

Esther 1:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?

Analysis

Legal question: **'What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?'** The king asks for legal judgment—what does law require for disobedience to royal command? This legal formulation made the matter official state business rather than private marital dispute. The question's phrasing assumed punishment was necessary; only severity needed determination. This legal proceeding, though unjust from Vashti's perspective (refusing degradation), became mechanism positioning Esther for future salvation of Jews. God's providence works through unjust human legal systems to accomplish His purposes.

Historical Context

Persian law's immutability (Daniel 6:8, 12; Esther 8:8) meant legal decisions, once made and sealed, couldn't be reversed. This made the counselors' advice crucial—their recommendation would become irreversible law. Ancient Near Eastern legal systems emphasized precedent and consistency, making this consultation about proper punishment for disobedience significant beyond Vashti herself. The legal framing transformed personal conflict into constitutional crisis about royal authority and proper social order, elevating stakes and ensuring whatever decision was made would be permanent and binding.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty working through unjust legal proceedings demonstrate His comprehensive control over human systems?
2. What does this teach about how believers should understand legal injustices that ultimately serve God's purposes?

Interlinear Text

כַּדָּת	מָה	עֲשֵׂתָ הָ	בַּמֶּלֶכָּה	וַשְׁתִּי	עַל	אֲשֶׁר
according to law	H4100	What shall we do	unto the queen	Vashti	H5921	H834
H1881		H6213	H4436	H2060		

לֹא	עֲשֵׂתָ הָ	אֶת	מִצְוַת	הַמֶּלֶךְ	אֲחַשְׁוֶרֶשׁ	בְּ
H3808	What shall we do	H853	the commandment	of the king	Ahasuerus	by
	H6213		H3982	H4428	H325	H3027

הַסְרִיסִים:

the chamberlains

H5631