

Esther 2:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her.

Analysis

After these things, when the wrath of king Ahasuerus was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her. The phrase "after these things" (achar ha-devarim ha-elleh, אַחֲרַ הַדְּבָרִים הַאֲלֵה) marks transition from Vashti's removal to the search for her replacement. The king's "wrath was appeased" (shakhakh chamat ha-melekh, שָׁחַק חָמָת הַמֶּלֶךְ) suggests his anger subsided, possibly leading to regret. The Hebrew verb zakhar (זכור, "remembered") implies more than mere recollection—it suggests reflection with possible remorse. The dual object of his remembering—"what she had done" and "what was decreed against her"—creates tension. Did he remember her defiance with continued anger, or her dignity with regret? Persian law's immutability (Esther 1:19) meant even royal regret couldn't reverse Vashti's banishment, creating the vacancy necessary for Esther's elevation. This verse demonstrates how God's providence works through human emotions and decisions, even regret and irreversible consequences.

Historical Context

The phrase "after these things" likely indicates a significant time gap—possibly months or years—between chapter 1 and chapter 2. Historical sources suggest Xerxes launched his massive invasion of Greece between Vashti's removal and Esther's selection, which would explain both the delay and the gap between year three (1:3) and year seven (2:16). The Greek campaign (480 BCE) ended in

humiliating defeat at Salamis and Plataea, potentially contributing to Ahasuerus's willingness to be distracted by a new queen search. Persian royal protocol included elaborate rules governing divorce and remarriage. That Ahasuerus "remembered" Vashti suggests he couldn't simply reverse his decision despite possible regret. Ancient Near Eastern kings, though wielding absolute power, were bound by public decrees and legal precedents. The immutability of Persian law served political stability but created personal constraints—even kings couldn't easily undo official proclamations without undermining governmental authority.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's providence work through irreversible human decisions and their consequences, even mistakes we cannot undo?
2. What does this passage teach about the relationship between human regret and divine sovereignty—can God use even our wrong decisions for His purposes?

Interlinear Text

בְּאַרְכָּת	בְּזַבְּבָרִים	כִּשְׁלָגָה	מִתְּמַנְּתָה	מִלְּגָדָה
After	these things	H428	was appeased	when the wrath
H310	H1697		H7918	H2534
אַחֲרֵי	רָאָבָה	אַתְּ	וְשָׁתֵּה	מִלְּגָדָה
Ahasuerus	he remembered	H853	Vashti	H834
H325	H2142		H2060	
עַלְיָהָה	נְגַדְּתָה	אַשְׁר	וְאַתְּ	עַשְׂתָה
and what she had done	H5921	H853	H834	and what was decreed
H6213				H1504

Additional Cross-References

Esther 7:10 (Judgment): So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified.

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