

April 27, 2014

## *Mostly Personal...*

Loved Ones,

Our final 7 days of agreement concerning *Faith Building Promises* continues! But first, let me share an article with you by Francis Frangipane. It expresses my belief that we should continue to make *AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN* for our beloved nation!

### **Their Mission: Eliminate the Cross**

If there ever was a reason to pray for America, you can see it in this excerpt of a recent CNN news article. The report concerns a video that has been published on radical Islamic websites of a large gathering of al Qaeda fighters in Yemen. Of particular interest to me is what they described as their expressed mission and their description of America.

In the middle of the clip, the man known as al Qaeda's crown prince, Nasir al-Wuhayshi, appears brazenly out in the open, greeting followers in Yemen. Al-Wuhayshi, the No. 2 leader of al Qaeda globally and the head of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, has said he wants to attack the United States. But in the video, he looks unconcerned that he could be hit by an American drone. "This is quite an extraordinary video," Paul Cruickshank, CNN terrorism analyst, said.

"The video shows al-Wuhayshi addressing more than 100 fighters somewhere within Yemen, Cruickshank said, The al Qaeda leader, he said, is 'taking a big risk in doing this.' But he doesn't mince words about his mission. In a speech to the group, al-Wuhayshi makes it clear that he's going after the United States, saying, "We must eliminate the cross. The bearer of the cross is America!"

Someone looking at the spiritual condition of America today, with our scandals, failures, and misdirection, might not see what this al Qaeda leader has made clear as their expressed mission. He said, "We must eliminate the cross. The bearer of the cross is America."

I am not relating this story because I am afraid of a hundred pumped up terrorists in a Yemenite desert. My concern is that many Christians have given up and surrendered their prayer stance for America. There are many Christian nations in the world, and many that are more worthy and cleaner than America right now. Yet it is America that the Islamists see as the primary *bearer of the cross* – and it is the influence of Christ's cross with its message of redemption and forgiveness that these terrorists seek to thwart. The fact is, millions of Muslims have turned to Christ in recent years, and this is what the Islamists fear most.

Friends, it is time for a new, national prayer initiative! It is time for the church to pray for this nation – to not give up on America! Yes, we all know that there are many things wrong with the USA, but if all we do is judge and find fault, then we have lost the war already. The Lord's house is a *house of prayer for all nations*. All nations sin; all nations have times of compromise. But is not that the very nature of revival that the dead come back to life?

Let us pray that the vision of God for the United States will be restored to

our national leaders. Pray also for these Muslim terrorists, that God would reveal to them in dreams or visions the supreme value of knowing Christ and the power of redemption as revealed in the cross. And finally, pray that, together with many nations, America would genuinely be a *bearer of the cross of Christ*. Read the whole article here: [www.cnn.com/2014/04/15/world/al-qaeda-meeting-video/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2014/04/15/world/al-qaeda-meeting-video/index.html).

### ***As we look at our verses of encouragement this week, focus on God's great promise of restoration for His people!***

**Sunday:** Jeremiah 10:23, 24 ESV I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps. Correct me, O Lord, but in justice; not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing.

**Monday:** Ephesians 3:16-21 ESV that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

**Tuesday:** Luke 12: 32-34 ESV Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**Wednesday:** Psalm 71:20, 21 ESV You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again. You will increase my greatness and comfort me again.

**Thursday:** Psalm 146:8, 9 ESV The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the sojourners; he upholds the widow and the fatherless, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**Friday:** Isaiah 48:17, 18 ESV Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go. Oh that you had paid attention to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

**Saturday:** Isaiah 54:10 ESV For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the Lord, who has compassion on you.

I love you, *Pastor Stephen*