

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**  
**10.04.15**  
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**Introduction** (1987 and 2015 - Times in Contrast):

As you listened to the beckoning we just heard - which went on for 3 minutes, 34 seconds, what thoughts ran through your minds? Were you offended? Inspired? Concerned that we would actually play that chant in a church building? Had you ever heard the Azan - the muslim call to prayer before?

Although some here tonight have never heard the Azan in full, in our world 1.6 billion people - the number of Muslims alive today - either live under this call to prayer five times a day or wish they did. It is one of the **center pieces to Islamic society**. It beckons observant Muslims to obedience to two of the five pillars of Islam - and where ever Muslims are found, this call to prayer is either heard regularly or soon will be - even right here in the Bay area.

Why is this important? Let me try and explain: *I had the privilege of serving Jesus as a missionary to Muslim people in Asia - the southern Philippines and Manila to be exact, in the mid '80's. When I left for the Philippines in March of 1983 and even upon my return to the Bay area in 1987, many Christians had only heard of Muslims from missionaries AND Muslim people were only occasionally seen around the bay area. This began to change in 2001, due to the World Trade Center attacks and the ensuing wars. But until then, Islam was NOT on most Americans radar screens.*

*When we fast forward from 1987 thru 2001 to 2015, we see a markedly different picture, to be sure, because we are living in a markedly different world.*

*If we google 'Mosques', many links to web sites for mosques or Islamic schools will come up. For example:*

- 1) *In the Bay area, you will find links to at least twenty locations around us - one of which will be the Santa Clara Muslim Community Association, which boasts the first mosque to be built in our county, and another five will be to mosques in the San Jose or South bay area;*
- 2) *In Fresno, I found quite a few links, one of which was to Masjid Fresno, a large mosque, built in 1989, which is located across the street from the University of Fresno campus on Shaw Blvd. On their web site, under the 'About' tab, you can read a description of the Masjid Islamic Center, and you will learn how "**Masjid Fresno Islamic Center is running and very successful Outreach Program**" and how "**Many people have reverted to Islam at Masjid Fresno**".*
- 3) *And in 2014, the County Board of Supervisors approved plans by the South bay Islamic Association to build a 5, 000 sq. ft prayer hall (read 'mosque'), a 2500 sq. ft. multi-purpose room and a 2 plus acre cemetery - at the corner of Monterey Highway and California St., in San Martin - meaning it is possible that San Martin residents and this living in south Morgan Hill may, someday soon, hear the call to prayer on a daily basis.*

*The reality is, in a short span of 28 years - the 28 years since Raquel and I returned to the US from Asia, Islam and Muslims have moved from being quite inconspicuous to being seen throughout the Bay area. They have built mosques and Islamic schools in our own local area and across the United States. Muslims are in the news almost every day. Students in some public schools are being taught the basics of Islam. AND the Council on Islamic-American Relations recently called for Ben Carson to resign his presidential candidacy because he dared say the US should never have a Muslim president who affirmed the Shari'ah Law.*

*Islam in the U.S. and in our local area has become a force - politically, socially, religiously and theologically - that our society as a whole, and more particularly Jesus's followers, should not ignore.*

*What should we know about Islam? What should we do? Are there things we should be concerned about? In our seminar tonight, I hope to answer some of these questions, so that each of you will at least have some basic answers to these and perhaps other questions on the topic of Islam - and I want to address these questions by talking about What Islam is, Who Muslims are, What they Believe and practice, What Jihad is about, and finally, How we, as Jesus's followers, can respond to Islam and Muslims in our midst.*

*Our first main heading then, is, What is Islam and who are it's followers?*

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**  
**10.04.15**  
**mdb**

**I. Islam:** What is it and Who are it's Followers? *Islam = submission; Muslims = submitted ones, and so in the Islamic sense, a Muslim is one who is by submitted to God*

**A. Islamic Origin and Early History:**

1. **The founder of Islam** was a man named Mohammad, b. 570 AD. He was orphaned at an early age; was raised by his g'father; spent much time on the caravan routes in Arabian desert; in 595 he married his first wife, Khadija, and she had a cousin who was a Christian (Waraqah); Environment was such that he had contact with Byzantine, Nestorian and Monophysite Christians and Jews - so he had exposure to the scriptures of these groups.

