

# Why It's Gone From Islamic Spring to Islamic Chaos

Sitting at home in Jerusalem, like so many other residents, one would never think that within only two to three hours' drive from here, chaos and turmoil is running rampant beyond Israel's borders. In fact, it is hard to believe that Israel has become, relatively speaking, an oasis in the midst of so many war-torn nations.

The reason is simply stated in the words of Jesus (Yeshua), where in Matthew's Gospel we read, "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."

In all due fairness, many Arabs are Christian, and many are secular or liberal-minded Muslims in faith or practice. However, the forces of evil that spring forth from the seeds of a religious belief in war, also known as jihad, will ultimately bring forth the fruits of violence, hatred and strife.

It is no surprise, then, that even since the last column I wrote, new developments have occurred in the Middle East, and we should not be shocked that by the time you are reading this, new twists and turns will have happened.

In Egypt, the now former president, named Morsi, was overthrown in a coup by the Egyptian military. Since Morsi's fall, his Islamist supporters have taken to the streets, vowing to continue protests until he is reinstated. Clashes and violence have been growing, with scores of people killed or wounded.

This seems so undemocratic and unfair by Western and European standards, so much so that the European Union is calling for Morsi's release from arrest as well as many members of his

previous government. But have you all forgotten that he was the head of one of the worst organizations on the face of the earth, called the Muslim Brotherhood, which was responsible for the assassination of Egypt's former President Sadat who came and actually made peace with Israel?

The Muslim Brotherhood was responsible for the founding of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, which sent suicide bombers into the heart of Israel, killing and wounding thousands of Israel's citizens, both Jewish and Arab. Hamas has launched or shot more than 8,000 rockets into southern Israel's regions since Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005. Currently more than 1 million Israelis live under the threat of rocket attacks. And while there are no more Jews in the Gaza Strip, Israel is still referred to as the occupation force.

The Muslim Brotherhood was also enacting new laws that were subjecting the Coptic Christians, evangelical Christians and other minority groups in Egypt to being persecuted and oppressed under the strong arm of Islamic Sharia laws. Quite frankly, Egyptian Christians are happy Morsi is gone. As the turmoil rages in the streets of Egypt, let us be aware and discerning that there are thousands of Christians who are completely supportive of the Egyptian military coup and, as such, have prayed for Morsi's overthrow.

The ancient group of Coptic Christians in Egypt represents one-tenth of the Egyptian population, roughly 84 million people. The news out of the Middle East is for us to be more aware of the events taking place. It is also important in the Christian mindset to understand that God's judgments and purposes for His people and the nations are being revealed.

Egypt is already sending in thousands of military soldiers to the Sinai, under their control, in order to battle terrorists and organizations like al-Qaida and Hamas. Also, 80 percent of the smuggling tunnels into the Gaza Strip have been shut down with Egypt's help. The military government is trying to bring

back stability and avoid a civil war.

Until now, tourism played a large part in the Egyptian economy, but it has been wiped out over the last two years. To restore confidence, one has to believe the military is doing what it can to strengthen jobs again. It may not be a perfect scenario, but it is one that still gives a glimpse of hope, especially to Egypt's Christian communities.

Tunisia, one of the first nations to overthrow its former leader, recently has seen its opposition leader assassinated. In Iraq, after the U.S. and other allied forces spent billions of dollars to create a democratic government and a stable army and police force, all we see now is chaos. It is the great divide between the Sunnis and the Shias.

Maybe a lesson for Westerners to learn is that Islam's tenets are rooted in Sharia law and not democratic values. Every week, scores of Iraqi citizens are being subjected to suicide bombings and killings as thousands of its people are dying without hope.

Again, we have failed as God's people who believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, as the Christian population once was reported to be about 1.5 million, traditional or evangelical, but has dwindled to around 250,000. The violence and persecution against Christians by Muslims in Iraq has been part of what they are sowing back today among themselves. This sounds unfair, but it is the truth.

So, where are the pastors and Christian leaders today in Europe? Why are their voices so few about these injustices in Islamic nations? Israel, which is not perfect by any means, is still the freest place for Christians in the entire Middle East. I don't know of one single Christian or Jewish believer in Yeshua, in all of Israel, that has died for his or her faith because of the Jewish people's democratically elected government or its laws in the Knesset.

And yet there are more evangelical Christians in Europe speaking out against Israel's injustices than for the rights of Christians throughout the entire Middle Eastern Islamic nations that are more like dictatorships. The apostle Paul, as recorded in Romans 11:18, says "Do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you." That root is Jewish.

Finally, we have arrived back home in Israel where the Obama-led U.S. negotiating team is trying to get the Palestinians, under the leadership of Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, back to peace talks with Israel. Israel will do anything for peace, as evidenced by the fact that a decision was made by Prime Minister Netanyahu's cabinet to free terrorist murderers of Israeli citizens despite much opposition from the Jewish population.

By releasing more terrorists, there is still some wishful thinking in Israel about a peace process that hasn't brought us anywhere closer to peace since 1993's Oslo Peace Accords. During these present peace talks, Abbas continues to declare, "The Palestinian state that will be established will not include a single Israeli soldier or civilian." In the words of the Nazis who declared their conquered lands, "*Judenrein!*"

Minister Naftali Bennett said, "Fear paralyzes. If we had listened to those who tried to scare us in previous generations, we would have stayed in the Arab world and in Europe, and we would have continued to be obliterated there."

In conclusion, I think Christians today should not fear but stand up for truth, and in doing so we will all have a greater reward for eternity. Never give up the truth!

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