

NOTES



PRAYER

Dear Jesus Christ,

Please make me strong and let me keep my faith unto the end. Give me grace and power to resist oppositions and stop their advances. Anoint me to keep the flag of your gospel flying, and let me rejoice in all ramifications of life. For in the name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.

[James Taiwo, "Prayer for Unwavering Faith"](#)

WARM UP (OPTIONAL)

If you could only drink either milkshakes, smoothies, or bubble tea for the rest of your life, which one would you take and why?

PRAYER



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WORD

¹ Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem. And the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem the holy city, while nine out of ten remained in the other towns. ² And the people blessed all the men who willingly offered to live in Jerusalem.

³ These are the chiefs of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but in the towns of Judah everyone lived on his property in their towns: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants, and the descendants of Solomon's servants. ⁴ And in Jerusalem lived certain of the sons of Judah and of the sons of Benjamin. Of the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, of the sons of Perez; ⁵ and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, son of Col-hozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, son of the Shilonite. ⁶ All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 valiant men.

[NEHEMIAH 11:1-6](#)

"Jerusalem is called here the holy city (v. 1), because there the temple was, and that was the place God had chosen to put his name there; upon this account, one would think, the holy seed should all have chosen to dwell there and have striven for a habitation there; but, on the contrary, it seems they declined dwelling there: one, because a greater strictness of conversation was expected from the inhabitants of Jerusalem than from others, which they were not willing to come up to.

Those who care not for being holy themselves are shy of dwelling in a holy city; they would not dwell in the New Jerusalem itself for that reason, but would wish to have a continuing city here upon earth. Or, two, because Jerusalem, of all places, was most hated by the heathen their neighbours, and against it their malicious designs were levelled, which made that the post of danger (as the post of honour usually is), and therefore they were not willing to expose themselves there. Fear of persecution and reproach, and of running themselves into trouble, keeps many out of the holy city, and makes them backward to appear for God and religion, not considering that, as Jerusalem is with a special malice threatened and insulted by its enemies, so it is with a special care protected by its God and made a quiet habitation (see Isa. 33:20; Ps. 46: 4, 5).

Or three: it was more for their worldly advantage to dwell in the country. Jerusalem was no trading city, and therefore there was no money to be got there by merchandise, as there was in the country by corn and cattle. Note, all seek their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's (Phil. 2:21). It is a general and just complaint that most people prefer their own wealth, credit, pleasure, ease, and safety before the glory of God and the public good."

- [Matthew Henry, Complete Commentary on the Whole Bible](#)

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = not at all; 10 = extreme), how would you rate your ability to live without material wealth? Why have you rated yourself this way?
2. Nehemiah surrounded himself with blessed people who were valiant (vs 6) and willing to leave their comfort zones to live in the newly established Jerusalem (vs 1), but it would have been hard for them to go to a place that was not established to restart their lives. Have you surrounded yourself with people who are willing to leave their comfort zones to grow in all God has for them, or do they prefer to stay comfortable and unchallenged? If not, do you know anyone you can learn from who has lived outside their comfort zones?
3. Do you consider your faith shakable? If so, what do you think would cause it to shake? If not, what allows your faith to be unshakable, and how does it do this?
4. Consider Matthew Henry's commentary in the article mentioned, and the final sentence of the excerpt: "It is a general and just complaint that most people prefer their own wealth, credit, pleasure, ease, and safety before the glory of God and the public good." Do you find this to be true today like it was for Nehemiah?
5. Are you personally willing to leave "credit, pleasure, ease, and safety" for God's glory and to serve other people? Why or why not?

If you are not yet a follower of Jesus, would you choose today to trust him? Will you enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus?

Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to be the master of my life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. I declare that I am yours, and you are mine. In Jesus' name, Amen.