

May 20, 2017

Greetings from sunny Phoenix,

Most of the recent news has been quite negative against U.S. President Trump over the firing of FBI Director, James B. Comey, and now a Special Counsel, former FBI Director, Robert Mueller, has been appointed by the State Department to investigate this matter and possible ties between President Trump's campaign and Russian officials. Hopes for a unified country with leaders working together seem more elusive than ever.

Meanwhile, the U.S. President is embarking on a most ambitious first foreign excursion with plans to visit the bastions of the three great Abrahamic faiths-- Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Mr. Trump will visit Saudi Arabia, Israel, and then travel to Europe where he will meet with Pope Francis and NATO leaders.

A senior administration official stated, *"The purpose of this meeting is to bring together all the different countries and all the different religions in the fight against intolerance and to defeat radicalism."* The official said that the idea for the trip had begun with Saudi Arabia, and said one major focus would be pushing back on Iran."

His goal is to establish a unity in fighting radical groups like ISIS which has a well funded operation which the United States has been fighting in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere.

President Trump's campaign statements against Iran has restored some of the confidence of Persian Gulf countries in American leadership. His aides have said he will meet with leaders from the Muslim world while in Saudi Arabia.

However, what he is seeking is what presidents, prime ministers, and the kings of the earth have sought before, and some got close but ultimately failed to produce a permanent unity to work together.

We pray for his success in this endeavor to bring about unity in fighting a common enemy. The Apostle Paul adds perspective for Christian the tradition of praying for authorities in **Rom. 13:1-5**, *"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ²Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake."*

We pray for world leaders and our President. However, due to the chief motivation of all people to have their own self-interest at heart, what Mr. Trump seeks to do will likely fail. We pray for his success so that this country and other nations will have peace so the gospel of the Kingdom of God can be preached to all nations.

Today it has been generally easy to preach the gospel almost anywhere, and it was generally so in the first century of the church because of the power and dominance of the Roman Empire. Paul wrote the brethren in **II Thes. 3:1-2**, *"Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly*

and be glorified, just as it is with you,² and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith."

The KJV says, "pray for us, that *the word of the Lord may have free course...*"

We pray for the same today that leaders of the world work together so that it will make it easier for the church to spread the good news of the coming Kingdom of God.

Attached is the news for the week in PDF and Word. Have a wonderful Sabbath!

All the best,
Jim Tuck