

# Middle East Burning

Mark Hitchcock



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## MIDDLE EAST BURNING

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## Arab Spring...or Fall?

*The turmoil in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman and Syria (and you ain't seen nothing yet...), coupled with the expected U.S. evacuation from Iraq and Afghanistan, the Iranian threat and the inherent non-reliability of international or Western guarantees and forces do not usher in Spring; they do usher in lethal geo-political twisters and floods.<sup>1</sup>*

YORAM ETTINGER

*Democracy is like a streetcar. You ride it until you get to your destination and then you get off.<sup>2</sup>*

TURKISH PRIME MINISTER RECIPI TAYYIP ERDOGAN

*It is still too early to tell whether the waves of change sweeping over the shores of North Africa and the Middle East will erode the foundations of autocracy or, conversely, whether they will merely substitute secular authoritarianism with Islamist totalitarianism.<sup>3</sup>*

ALI ALFONEH, *THE JERUSALEM POST*

**T**he headlines during the spring months of 2011 said it all: “Apocalypse Now: Tsunamis. Earthquakes. Nuclear Meltdowns. Revolutions. Economies on the Brink. What the #@%! Is Next?”<sup>4</sup>

“The Revolution”<sup>5</sup>

“Fire from Egypt and Tunisia Flames Across Arab World”<sup>6</sup>

“Where Is the Next Upheaval?”<sup>7</sup>

“The Middle East Crisis Has Just Begun”<sup>8</sup>

“Why Is the Middle East Burning and Can Anyone Put Out the Fire?”<sup>9</sup>

“Gaddafi’s Last Stand”<sup>10</sup>

“A World Turned Upside Down”<sup>11</sup>

It all began with one tiny spark on December 17, 2010. This spark ignited the blazing brush fire that is now raging across the Middle East. It started when an unemployed Tunisian, Mohamed Bouazizi, doused himself with paint thinner and lit a match. This desperate act of self-immolation was apparently due to the embarrassment and humiliation he suffered after the government confiscated apples he was selling so he could support his family. To make matters worse, Bouazizi was slapped in the face and publicly beaten twice. When his trip to the governor’s office was rebuffed, he believed he had been completely stripped of his dignity, so in a final act of despair he lit a match that ignited a revolution that has since reverberated throughout the Middle East.

Bouazizi’s action ignited street clashes that inspired nearly a dozen other men to set themselves on fire in Egypt, Algeria, and Mauritania and ultimately toppled the autocratic regime of Tunisia, which had been led by Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. The rage continues to spread across the Middle East, and dictators

in the region are feeling the heat. We've all seen the disturbing images of mayhem emanating from the Arab nations with no discernible end in sight. There are lulls and interruptions, but the future is uncertain. The explosive events have shocked, surprised, and stunned the world. The question on the minds of many people is this: Will the present wave of uprisings bring about new democracies in the Middle East, perhaps ones that are more friendly to the West and more benevolent to their own people? Will nations like Egypt become more moderate and remain at peace with Israel? Or will this swelling tide clear the way for radical Islamic leaders to take control of these nations—leaders who are even more oppressive than their predecessors and want to impose Islamic sharia law?

### **Domino-effect Revolutions**

I live in Oklahoma, where the “wind comes sweepin’ down the plains.” At no time is that more true than in the spring. The gusty winds are great for wind power, but terrible when there’s been a drought and a stray spark ends up igniting a grass fire. When these fires are whipped by the winds, they turn into vicious, unpredictable infernos that consume everything in their path.

Today, there is a blazing inferno sweeping across the Middle East. The winds of revolution are whipping up the flames and no one seems to know what’s going to happen or where it’s all headed. After the initial flash in Tunisia, it took just 28 days for Tunisian president Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali to be sent packing to Saudi Arabia after 23 years of tyranny. The winds then blew the glowing embers to Egypt, the most powerful and

populous nation in the Arab world. And from there the flames have continued to spread. Nations are erupting “like a line of dormant volcanoes into revolutionary rioting.”<sup>12</sup>

When the flames spread to Egypt and began what is now known as the January 25th Revolution, a watching world was captivated day after day as newscasts showed scenes of thousands of emboldened protesters and rioters marching, shouting, and camping in the shadow of the famed Egyptian Museum. The Egyptians stood their ground in Tahrir Square and demanded the ouster of Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled Egypt with absolute power for 30 years. After an intense 18-day revolution, Mubarak finally succumbed to the deafening outcry and walked away in shame on February 11, 2011. An interim military regime was appointed, and as of this writing, Egypt’s future is unsettled and uncertain, and elections are allegedly in the offing.

