

### **Fasting: Tapping Into Needed Protection**

[Ezr 8:21-23 NASB] 21 Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might humble ourselves before our God to seek from Him a safe journey for us, our little ones, and all our possessions. 22 For I was ashamed to request from the king troops and horsemen to protect us from the enemy on the way, because we had said to the king, "The hand of our God is favorably disposed to all those who seek Him, but His power and His anger are against all those who forsake Him." 23 So we fasted and sought our God concerning this [matter,] and He listened to our entreaty.

This world is a dangerous and unpredictable place. There is lawlessness and sickness running rampant. The curse and Satan are still present and active. God wants us to tap into His Protection. One of the ways we tap into His protection is through fasting. We can use the Ezra model of fasting for protection:

- Ezra sought God with intention
- Ezra sought God specifically
- Ezra sought God with awareness of danger
- Ezra sought God matching his dependency with his rhetoric
- Ezra sought God with fasting and He heard him.

What can we learn from Ezra about how fasting will help us to see God's protection?

There are five aspects of Ezra's fasting model we need to practice today.

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[Mat 6:2, 5-6, 16 NASB]

#### **God wants us to specifically ask what we need/want from Him.**

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[Mar 10:51-52 NASB]

Ask God to be “unimpeded by obstacles or danger” (Yomauchi)

**God wants us to understand our dangerous situation.**

V. 21&22 ... safe journey ... protect us from the enemy on the way ...

[1Pe 5:8 NASB]

**God wants us to live lives where our dependency matches our rhetoric.**

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Ezra was concerned what others might say about God if he looked to humans for his deliverance.

[Eph 3:20-21 NASB]

Clark – Ezra had more anxiety for the glory of God than for his personal safety.

His practice matched his preaching.

**God wants to hear and answer us.**

V. 23... So we fasted and sought our God concerning this [matter,] and He listened to our entreaty.

**God wants us to intentionally and specifically seek Him through fasting with the understanding that we need Him so He can be the God we claim we believe that He is.**

As we seek God through many disciplines, including through fasting, we will experience healing past trauma, protection from current dangers, and empowerment to overcome future challenges.

**From this sermon:**

What can you pray about? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you study more about? \_\_\_\_\_

What can you apply? \_\_\_\_\_

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