(see Note 1 for more on Nestorian and Monophysite Christians)

2. **After marriage**, being very concerned with affairs in and around Mecca, he went into a cave in Mount Hira region, and while there he had his first vision. The Angel Gabriel, according to him, appeared to him and taught him the first lines of chapter 96 of the Koran: "**Noble is the mission of the Prophet, selected to proclaim the Message of God, the Lord, the Cherisher of all His creation, whose measureless bounty include instruction of man in new and ever new knowledge....**" and so forth (see Sura 53: 4-9 for description of this event). His second revelation identified him as the Prophet of Allah and he was told to 'Rise and warn'. He began to do so, calling the Arab tribes to reject their polytheistic beliefs and embrace the One God - Allah - and from here, Islam began to spread - and it spread rapidly.

3. **How rapidly did Islam spread?**

**Mohammad** died in 632 AD/CE. Under his leadership, the Arab tribes were united and Islam controlled the Arabian Peninsula;

**Abu Bakr** (632-634) spent most of his rule re-establishing peace between the tribes. Once peace was re-established, he launched a campaign against Iraq (Persia) but died before he could complete it;

(**The divide between Shia and Sunni Muslims** traces to Mohammad's successor's and how succession was accomplished. see Note 2 for on the differences between Shia and Sunni Muslims)

**Umar** (634-644) was **second caliph**. He was a political genius and continues the war of conquest started by Abu Bakr. By 640, all of Mesopotamia and most of Syria and Palestine were under Islamic control. Egypt was conquered by 642 and the Persian Empire by 643. **NOTE** : These were some of the richest regions of the world guarded by powerful armies - but they fell into Islamic hands in a mere **ten years!!**

**Uthmann** (644-656) was **third caliph**. He continued the wars of conquest. He was very unpopular but is known for two accomplishments. **1st**, under Uthmann, remaining **portions of the eastern Persian Empire, as well as Libya** were brought under Islamic rule; and **2nd, he consolidated** all the copies and portions of the Koran **into one common version**.

**Islam** continued to spread and conquer, until, under the **Umayyad Caliphate** (661-750), the Islamic Empire extended across North Africa, and incorporated the Causcus (, Transoxiana (Central Asia - present day Turkistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan), Sindh (a part of present day Pakistan), the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya), and most of the Iberian Peninsula (modern day Spain and Portugal), a land area of 5.17 million square miles (13, 400, 000 sq.km.) making it the fifth largest empire the world has ever seen. **To achieve this had taken only 118 years from the death of Muhammad.**

**B. The Islamic World Today:** Between 750 AD/CE until today, a lot has transpired, until today Islam still controls North Africa for the most part, most of Palestine except for Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, southern Philippines, Malaysia, and so forth. There are 1.6 billion Muslims in the world today. They are outgrowing non-muslim populations by leaps and bounds and are the fastest growing religion in the world. A Pew report from 2010 says, in fact, that "**Christianity was by far the world's largest religion, with an estimated 2.2 billion**

## Understanding Islam Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics

10.04.15

mdb

***adherents, nearly a third (31 percent) of all 6.9 billion people on Earth. Islam was second, with 1.6 billion adherents, or 23 percent of the global population. [But Islam] will nearly equal Christianity by 2050 before eclipsing it around 2070, if current trends continue...***"

Today, there is a significant Islamic presence in Russia (16, 379,000), the UK (2,869,000), France (4 million), Germany (4, 119, 000), Switzerland, Canada (1 million plus) and the U.S (2,595, 000) and Muslims are found in every country almost, in the world.

