

The Heart of YHWH and His Chosen One in 1 Samuel 13:14

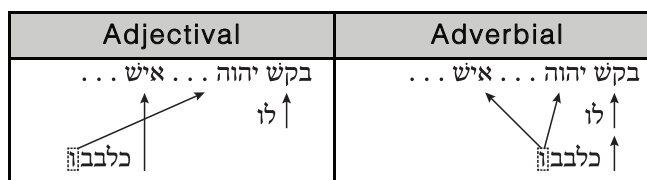
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Abstract: This paper considers the meaning of the prepositional phrase כַּלְבָּבוֹ “like/according to his heart” in 1 Sam 13:14. By assessing syntactic and semantic parallels, comparative ANE data, and the Deuteronomic context of 1–2 Samuel, the study argues that the prepositional idiom is best rendered adverbially and understood to clarify the norm or standard by which YHWH sought a king to replace Saul—he did so according to his own will. This being established, the paper then considers whether God’s showing discretion and seeking one man in contrast to others necessitates that there was something about the king-elect that matched the royal image he had in mind. Specifically, while כַּלְבָּבוֹ should be read adverbially, the resulting meaning in 1 Sam 13:14 may in fact align with both the numerous texts that emphasize David’s special divine election in contrast to Saul and the many passages that stress David’s greater like-mindedness to YHWH when compared to Saul. *Forthcoming in BBR 24.4 (2014): 11–32.*

1. Introduction

Table 1. Translations of 1 Samuel 13:14

MT	בְּקִשׁ יְהוָה לוֹ אִישׁ כַּלְבָּבוֹ	
LXX	καὶ ζητήσῃ κύριος ἑαυτῷ ἄνθρωπον κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ	
Bishop’s Bible (1572), Geneva Bible (1599), KJV (1611), Webster Bible (1833), RV (1885), Darby Translation (1890), ASV (1901), WEB (1997) NKJV (1982), ISV (1995), CJB (1998), MEB (2014) NASB (1995) RSV (1946), AMP (1954), NIV (1984), NRSV (1989), ESV (2001), NLT (2004), NIV (2011)	Jehovah/Yahweh/the LORD hath/has sought him a man after his own heart. The LORD/Adonai has sought for himself/Himself a man after his/His own heart. The LORD has sought out for himself a man after his own heart. The LORD/Lord has sought out a man after his/His own heart.	<i>After</i> his own heart
Douay-Reims (1610) Young’s Literal (1898)	The Lord hath sought him a man according to his own heart. Jehovah hath sought for Himself a man according to His own heart.	<i>According to</i> his own heart
Bible in Basic English (1965) The Living Bible (1971) NET Bible (1996) HCSB (2003)	The Lord, searching for a man who is pleasing to him in every way . . . The Lord wants a man who will obey him. And he has discovered the man he wants. The LORD has sought out for himself a man who is loyal to him. The LORD has found a man loyal to him.	Character/loyalty
The Message (2002) CEB (2011)	GOD is out looking for your replacement right now. This time he’ll do the choosing. The LORD will search for a man of his own choosing.	Election
GNT (1992) NCV (2005)	The LORD will find the kind of man he wants. The LORD has looked for the kind of man he wants.	Character/loyalty and election

Figure 1. The Modification of **כלבבו** in 1 Samuel 13:14

2. Reassing in כלבבו 1 Samuel 13:14

2.1. Syntactic and Semantic Considerations

1 Sam 13:14	בקש יהוה לו איש כלבבו	The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart.
	MT	ESV
1. Ps 20:5[ET4]	יתן לך כלבבך	May he grant you your heart's desire.
2. 2 Sam 7:21	ובלבד עשית את כל־הגדולה הזאת	And according to your own heart, you have brought all this greatness.
3. Jer 3:15	ונתתי לכם רעים כלבי	And I will give you shepherds after my heart.
4a. 1 Sam 2:35	והקימתי לי כהן נאמן באשר בלבבי ובנפשי יעשה	And I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind.
4b. 2 Sam 17:10	והוא גם־בן־חיל אשר לבו כלב האריה המס ימס	Then even the valiant man, whose heart is like the heart of a lion
4c. Ezek 28:2	ותתן לבך כלב אלהים	though you make your heart like the heart of a god
4d. Ezek 28:6	וען תתן את־לבבך כלב אלהים	Because you make your heart like the heart of a god,
5. Ernst Jenni, <i>Die Präposition Kaph</i> , Band 2, <i>Die hebräischen Präpositionen</i> (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994).		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main category for כלבבו in 1 Sam 13:14: Realization (mental anticipation): X is/acts as X/Y imagined—“YHWH acts as he conceived” or “YHWH sought (a man) in accordance with his act of willing.” • Sub-category for כלבבו in 1 Sam 13:14: Action according to discretion.

