

Introduction: Orthodox Jews recite the ‘*shema*’ (hear!) up to four times a day: Hear! Israel! Yahweh, our God, Yahweh (is) one; and, thou have loved Yahweh thy God in all thy heart and in all thy soul and in all thy might; and, it has been, these words that I am commanding thee this day, in thy heart (Deuteronomy 6:4-6). (Only, they would say Adonai, not Yahweh.) This command given by Yahweh through Moses focuses on God’s people loving Him with their full heart. And, this love to God is fed by His people having all God’s words in their heart. Jesus said the ‘*shema*’ is God’s greatest word to His people (Matthew 22:36-38). *** In the Upper Room, before Jesus offered Himself as THE Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7), He said those who love Him will obey Him (John 14:15-23). Why would people love Jesus? The mature apostle John said, because He loved us first (1 John 4:19). *** How did Jesus love us? He died for our sins and He rose to give us His new life (1 Corinthians 15:1-6). Why does God love us? From before the beginning, His desire is to share Himself with all living beings He created: first with angels, then with humans. His basic Covenant with people is: I will be God of you, and you will be My people (Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 7:23, 30:22; Ezekiel 36:28). *** God does not need us; but, He graciously created us to be perfect in His image, in a perfect place (Genesis 1:27-32; 2:15-25). But, then people sinned and disobeyed God (Genesis 3). Some two thousand years ago God made it possible for any and all people to be re-created IN His Son: The Savior-King. We may now serve Him in humble, obedient and surrendered faith IN the love, joy and peace that comes through the Holy Spirit. Once we begin to experience this Truth of God’s love deep in our hearts, we begin to live the abundant and meaningful life God intended for us to live from the beginning (John 10, 15). *** There are only two kinds of people: Those who say ‘yes’ to God, and those who say ‘no’. God sends His prophets to apply His once-given Word for people in their current life situation. *** Saul proved to be in the group who say ‘no’ to God by disobedience and rebellion. In our passage this morning it is hinted that David is in the group that says ‘yes’ to God. In a Psalm he composed, he declares his trust in and obedience to Yahweh from a heart filled with love and praise to God.*** With this introduction detailing God’s desire to have a two-way flow of love from Him to His people, and back from them to Him, we will examine more closely the passages we have heard.

I. When the Philistines overwhelm Israel, Saul’s men scatter and he offers a disobedient sacrifice; when confronted by Samuel, Saul is un-spiritually proud and will lose his kingship to a man after Yahweh’s heart. (1 Samuel 13:5-16)

A. The Philistines come at Israel with overwhelming force causing Saul’s men to scatter, then he disobeys Yahweh by offering a sacrifice. (Verses 5-9)

1. The Philistines gathered to fight Israel: thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, people as the sand on the seashore in multitude; they came and camped at Michmash east of Beth-Awen. (Verse 5)

Huge forces: The size and power of the Philistine forces was intimidating. Chariots were the most fearful weapon of those days. By the end of this account, Saul had only six hundred men!

Location: Michmash was located in Benjamin near the border with Judah, ten miles north of Jerusalem and ten miles west of where the Jordan River enters the Dead Sea.

2. The men of Israel saw that they were besieged, because they were hard-pressed; then they hid themselves in caves, crevices, rocks, tombs and cisterns; and (some) Hebrews went over Jordan to Gad and Gilead; Saul continued at Gilgal and all the people following him trembled. (Verses 6-7)

Hide: The fighting men of Israel under Saul’s leadership understood the odds, humanly speaking, and hid wherever they thought they could not be found and killed.

Fear: They were less than a mile from the Philistines and they were all trembling in great fear.

3. He (Saul) waited seven days, to the appointed time (by) Samuel, and Samuel had not come to Gilgal; then the people scattered from him. (Verse 8)

Deadline: Samuel said he would come to Saul in seven days, but as the day ends he has not come. When Saul was first anointed king by Samuel, he told Saul to wait seven days until he came to sacrifice. Saul waited and all went well (1 Samuel 10, especially verse 8).

Scattered: But, now, as the deadline neared, all Saul’s men were leaving him.

4. Then Saul said: Bring then, burnt offering near to me, and the peace offerings; then he offered the burnt offering. (Verse 9)

Disobedience: Saul disobeyed God two ways. First, he grew impatient as the ‘set time’ expired. Have any of us ever been convinced we have waited too long for God to do for us what we needed. I still remember when I put a time limit on God, waited a little longer, then acted rashly. He answered a minute later. Very humbling! Worse, as Saul was not a priest or Levite he could not offer sacrifices!

B. When Samuel confronts Saul, he responds un-spiritually in pride; then, Samuel tells Saul he will lose the kingdom to a man after Yahweh’s heart. (Verses 10-16)

1. As he ended the burnt offering, Behold! Samuel coming; Saul went to meet him and bless him; Samuel said: What have thou done? Saul said: When I saw the people scattered, and thou did not come in the appointed days, and the Philistines gathered at Michmash; I said: The Philistines will come upon me at Gilgal and I have not entreated the face of Yahweh, I forced myself, and offered up the burnt offering. (Verses 10-12)

Samuel: When Samuel comes as Saul finishes his ill-advised offering, Saul meets him and blesses him.

Pointed question: Samuel gets to the point, confronting Saul with a pointed question.

Saul strong-willed: Saul justifies himself, implicitly blaming Samuel. Saul acknowledges he had not sought Yahweh, saying as an act of his will, he offered up the sacrifice Samuel should have offered.