### II. Muslims: What Do They Believe and Practice?

In the Koran, one finds many of the men found in the OT as well as Jesus and Mary from the NT. And the major theological beliefs of Muslims parallel, in some ways, those of observant Jews and Christians. Muslims also hold **eight major theological beliefs.**

#### A. Theological Beliefs:

- |                            |                                    |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. God and His unity       | 5. Predestination of Good and Evil |
| 2. God's Angels            | 6. Bodily Resurrection of the Dead |
| 3. God's Books (4 of them) | 7. Final Judgment                  |
| 4. Gods Prophets           | 8. Heaven and Hell                 |

#### B. Jesus and Salvation:

In addition to these major beliefs, there is much said about Jesus in the Koran and in Islamic teaching. For example, He is called **a word from Allah (Sura 3: 45)**, a **messenger from Allah (Sura 4: 171)**, he has **revelation and is a prophet (S. 19: 30-31)**, and he **lived, died and rose again from the dead (s. 19: 33)**. **Jesus was virgin born (S. 19: 20,21)**, called **the Anointed One (S. 4: 171)** and is said to have **ascended to Allah (S. 3: 55; 4: 158)** and will be a **sign of coming judgement (S. 43: 61; 3: 49)**.

A LOT is said about Jesus in the Koran - but a LOT is not said, or presented differently than in our scriptures. Two examples will suffice:

**1st**, In Islam, Jesus is NOT considered God's Son - for to equate equality with God to Jesus is considered blasphemy of the worst kind;

**2nd**, in Islam, Jesus wasn't crucified and especially wasn't crucified for sin (S. 4: 157-158)

In light of these teachings about Jesus, one of the questions in many Christians minds is, how is a person saved in Islam? This is an excellent questions. In summary, there are several things we need to know about salvation in Islam. Salvation is by BOTH faith and works in Islam.

1. **Faith** (tahweed) plays a part in Muslim salvation - but the object of faith is **in the unity of God**. Therefore, a **kafir** (unbeliever), a **mushrik** (one who associates others with God - like Christians who believe Jesus is the Son of God) and a **dahriya** (an atheist) are considered the WORST of sinners.

2. **Obedience**, i.e. keeping the Five Pillars, plays a part in salvation for a Muslim.

3. **Martyrdom** in a Holy War is also a way of salvation - and tends to be instant.

4. **Further Differences** between Islam's and Christians view of salvation:

- a. Koran vs. Christ as central revelation of God;
- b. Tradition vs. Bible - Hadith is equivalent to scripture;
- c. Islam focuses on Doing - Christians on Believing; Muslims ask "What should I do"? Christians ask, "What should I believe?"
- d. One may be born Muslim; one may NOT be born a Christian - for we must be **born again**.
- e. No Atonement for sin in Islam. Allah pardons who he will, and condemns who he will - forgiveness is totally arbitrary - and understanding this can open up fruitful conversation.

## Understanding Islam Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics

10.04.15

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### C. Prescribed Practices - the Five Pillars of Islam:

1. Confession (S. 47: 19a; 48: 19a): There is no God but God and Muhammad is His Prophet (or messenger) of God (43: 19)
2. Prayer (five times per day, at set times); called Salat
3. Fasting (month of Ramadan), the ninth month of the lunar year
4. Alms (Zakah)
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca (called the Hadj; must be taken once in a life time)

D. Islamic Worldview: when we put all this together, what we have is a distinct Islamic worldview that differs considerably from that of the Christian - and yet, there are some parallels. When we put all this together, the way Islam sees the world informs how Islam relates to the world, in much the same way Jesus's followers do. Among Muslims, there is a community, called -