From there, the flames continued to spread. They were stoked in Morocco, Algeria, Jordan, Libya, Bahrain, Oman, Yemen, Iran, Syria, and even Saudi Arabia. Protests convulsed the Middle East over long-suppressed, long-ignored grievances. Dictators who had lived large on the backs of the masses were either sent scurrying for cover or quickly and brutally suppressed those who dared to take part in public demonstrations.

In Libya, when strongman dictator Colonel Muammar Abu Minyar al-Gaddafi (also spelled Qaddafi) and his tyrannical regime came under siege from rebel forces, they struck back with a vengeance. The nation quickly descended into “a patchwork of liberated zones and violently defended redoubts of the

regime.”<sup>13</sup> For a while it appeared Gaddafi would defeat the rebels. Finally, the UN and NATO stepped in to stem the slaughter, giving rebels a brief reprieve, but a long standoff ensued. Most alarming to the West, Libya’s 1.2 million barrels of oil a day was taken off-line and oil prices quickly spiked as uncertainty mushroomed. Prices at the pump rose 20 percent over the period of just a few weeks, exposing the West’s ongoing vulnerability to any slight disruption in oil supply. Gaddafi was finally deposed on August 29, 2011, then killed on October 20, 2011.

### **Arab Awakening**

The series of uprisings in the Middle East has been dubbed the “Arab Spring.” Many have hailed it as an Arab awakening and applauded the protests expressing a desire for freedom and democracy. While freedom and democracy are great gifts and should be desired and fostered by all people, the explanation for the recent rash of uprisings may not be all that simple. Additional factors appear to be lurking behind the scenes of the wave of protests and anger that have engulfed the Middle East and North Africa. Among these forces are “the global financial crisis, rising costs of living, high unemployment—especially of educated youth, frustration from decades of living under authoritarian and corrupt regimes, various document leaks revealing more details about how governments around the world are dealing and viewing each other.”<sup>14</sup> Of course, for many caught up in the unrest a desire for democracy may be their chief goal and motivation, but we are naïve if we fail to recognize that the real impetus behind the so-called Arab Spring could be much deeper and much more sinister.



According to Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, the uprisings are “a direct result of the website’s dumping of classified documents about each country’s leadership.”<sup>15</sup> One of Assange’s document dumps of classified internal Israeli documents revealed “surprisingly intimate levels of cooperation between Israel and the Arab governments now under fire.”<sup>16</sup> Assange told Israel’s Yediot Ahronot: “The documents we released in the past few months were the fuel that ignited the Arab revolts.”<sup>17</sup> According to good sources,

He explained that Wikileaks began publishing the secret U.S. Embassy cables on November 29, 2010, in Arab newspapers, including Lebanon’s Al-Akhbar, which eventually made their way to North Africa, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon, which led to the eruption of the popular revolts. For example, one cable from the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv documented a private talk between Bahrain’s King Sheikh Hamad ibn Isa Al Khalifa and the U.S. Ambassador in which the Ambassador reported: “He [the king] revealed that Bahrain already has contacts with Israel at the intelligence/security level (with Mossad) and indicated that Bahrain will be willing to move forward in other areas.”

Assange isn’t merely blowing his own horn on the impact the document dump has had across the Middle East. One need only look at the governments most at risk. Their repressive policies may have sparked the early revolts, but it was their secret *collusion with the United States and with Israel* that sustained it and provided it with fuel. The documents showed that some

Arab leaders didn't hate Israel and America. At least, not as much as their populations wanted them to. That is what Arab Spring is *really* all about. "Death to America." "Death to Israel." To millions of ordinary Arab citizens, they aren't just slogans. It was the *reason* that they put up with their repressive regimes—they believed that their leaders hated the two Satans as much as they did.<sup>18</sup>

The article continues:

The Egyptians didn't come out in mass demonstrations against Hosni Mubarak because they hunger for Western-style democracy like that of America or Israel. It was over Mubarak's relationship with the United States and Israel as revealed by the Wikileaks dump. The same holds true across the rest of the Middle East. The more the government was revealed to have cooperated with Israel or America, the more restive the population and tenuous that government's hold on power.<sup>19</sup>

