

1 Samuel 26:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the LORD liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the LORD'S anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster.

Analysis

David's verdict ('ye are worthy to die') pronounces a sentence he refuses to execute, modeling the difference between declaring truth and usurping God's prerogative in judgment. The evidence of the king's spear and water cruse proves David's access and restraint beyond dispute. The threefold repetition of 'the LORD'S anointed' throughout this dialogue emphasizes David's consistent theological framework: regardless of Saul's behavior, his office demands respect that only God can revoke.

Historical Context

The death penalty for failing to protect the king was standard in ancient Near Eastern monarchies. By Israelite law, those charged with the king's safety who failed could face execution. David's pronouncement acknowledges this judicial reality while declining to enforce it.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between identifying sin and executing judgment?
2. What truth have you declared while leaving the consequences to God?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	בְּזַבְּזָה	פְּזַבְּזָה	רָאשָׁךְ	עֲשִׂית	כִּי
H3808 is not good	This thing	H2088	H834	that thou hast done	liveth

לֹא	אָשֶׁר	אָתָּה	מֵת	בְּנֵי	כִּי	יְהִי	הָ
As the LORD	H3588	ye are worthy	to die	H859	H834	H3808	
H3068		H1121	H4194				

יְהִי הַמָּשִׁיחַ אֲדֹנֵיכֶם עַל שְׁמַרְתֶּם כַּאֲنַסְתֶּם כַּאֲנַסְתֶּם עַל שְׁמַרְתֶּם כַּאֲנַסְתֶּם עַל שְׁמַרְתֶּם כַּאֲנַסְתֶּם עַל שְׁמַרְתֶּם כַּאֲנַסְתֶּם

וְעַתָּה	רָא	הִנֵּה	יְתִיאָה	בְּפִלְגָּה	וְאַתָּה	צְפָנָה
H6258	And now see	H335	spear	where the king's	H853	is and the cruse
H7200		H2595		H4428		H6835

מִקְאָשָׁתָו:	אָשָׁר	הַמְּעָם	מִ
that was at his bolster	H834	of water	H4325

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 102:20 (Parallel theme): To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

Psalms 79:11 (Parallel theme): Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die:

Ephesians 2:3 (Parallel theme): Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

1 Samuel 26:11 (References Lord): The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us go.

1 Samuel 20:31 (Kingdom): For as long as the son of Jesse liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die.

1 Samuel 26:9 (References Lord): And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?

2 Samuel 12:5 (References Lord): And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

2 Samuel 19:28 (Kingdom): For all of my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet didst thou set thy servant among them that did eat at thine own table. What right therefore have I yet to cry any more unto the king?