1. Dar al Islam (house of Islam) is the umma - the Islamic community. The community ideally is guided by:
2. Islamic Law (Shari'ah) and this law dictates all of life - socially, politically, theologically, ethically.
3. Religions and the State are therefore NOT separated in Islam, if one lives in a pure Islamic nation;
4. Dar al Harb (house of war) - and the Dar al Harb is in desperate need of submission to God
5. Divisions within the Islamic Ummah, in terms of how an individual Muslim or group of Muslims live out their faith, are VERY important to grasp - because how a Muslim or group of Muslims relate to Dar al Islam will be determined by what type Muslim, politically/philosophically they are. In modern Islam, a Muslim may fall into one of four categories:
  - a. **Islamism** refers to the desire to impose any given interpretation of Islam society. Those who follow this belief are called Islamists.
  - b. **Jihadists** are Muslims who use force to impose Islamism on society. Each of these groups define martyrdom in their own way.
  - c. **Moderates** form another class of Muslim. Moderates are Muslims who are FUNDAMENTALISTS in belief and practice, as a Christian would define fundamentalism, BUT are not desirous of living under the Shari'ah or seeing an Islamic take over of the U.S. They may be Islamists, but generally not jihadists, in a violent sort of way. Many of the Muslims we encounter in our area will fall into this category of Muslim
  - d. **Nominal Muslims** are those who were born into Muslim homes and are Muslim in name only.

The debate over whether Islam is a peaceful or peace hating religion centers on these distinctions as does the confusion as to what the Islamic State is about and how they fit into Islam. And the category of Muslim one is will determine how you might go about carrying out the mission of Islam personally and corporately. What is the 'mission of Islam'? That is what jihad is about.

### III. Jihad and the Events of the Present Day

#### A. Jihad: What is It? **Jihad** simply means "to struggle or to strive in the way of God" and there are two types:

1. Greater jihad is *the struggle of the self with evil - the struggle to control one's bodily members. Jesus's followers call this 'spiritual war', or the war with the flesh, or the mortification of the flesh, or the struggle of sanctification*
2. Lesser jihad is *the physical struggle, often associated with fighting, killing, warfare, 'Fi sabil Allah' - in the way of Allah. It is this type jihad Ben Laden was carrying out and it is this type jihad ISIS is carrying out today in the Middle East.*

#### B. Who are the objects of Jihad?

1. The sinful world, that needs to submit to God;

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**

10.04.15

mdb

2. Infidels in general;
3. Israel (S. 5: 85a);
4. Israel's allies (read the US here, or anyone else who supports Israel);
5. Anyone who fights against Islam or Muslims - including other Muslims;
6. Apostates: under this category is included anyone who **a)** denies the Koran's authority or **b)** the prophecies of Muhammad; for ISIS, **c)** a person can be said to be an apostate if he/she sells alcohol or drugs, **d)** wearing western clothes or **e)** shaving one's beard, **f)** a failure on the part of women to wear the face coverings or even the burka (by some Muslim groups), **g)** voting in an election - even for a Muslim candidate, **h)** being lax about calling other people 'apostate', **i)** being Shi'ite (by ISIS ) because the Islamic State sees shi'ism as innovation. This means that at least in they eyes of ISIS 200 million Shi'ite Muslims are marked for death; and while we are talking about who is seen as an apostate, we can ad every head of state of a Muslim country who have exalted man-made law over the Shari'ah.

Now keep in mind - most Muslims will not be this extreme in defining who is an apostate. Most will see 3's 1 to 5 as objects of jihad. But, jihadists and Islamists may be this extreme.

C. What are the Motivation Behind Jihad? Jihad is based on Koranic verses such as S. 2: 190-195, 216, 244; 4: 74-76; 8: 38-40; 9: 5, 29-32, 73, 123). Jihad is entered into for several reasons:

1. Personal purity in the way of Allah
2. To spread Islam
3. To cleanse Palestine
4. To cleanse Muslim countries of apostates
5. To usher in the return of Jesus the Christ - which is actually ISIS's long term goal (**see Note 3**)

Thus far, we have covered a lot of material about Islam and about Muslims. One question to ask at this point is, what should we as Jesus's followers do, in light of Islam it's spread around the world? And there are actually many ways to respond as those who follow Jesus. Let's spend the rest of our time discussing that, and if time allows, we can then have some Q&A time.

