

Esther 1:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

Analysis

The demand: **'To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on'**. Ahasuerus, drunk after seven days of feasting, commands his seven eunuchs to bring Queen Vashti wearing her crown to display her beauty before male guests. The phrase 'with the crown royal' possibly means 'wearing only the crown,' suggesting degrading demand to appear essentially nude before drunken men. Whether literal nudity or simply being paraded as trophy wife, the demand violated Vashti's dignity and Persian propriety. This sets up crisis revealing how God works through even pagan rulers' follies to accomplish His purposes.

Historical Context

Persian court etiquette typically maintained strict separation between male and female spheres. Royal women, particularly the queen, maintained dignity and privacy. Ahasuerus's drunken demand violated these customs, creating scandal. Greek historian Herodotus notes that Persian men didn't permit wives at men's drinking parties, confirming that this demand was culturally inappropriate. Archaeological evidence from Persepolis shows elaborate women's quarters separate from men's areas. The king's demand, motivated by drunken pride wanting to display his beautiful queen as possession, created the crisis that would ultimately position Esther for Mordecai's and the Jews' salvation.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the king's drunken demand illustrate the dangers of alcohol impairing judgment and leading to sinful demands?
2. What does this passage teach about how God's providence works even through human folly and sin?

Interlinear Text

בְּכֹתֶר	הִמָּלֵךְ	לִפְנֵי	הַמֶּלֶךְ	וַשְׁתִּי	אֶת	לְהָבִיא
with the crown	the king	before	the queen	Vashti		To bring
H3804	H4428	H6440	H4436	H2060	H853	H935
כִּי	יָפִיָּהּ	אֶת	וְהַשָּׂרִים	הָעַם	יָם	לְהָרָא
H3588	her beauty	H853	and the princes	the people		to shew
	H3308		H8269	H5971		H7200
					מֶלֶךְ	וְ
					royal	
					H4438	
					טוֹבָה	הִיא:
					for she was fair	to look on
					H2896	H4758
						H1931

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 31:30 (Parallel theme): Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

Proverbs 16:9 (Parallel theme): A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.

1 Samuel 25:3 (Parallel theme): Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a

beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.

2 Samuel 14:25 (Parallel theme): But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty: from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.

Esther 6:8 (Kingdom): Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head:

Esther 2:17 (Kingdom): And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained grace and favour in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.