

Deuteronomy 22:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her,

Analysis

If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her—this introduces a case law addressing false accusations against a bride's virginity. The Hebrew *sane'* (סָנֵא, "hate") describes not mere emotion but covenantal rejection and breach of marriage commitment. *Ba' 'el* (בָּאֵל, "go in unto") is the standard euphemism for consummating marriage.

This law protects vulnerable women from malicious husbands who might fabricate charges to escape marriage obligations without paying the bride-price refund or to justify divorcing an unwanted wife. The case assumes premeditated slander motivated by *sin'ah* (hatred), revealing character defects that emerged after marriage. Ancient Near Eastern marriage customs involved bride-price payments and consummation verification, making virginity economically and socially critical.

Historical Context

In ancient Israel (circa 1406 BC), marriage was a covenant involving families and economic transactions. The bride-price (*mohar*) compensated the father for losing his daughter's labor and established the marriage's legitimacy. Virginity at marriage proved the father had maintained his household's honor and that the bride entered marriage without prior obligations. False accusations could destroy a woman's reputation, her family's honor, and her future security, making legal protection essential. This law operates within Israel's theocratic covenant community where sexual purity symbolized covenant faithfulness to Yahweh.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does this law's protection of the vulnerable woman reflect God's justice and concern for the oppressed?
2. What does the connection between 'hating' a spouse and slandering them reveal about the relationship between love and truthfulness in marriage?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	חָקֵץ	אִם יִשׁ	אִשָּׁה	וְכָא	אֶל יְהוָה	וְשָׂנְאָהּ:
H3588	take	If any man	a wife	and go in	H413	unto her and hate
	H3947	H376	H802	H935		H8130

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 29:21 (Parallel theme): And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.