#### IV. Responding to Islam as Followers of Isa Al-Masih - what should we do?

A. Understand, Jihadists and Islamists are at war with Dar al Harb and they do not represent a small lunatic fringe among Muslims. They are in the minority; and many moderate Muslims do NOT want their kind of Islam. But, they are a part of the Islamic family and are a force to reckon with. Also, it is important to note that what we see ISIS doing IS ancient and historic Islam - and not so much what we see from secular or moderate Muslims. Also, remember that regardless of what type Muslim a person is, the first loyalty will always be to the Ummah of Islam - the Muslim community.

B. Understand Islam's Goal, whether a muslim is a jihadists, an Islamist, or a fundamentalist moderate, is:

1. The complete overthrow of the State of Israel. Israel is the natural enemy of the Islamic peoples and has been since the days of Nehemiah (see 1 and 2; cp.w/ Gen. 17: 1-21; 18: 1-15)
2. The defeat of the West (read Europe, the UK, America) because we are infidels and we attack the Ummah and support Israel.
3. World domination, which follows a three fool strategy of :
  - a. Conversion

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**  
**10.04.15**  
**mdb**

- b. Subjugation (non Muslims are always taxed, enslaved or persecuted under Islamic rule. This is relative)
- c. Annihilation

*(Note: Many in our day may feel that the stated goals of Islam as presented in this seminar are not accurate. For more detailed information about Islam's intention toward non-muslim people and civilizations, see Dr. Bill Warner's web site, Political Islam at <http://www.politicalislam.com> )*

In light of all this, what is the hope for the world? It is the good news of Jesus Christ on the backdrop of what we know from the scriptures re what will indeed happen in these last times - that Jesus WILL return and when He does, He will bring in peace, righteousness and justice and He will rule!!

C. Understand how the **Gospel of Jesus Christ** is the only hope for:

- 1. Muslims
- 2. Jews

3. And for everyone else!! And only when Jesus the Christ, the true Prince of Peace returns, will there be real peace, real justice, and real freedom from sin, from death, from the curse and so forth.

D. On this foundation, there are some things to avoid and some things to do:

1. As followers of Jesus Christ we should strive to avoid:

- a. Ignorance - of our own faith and of their religion, and how to discuss various differences;
- b. Fear - fear cripples, but believers should not fear (see Matt. 10: 24-31; 2 Tim. 1: 7);
- c. Hostile engagement (James 1: 19-20; Col. 3: 6);
- d. Propaganda - news feeds must be read with caution and discernment;
- e. FB discussions about most subjects are no more than a polling of opinion not based in fact;

2. As followers of Jesus Christ we should definitely:

a. **Learn from them** - The average Muslim will put the average Christian to SHAME in terms of personal devotion, spiritual disciplines like prayer, reverence for the Word of God, consistency in faith, etc. And in the same way Gentiles believers will be used of God to provoke Jews to jealousy, perhaps Muslims will do the same for Gentile Christians.

b. **Pray for the salvation of Jesus Christ to come to Muslim people.** There are amazing things happening among Muslim people, resulting in salvation for many. Muslim background believers in Christ testify to dreams where a person they identify as Jesus appears to them and gives them instructions about what they should do, or embraces them, or teaches them, with the result that they begin a search for faith, which eventually leads them to embrace Christ by faith. This can happen to Muslims in our local area. However, it is still important for Jesus's followers to give personal witness to Jesus Christ and His gospel as well.

c. Engage Muslim people, first in friendship and then in conversation - and don't be afraid to testify to your own faith in Christ and relationship with God.

d. And finally, don't be afraid to love Muslim people actively for Christ's sake...because Jesus died and rose again on behalf of all peoples, and there will be Muslim background believers in that great multitude someday, who, standing before the throne of the Lamb, will sing His praises for His redemption of them, by His blood!!

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**  
**10.04.15**  
**mdb**

**NOTES**

**NOTE 1: Nestorianism taught that there were two separate persons in Christ - a human and a divine person. Christ had dual personalities;**

**Monophysitism** (aka **Eutychianism**) taught that Christ had one nature only - Gk. mono (one) and physis (nature). He held that the human nature was taken up and absorbed by the divine nature of Christ, so both natures were changed into a third unique nature.