The handwriting is on the wall concerning who will ultimately take over in Egypt and other Middle Eastern nations, and it won't be the forces of democracy. Roger Wiegand warns,

Any political change of power, especially by force, will not be in the direction of a Western vision of Democracy. Radical Islam is what is forcing the change, so any new governing power structure will have to recognize the radicals and include them in a new regime. Once they officially have a foot in the political governing

door, it is not a large step to take control of the entire country.<sup>20</sup>

What we are witnessing could well be the embryonic, emerging Islamic caliphate that jihadists want. The tide of revolution could eventually usher into power states with radical leaders who want to establish sharia law the same way it was implanted in Iran after the revolution in 1979. These developments could light the fuse to the Middle East powder keg and trigger the military conflict predicted in Ezekiel 38–39.

### **It's Not the Same Old Middle East**

While some of these uprisings, such as those in Syria, may be temporarily stuffed and stalled by bullets, the people of the Middle East are more aware today of what's going on in the outside world than at any other time and have more resources available to them. While there is still widespread illiteracy and poverty in all Islamic Middle East nations, there is a burgeoning sector of the population that is educated and technology savvy. Social networking websites have played a key role in the uprisings, especially in Egypt. The "Facebook Generation" has already been given much of the credit for the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak. The Egyptian government blocked Internet use in an effort to throw water on the flames of revolt, but to no avail, and Egyptian Google executive Wael Ghonim was the darling of Tahrir Square on January 27, 2011.

Information technology, however, is a powerful resource not only for the promoters of democracy, but also the enemies of freedom. Fouad X, the head of information technology for Hezbollah in Lebanon, uses email and the Internet to recruit

young Islamists willing to serve their “sacred cause.” The continuing expansion of Internet technology will continue to play a major role, for both good and evil, as the flames of unrest continue to spread. As Niall Ferguson notes, “The clash of civilizations would have been easy for the West to win if it had simply pitted the ideas and institutions of the 21st century against those of the seventh. No such luck. In the new mash of civilizations, our most dangerous foes are the Islamists who understand how to post *fatwas* on Facebook, email the holy Quran, and tweet the call to jihad.”<sup>21</sup>

So technology will clearly have a key role in the future of the Middle East and the global balance of power. This is another key sign of the times as the world “shrinks” and the globalism envisioned in Revelation chapters 13 and 17 comes to fruition.

### **Filling the Void**

In November 2008, during a *Wall Street Journal* forum, former White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel was quoted as saying, “You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. And what I mean by that is an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before.” His stunningly opportunistic statement was a transparent and honest admission of the Obama administration’s tactical approach to crises. The employment of this perspective has reaped a sea-change of initiatives in the US during a time of extended economic difficulties. However, our trials, tribulations, and turmoil pale in comparison to what is happening in the Middle East today. Opportunities abound for evil forces to exploit the uprisings to their advantage.

According to *The Economist*,

The latest issue of *Inspire*, an on-line jihadist magazine that declares itself the English-language mouthpiece of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the Yemen-based franchise of Osama bin Laden's global jihadist group, hails the Arab's revolutionary fervour as a golden opportunity. "The revolutions that are shaking the thrones of dictators are good for the Muslims, good for the mujahideen and bad for the imperialists of the West and their henchman in the Muslim world."<sup>22</sup>

Many are celebrating the Arab people's desire for freedom and democracy, but at the same time they fear that what follows may be as bad or in some cases worse than what was there before. The question everyone is asking is this: Who will fill the void? It's likely that the Arab awakening will be hijacked and exploited by murderous Islamists and jihadists who are more oppressive and dangerous than the despots they replace. In other words, don't expect the Arab Spring to be followed by a summer of love in the Middle East. Rather, the uprisings could prove to be "a Trojan Horse for radical Islam."<sup>23</sup>

The protests in the Middle East have presented a golden opportunity for Islamic radicals to assert themselves. For example, among Gaddafi foes in Libya, one U.S. general said he detected "flickers of al-Qaeda."<sup>24</sup> Those flickers could become a firestorm of terror if these foes secure power in Libya. Jihadists are certainly not letting this crisis "go to waste." *Stratfor Global Intelligence* summarizes the situation well:

