

ALLEN TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday School Live 

July 23, 2023

Lesson Title: Fasting & Praying

Lesson Text Ezra 8:21-23 ESV

Devotional Reading Ezra: 7, 8

2 Chronicles 7:12–18

INTRODUCTION

In today's passage, Ezra moves from a prophetic role to a leadership role. After proclaiming God's protection, Ezra led the people in prayer and fasting to ensure their safety in the return to their homeland. Typically, the Persians would have provided military escort for Ezra as they were carrying with them monetary contributions made by the Persians. Apparently, however, the Persian king had been convinced of God's protection for the returning exiles.

LESSON CONTEXT

The Temple has been restored, Ezra & company are now preparing for the journey from Babylon to Jerusalem. They have a long trip and are carrying valued treasures through dangerous territory. Although King Artaxerxes promised Ezra anything he desired for this trip. Ezra seeks the provision and protection of the Lord and calls for spiritual leaders to pray with Him and the tribes before their departure instead of going to the King, whom Ezra previously told God's Got It!

GOALS FOR THIS LESSON

- 1. Understand how fasting was used on this journey and why.**
- 2. Review Gods Response to the fasting and prayer.**

LESSON POINTS

- 1. Fasting to Seek The Lord's Protection**
- 2. Trusting God to Deliver You**
- 3. God Will Respond**

Ezra 8:21 NIV

21 There, by the Ahava Canal, I proclaimed a fast, so that we might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children, with all our possessions.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER?

- 1. Why did Ezra call for spiritual leaders & Levites to Pray with them?**
- 2. How does this text help us make critical decisions when facing adversity or danger.**
- 3. What was the major influence on the people's safe arrival after their 720-mile journey (v. 23)?**

Ezra 8:22 NIV

22 I was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers and horsemen to protect us from enemies on the road, because we had told the king, “The gracious hand of our God is on everyone who looks to him, but his great anger is against all who forsake him.”

Ezra 8:23 NIV

” 23 So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- 1. Trust God.**
- 2. Try God**
- 3. Worship God.**
- 4. God Hears Our Prayers; God Never Fails.**

Liberating Lesson

As we go through life, we learn that we will face things where a solution is not readily apparent. There may not be a perfect example in the Bible for us to follow for our situations. Often, these answers are obtained through fasting and prayer. In these instances, God still gives access to Him to help lead us through these circumstances.

Liberating Lesson

Once God begins to work in our lives, it's important that we share with others His many miracles and blessings. We should understand that others will gain faith in what God can do by our testimonies. We may have a path imagined for our lives, but only God knows what lies ahead and can direct us safely through.

Liberating Lesson

We may have a path imagined for our lives, but only God knows what lies ahead and can direct us safely through. He awaits the call and plea of His children, wanting His guidance to be yet another demonstration of His mighty effect on their lives.

BIBLICAL STUDY RESOURCES

- 1. NASB | NIV | NRSV STUDY BIBLE**
- 2. BIBLEREF.COM | BIBLESTUDYTOOLS.COM.**
- 3. THE OLD TESTAMENT**
- 4. GOTQUESTIONS.ORG**
- 5. PRECEPTS FOR LIVING.**

KEEP SAKE

**SPIRITUAL FASTING IS A SACRIFICE WE MAKE.
PRAYER IS THE ACTION WE TAKE IN ORDER
TO ACCESS, WORSHIP & PETITION
THE LORD & DRAW CLOSER TO GOD.**

**THE PRAYERS OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN
AVAILETH MUCH. JAMES.5:16**