**Chalcedonian Definition of Christ's nature** on the other hand states, "*We, then, following the holy Fathers, all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and*

*also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, of a reasonable [rational] soul and body; **consubstantial [coessential] with the Father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial with us according to the Manhood; in all things like unto us, without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, according to the Manhood; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, to be acknowledged in two natures, **inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably;** the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets from the beginning [have declared] concerning him, and the Lord Jesus Christ himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.***"

**The Chalcedonian Definition** taught then, that **a)** Christ definitely had two natures - one human and the other divine; that **b)** as His divine nature is exactly like that of the Father, so His human nature was exactly like ours; that **c)** he had this human nature yet without sin. Further, it taught that **d)** the two natures maintain their distinctions; and **e)** it also affirmed that these two natures are united in the same person - Christ - united yet not confused.

This definition defines the true nature of Christ and has been accepted as orthodox since the 5th century by Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox branches of Christianity (with three exceptions - the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the Egyptian Coptic Church and the Syrian Jacobite Church). BUT, Muhammad was exposed, not to orthodox Christians BUT to two sects who held an erroneous view of the nature of Christ Jesus. This comes out when we consider what the Koran teaches about Jesus Christ.)

**NOTE 2: The division between Shia and Sunni** dates back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad, and the question of who was to take over the leadership of the Muslim nation. Sunni Muslims agree with the position taken by many of the Prophet's companions, that the new leader should be elected from among those capable of the job. This is what was done, and the Prophet Muhammad's close friend and advisor, Abu Bakr, became the first Caliph of the Islamic nation. The word "Sunni" in Arabic comes from a word meaning "one who follows the traditions of the Prophet."

On the other hand, some Muslims share the belief that leadership should have stayed within the Prophet's own family, among those specifically appointed by him, or among Imams appointed by God Himself.

The Shia Muslims believe that following [the Prophet Muhammad's](#) death, leadership should have passed directly to his cousin/son-in-law, [Ali bin Abu Talib](#). Throughout history, Shia Muslims have not recognized the authority of elected Muslim leaders, choosing instead to follow a line of [Imams](#) which they believe have been appointed by the Prophet Muhammad or God Himself.

The word "Shia" in Arabic means a group or supportive party of people. The commonly-known term is shortened from the historical "Shia-t-Ali," or "the Party of Ali." They are also known as followers of "Ahl-al-Bayt" or "People of the Household" (of the Prophet).

## **Understanding Islam** **Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**

10.04.15

mdb

### **Distribution**

Sunni Muslims make up the majority (85%) of Muslims all over the world. Significant populations of Shia Muslims can be found in Iran and Iraq, and large minority communities in Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, and Lebanon.

### **Differences in Religious Practice**

From this initial question of political leadership, some aspects of spiritual life have been affected and now differ between the two groups of Muslims.

It is important to remember that despite these differences in opinion and practice, Shia and Sunni Muslims share the main articles of Islamic belief and are considered by most to be brethren in faith. In fact, most Muslims do not distinguish themselves by claiming membership in any particular group, but prefer to call themselves simply, "Muslims."

### **Religious Leadership**

Shia Muslims believe that the Imam is sinless by nature, and that his authority is infallible as it comes directly from God. Therefore, Shia Muslims often venerate the Imams as saints and perform pilgrimages to their tombs and shrines in the hopes of divine intercession.

Sunni Muslims counter that there is no basis in Islam for a hereditary privileged class of spiritual leaders, and certainly no basis for the veneration or intercession of saints. Sunni Muslims contend that leadership of the community is not a birthright, but a trust that is earned and which may be given or taken away by the people themselves.

