

# INTERCEDE

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## Revolution in the Arab Muslim World

By Fouad Masri and Dr. Byron Klaus



The following statements by Fouad Masri and Dr. Byron Klaus provide excellent insight into recent unprecedented events in the Arab Muslim world.

### **Islam is Being Rejected Across the World**

*Fouad Masri, Director, Crescent Project*

I hope you are watching all that is going on in the Muslim world. God is on the move. Muslims are tired of oppression and many are seeking freedom. It is clear that Islam has failed as a political and a social system. Muammer al-Qaddafi, who has funded the building of mosques and the propagation of Islam throughout the Western world, is now using his guns and jets on his own people. Why? Because political Islam is all about gaining and keeping power.

There are revolutions and demands for change in many Muslim countries, including Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Lebanon, Yemen, Bahrain, Iran and more. If it were just in one or two countries, I agree it would be a local issue. But it's not. The entire Islamic world is in unrest, and the people losing the most sleep are the ones in charge.

There are three reasons I say this is a revolution against Islam, not just against government.

(1) The people are tired of ruthless, self-important rulers. Yet, this is the core nature of Islamic rule and politics dating back to the beginning with Muhammad. Islam demands a strong ruler to keep the population under control. It has often been said that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts

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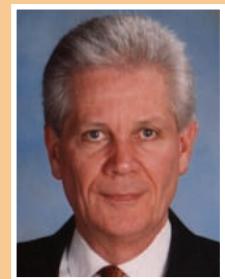


# Until All Have Heard

*How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? – Romans 10:14*

Jim Bennett

Global Initiative:  
Reaching Muslim Peoples



**R**ecent events in the Arab Muslim world have astounded us. Scores of articles have attempted to analyze and explain what has happened; media pundits have offered a host of cause-and-effect theories. Analysis is essential, and we do not discount the importance of discussing the issue of freedom for all peoples and nations. However, at the same time, a key question for followers of Christ is: Can we discern what the Lord of the harvest is saying through these events — and take appropriate missiological action? Will these events provide unprecedented open doors for missional activity? We cannot say with certainty, but it would be wise to take appropriate steps to prepare personnel and means.

At the least, our responsibility is to: (1) diligently pray that the Lord of the harvest will call forth more laborers, (2) offer support and prayer for missions personnel who are already pre-positioned and presently live and serve in these complex places, (3) recognize and pray for existing churches and Christians in these countries, and (4) pray that these events will be used to help remove the spiritual veil of darkness from the eyes of the Muslim inhabitants of these lands.

In our lead article, Fouad Masri, director of Crescent Project, suggests reasons why recent events are a revolution against Islam, not just against government. He then says, “I ask that you look beyond the headlines and see the spiritual dilemma Muslims are in. They need a savior, and He is responding.” This is the ultimate answer to the Muslim ‘dilemma.’

Also in our lead article, Byron Klaus, president of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, underscores the importance of looking beyond the socio-political implications of these events. He says, “I hope that followers of Jesus will be discerning enough to realize that this current upheaval cannot be entirely explained even by the most experienced pundits. Isaiah 40:23 describes a factor that has to be added to our analysis: ‘He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.’” Then in closing, Klaus adds, “This is a time for the followers of Jesus to be more than avid observers of world events, but obedient participants in the grand saga of redemption that will conclude with people from every tribe, tongue and nation singing, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain’” (Rev. 5:9-12). 





# Muslim World News

## Pakistan

### *Death in blasphemy case*

A Christian serving a life sentence in Karachi Central Jail on accusations that he had sent text messages blaspheming Muhammad died amid suspicions that he was murdered.

Qamar David's life had been threatened since he and a Muslim, Munawar Ahmad, were accused of sending derogatory text messages about Muhammad in June 2006.

David was convicted under Section 295-C under Pakistan's widely condemned blasphemy laws for derogatory remarks against Muhammad. Maximum punishment for 295-C is death, though life imprisonment is also possible.

