

# Esther 1:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

## Analysis

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Feared contagion: '**For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not**'. Memucan predicts Vashti's example will spread, causing widespread wifely disobedience. The fear that news of queen's successful resistance would inspire other women reveals insecurity about patriarchal control. This exaggerated concern provided political justification for severe punishment, though real motivation was protecting male authority. Ironically, this decision orchestrated by men fearful of losing control ultimately empowered Esther to save her people.

## Historical Context

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Ancient communication networks spread news throughout empires through merchants, official messengers, and travelers. The counselors' fear that Vashti's resistance would be widely known and imitated shows both the reality of ancient gossip networks and patriarchal anxiety. The logic—if the king's own wife can refuse with impunity, all wives will rebel—assumes obedience is maintained only through fear of punishment, not mutual respect or love. This reveals the coercive

foundation of ancient patriarchy and explains the counselors' determination to make severe example of Vashti.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does fear of losing control lead to excessive responses and unjust punishments?
2. What does this teach about the difference between authority maintained by coercion versus that earned through respect?

## Interlinear Text

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כִּי	יִצְאָה	דָּבָר	הַמֶּלֶךְ הַ	עַל	כָּל	הַנָּשָׁהִים
H3588	<b>shall come abroad</b>	<b>For this deed</b>	<b>of the queen</b>	H5921	H3605	<b>unto all women</b>
	H3318	H1697	H4436			H802
לְפָנָיו וְתַ	בְּעֵינֵיכֶם	בְּעֵינֵיכֶם	רָאָמָן	רָאָמָן	לְרָאָמָן	הַקָּדוֹשׁ
<b>so that they shall despise</b>	<b>their husbands</b>	<b>in their eyes</b>	<b>commanded</b>	<b>The king</b>		
H959	H1167	H5869	H559	H4428		
בָּאָה:	בָּאָה:	בָּאָה:	וְשָׁתָּה	וְשָׁתָּה	וְשָׁתָּה	הַמֶּלֶךְ הַ
<b>Ahasuerus</b>	<b>commanded</b>	<b>him but she came</b>	H853	<b>Vashti</b>	<b>of the queen</b>	
H325	H559	H935		H2060	H4436	
בָּאָה:	בָּאָה:	בָּאָה:	לְפָנָיו			
<b>before</b>	<b>him but she came</b>					
H6440	H3808	H935				