2.2 Ancient Near Eastern Comparisons

6. Babylonian Chronicles (R §11–13)	The seventh year: In the month of Kislev the king of Akkad [i.e., Nebuchadnezzar II] mustered his army and marched to Hattu. He encamped against the city of Judah and on the second day of the month Adar he captured the city (and) seized (its) king. <i>A king of his own choice he appointed (šarra ša ŠĀ-šú ina libbi ipteqid) in the city [i.e., Jerusalem] (and) taking the vast tribute he brought it into Babylon.</i> [Grayson, <i>Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles</i> , 102]
7. Hittite New Kingdom treaty between Tudhaliya IV of Hatti and Kurunta of Tarhuntassa (ca. 1250–1225 BC) (No. 18C; §19.ii.92–94)	Whatever son Kurunta prefers, whether the son of his wife or the son of some other woman, whatever son is the <i>choice</i> of Kurunta, whatever son Kurunta prefers, (let him place him in kingship in the land of Tarhuntassa). [COS, 2:103]
8. Eannatum, a ruler in the Dynasty of Lagash and one of the last kings of the Early Dynastic Period (ca. 2500–2335 BC) (Brick A.i.9–ii.1)	He is one “whose name was called to mind by Enlil; endowed with strength by Ningirsu; <i>emissaged by Nansh in (her) heart (ša[g]-pa[d]-daⁿnina-ge)</i> ; truly and rightly suckled by Ninhursaga; named by Inanna.” [Frankfort, <i>Kingship and the Gods</i> , 238]

9. King Gudea of the Dynasty of Akkad (ca. 2335–2112 BC) (Statue B.ii.8–iii.5)	<i>Shepherd envisaged by Ningirsu in (his) heart (sib ša[g]-gi-pa[d]-da^dnin-gir-su-ka-ge), steadfastly regarded by Nanshe; endowed with strength by Nindar; the man described(?) by Baba; child borne by Gatumdug; endowed with dignity and the sublime scepter by Ig-alima; well provided with the breath of life by Dunshagar; he whom Ningiszida his god has made to appear in the assembly with (proudly) raised head. [Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods, 238]</i>
10. Gudea's inscriptions (Cylinder A.xvii.10–16)	Being the one at whom Nanshe looked with favor, being <i>the man of the heart of Enlil</i> (^d en-lil-lá galu ša[g]-ga-na-kam), being the ruler . . . (?) of Ningirsu, Gudea, being born in a lofty sanctuary of Gatumdug; Nisaba opened the house of wisdom for him, Enki prepared the plan of the house for him. [COS, 2:426]
11. The royal inscriptions of Shu-Sin of the Ur III Period (ca. 2112–2004) (E3/2.1.4.3.i 4–16)	Šū-sîn, called by name by the god An, beloved of the god Enlil, <i>king whom the god Enlil chose in his (own) heart (lugal^den-lil-le šà-ga-na in-pà)</i> as shepherd of the land and of the four quarters, mighty king, king of Ur, king of the four quarters. [Frayne, <i>Ur III Period (2112–2004 BC)</i> , 302]
12. Babylonia Manzāzu Commentary 1:19.103	If the Presence is turned upside down: <i>Enlil will install a king of his own choice</i> (^d Illil šarra ša libbišu išakkan). [Koch-Westenholz, <i>Babylonian Liver Omens</i> , 146]
13. Cyrus Cylinder	He [i.e., Marduk] surveyed and looked throughout all the lands, <i>searching for a righteous king according to the desire of his heart, so as to grasp his hand</i> (ištēma malki išaru bibil libbi ša ittamah qātuššu). He called his name Cyrus, king of Anshan; he pronounced his name to be king over all (the world). [COS, 2:315]

2.3. David's "Election" in Context

1 Sam 13:14	וַעֲתָה מִמְּלִכְתְּךָ לֹא-תִקּוּם בְּקֶשׁ יְהוָה לֹא אִישׁ כִּלְבָּבוֹ וַיִּצְוֵהוּ יְהוָה לְנָגִיד עַל-עַמּוּ בִי לֹא שָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּךְ יְהוָה: פ	But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you.
	MT	ESV
14a. 1 Sam 8:5	עֲתָה שִׂימָה-לָנוּ מֶלֶךְ לְשִׁפְטֵנוּ כְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם	Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.
14b. Deut 17:14–15	14 כִּי-תָבֵא אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ וַיִּרְשָׁתָהּ וַיִּשְׁבֹּתָהּ בָּהּ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲשִׁימָה עָלַי מֶלֶךְ כְּכָל-הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר סְבִיבֹתַי: 15 שׁוּם תִּשֶׂים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בּוֹ מִקְרֵב אַחֶיךָ תִּשֶׂים עָלֶיךָ מֶלֶךְ לֹא תוֹכֵל לָתֵת עָלֶיךָ אִישׁ נָכְרִי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-אַחֶיךָ הוּא:	¹⁴ When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, "I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me," ¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

3. Conclusion and Implications

Appendix: The Targum and the New Testament on 1 Samuel 13:14

1 Sam 13:14 (MT)	בְּקֵשׁ יְהוָה לֹא אִישׁ כְּלִבּוֹ	ESV: The LORD has sought out a man after his own heart.
1 Sam 13:14 (<i>Tg. Neb</i>)	אַתְקִין יְיָ קְדָמוּהִי גְבֵר עֲבִיד רְעוּתִיה [or רְעוּתִיה]	DeRouchie: YHWH has established before himself a man doing his pleasure [<i>or pleasures</i>].
1 Sam 13:14 (LXX)	καὶ ζητήσῃ κύριος ἑαυτῷ ἄνθρωπον κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ	NETS: And the Lord will seek for himself a person after his heart.
Acts 13:22	εὗρον Δαυὶδ τὸν τοῦ Ἰεσσαί, ἄνδρα κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν μου, ὃς ποιήσει πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου	ESV: I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.