

# Prayer for Parliament

THE RT. HON SIR JEFFREY DONALDSON, MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON SW1A 0AA

Notes of Prayer Meeting held on Tuesday, 13 November, 2018

As rooms at Westminster were very much in demand, the meeting was held at the Emmanuel Centre. The kind and welcoming hospitality received from the Emmanuel Centre is greatly appreciated by Prayer for Parliament. The meeting was opened by Bill Nelson who reminded us of the scriptural injunction *'In all thy ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.'* Proverbs 3: 5 & 6 and Luke 18:27 *'The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.'*

**Cards** for the Prime Minister and the, then Brexit Secretary, Dominic Raab, had been prepared and included the message *'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'* Prayer was made that God would give guidance and wisdom for both at this time of critical Brexit discussions.

The main purpose of these meetings is to pray for Parliament and related issues. On this occasion time was given to bring matters that relate to the welfare of the nation before the meeting.

**Chaplain's report regarding stabbings and the youth culture.** Chaplain Gavin ..... spoke with heartfelt eloquence about the tragedy of death and disaster that the youth of today is experiencing. He and other Chaplains are working first-hand with the youth in their areas. Gavin's report brought the harsh realities into view. The day before this meeting, Gavin had attended his 39<sup>th</sup> funeral for a stabbing victim this year. The area in which these Chaplains work is the work place, football grounds, hospitals, schools and prisons across the London boroughs. They see that living in poverty produces barrenness and a lack of vision or hope. Struggling families are left to their own devices. Many are at the mercy of neighbouring street gangs and drug barons who entice children into street crime and gang warfare.

The police use 'Stop and Search' powers, but, once convicted, a gang member will then be pushed into an overcrowded prison and immersed into further criminal activity through unavoidable contact with other inmates. Young Somali, Caribbean and Turkish boys tend to gather to fight on Friday nights and, for them, the street is the economy where they interact and buy and sell drugs. Young boys are driven in expensive cars to outlying suburbs and rural areas to ply their drug trade further spreading the use of drugs amongst the young and gullible. Not only are fathers absent from family units, but mothers themselves have often had little or no nurturing.

However the local youth community does know how quickly money can be made. Many are willing to risk all when the likelihood, to their way of thinking, is that they will be dead by the age of 18. There is just one youth club in the borough of Haringey but, because each of the gangs patrols around that club area, the club is empty because no youngster dares go there.

Instead of practical help coming from the local council or church members (other than the actual funeral service), Pupil Referral Units (PRU) are a temporary palliative organised by the schools. These are no substitute for the desperate need to repair, restore and replenish the hearts of these broken and impoverished families. The gang leaders value their gang members who have been in prison and regard them as a 'valuable asset'. That then leads to further grooming and descent into the quagmire of hopelessness.

There is an opportunity here for the numerous churches in these boroughs to give a lead by responding to this perpetual suffering. It is a fact that 67% of all prisoners are black, with mental problems and many can scarcely read or write. The silence and complacency among authorities is deafening. These senseless killings have to stop. Gavin gave practical suggestions that would help the situation:

- Churches need to be open during the week and be pro-active, filling the gap created by local authority cuts
- Pupil Referral Units (PRU) should be closed down as they are a breeding ground for gangs
- Drugs need to be taken out of the local economy
- The Gospel needs to be preached to bring life and hope into people's lives
- Politicians need to be honest and open about their reporting

**Prayer Points:**

- Pray that, if and when, much needed money is made available that it will be used strategically and effectively to give help and a future to the youth and not just be 'thrown' at the situation. Psalm 25:7 *'Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness sake, O Lord.'*
- Pray that men with a father heart will become role models for the youth. Malachi 4:6 *'And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers'.*
- Pray that instead of despair that hope will rise in the hearts of today's youth. Psalm 88:15 *'I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors and I am distracted.'* Psalm 129:2 *'Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth: yet they have not prevailed against me.'*
- Pray that instead of violence there will be peace in their hearts. Isaiah 60:17B & 18. *'I will also make your officers peace, and your magistrates righteousness. Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders: but you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.'*

**Report regarding discussion in Parliament:** At this juncture a report was received from two group members who had been in the House during a discussion relating to an Opposition Amendment. Its purpose was to ensure that what the Attorney General had previously said could not be overturned. The Government's response was that since 1872 the final decision is made by the Law Officer, the departure from that being in 2002, for decision to go to war in Iraq. The votes were counted in the Aye lobby, but there was silence from the Government. This tactical move on the part of the Government ensured that the Attorney General still retains his power. It was noteworthy that the atmosphere in the Chamber was one of reciprocal honour and respect. However, the Opposition Attorney General was still allowed the freedom to complain.

