

Tariffs-less Grace

Tariffs are taxes imposed by a government on imported goods. When a foreign product enters a country, tariffs increase its cost, making it more expensive for consumers. The main aim of tariffs is to protect domestic industries from foreign competition by encouraging people to buy locally made products instead.

During his presidency, Donald Trump frequently used tariffs as a key part of his economic and trade policy. He argued that the US had been taken advantage of in global trade deals, particularly by countries like China. By imposing tariffs on imported goods—especially steel, aluminium, and a wide range of Chinese products—Trump sought to level the playing field.

One of his key reasons was to reduce the US trade deficit—the gap between how much the US imports versus how much it exports. Trump believed that by making foreign goods more expensive, Americans would buy fewer imports and more home-produced items, thereby supporting American businesses and manufacturing.

Another reason was to pressure countries into renegotiating trade deals. By threatening or enforcing tariffs, Trump hoped to force other nations back to the negotiating table to secure agreements more favourable to the US.

However, tariffs also sparked controversy. Critics argued that they often led to higher prices for consumers and harmed American businesses reliant on imported materials. Trade wars—where countries retaliate with their own tariffs—can also damage global economic stability.

The impact wasn't limited to the US. For example, UK car manufacturers like Jaguar Land Rover were hit hard. US tariffs on steel and aluminium raised production costs, while Chinese tariffs on US-made cars—some of which included Jaguar vehicles built in the US—hurt exports. This added strain to an already struggling market, demonstrating how global supply chains feel the ripple effects of trade wars.

Analysts at Wedbush Securities, a major Wall Street investment firm, called the wave of tariffs "*worse than the worst-case scenario*" that many in finance had feared.

In **Deuteronomy 2:2-7**, God commanded Israel to trade freely with Edom (their enemies), purchasing food and water without tariffs or restrictions. This passage is sometimes cited to argue that free trade aligns with God's design for mutual benefit.

This situation remains difficult to resolve—one we can only ponder and seek God's guidance for all those affected.

Let us pray for God's wisdom through these challenging times and thank God for his trafficless grace.