Pervaiz Chaudhry, David's former lawyer, said David had expressed fears for his life several times during the trial.

"David did not die of a heart attack as the jail officials are claiming. He was threatened since the trial began, and he had submitted a written application for security." — *Compass*

## Ethiopia

### *Churches destroyed by mobs*

At least one Christian was killed and others were injured when thousands of Islamic extremists set fire to 59 churches and at least 28 homes in Ethiopia. More than 4,000 Christians in and around Asendabo, Jimma zone, have been displaced as a result of attacks that began after Muslims accused a Christian of desecrating the Quran by tearing up a copy.

The Christian killed in the violence, believed to have been a member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, has not yet been identified.

A pastor based in the capital, Addis Ababa, noted that evangelical church leaders have reported the attacks to authorities and asked officials for help, but no action had been taken as of press time.

After the destruction began at Asendabo, it spread to Chiltie, Gilgel, Gibe, Nada, Dimtu, Uragay, Busa, and Koticha, as Muslim mobs in the thousands rampaged throughout the area, sources said. — *Compass*

## Malaysia

### *Detention of Christian literature*

The detaining of 30,000 copies of the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs in the Malay language at Kuching Port has 'greatly delusioned' the nation's Christian community.

The books, imported from Indonesia by the local branch of Gideons International for distribution in schools, churches and longhouses in Betong, Saratok and other Christian areas in Sarawak State, have been detained at the port since January.

Authorities told an officer of the importer on Jan. 12, that he could not distribute the books in Sarawak State, on the island of Borneo, since they "contained words which are also found in the Quran," according to online news agency *Malaysiakini*.

Bishop Ng Moon Hing decried the action. "It would appear as if the authorities are waging a continuous, surreptitious and systematic program against Christians in Malaysia to deny them access to the Bible in (Malay)," he said. — *Compass*

# Revolution in the A

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absolutely. This has never been more evident than in the Islamic world. At last, Muslims around the world are realizing there is a better way.

(2) Unemployment is rampant in most of these countries and the people want something done about it. This is perhaps one of the most cited reasons for the unrest, yet few look into the cause of the poor economy. Muslims tend to have a well-developed sense of fate (a core Islamic belief), and therefore often simply accept their poor conditions as the will of Allah. Perhaps true, but many are now seeing that the wealth and corruption of the Islamic leadership is repugnant when millions live in squalor and are simply told to accept it.

(3) Many Muslims have seen and tasted freedom for the first time. With access to the Internet, millions of Muslims around the world are being exposed to new ideas — including an understanding of freedom. Under Islam, there is no freedom. Every behavior and every thought is to be controlled by Islam. Today, many people are seeing the beauty of freedom and want to experience it for themselves.

There is a major wave of awakening on the social level. I ask that you look beyond the headlines and see the spiritual dilemma Muslims are in. They need a savior, and He is responding. I know of a Shiite who prayed and committed his life to Christ recently. I know of another Muslim who came to faith in the Middle East. Yet another is exploring the New Testament.

There is a new spiritual hunger in the Muslim world, and we need to pray for Muslims everywhere to meet authentic Christians and hear the Good News of Christ.

Whether freedom wins, or not, we need to pray for Muslims to hear the Gospel. We need to take action and get involved in this timely work. We need to share the hope of Jesus with Muslims.

## Just Thinking Out Loud

*Dr. Byron Klaus, President, AGTS, Springfield, Mo.*

North Africa and the Middle East are experiencing grassroots, citizen-driven political upheavals that have seemingly come from nowhere. Supposedly ironclad regimes are simply being tested over the entire region.



Without a doubt, we are seeing the emergence of a growing reality: the power of social media. However, to claim that Twitter or Facebook was the only thing missing for this kind of revolution to occur would be delegating too much causal clout, although the amazing reality of the speed with which the powerful social media has driven these events is stunning. Multiple facts have converged into a ‘fullness of time’ scenario that is truly amazing to watch. Three weeks of protest in Egypt brought down a 30-year military band regime and similar movements preceded Egypt in Tunisia with new hotspots developing in Libya, Yemen and Bahrain. It almost seems like the 1960s art form of protest has been reincarnated throughout the Muslim world.

