

1 Samuel 26:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?

Analysis

David's restraint crystallizes one of Scripture's most important principles regarding authority: the anointed of the LORD must not be destroyed by human hands. The Hebrew 'mashiach YHWH' (the LORD's anointed) establishes a category of sacred protection that transcends personal grievance. David's rhetorical question 'who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?' establishes a precedent that extends beyond this moment to any who would usurp divine prerogatives in removing those God has placed in authority.

Historical Context

Anointing with oil was the ritual that formally inducted Israelite kings into office, marking them as God's chosen representatives. This sacred act created an inviolable status that only God Himself could revoke. David's respect for this office, despite Saul's unworthiness, models submission to divine ordering of society.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you maintain respect for God-ordained positions even when the people in them fail?
2. What does David's restraint teach about the limits of human judgment in removing those in authority?

Interlinear Text

מִ יְכִי תְּשַׁחַת הַוְּאֵל אֶל יְהִי אָמָר

said **And David** H413 **to Abishai** H408 **Destroy** H3588 H4310

H559

H1732

H52

H7843

H3588 H4310

שֶׁל חַ

יְד וְ

בְּמַשְׁיַח

יְהִי הָ

him not for who can stretch forth **his hand** **anointed** **against the LORD'S**

H7971

H3027

H4899

H3068

וְנִקְרָה:

and be guiltless

H5352

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 1:14 (References Lord): And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S anointed?

Psalms 105:15 (Parallel theme): Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

2 Samuel 1:16 (References Lord): And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slain the LORD'S anointed.

