

"AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART"

After king Saul disobeyed the command of God, the prophet Samuel told him:

1 Samuel 13:14 *but now your kingdom will not continue; the Lord has sought out a man after his own heart; and the Lord has appointed him to be ruler over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you.* [NRSV]

The man the Lord sought out was David.

What is it to be "after the heart" of the Lord?

David expressed it so:

Psalms 27:4 *The one thing I ask of the Lord — the thing I seek most — is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord's perfections and meditating in his Temple.* [NLT]

It is having this one purpose: to be always with the Lord and to delight in Him.

There is something more that we may learn from David, who — after having declared his one purpose — wrote this:

Psalms 27:9 *Do not turn your back on me. Do not reject your servant in anger. You have always been my helper. Don't leave me now; don't abandon me, O God of my salvation!* [NLT]

Did God need to be reminded not to abandon David? Not really: the Lord's memory and faithfulness are unsurpassed.

Why then would David fear that God might abandon him and thus would plead earnestly that such might not be the case? How could it be that David would be scared, if he had full confidence in God?

For the same reason we ourselves may have such fears about what may happen to us: we fear when we let our soul and our mind be taken by events and we let our emotions and intellectual assessments overcome the childlike spirit that has been inborn into us by the Lord.

The spirit that trusts God unconditionally — as little children would.

The events in David's life were indeed terrifying: for example, Saul, the powerful king of Israel at the time, tried to murder David:

1 Samuel 18:10–11a *The next day an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he did day by day. Saul had his spear in his hand; 11a and Saul threw the spear, for he thought, "I will pin David to the wall."* [NRSV]

The events caused David to fear and the fear was so great that he became even uncertain of God's provisions and afraid that even God might abandon him: *Don't leave me now; don't abandon me*, David cried out.

Those words show us the humanity and the human frailty of David, even after he had earlier uttered:

Psalms 27:7–8 *Hear me as I pray, O Lord. Be merciful and answer me! 8 My heart has heard you say, "Come and talk with me." And my heart responds, "Lord, I am coming."* [NLT]

It is possible that similar fears may surround and afflict us. We should not feel guilty nor ashamed: if and when that happens, once again, we have the example of David:

Psalms 27:13–14 *Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness while I am here in the land of the living. 14 Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord.* [NLT]

Notwithstanding the overwhelming fear, David was able to be confident of the Lord's goodness, because David was one,

Acts 13:22b *... concerning whom He also testified and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.'* [NASB]

I can have as much confidence as David, if:

Psalms 27:4b *... the thing I seek most — is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord's perfections and meditating in his Temple.* [NLT]