In this case, whatever the cause of the risings, there is

no question that radical Islamists will attempt to take advantage and control of them. Why wouldn't they? It is a rational and logical course for them. Whether they will be able to do so is a more complex and important question, but that they would want to and are trying to do so is obvious. They are a broad, transnational and disparate group brought up in conspiratorial methods. This is their opportunity to create a broad international coalition. Thus, as with traditional communists and the New Left in the 1960s, they did not create the rising but they would be fools not to try to take advantage of it. Democratic revolutions have two phases. The first is the establishment of democracy. The second is the election of governments. The example of Hitler is useful as a caution on what kind of governments a young democracy can produce, since he came to power through democratic and constitutional means—and then abolished democracy to cheering crowds. So there are three crosscurrents here. The first is the reaction against corrupt regimes. The second is the election itself. And the third? The United States needs to remember, as it applauds the rise of democracy, that the elected government may not be what one expected. The democracies that eventually arise will produce regimes that will take their bearings from their own culture, which means Islam. The problem with revolutions is that the people who start them rarely finish them.<sup>25</sup>

As bad as the current leaders in the Middle East and North Africa are, they have been reluctant to go up against Israel

because they know they can't win an all-out war. They've tried before and been unsuccessful. However, the radicals who replace them would most likely not be constrained by the same fear and won't be as concerned about self-preservation as they are about destroying Israel. They won't have the imbedded dynasties and riches to protect like the current leaders have.

One example of a group that has taken advantage of the current situation is the Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas, which has long been committed to the complete destruction of Israel and has been pounding southern Israel with rockets. Recently the less-radical half of the Palestinians, Fatah, has chosen to make peace with Hamas so that their two groups are now under one leadership. The implications of this development are very serious for Israel.

Every year, when the Israelis celebrate the anniversary of the birth of the modern state of Israel, Palestinians mark the day by calling it *nakba* (catastrophe). On that day in 2011, Hamas prime minister Ismail Haniyeh spoke to Muslim worshipers, telling them to pray for an end to Israel. He said, "Palestinians mark the *nakba* with great hope of bringing to an end the Zionist project in Palestine."<sup>26</sup> He told 10,000 people at Gaza City's al-Omari mosque, "To achieve our goals in the liberation of our occupied land, we should have one leadership." He said this in recognition and praise of the recent unification of Hamas and Fatah and added that Hamas would not recognize Israel's right to exist. This uniting of forces under Hamas, joined with Hezbollah in Lebanon, could seize the current unrest as an opportune time to draw Israel into another war.

The fortunes of groups like al-Qaeda and nations like Iran

rise as the dictators of the Middle East fall or struggle to survive. It now seems clear that “in the uncertainty of dramatic changes sweeping the Middle East and North Africa, what’s certain is that Israel will have fewer friends and perhaps more hostile neighbors.”<sup>27</sup> Meir Litvak, director of the Center for Iranian Studies at Tel Aviv University, states, “A weaker Egypt in the Middle East...leaves a certain vacuum in which Iran can play a more active role, and that is not beneficial.”<sup>28</sup> All the unrest and upheaval serves the purpose of Iran and its Shiite, mullah regime in that it dilutes and diffuses the power of Sunnis in places like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Egypt. In fact, Iran was on the sidelines cheering the revolt in Egypt and the fall of the house of Mubarak.

As of this writing, Egypt is susceptible to a political takeover by the Muslim Brotherhood, which is a worldwide Sunni Islamist movement now boasting chapters in about 80 nations. If the Muslim Brotherhood gains a slice of the power in Egypt, it would undoubtedly be cozy with Hamas and do all it could to undermine any kind of peace agreement with Israel. The Muslim Brotherhood has already called for a referendum on the Camp David accords with Israel.

Since its founding in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood has been “an important incubator of Islamist movements.”<sup>29</sup> This group is the quintessential radical Islamic organization—in fact, it gave birth to al-Qaeda. What’s more, al-Qaeda’s number two leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri, was a high-level member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood before embarking on his reign of terror, murder, and oppression with Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The Muslim Brotherhood has spawned several



other religious and political organizations in the Middle East, including Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

The Brotherhood is dedicated to the jihadi credo “Allah is our objective, the Quran is our Constitution, the Prophet is our leader, Jihad is our way, and death for the sake of Allah is the highest of our aspirations.” The organization’s charter and website state that the Muslim Brotherhood seeks to install an Islamic empire ruled under sharia law and a caliphate across the Muslim world—and ultimately the entire world—through stages designed to incrementally “Islamize” targeted nations. Those who want this Islamic caliphate need the one key ingredient that’s always required for sudden, dramatic change—chaos and unrest.

