

# Esther 4:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

## Analysis

**All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.** Esther's response explained the risk: Persian law mandated death for anyone approaching the king unbidden unless he extended the golden scepter. The phrase "all the king's servants and the people...do know" indicates this was common knowledge, emphasizing the law's strictness and enforcement. The detail "I have not been called...thirty days" suggests the king's affection had cooled—making her approach even riskier. This excuse shows Esther's understandable fear while setting up Mordecai's powerful challenge (v. 13-14). The conversation demonstrates how God positions His servants in places of both opportunity and risk, requiring faith to act.

## Historical Context

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Persian royal protocol's strictness is documented in classical sources. Herodotus and other ancient historians describe elaborate Persian court ceremonies and harsh penalties for protocol violations. The golden scepter practice appears in Esther and parallel ancient sources, serving both practical purposes (controlling access, preventing assassination) and ideological ones (demonstrating absolute royal power). The thirty-day gap since the king summoned Esther suggests either his attention had shifted to other concerns (possibly the Greek campaign referenced in 2:16) or simply the vagaries of harem rotation among multiple wives and concubines. This detail makes Esther's eventual approach even more courageous.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. How does the death penalty for unbidden approach illustrate the real cost of obedience when God calls to risky action?
2. What does Esther's candid expression of fear teach about honest wrestling with danger before faithful obedience?

## Interlinear Text

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יֹדְעִים	הֵם לְךָ	מְדִינֹת	וְעַם	הֵם לְךָ	עֲבָדֶי יְכָל
do know	All the king's	provinces	and the people	All the king's	servants
H3045	H4428	H4082	H5971	H4428	H3605
אֵל	לֵב וְאֵל	אִשָּׁה	אִישׁ	כָּל	אִשָּׁה
H413	shall come	or woman	that whosoever whether man		
	H935	H802	H376	H3605	H834
לֹא	אִשָּׁה	הַפְּנִימִית	הַחֹצֵה	אֵל	הֵם לְךָ
H3808	H834	into the inner	court		All the king's
		H6442	H2691	H413	H4428
לִּבְדֹּ	לְהַמִּית	תּוֹרָה	אֶחָד	נִקְרָא	אֵתִי
except	of his to put him to death	law	there is one	but I have not been called	
H905	H4191	H1881	H259	H7121	
הַזָּהָב	שֵׁבֶט	אֶת	הֵם לְךָ	לֹא	יֹשִׁיט
the golden	sceptre	All the king's		shall hold out	
H2091	H8275	H4428	H0	H3447	H834
אֵל	לֵב וְאֵל	נִקְרָא	אֵתִי	לֹא	יֹשִׁיט
H413	shall come	but I have not been called		that he may live	
	H935	H7121	H3808	H589	H2421
יָמֵם:	שְׁלוֹשִׁים	יָמֵם	הֵם לְךָ		
days	these thirty		All the king's		
H3117	H7970		H4428	H2088	H4428

## Additional Cross-References

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**Daniel 2:9** (Word): But if ye will not make known unto me the dream, there is but one decree for you: for ye have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me, till the time be changed: therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that ye can shew me the interpretation thereof.

**Esther 8:4** (Kingdom): Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king,

**Esther 2:14** (Kingdom): In the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, which kept the concubines: she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name.

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