# Arab Muslim World

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The surprise these protest movements has elicited, even among the most seasoned world observers, is amazing to behold. Just three months ago, the global headlines that changed hourly would have been inconceivable. I hope that followers of Jesus will be discerning enough to realize that this current upheaval cannot be entirely explained even by the most experienced pundits. Isaiah 40:23 describes a factor that has to be added to our analysis: “He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.”

We have a history of missing windows of opportunity for the gospel. For example, our sluggishness in responding to the fall of the Iron Curtain was an unfortu-

nate miscue, largely caused by a predominating belief that it was improbable that the gospel could ever again be preached in the USSR and its satellite countries. That overriding unwillingness to recognize the inexorable redemptive mission of Christ seemingly forgot that not even the gates of hell could resist the inevitability of Christ’s Kingdom.

Could it be that we are facing a 21st century version of our Cold War frozenness? When we think of the harsh and often violent consequences of taking the gospel to certain peoples and regions, could it be that we may have a similar case of spiritual myopia that followers of Jesus exhibited back in the 1980s?

I am neither naive nor overly sentimental, but I was just thinking...

Remember over the past Christmas season, when all over the American nation — and even globally random groups surprised shoppers with the spontaneous singing of the Hallelujah Chorus? Could it be that God was actually giving us a wakeup call that in the most unlikely places (malls: cathedrals of market consumption) His declaration of Lordship over the nations was being pronounced — Good news to all the people? Frankly, I am thinking — something’s up — it’s astounding. Who would have believed it? But could it be that we are seeing God’s redemptive saga again jumpstart a new effort to reach the sons and daughters of Ishmael, just when our hearts are yet filled with anxiety and even anger toward this growing religious reality?

Maybe the words from Jehovah God to the ancient prophet Habakkuk are fitting for today (Habakkuk 1:5) “Look at the nations and watch and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe even if you were told.” Is it just mere coincidence that the spontaneous declaration of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in American malls this past Christmas has been followed by the unthinkable political upheaval in the most unlikely places on earth?

Maybe I am out on a limb with my observations (I suppose that my analysis wouldn’t make it on CNN, Fox News, BBC, or Al Jazeera). I simply believe that something so unexpected — which has occurred in such an

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accelerated manner, requires more than the predictable responses of pundits and other talking heads. Followers of Jesus need some sense of wonder at the fact that there is more to this set of events than the painful reality of higher gas prices. Even the laudable desire, that the minimal privileges of democracy should be universal experiences for all people, cannot capture the true significance of what is going on right now.

How often have we reminded God that the situations are impossible? We look at the political, social, and economical logjams around the world and query God about where He is in the middle of all this obvious chaos. The crumbling of structures that have strangled the sense of destiny for countless millions of people is just as unlikely as the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus in a mall. I think every valley is being exalted (Isa. 40:2) and the people who have walked in darkness are seeing a great light (Isa. 9:2).

The Lord God Omnipotent is reigning. This is a time for the followers of Jesus to be more than avid observers of world events, but obedient participants in the grand saga of redemption that will conclude with people from every tribe, tongue and nation singing, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain” (Rev. 5:9-12). 



## Unreached People Group: The Sundanese of Indonesia

The 35 million Sunda are the largest Indonesian unreached people group. They live in the western portion of the Indonesian island, Java. Their region is called Tanah Pasundan. Ninety-eight percent of Sunda are Muslims. Islam is often mixed with Sunda traditional customs. To be Sundanese is, ideally, to be a rice farmer. Yet, many of the villagers do not own enough rice land to provide for their daily needs. Because of this, nearly all of the villagers engage in trade, crafts, seasonal farming, or service occupations.

