

INTRODUCTION

To be honest with you, we wrote this book in 2004, about nine months after Coalition troops invaded (or liberated, depending on who tells the story) Iraq. For several reasons that have nothing at all to do with this book, the manuscript has been in a file drawer ever since.

Then, in December 2010, a domino fell in North Africa.

The people of Tunisia took to the streets and drove out President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. And the whole region exploded.

Demonstrations raged in neighboring Algeria. Jordanians demanded and got the resignation of Prime Minister Samir Rifai. Hosni Mubarak was deposed in Egypt. People rioted in Yemen and Bahrain. Hezbollah seized power in Lebanon. Islamic potentates, one after another, tried to promise, bluff, or bludgeon their way into longer reigns. In Libya, Muammar Gaddafi ordered out his troops and left hundreds dead, outraging the international community and mobilizing the U.N.

Then, on May 1, 2011, President Obama announced to the world that Navy Seals had killed al-Qaeda mass murderer Osama bin Laden.

Clearly, God was moving. Suddenly. Dynamically. Purposefully.

But to what end?

And what should the Church do?

For one thing, we need to change the way we think about Iraq. We need to align ourselves with God and pray and act in accordance with his foreknowledge and plan.

Little has changed in Iraq since 2004. Its issues are the same, its challenges unresolved. American troops are still there. The dinar is still worthless. Sunni, Shi'a, and Kurds are still enemies. And though half of the Iraqi Christians have fled the violence and persecution, half remain ... a bold and courageous witness, keepers of the divine trust, and heirs to an ancient promise.

In the following pages, then, you will walk through Scripture and see a land intertwined with man's destiny and God's plan.

From time to time, you will meet one of your brothers or sisters—faithful Christians who, while missiles rained down on them in two Gulf wars, shouted desperate prayers of faith with their families and congregations. Who suffered under Saddam's brutal regime. And who now watch in awe as God's hand begins to move in ways they had never dared to dream.

Through it all, you will be given a fresh look at Iraq, not through the eyes of Western media or even through history. You will gaze through the eyes of the ancient prophets. You will look ahead through the ages to the fulfillment of divine promises that will one day affect the whole earth.