2. Samuel said: Thou acted un-spiritually and have not kept the commandment of Yahweh; because He would have established thy kingdom forever; now, it will not continue; Yahweh has sought for Himself a man according to His heart, and appointed him prince over His people, because thou have not kept what Yahweh commanded thee. (Verses 13-14)

Un-spiritual: Saul acted un-spiritually by not listening and deferring to God’s prophet. In the time of human kings in Israel, the prophet of Yahweh was always superior to the king.

Lose kingdom: Because Saul disobeyed Yahweh’s word through His prophet, his line would end.

Man after Yahweh’s heart: Yahweh sought a man with a heart willing to fully follow His heart!

- Samuel rose up and went up from Gilgal to Gibeah in Benjamin; Saul numbered the people found with him: six hundred men; Saul, Jonathan and the people were staying in Gibeah, and the Philistines encamped in Michmash. (*Verses 15-16*)

Rag-tag remnant: Humanly speaking, Saul has no chance to fend off over one hundred thousand Philistines with a superior arsenal with only six hundred men!

Proximity: And this superior army is camped less than a mile away.

Application: We must learn from Saul to take seriously the words of David in our prayer of confession and pray that God will not remove His Holy Spirit from us when we disobey Him.

II. When Saul rebels with the devoted animals, Samuel says Yahweh puts obedience above sacrifice, and Saul's kingship will end; David praises Yahweh in faith from his heart, and desires to meditate in His presence. (*1 Samuel 15:22-23; Psalm 27:1-6*)

- After Saul rebels against Yahweh by keeping animals alive as spoil. Samuel says obedience is better than sacrifice, and that Saul will have no sons rule in Israel. (*1 Samuel 15:22-23*)
 - [A few years later] Samuel said [to Saul]: Does Yahweh have delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices / as [much as] to obey the voice of Yahweh? // Behold! To obey (is) better than sacrifice / and to pay attention [to Yahweh] than the fat of rams. (*Verse 22*)
- Disobedience:** Saul had disobeyed a direct order from Yahweh, through Samuel, to destroy all that belonged to Amalek – even all its livestock (verses 1-3).
- Because (as) the sin of divination (is) rebellion / and (as) iniquity and idolatry (is) to be arrogant // on account of thou rejected the Word of Yahweh / He has rejected thee from being king. (*Verse 23*)

Loss of kingship: As a result of his second rebellious disobedience equated with seeking out demons, not only will none of Saul's descendants be king, he has now forfeited his God-ordained role as king of God's people.

Disobedience leads to the forfeit of a role

Application: We must seek to discover our role in God's Kingdom; and, then we must pray to always fulfill our role according to God's Word and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit so we do not lose our role.

- David demonstrates his heart for Yahweh in a praise song of faith; and, he desires to be in His presence to meditate on all He is. (*Psalm 27:1-6*)

- {To David} Yahweh (is) my light and my salvation / whom will I fear? // Yahweh (is) the strength of my life / whom will I dread. (*Verse 1*)

Light: Because Yahweh is David's savior and light, he will not fear anyone.

Strength: And because Yahweh is the source of all his strength in this life, he dreads no one.

- When evildoers will come near me to devour my flesh / my adversaries and enemies stumbled and fell // if a host encamp against me / my heart will not fear // if war will rise against me / yet I am (confidently) trusting. (*Verses 2-3*)

Threats: David speaks of evil people desiring to destroy his flesh and a vast army encamped to make war against him. He faced these threats most of his life from Saul and the nations around him.

Heart: He declares his heart will not fear.

Full trust: Instead, he will confidently trust in Yahweh. This is the heart of the man Yahweh sought!

Yahweh seeks a man after His own heart

- One (thing) I asked Yahweh, that I will seek / to dwell in the house of Yahweh all the days of my life // to perceive the (pleasant) beauty of Yahweh / and to seek to reflect (on Him) in His Temple. (*Verse 4*)

Presence: David seeks to be in the presence of Yahweh to meditate on Him.

Beauty: And he also desires to perceive His pleasant beauty.

- Because He will hide me in His booth in the day of evil / He will conceal me in the secret place of His tent / on a rock, He will set me high. (*Verse 5*)

Booth: The word for booth is in the name of the seventh, and last, being held in the fall, annual festival Yahweh gave His people (*Leviticus 23:33-43*).

Paradox: As God's people 'fasted' from luxury to live simply in tents for a week, it reminded them of the fellowship their ancestors had alone with Yahweh for forty years in the wilderness. Now that Jesus 'tabernacled' (the verb form of the word for booth) in human flesh (*John 1:14*), all who are IN Him by grace through faith, have constant fellowship with God.

- Now, it will be lifted up, my head, above my enemies surrounding me / I will offer in His tent sacrifices of joyful shouts / I will sing praise songs to Yahweh. (*Verse 6*)

God exalts: David is confident Yahweh will exalt him: lift him up over his enemies

Resulting praise: As a result he will shout for joy and sing praise songs to Yahweh with all his heart.

Yahweh seeks a man after His own heart

Application: Let us follow David's example and resolve to always meditate in our hearts about God's light and His shelter to protect us; and, His delightful presence with us, so we will praise Him with hearts of faith.

Conclusion: When the Philistines overwhelm Israel, Saul's men scatter and he offers a disobedient sacrifice. When confronted by Samuel, Saul is un-spiritually proud and will lose his kingship to a man after Yahweh's heart. When Saul rebels with the devoted animals, Samuel says Yahweh puts obedience above sacrifice, and the line of Saul's kingship will end with him. David praises Yahweh in faith from his heart, and desires to meditate in His presence.

Yahweh seeks a man after His own heart