

Exodus 22:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.

Analysis

If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.

This ordinance reveals God's comprehensive justice—regulating economic transactions, property rights, and social relationships. The mishpatim create framework for covenant community to flourish. Each law applies broader principles: love God supremely, love neighbor practically. Modern believers aren't bound by ceremonial laws but should pursue their spirit—justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Matthew 23:23). God's character revealed in law guides Christian ethics.

Historical Context

These civil regulations distinguished Israel from surrounding nations, creating a society reflecting God's justice. The laws balance individual rights with community welfare, property rights with compassion for the poor.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

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

אָם		יָמָא		יָמָא		אָב יֵה		לְתַתָּהּ		וּ	ל	כֶּסֶף
H518		refuse		refuse		If her father		to give		H0		money
		H3985		H3985		H1		H5414				H3701
וְשָׁקָל לָ			כֶּמֶת הָרָ			הַבְּתוּלֹת:						
her unto him he shall pay			according to the dowry			of virgins						
H8254			H4119			H1330						

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 34:12 (Parallel theme): Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

1 Samuel 18:25 (Parallel theme): And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, The king desireth not any dowry, but an hundred foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of the king's enemies. But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philistines.

Deuteronomy 22:29 (Parallel theme): Then the man that lay with her shall give unto the damsel's father fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife; because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.