We have all the makings today of what we might call a “Recipe for Middle East Turmoil.” Here are the key ingredients and instructions:

- Take one land (Israel) and try to divide it into two equal parts. Set aside one portion for the Arabs, but don’t do anything with it yet.
- Add in the explosion of radical Shiite-Muslim extremism and Jewish nationalism.
- Add a pinch of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Bashir al-Assad, the Muslim Brotherhood, and jihadist terror.
- Add chaos and unrest that opens the doors for radical elements to gain a foothold in Egypt, Libya, and other Arab states.

- Add the possible proliferation of nuclear weapons.
- Mix well and let simmer until it explodes.<sup>30</sup>

In light of these recent developments, the situation for Israel has become increasingly dire. A growing number of radical Islamic leaders are threatening that Israel will soon be wiped off the map and are pledging to assist in that effort in whatever ways they can. Iran is feverishly trying to cross the nuclear “finish line” by building nuclear weapons and the ballistic missiles to deliver them. In Lebanon, Hezbollah has stockpiled a supply of more than 40,000 rockets aimed at Israel. Syria has spent billions on weapons systems targeting Israel, and with the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Egyptian leaders are speaking with growing hostility toward the Jewish State.

To make matters worse, if that’s possible, at the same time the Middle East is burning, President Obama has called for Israel to return to its 1967 borders as a basis for the creation of the neighboring Palestinian State. Israel’s number one and most powerful ally is putting Israel in a no-win situation, or “throwing them under the bus,” as some have put it. Obama’s plan would mean the Palestinians would control the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu immediately rejected the notion of a return to the 1967 borders. He said, “Remember that before 1967, Israel was all of nine miles wide. It was half the width of the Washington Beltway. And these were not the boundaries of peace; they were the boundaries of repeated wars, because the attack on Israel was so attractive.”<sup>31</sup> President Obama’s statements about Israel highlight the

fact that the deep, smoldering issue for the Arabs is still the Israeli-Palestinian issue. Obama knows that this issue must be resolved, but his answer is historically shortsighted, politically unpopular, and biblically reckless. In light of these latest developments, many orthodox Jewish rabbis and a growing number of Christians believe that the Middle East could explode at any time into a major regional conflagration.

And in fact, there are signs that we're headed in that direction. The Institute of International Finance predicted that economic growth in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Syria will fall dramatically in the near future. It is increasingly difficult to carry out normal business, crime is soaring, and the political future is profoundly uncertain. Rich Arabs are pulling their money out fast. They don't trust the Arab revolution. "Since January [2011] they have been rushing to get their cash into safe havens, some arriving in London or Zurich with suitcases full of cash."<sup>32</sup>

There are estimates that as much as \$30 billion has fled from Egypt alone since the outbreak of the Arab Spring. The Egyptian stock market is tanking, having plunged 23 percent from its peak before the crisis. Foreign investors don't want anything to do with the region. The unsettling bottom line is that economic conditions have gotten far worse, not better, since the onset of the Arab Spring. Unemployment is rising in Egypt and inflation has increased 12 percent. Many of the same conditions that precipitated the Arab uprising—high unemployment, high food prices, and corruption—have increased, while living standards are declining. This is the perfect set-up for extremists like the Muslim Brotherhood and al-Qaeda

to come in and “peddle their radical ideology of war against internal and external foes.”<sup>33</sup> If things don’t begin to improve quickly, horrific civil war could erupt between the forces of revolution and reaction.

## **Foreshadows of the Future**

Those who know the Bible recognize that Scripture tells us the Middle East will be the staging ground for the great wars of the end times, including the Battle of Gog and Magog as well as the mother of all wars, Armageddon. So their eyes are riveted on the Middle East, and they are acutely aware of the significance of any developments that have the potential to lead the Middle East closer to these cataclysmic events.

