

Joel Rosenberg Echoes Fears of Syrian Use of Chemical Weapons

A terrible darkness is settling over the Middle East, and with each day that passes the likelihood of a major war in the Middle East in 2013 that could involve **Israel**, Iran and Syria appears to grow. The ayatollahs in Iran are continuing to pursue nuclear weapons. They're preaching that the end of days have come and that the so-called Islamic messiah known as the Twelfth Imam will be revealed soon to rule the Earth.

Neither the U.S. nor the rest of the world seem willing to take decisive action to neutralize the threat. Israel is actively preparing to launch a preemptive military strike. But the world is pressuring Jerusalem not to strike. And Israeli leaders are also weighing the blowback they would receive once such a war began.

The Iranian-backed Hezbollah terror group in southern Lebanon has tens of thousands of missiles pointed at the Jewish State. A radical Islamic dictator is rising in Egypt. Jihadists have been firing rockets and mortars at Israel from the Sinai Desert. Hamas forces in Gaza just fired more than 1,500 rockets and missiles at Israel and are being resupplied by **Iran**.

That said, senior Israeli intelligence sources are now saying the border with Syria could become "the hottest border in Israel" in 2013. We're currently witnessing the slaughter of more than 40,000 innocent civilians by the bloodthirsty regime in Damascus.

Israeli and Western intelligence agencies increasingly fear the Assad regime will use weapons of mass destruction against Israel, and/or against their own people,

and/or the Assad regime will fall and jihadist forces will gain control of Syria's stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and then focus on a War of Annihilation against Israel. The U.S. and Israeli governments are warning the regime in Damascus not to use WMD (**weapons of mass destruction**) as this is a red line.

"I want to make it absolutely clear to Assad and those under his command—the world is watching," President Barack Obama said during a speech at the National Defense University in Washington on Monday.

The use of weapons of mass destruction by **Syria** "is and would be totally unacceptable," the president said, adding, "And if you make the tragic mistake of using these weapons, there will be consequences and you will be held accountable."

Recent trends in the Middle East—notably the intensifying threat of Syria using weapons of mass destruction in combination with the growing Iranian nuclear threat—echo the plot of my forthcoming political thriller, *Damascus Countdown*, which will release nationwide on March 5, 2013.

What my novels do is ask what everyone is asking: What if all hell breaks loose? What if these dark trends spin out of control? What would it look like if Israel does, in fact, launch a massive preemptive military strike against Iran? What would the retaliation look like if Iran, Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas fire back with tens of thousands of missiles raining down on Israel? And is it possible that such a horrific war could inadvertently set into motion end-times Bible prophecies, such as the prophecies in Isaiah and Jeremiah that indicate the city of Damascus will one day be utterly and completely wiped off the face of the earth?

In *Damascus Countdown*, all eyes are on the **Middle East**. Israel has successfully launched a first strike on Iran, taking out all of their nuclear sites and six of their nuclear

warheads—and causing the Twelfth Imam to order a full-scale retaliation. U.S. President William Jackson threatens to support a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning the Jewish State for unprovoked and unwarranted acts of aggression.

Meanwhile, CIA operative David Shirazi has infiltrated the Iranian regime and intercepted information indicating that two Iranian nuclear warheads survived the attack and have been moved to a secure and undisclosed location. In danger not only from the ongoing missile strikes on Iran but also from the increasingly hostile and suspicious governments of multiple countries, David and his team are in a race against time to find the remaining nuclear warheads before disaster strikes. And suddenly the city of Damascus becomes a strange and unexpected actor in the drama.

Will the prophecies regarding the future of Damascus come true in our lifetime? Are current events in Syria foreshadowing prophetic events?

Damascus Countdown will be the third and final novel in the trilogy that began with *The Twelfth Imam* and *The Tehran Initiative*.

Joel C. Rosenberg is the author of 10 New York Times best-selling novels and non-fiction books, with more than 2.5 million copies sold. He is also the founder of The Joshua Fund.