

April 17 Answers

- 1) David had the chance to kill Saul on two different occasions: in the cave in the wilderness of En Gedi and in the wilderness of Ziph. Both times, David's closest friends advised him to kill Saul. The first time, David said, "The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's **anointed**" (1 Sam 24:6). Even cutting off the **hem** of Saul's robe bothered David's conscience, for the robe was a **symbol** of Saul's kingship, and cutting it off was an affront to Saul's **authority**. This teaches us that, apart from God's direct command (cf. 2 Kgs 9:2–10), we must never raise our hand (**literally** or **figuratively**) against those whom God has put in authority over us. We must also keep our conscience **clear** (1 Sam 24:5). The second time, David said, "Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be **guiltless**?" (1 Sam 26:9). God had anointed David as king, yet David refused to become king by killing Saul. This teaches us that the **means** we use to accomplish God's work are just as important as the work itself. David's attitude toward Nabal ("**foolish**") was quite different, and only Abigail's wisdom kept him from bloodguilt. Her speech is a model of how to **appeal** to a powerful person who is filled with wrath. When she was finished, David said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who **sent** you this day to meet me" (1 Sam 25:32). David perceived God's hand behind Abigail's words, and he was **grateful** to God for keeping him from "working salvation with my own hand" (1 Sam 25:33). How wonderful to serve a God who does all He can to keep us from sin!