways. Conversely, those who walk in integrity can do so only through trust in God. This is faith working through obedience—not salvation by works but works that evidence saving faith.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How can David boldly invite God's judgment when other psalms plead for mercy, and what does this teach about different contexts of prayer?
2. What is the relationship between trusting in the LORD and walking in integrity, and why can't we have genuine integrity without trust in God?
3. How is declaring 'I have walked in mine integrity' different from claiming sinless perfection or self-righteousness?
4. In what situations are you tempted to defend yourself against false accusations rather than appealing to God as righteous Judge?
5. What does it mean that those who trust God 'shall not slide,' and how does this promise address anxiety about life's instability?

Interlinear Text

כָּל כֹּתְּנִי בְּתִמְמִינִי וְבַיַּהַנְּה שְׁפָטִנִי
Judge also in the LORD in mine integrity for I have walked
H8199 H3068 H3588 H589 H8537 H1980

לֹא בָּטַח וְבַיַּהַנְּה אַמְעַד:
also in the LORD I have trusted therefore I shall not slide
H3068 H982 H3808 H4571

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 28:7 (Faith): The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

Psalms 7:8 (Judgment): The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O LORD, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.

Proverbs 20:7 (Parallel theme): The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

Psalms 21:7 (Faith): For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved.

2 Kings 20:3 (References Lord): I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.

1 Samuel 24:15 (Judgment): The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

Hebrews 10:23 (Faith): Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)

Psalms 25:21 (Parallel theme): Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Psalms 15:2 (Parallel theme): He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

Psalms 62:2 (Parallel theme): He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved.