

Exodus 21:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

Analysis

If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

This judgment (mishpat) from the Book of the Covenant applies moral law to civil society. God's justice is comprehensive—addressing economic disputes, family relations, and community welfare. The case laws teach covenant people how to love God and neighbor practically. Through detailed ordinances, God shapes Israel as holy nation, distinct from pagan neighbors. These laws reveal God's character: just, merciful, concerned with details of everyday life.

Historical Context

The Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22-23:33) is Israel's foundational legal code, predating later expansions in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It addresses civil, criminal, and ceremonial matters.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this law reveal God's character—His justice, mercy, or holiness?
2. What New Testament principles build upon or fulfill this Old Testament regulation?

Interlinear Text

אִם H518	כִּעַ הַ If she please H7451	בְּעֵינַי י H5869	אֲדֹנֵי יְהוָה not her master H113	אֲשֶׁר H834	לֹא H3808	יַעַדְהָ who hath betrothed H3259
וְהִפָּדְתָּהּ her to himself then shall he let her be redeemed H6299			לְעַמּוּ nation H5971	נִכְרִי י her unto a strange H5237	לֹא H3808	
וְיִמְשַׁל׃ he shall have no power H4910		לְמַכֵּר הַ to sell H4376	בְּבִגְדוֹ seeing he hath dealt deceitfully H898		בָּהּ: H0	

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