- Ask the Lord to raise up people who understand the Sundanese culture in order to effectively share Christ with them.
- Ask God to strengthen, encourage and protect the few Sundanese Christians.
- For further information on the Sundanese, visit [www.joshuaproject.net](http://www.joshuaproject.net).





# JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

Jumaa Prayer is now on Facebook. Please join today.



#### **Friday, May 6, 2011. Please pray**

**...for Muslims in Turkey's Erzurum province.** Erzurum, where the Tigris and Euphrates begin, has no reported Christian missions workers or evangelical churches.

**...for Muslims in Iraq.** Estimates indicate that possibly 65 percent of the Christian population has already fled Iraq. Pray that remaining Christians would be a witness of the love of Jesus Christ.

**...for Muslims in Libya.** Pray that despite the recent turmoil, opportunities would open for Christian witness.

#### **Friday, May 13, 2011. Please pray**

**...for Muslims in Turkmenistan,** which is currently the most closed country in Central Asia.

**...for the 1.7 million Qashqai Turks of Iran.** There are no known Christian believers among the Qashqai.

**...for MBBs (Muslim Background Believers) in Chechnya.** Muslim Chechens cannot change their religion publicly.

#### **Friday, May 20, 2011. Please pray**

**...for God's love to reach hundreds of thousands of children in Muslim madrassas (Quranic schools).** Daily, these precious children spend long hours of indoctrination through rote memorization of the Quran, usually reciting verses in Arabic, a language most will never even understand.

**...for efforts to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ** to 200,000 Muslim immigrants in Japan.

**...that God will protect Indonesian house churches.** These underground believers often risk financial loss, imprisonment and death.

#### **Friday, May 27, 2011. Please pray**

**...for Muslims in the country of Georgia.** They number almost 500,000 and have had very little witness of the gospel since the fall of communism.

**...for Christians engaged in prison ministry** to Muslims in the U.S. prison system.

**...for Christian witness to the Dongxiang Muslims.** They are the fourth largest group of Chinese Muslim peoples and among the poorest and least literate ethnic minorities in China.

**I URGE, THEN, FIRST OF ALL THAT REQUESTS, PRAYERS, INTERCESSION AND  
THANKSGIVING BE MADE FOR EVERYONE. — 1 TIMOTHY 2:1, NIV**



# JUMAA PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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Please join today.*



#### **Friday, June 3, 2011. Please pray**

*...for the millions of Muslims accessing Christian literature* via the Internet, or through radio and television. Pray that God will minister through the different types of programs.

*...for repeal of the grossly unjust and widely abused blasphemy laws in Pakistan.* The laws make it extremely difficult for the gospel to be preached.

*...for the Muslims of Australia.* Pray for those witnessing to approximately 300,000 Australian Muslims.

#### **Friday, June 10, 2011. Please pray**

*...for Muslim teenagers across the globe.* Pray that they would have unprecedented opportunity to hear the truth and love of Jesus Christ.

*...that through dreams, literature or Christian witness,* Muslims would have opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ.

*...for Muslims in the Arabian Gulf.* Pray that through expatriate workers, the gospel will be heard by many.

#### **Friday, June 17, 2011. Please pray**

*...for God to sustain and protect the persecuted Church in Bangladesh.*

*...for God to fill the hearts of Malaysian Muslims* with a strong desire for progress and liberty, so that the present trend toward Islamization might be reversed.

*...for God to work miracles in the lives of Indonesia's 180 million Muslims.*

#### **Friday, June 24, 2011. Please pray**

*...for Muslims in Jordan.* Pray that the Lord would continue to use MBBs to reach Muslims with the love of Christ.

*...for political rulers across the Muslim world.* Pray that through divine intervention, windows of opportunity would open, allowing millions of Muslims to truly have an opportunity to learn about Jesus.

*...for the burgeoning Church in Iran.* Pray that despite opposition and oppression, the gospel will thrive in Iran.