

# Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



## "The Prayer of the Committed Trainee"

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### Devotion and Discussion Questions

**Key Texts (TLV): Psalm 26; Ps. 68:6; Luke 22:31–34; Luke 22:55–62; John 21:18–22; 1 Pet. 2:20–21**

There is a difference between wanting the outcome and being committed to the process. We can say, "Lord, I want to be formed by You. I want to walk with You. I want to be like You." But then the training begins, and it often does not look anything like what we expected. We want the fruit, but not necessarily the formation. We want the strength, but not that kind of testing. We want to learn, but when the Teacher says, "I do, you do—no questions," we can find ourselves saying, "I quit."

It is like Daniel in *The Karate Kid*. He wanted to learn karate, but the training looked like waxing cars, sanding floors, and painting fences. It seemed pointless. It felt unrelated. He had no concept of what was actually being formed in him through the process. Ps. 26 is the prayer of someone who does not merely want to *appear* committed to ADONAI, but who truly wants to BECOME like Him. It is the prayer of a committed trainee saying, "Search me. Test me. Show me where I really am. I do not want to be deceived about my own heart."

### 1. THE COMMITTED TRAINEE INVITES THE LORD TO EXAMINE HIM

David opens with a prayer that may sound strange to modern ears: "*Vindicate me, ADONAI, for I have walked in my integrity, and trusted in ADONAI without wavering*" (Ps. 26:1). The word carries the idea of being judged, vindicated, examined. For many of us, the thought of God judging us carries a heavy dose of fear. But David is not running from the Lord's examination. He is inviting it. He is saying, "Look at me honestly. Tell me where I really am."

Then he continues, "*Probe me, ADONAI, and test me, refine my mind and my heart*" (Ps. 26:2). This is not a surface-level request. David is asking the Lord to look closely, to put him to the test, to run him through the kind of trial that reveals what is actually there. He is saying, "Refine my innermost parts. Purify my emotions. Purify my heart." This is the heart of someone who does not want to merely look pure from a distance. He wants to be pure when the Lord looks up close.

### 2. THE COMMITTED TRAINEE TRUSTS THE LORD'S CHESSED IN THE TESTING

David can ask the Lord to search him this deeply because he knows the character of the One doing the searching. He says, "*For Your love is before my eyes, and I have walked in Your truth*" (Ps. 26:3). Your chesed, Your covenant faithfulness, Your steadfast love—that is what I am looking at. David is not saying, "Test me because I know I am flawless, and I want that affirmation." He is saying, "Test me because I trust Your heart toward me."

Knowing the Lord's heart toward us is the critical component. When we know ADONAI's love is before our eyes, His testing is not a terrifying thing meant to destroy us. It may feel like the pressure is too much. It may feel like the heat is too intense. But the refiner's fire is not there to kill us; it is there to reveal and remove what does not belong. We may feel like we are going to die, but He is making us more into what He intended us to be. His goal is not to humiliate us, but to form His character in us.

### **3. THE COMMITTED TRAINEE WALKS IN INTEGRITY, NOT EMPTINESS**

David then begins to describe what walking in ADONAI's truth looks like. He says, *"I have not sat with men of falsehood, nor do I consort with hypocrites. I detest the company of evildoers, and do not sit with the wicked"* (Ps. 26:4–5). He is not interested in emptiness. He is not interested in those who carry the name of God but with no substance beneath it. He is not interested in pretending. He is saying, "I do not want the surface version. I want the real deal."

But David does not only say what he refuses. He also says what he is committed to: *"I will wash my hands in innocence, so I can walk around Your altar, ADONAI, hearing the voice of thanksgiving while proclaiming all Your wonders"* (Ps. 26:6–7). He wants to come near the altar with clean hands and a grateful heart. He loves the place where ADONAI's glory dwells: *"ADONAI, I love the House where You live, the place where Your glory dwells"* (Ps. 26:8). This is not empty religion. This is a heart saying, "I want to be where You are. I want to love what You love. I want to hate what You hate. I want to walk in Your truth."

### **CONCLUSION**

This psalm is not David saying, "Look what a good boy I am." It is the prayer of someone whose integrity is on the line, someone desperate to be searched by God because he actually wants to walk in the truth. He says, *"But I—I will walk in my integrity. Redeem me and be gracious to me. My feet stand on level ground. In congregations I will bless ADONAI"* (Ps. 26:11–12). He is not trying to prove himself apart from grace. He is depending on the God who redeems and shows favor.

And sometimes, when we ask the Lord to test us, we may be disappointed by what is revealed. Peter was sure of his loyalty. He said, *"Master, I am ready to go with You even to prison and to death!"* (Luke 22:33). Yet under pressure, he denied Yeshua three times and wept bitterly. But Yeshua was not finished with him. After Peter was restored, Yeshua still said, *"Follow Me!"* (John 21:19). That is the call for us as well. Not merely, "Lord, I want to be like You," but, "Lord, I am committed to the process. Search me. Test me. Refine me. Show me where I really am. And by Your *chesed* – your love – and grace, form Your character in me."

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think David was able to pray, “Probe me... test me... refine my mind and my heart,” without being controlled by fear?
2. What is the difference between wanting to be formed by God and being committed to the process of formation?
3. David says he does not want to sit with “men of falsehood” or consort with hypocrites. Where do you see the temptation today to carry God’s name or God’s truth in an empty way?
4. When pressure reveals something disappointing in you, do you usually run from the Lord, defend yourself, compare yourself to others, or come back to Him honestly? Why?
5. What is one area of your life where you need to pray, “Lord, I do not just want to look like Yeshua; I want to become like Him when no one is watching”?

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

*Avinu Malkhenu*, Our Father, Our King, search us and know us. Probe us, test us, and refine our hearts. We do not want to walk through the motions or simply appear faithful on the outside. We want the real thing. We want Your character formed in us from the depths of who we are.

Set Your chesed before our eyes. Help us trust Your heart toward us, even when the training is hard and the process does not look like what we expected. Redeem us and be gracious to us. Teach us to walk in integrity, to love what You love, to turn away from emptiness, and to follow in the footsteps of Messiah Yeshua.

*B'Shem Yeshua*, In the name of Yeshua, amen.