

Esther 7:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?

Analysis

Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? The king's question reveals shock and rage—"Who is he, and where is he" that dared (male libo, "presume in his heart") to threaten the queen? The phrase "presume in his heart" suggests audacious evil requiring extraordinary boldness. Ahasuerus's outrage demonstrates he hadn't connected his authorization (3:10-11) to its implications for Esther. This moral blindness—approving genocide abstractly while horrified when it affects someone he loves personally—demonstrates how evil operates through abstraction and distance. The king's question sets up Esther's dramatic identification of Haman, transforming the banquet from festive to judicial.

Historical Context

The king's shocked question suggests he had given little thought to the decree's specifics after approving it (3:11). Ancient monarchs often delegated authority without tracking details, creating situations where they might unknowingly authorize harm to those they valued. Ahasuerus's outrage at threat to his queen, while having approved threatening an entire ethnic group, demonstrates the moral inconsistency of selective empathy. The dramatic question also served rhetorical purpose—creating suspense before Esther's identification of Haman. Ancient

audiences would have recognized this as the narrative's climax, where hidden evil would be publicly exposed.

Related Passages

John 15:13 – Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the king's shock at his decree threatening Esther illustrate the moral danger of abstract evil versus personal connection?
2. What does this teach about how injustice often operates through distance and abstraction that shields perpetrators from confronting consequences?

Interlinear Text

מ	י	המלך	ה	לאסתר	ו	אמר	ו	ה	Achashverosh	ה	לך	ו	אמר
and said		Then the king		Ahasuerus		and said		unto Esther		the queen			
H559		H4428		H325		H559		H635		H4436			H4310

מִלְאָה	וְلֹבֶן	לְעֵשׂ וְתָ	כָּבֵד
Who is he and where is he that durst presume H4390	in his heart H3820	to do H6213	H3651

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