

Esther 8:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?

Analysis

For how can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred? Esther's appeal becomes personally emotional: "how can I endure" (literally "how am I able") to witness her people's destruction? The parallel phrases—"evil that shall come unto my people" and "destruction of my kindred"—emphasize both communal and familial bonds. This declaration demonstrates Esther's full identification with the Jewish people despite her position as Persian queen. She could have remained safe (Mordecai warned against this in 4:13-14), but she commits to her people's fate. This models covenant loyalty and solidarity: privilege doesn't exempt believers from responsibility to their community. Esther risks everything to save her people.

Historical Context

Ancient honor-shame cultures valued kinship and ethnic solidarity highly. Esther's declaration that she couldn't bear watching her people's destruction would have resonated with ancient audiences. Her reference to both "my people" and "my kindred" covers both the broader Jewish nation and immediate family/community. This appeal combined emotional impact with strategic reminder that the decree threatened the king's beloved queen's family and people—personalizing the genocide in ways that abstract numbers couldn't. Ancient rhetorical handbooks taught that personal, emotional appeals often moved rulers more effectively than abstract arguments about justice or policy.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Esther's complete identification with her threatened people model covenant loyalty that privilege and position don't exempt?
2. What does her emotional appeal teach about how personal connection and empathy can motivate action where abstract justice claims might not?

Interlinear Text

אַתָּה	וְיַחַץ	אַתָּה	בְּרַע	אֲשֶׁר	בְּרַע	הַ	וְכָא	יִתְּהַ	אוֹכֶל	וְאַיְכָּה	כִּי
H3588	For how	can I endure	to see	the evil	H834	that shall come					H853
	H349	H3201	H7200	H7451							H4672
unto my people	בְּאֶבֶד	וְאַיְכָּה	אוֹכֶל	וְכָא	יִתְּהַ	בְּאֶבֶד	וְאַיְכָּה	עַמִּי	מַולְדָּתִי		
H5971		H349	H3201	H7200	H13		the destruction	of my kindred			H4138

Additional Cross-References

Esther 7:4 (Parallel theme): For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.

Romans 10:1 (Parallel theme): Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.