

Red Carpet Treatment

When were you treated better than you expected or better than deserved?

Read Ezra 7:1-28 and Ezra 8:1-36.

1. Who was Ezra?
 - A. A great organizer.
 - B. A tremendous motivator.
 - C. A descendant of Aaron, the first high priest of Israel.
 - D. A scribe—very familiar with God’s law.
 - E. The king of Persia.
 - F. A relative of the king of Persia.
 - G. Someone with deep roots in Babylon.
 - H. A military leader.
 - I. Other.

2. What did the king include in his letter for Ezra’s endorsement?
 - A. A promise of protection for travel.
 - B. A promise of protection once the exiles got to Jerusalem.
 - C. Lots of money.
 - D. Worship leaders to reinstate worship to Yahweh in Jerusalem.
 - E. Permission for any Jew to leave Babylon for Jerusalem.
 - F. Access to the king’s storehouse.
 - G. More resources after they arrived in Jerusalem.
 - H. A variety of animals so they could start a zoo in Jerusalem.
 - I. Other.

3. Why was the king so generous for the returning Jews?
 - A. The king was a nice guy.
 - B. The gracious hand of God was on the king.
 - C. The gracious hand of God was on Ezra.
 - D. Esther was the queen.
 - E. Mordecai was the king’s right-hand man.
 - F. He wanted to expand his kingdom.
 - G. He wanted the Jews out of Babylon.
 - H. He believed in the God of the Jews.
 - I. Other.

4. Why didn't any Levites volunteer to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 8:15)?
 - A. The rebuilt temple wasn't as grand as the one Solomon had built.
 - B. They wanted a special invitation from Ezra.
 - C. None of their friends were going.
 - D. They preferred their lives in Babylon.
 - E. Born in exile, they didn't know how to lead in worship to Yahweh.
 - F. They didn't like some of the people who were going to Jerusalem.
 - G. Just because you're born to worship doesn't mean you will.
 - H. None of them liked Ezra.
 - I. Other.

5. Why did Ezra have the group fast and pray three days before departing?
 - A. This would build up their energy and endurance.
 - B. He needed the people to be highly disciplined.
 - C. Ezra considered prayer vital; not just something short at the start.
 - D. They were taking lots of wealth with no armed guards.
 - E. To make sure they were right with God.
 - F. He had a lot on his mind.
 - G. Spiritual practices matter more than physical abilities.
 - H. That's what Esther had done (Esther 4:15-16).
 - I. Other.

6. Why did this group make it safely to Jerusalem?
 - A. The gracious hand of the Lord was on them.
 - B. Good leadership.
 - C. Angels protected them.
 - D. They were lucky.
 - E. Everyone knew they had the king's support.
 - F. Nobody knew they were doing this.
 - G. They had armed escorts.
 - H. Other.

7. What has God clearly given you? Was any of this miraculous?

8. When has God protected you from harm or evil?