

Inside the Revolution | Joel Rosenberg

Reviewed by Max Frazier in the August 2009 Philogian

The jacket of Joel Rosenberg's latest best-seller, titled *Inside the Revolution*, quickly captures one's attention. What is the relationship between Osama bin Laden, Thomas Jefferson, and Jesus Christ? One would be hard pressed to find an answer. The subtitle of the book then helps the reader to understand the purpose for the pictures: "How the Followers of Jihad, Jefferson & Jesus are Battling to Dominate the Middle East and Transform the World."

Inside the Revolution, published in 2009 by Tyndale House Publishers, is a fascinating story of three diverse philosophies that are wrestling for control of Iran and the entire Middle East. In the first one-third of the book, Rosenberg focuses his attention upon a group he calls The Radicals. These are primarily the followers of Osama bin Laden and others who aspire to create a world dominated by an extreme Muslim religion. Let me share a rather lengthy quote from an interview Mr. Rosenberg had with General William Boykin, former deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence:

"When I came into the Army in 1971, we were focused on the Soviet Union. Even though we were fighting in Viet-nam, our real threat was the Soviet Union. But I would say to you, Joel, that the threat that Radical Islam presents to not only America but to the world today is an even more serious threat than when we were in a nuclear standoff during the Cold War. And it's more concerning to me because this is an enemy that is hard to understand. It is an enemy that is easy to ignore, and it is an enemy that is absolutely relentless" (page 9).

Then, for the next two hundred pages or so, the author helps us to better understand the seriousness of the threat of Radical Islam, under the leadership of Osama bin Laden and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. He cites passages from the Koran that are used to promote a philosophy of hatred toward Israel and Western Civilization. He helps us to understand the dedication that these people have toward the realization of a worldwide Muslim Caliphate. To be honest, when I finished reading this section of the book I wondered if there was any hope left. Is the world completely helpless in the face of such a seemingly formidable foe?

The reader then comes to the middle section where the focus is upon The Reformers. These are Muslim leaders who espouse a democratic philosophy and who seek to have Muslim nations return as equals into the international community. What I found especially interesting were the biographies Rosenberg included of King Mohammed VI of Morocco and Jalal Talabani, the first democratically elected president of Iraq. It seems that we, in the West, have heard little about either man and that is to our detriment. They are individuals worthy of our support. Rosenberg also shares some powerful thoughts from President Hamid Karzai, president of Afghanistan. Let me share with you a statement from the humble man that we need to remember:

Innocent life is the enemy of terrorism. In other words, terrorism sees us all as enemies. Therefore, we have only one approach, one cause, one direction, one objective: to fight it, period. Playing with it is like trying to train a snake against somebody else. You don't train a snake. You cannot train a snake. It will come and bite you. Therefore, there's only one way: to fight terrorist, to fight extremism, in whatever form, wherever it may be, and to not use extremism as an instrument of policy. These are evils that the world has to get rid of. We have no choice there. If we adopt a complacent approach of having a choice there, you will see more destruction all around the world, without knowing when the next target would be. (page 268)

After reading this middle section of the book, I began to experience a measure of hope. There were some sane, intelligent people seeking to govern a Muslim world in a democratic way.

Finally, the reader arrives at the final third of the book. There Rosenberg exposes what God is doing in the Middle East through a group he describes as The Revivalists. To be perfectly honest with you, when I got to this section, I could hardly put the book down. The pages are filled with one testimony after another of the miraculous intervention of God into people's lives changing them dramatically. Listen to these figures from Sheikh Ahmad Al Qataani, a Saudi cleric, given to Aljazeera television in December 2001:

In every hour, 667 Muslims convert to Christianity. ... Every day, 16,000 Muslims convert to Christianity. Every year, 6 million Muslims convert to Christianity. ...Every year, a tragedy has happened. (page 381)

Rosenberg tells the story of a young twenty-two year old Iranian Shia woman who had become a Christian after seeing a vision of Jesus Christ. (Visions of Christ seem to be a common occurrence in the Muslim world. Could this be the fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel?) This woman entered a church, hungry to study the Bible. The more she studied, the more she came to realize that God had given her the gift of evangelism. So she began to share her faith. Today, in Iran, she leads an average of fifteen people to Christ every day. She related that Muslims are so desperate for the gospel that it takes about five minutes to share the story of her conversion and how God has changed her life before that person is ready to also receive Christ. "Difficult" conversations take fifteen to twenty minutes. (page 387).

Don't let the size of this book discourage you. This is a book deserving of your undivided attention. It is a must read if we are to better understand what is happening in the Middle East. And, I can assure you, what you read in the final part of the book is something you will never hear from major media sources. There is still time to relax in your favorite patio chair with a glass of ice-cold tea, a few chocolate chip cookies, and Inside the Revolution. Happy reading!