**Sir Jeffrey Donaldson.** In the middle of a very demanding schedule of meetings, Sir Jeffrey was able to join the meeting for a brief time. Because of the numerous requests for a Committee Room on a Tuesday, he will arrange for checks to be made to ascertain if there was a better time to request a room. This may lead to a change of day for the PFP meeting.

**Brexit:** The Prime Minister will place before the Cabinet exactly what she has signed up to, including the needed 'special arrangements'. It is apparent that the EU has overstated their case. At the Cabinet meeting it is hoped that no one will vote against their convictions. Many questions are still being worked through politically particularly with relation to trade, immigration and business. The importance of Brexit to the Nation cannot be overstated.

#### **Prayer Points**

- Pray against confusion. 1 Corinthians 14:33 *'For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.'* 2 Timothy 1:7 *'For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind'.*
- Pray for clear understanding and clarity re the effect of the agreement. Proverbs 4:7 *'Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.'*
- Pray for clear direction for the next steps to be taken. Psalm 119:35 *'Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.'*
- Pray that the Brexit 'divorce' from the European Union will be clear and without acrimony. James 3:16 & 17 *'For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.'*
- Pray that the Lord's plans will come into effect. Isaiah 55:8 *'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways saith the Lord.'*
- Pray that the PM and MP's will be guided by the Lord. Proverbs 8: 14&15 *'Counsel is Mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding, I have strength. By Me kings reign; and rulers decree justice'.*
- In the necessity of considering Brexit pray that other important matters are not overlooked.

**Northern Ireland** - There is still no devolved government. The Executive needs to be restored because everything is linked together through the border. The Irish Republic is naturally being affected by Brexit.

- Pray for the DUP that God would give them wisdom as they voice their concerns regarding the needs for Brexit and the needs of N. Ireland and Eire. Proverbs 15:22 *'Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.'*

**ITN News Item – 10 pm on 12 November.** An item of news was given by a reporter who secretly filmed his interviews when he supposedly sought counsel regarding homosexual issues affecting him. The interviews related to his supposed conversion and therapies relating to recovery from homosexuality. This could not be described as objective journalism. As a supposed seeker for truth, the reporter was encouraged to speak to Christian leaders and continue to read God's Word. This 'report' is not only distorted evidence but has also been presented in such a way as to influence the Government negatively so as to prevent from promoting Conversion Theories proposed in forthcoming legislation. People were encouraged to view the news item for themselves and to write to Ofcom to protest if they considered this report to be biased.

**Israel** - Lady Carol Baker read out a news report received direct from the Israeli Embassy which was intended for general circulation. Mindful of bias and inaccurate international broadcasting, the Embassy sought to 'put the record straight' and defend Israel's reputation. They have endured months of toxic drone firebombs that were only intermittently reported. On Sunday night in Gaza, Hamas terrorists ambushed an IDF reconnaissance team. Hamas retaliated with heavy rocket fire the next morning followed by defensive counter measure airstrikes from Israel. Israel, in doing what is needful to protect its people, launched counter attacks and it is these attacks that are reported negatively.

**Prayer Points**

- Pray that the city of Jerusalem will become like its name – 'City of Peace' Psalm 122:6 *'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem'.*
- Pray that this nation shall honour Israel. Psalm 122.6 (b) *'They shall prosper that love thee' (Jerusalem)*
- Pray that the Lord will make Jerusalem a city to be praised. Isaiah 62:7 *'And give Him no rest till He establishes and till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.'*

**Abortion** - We were reminded of the forthcoming Second Reading of the Abortion Decriminalization Bill which is scheduled for Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. This could so easily be overlooked unless our MP's are alerted to support Pro-life principles. People were encouraged to write to their MP's about this.

- Pray that life pre-birth will be recognised. Job 3:16 *'Why was I not hidden like a stillborn child, like infants who never saw light.'* Psalm 127:3 *'Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is His reward.'*

This concluded the meeting.

Attendees 51      Apologies 17