

Esther 9:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men.

Analysis

In Shushan the palace the Jews slew and destroyed five hundred men (בְּשׁוּשַׁן הַמְּצֻדָה)—The Hebrew *hārēgū* (slew) and *abbēd* (destroyed) are legal terms for execution of judgment, not massacre. Shushan (שׁוּשַׁן), the capital fortress, had concentrated opposition—likely including many who had allied with Haman's genocidal plot.

The specific number (500) in the capital contrasts with 75,000 throughout the empire (v. 16). This precision demonstrates the controlled, judicial nature of the defense. The Jews didn't engage in random slaughter but executed those who actively attacked them under Haman's decree.

Historical Context

Shushan served as the winter capital of the Persian Empire. The palace complex (*bîrâ*) housed the royal court and administrative center. The concentration of enemies in the capital suggests organized resistance by those who had expected to profit from Haman's planned genocide and now faced ruin.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does God's justice sometimes work through established legal and governmental systems?
2. What does the precision and restraint in this account teach about righteous use of defensive force?

Interlinear Text

וּבְשׁוּשַׁן	הַבֵּיכָה	הָרָג וְ	הַיְּהוּדִים	וְאַבְדָּה	חֲמִשָּׁה
And in Shushan	the palace	slew	the Jews	and destroyed	five
H7800	H1002	H2026	H3064	H6	H2568
מֵאִישׁ: מֵאֵת					
hundred	men				
H3967	H376				