Almost 30 years ago, Bible prophecy scholar John Walvoord noted that the first key to the Armageddon countdown is that “the Middle East must become the number one crisis in the world.”<sup>34</sup> After this he added, “Then as nations jockey to gain influence and control, a new world order will begin to emerge. This sets the stage for the emergence of a new nation group that will superimpose a peaceful solution in a seemingly impossible situation.”<sup>35</sup> There’s no doubt today that the Middle East is the number one crisis spot in the world. That piece of the prophetic puzzle is now firmly in place. There’s also no doubt that everyone recognizes the need for a comprehensive peace plan for the Middle East.

In 1967, Dr. John Walvoord wrote some timely words that look like they were taken straight from today’s headlines. What he says here is clearly more applicable today than when he wrote it almost 45 years ago:

The world today faces an international crisis unparalleled in all the history of man. A tremendous revolution is under way in the international scene, in science, in economics, in morals, in theology, and in the religious structure of the church. The world is aflame with the raw passions of men ambitious for power and desperate to be freed from poverty and frustration. An ominous cloud hangs over the hearts of men and nations. The nations are indeed at the crossroads, and impending events cast their shadow on every aspect of human life. The world is moving faster and faster like a colossal machine out of control whose very power and momentum inevitably will plunge it into ultimate disaster.

Apart from the Bible, the world does not have a ray of hope. Our most brilliant leaders have not found an answer. World leaders, whether in Moscow or Washington, are troubled by the great issues which face the world today...

The present world crisis is not a result of any one factor, but a concurrence of causes and effects which combine to set the world stage for a conflict which may quickly bring an end to hundreds of years of progress in western civilization and establish new centers of international power. Whatever the future holds, it is going to be dramatically different than the past. In this dark picture only the Scriptures chart a sure course and give us an intelligent explanation of worldwide confusion as it exists today. The present world crisis in the light

of the Scriptures reveals the existence of remarkable components in almost every area which may lead to a dramatic climax of world history. The present crisis in every area of human life all point to the same conclusion, that disaster awaits the nations of the world.<sup>36</sup>

### **How Much Longer Can the Lid Be Held Down?**

The rapidly increasing tempo of change in modern life and the constant upheavals and uncertainty in global hot spots has given the entire world a sense of impending crisis. The entire Middle East became the center of attention during the Gulf War in 1990–1991 and made many wonder whether that conflict was the final war predicted in Scripture. Although it soon became clear that the Gulf War was not a fulfillment of biblical prophecy, the entire world has kept its eyes intently focused on the Middle East ever since.

The invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 seem to have added fuel to the jihadist fire. Israel fought a 34-day war with Hamas and Hezbollah in the summer of 2006. The spring of 2011 brought a series of revolutions to the Middle East and North Africa that are still smoldering. Iran is in hot pursuit of nuclear weapons and could be planning nuclear jihad against Israel. Israel is equipped to unleash a preemptive strike against Iran's nuclear facilities. Given all these factors, how much longer can world tensions be kept in check? How much longer can Western powers keep their struggle with Islamic jihadists from becoming a global bloodbath?

People everywhere are asking questions about the future as never before—sober questions that have serious implications:

- Are biblical prophecies being fulfilled before our eyes?
- How do the enormous changes taking place now in the Middle East fit into God's prophetic puzzle?
- Will some of the Arab nations now experiencing unrest eventually join the Islamic jihad and turn against Israel even more aggressively?
- Could the Arab Spring turn into a nuclear winter?
- How do Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Iran, Syria, Russia, and Turkey fit into God's prophetic program?
- What will happen to Israel?
- What does the Bible say about coming wars in the Middle East?
- Where, if anywhere, does the United States fit in all this?

The Middle East is burning. That much is clear. But what does it all mean? What will happen next? Where is all this headed? The Bible is certainly the best place to look for answers. Many of the biblical prophecies cited in this book are strikingly foreshadowed by events happening right before our eyes. People everywhere are becoming increasingly aware of an astonishing correspondence between the obvious trend of world events and what the Bible predicted centuries ago.

In fact, 28 percent of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written. Even the most skeptical person can put these prophecies to the test by noting the literal, precise fulfillment of hundreds of biblical prophecies that have already come to

pass. When it comes to prophecy, the Bible has a proven track record of 100 percent accuracy. For this reason, biblical prophecy is being discussed more than ever before. Prophecies that, in the past, were sometimes brushed aside as being too far-fetched or impossible are now being studied again. People of all walks of life and of all religious faiths are asking the burning question: What does the Bible say the future holds?