

## PRIMER ON SUNNIS AND SHIITES

June 20, 2014

Who are these Shiites and Sunnis, and why do they hate each other? And why do they both hate the West? Who are Hamas and Fatah, and who are they supported by? Are the Saudis our allies? Should the US intercede, along with Iran in the ISIS war on Iraq? I am glad you asked all these questions, because I have strong opinions on the Mideast - also some facts.

The facts first:

The Sunnis and Shiites broke up over who should be Muhammad's successor. According to Pew Research, there are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world. 317 million are in the Middle East and there are 344 million in India and Pakistan. 85-90% of Muslims are Sunnis, and Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, and Azerbaijan, are the only nations with more Shiites than Sunnis. Lebanon has a significant Shia minority, estimated to be 45% of the total Muslim population. Indonesia has more Muslims than any other country, about 209 million.

It's a given that the Shiites and Sunnis are not going to suddenly love each other after 1400 years of conflict. There were several hundred years of relative peace under the Ottoman Empire, but the Ottomans started declining in the late 19th century; largely because the European powers were competing with each other for empire. One of the causes of WW 1 was that competition. Unfortunately for the Ottomans, they chose to be on the side of the Germans, and after the war, the Allies carved up the Empire with borders that in hindsight made no sense.

Before the Gulf War, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, had dictators who had to suppress descent to stay in power but they all had significant Christian minorities which were largely left alone. It's estimated that the three countries had 8-20% Christian populations.

In Iraq, Saddam Hussein was a secular Sunni ruling over a majority Shia country.

In Syria, Assad is a secular Alawite Shiite ruling a majority Sunni country in a civil war.

Mubarak was a secular Sunni ruling over a majority Sunni country.

In recent history, warring between Iraq and Iran, along with a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, maintained a Mid East balance of power. When Bush removed Hussein from Iraq, and Obama helped depose Mubarak from Egypt, that balance was destroyed. The Shia majority took over Iraq, and the stage was set for the invasion of ISIS. Whole Christian communities have been destroyed in those three countries since.

Some terror organizations:

1. Al Qaida - Sunni, origins Saudi Arabia and Egypt
2. Hamas - Governing party of Palestine
3. al Fatah - Minority party in Palestine supported by Iran, formed by Yasser Arafat of the PLO.
4. Muslim Brotherhood - Originated in Egypt in the 1920's
5. ISIS - Islamist State of Iraq and al Sham - Aim to form a new Caliphate across the Middle East and eventually the world.
6. Taliban - Fought against the Russians, and took over most of Afghanistan after the Russians left. Harbored Osama bin Laden.

They are all Sunnis, but it has been widely reported that al Fatah has received some funding from Iran. Our "allies" the Saudis have given financial support to several of them. The Saudis and all the Gulf States fear Iran possessing nuclear weapons.

The only people that Shiites and Sunnis hate worse than each other is us, and to a lesser degree all the West. They want to destroy us!

Opinion:

We have made mostly wrong decisions in our Mid East foreign policy, and it would be folly to help either side in Iraq. They both hate us, and imagine if Germany and Japan had declared war on each other during WW11, after we were at war with both, and we decided to help either. We helped the Taliban run the Russians out of Afghanistan. How has that worked out? Muslims killing each other will save American lives. The enemy of our enemy is not our friend!

To rebuild we must:

1. Congress must stop Obama from making and breaking laws. He should be impeached. Our recovery could start two years earlier with him out office.
2. We should get out of the Mid East, and concentrate on rebuilding our military, and close our borders, and be willing to use nuclear weapons when we are attacked by the Caliphate.
3. Work at being energy independent by ceasing the war on coal, approving the Keystone pipeline, and drilling on federal land and offshore.
4. Our regulations must be brought under adult control. Firing 90% of the bureaucrats in the EPA would be a good start.

5. Our tax code should be simplified to the point where most people could fill out one sheet of paper to file their income tax. While we are doing that, the corporate tax rate should be cut to make our companies competitive with the rest of the world.

6. Term limits for Congress

7. Put God back in public life! Our number one problem is our drifting way from God, and sinking in a sea of immorality. Israel proved, more than once that when nations become rich, they don't think they need God anymore. They depend on their wealth. We became rich after WW 11. Now, other than the 1%, we are not rich anymore. The average American has food on the table, air conditioning, big screen TV, cell phones, and internet, even if they're on welfare. We are too comfortable to see how serious our problems are. Breaking the welfare system is one of the first steps in creating a dictatorship.

This is not a comprehensive list of actions, but we have got to start somewhere. We are going to have to suffer, but if we don't get the greatest country in the history of the world back on track, our grandchildren will suffer more.

Our government - at least the democrat portion - still doesn't understand the nature of the war we are in. We are not in a war on terror; terror is only a weapon used against us by our sworn enemy. We are in a war against Islamist. Political correctness directs us to differentiate between the fanatics and the peaceful ones. Unfortunately, we can't tell the difference by looking at them. Your taxi driver may be a terrorist in waiting.

Bernard Lewis, the British/American historian has been generally credited with being the western world's foremost authority on the Middle East, but he is 98 years old. In my opinion, Michael Youssef knows as much about the menace as anyone in the West today. Michael's opinions are discounted by a lot of "sophisticates", because, "after all he is only a preacher."

He is a preacher with a PhD in social anthropology from Emory University. He grew up with Muslims in Egypt, and he has been a voice "shouting in the wilderness" for 30 years. He has written books about the danger of militant Islam, he has had audiences with members of congress, and presidents staff members, and he has appeared on national TV.

He attempted to tell the CNN audience that the "Arab Spring" would not bring freedom and democracy to Egypt, and the announcer, Don Lemon shouted him down. He understands the danger, but he is still attempting to take the "good news of Jesus Christ" to them. He is on radio and satellite TV in near 200 countries, in 20 plus languages. He has preached regularly in person in Jordan, Lebanon, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Egypt, Indonesia, and more less dangerous countries.

He writes a column too, and his column of yesterday was particularly insightful on Obama. Go to:

MichaelYoussef.com

And read his "Connecting the Dots on Obama." He's not as long winded as I am, and it's a quick read. He will probably get his income tax audited soon. His archived columns are educational for most people.

## ADDENDUM

June 27, 2014

Last week I listed short descriptions of Muslim terror organizations, and I left out the Wahhabi sect of Sunni Islam. Wahhabism is the official religion of Saudi Arabia, and no Muslims are as fundamental as they are. They believe they are the only chosen ones, and nobody else, including other Sunnis, Shiites, Christians, and Jews will go to heaven. The Saudis have funded mosques and madrassas (religious schools) both in the Kingdom and worldwide. Lots of terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, have been trained in the madrassas.

The only thing we have in common with the Saudis is oil. The Kingdom is a time bomb waiting to explode. If - when - the explosion happens, it is going to devastate whatever economy we have left. No matter the winner in Iraq, it doesn't bode well for the Saudis. Instead of taking sides in Iraq - were we are hated by both sides - we might consider making a deal with the Saudis to protect our oil supply until we can become energy independent.

Last week I stated that our number one problem, as a nation was turning away from God. Well, that's still my number one, but I have had time to think this week, and I have moved number two - Muslims trying to kill us - down to number three. Number two this week? Drum roll, please! ..... The liberal, progressive, socialist, mainstream media. The TV networks, Hollywood, and the big city newspapers are still schilling for O. They are slow learners.