

September 22 Answers

- 1) The conclusion of the story of Esther teaches us several lessons. First, Esther's method of appealing to the king shows **wisdom** and courage. Instead of **blurting** out her request, she made Ahasuerus **curious** by inviting him to a banquet. The anticipation of learning her true desire made him all the more willing to grant her request. There may come a time when we need to appeal to someone in authority over us, and we can **adapt** Esther's example to our own situation. Second, the decree allowing the Jews to defend themselves shows that there are times when it's appropriate to take up arms to defend the **safety** and security of our families. We should "turn the other cheek" in cases where the offense is not life-threatening, and we are never to seek **revenge**, but there are times when God **authorizes** us to defend ourselves and others, even to the point of **killing** our attacker (cf. Exod 22:2; 2 Sam 2:18–23). Third, Mordecai's willingness to work for a dictator shows that we can work for good in **worldly** administrations and governments. While we should never condone **corruption** or wickedness, it's possible for us to accomplish great things for God while serving an ungodly regime (cf. Gen 41:39–44; Dan 6:1–3). We all like quotes like William Carey's "**Expect** great things from God. **Attempt** great things for God." Yet we should remember that Esther did not go looking for greatness—it came looking for her. Paul tells us to aspire to live **quietly**, and to mind our own affairs, and to work with our own hands (1 Thess 4:11). If we do this—if we lead **simple** lives of daily obedience—then when/if God does call on us to do something great, we'll be **prepared** to follow His leadership.