### **Religious Texts and Practices**

Shia Muslims also feel animosity towards some of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad, based on their positions and actions during the early years of discord about leadership in the community. Many of these companions ([Abu Bakr](#), [Umar ibn Al Khattab](#), Aisha, etc.) have narrated traditions about the Prophet's life and spiritual practice. Shia Muslims reject these traditions (*hadith*) and do not base any of their religious practices on the testimony of these individuals. This naturally gives rise to some differences in religious practice between the two groups. These differences touch all detailed aspects of religious life: prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, etc.

\* 'What's the Difference Between Shia and Sunni Muslims?' [http://islam.about.com/cs/divisions/f/shia\\_sunni.htm](http://islam.about.com/cs/divisions/f/shia_sunni.htm)

**NOTE 3: Far from being a collection of radical jihadists who simply seek territory and control at the end of the Iraq conflict, ISIS has a cause they are fighting for, specific goals, and a worldview that motivates them. The explanations below come from articles written on this topic in 2015.**

*"The Islamic State is no mere collection of psychopaths. It is a religious group with carefully considered beliefs, among them that it is a key agent of the coming apocalypse". (Atlantic Weekly magazine, March 2015 - for full article see <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>)*

"Islamic State terrorists are announcing they are part of the apocalyptic end times prophesied in the Koran and that Jesus will appear soon to defeat the armies of Rome thus beginning the countdown to the end of the world. This prophetic interpretation was hinted at by the leader of the grisly beheadings of 21 Coptic Christians earlier this month as he pointed northward in the grisly video of the killings, saying, "We will conquer Rome, by Allah's permission."

ISIS believes it is setting up a showdown with the armies of Rome in northern Syria and then a final showdown with an anti-Messiah in Jerusalem.

Now ISIS has published more insights -- in the seventh edition of Dabiq, its English translation propaganda magazine -- about the end-times theology that is driving its vicious savagery and belief that Islam is a "religion of the sword, not pacifism," and ISIS' role in bringing about the end of the world.

Specifically, ISIS explains that it will continue to war against the enemies of Islam until 'Isa (Jesus) kills the Dajjal (the Antichrist) to establish 'Islam and its justice' over the whole world; and, it is luring fighters from around the world with this end-times vision.

Graeme Green explains "[What ISIS Really Wants](#)" in the upcoming March issue of Atlantic Monthly.

**Understanding Islam**  
**Origins, Beliefs, Practices, Politics**  
**10.04.15**  
**mdb**

Green argues ISIS rejects peace as a matter of principle because "it considers itself a harbinger of—and headline player in—the imminent end of the world."

"In fact, much of what the group does looks nonsensical except in light of a sincere, carefully considered

commitment to returning civilization to a seventh-century legal environment, and ultimately to bringing about the apocalypse," Green wrote. Their aim is to goad the United States and its allies into attacking them in order to bring on the apocalypse, he observed."

<http://www.christianexaminer.com/article/isis.says.jesus.is.coming.soon.and.the.end.of.the.world/48469.htm>

For more detailed information on ISIS, Islam, and the threat Islam poses for the west, visit <http://www.politicalislam.com>. This is the web site of Dr. Bill Warner, Ph.D and contains much valuable information which Christians will find helpful.

See especially his video lectures titled The Death of History, Why are we so Afraid, and Islamic Attack on Chattanooga: What it Means and What to Do.

**RESOURCE LIST**

**Web Sites of Interest (Christian)**

- Political Islam (the web site of Dr. Bill Warner).....<http://www.politicalislam.com>
- Center for Ministry to Muslims.....<http://www.cmmequip.org> \*
- Fellowship of Faith for Muslims.....<http://www.ffmna.org/site/home.php> \*

**Web Sites (Islamic)**

- Islamic Thinkers Society.....<http://islamicthinkers.com>
- South Bay Islamic Society.....<http://www.sbia.info>
- Masjid Fresno.....<http://www.masjidfresno.org>

**Articles of Interest**

*What ISIS's Leader Really Wants*

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/119259/isis-history-islamic-states-new-caliphate-syria-and-iraq>

*What ISIS Really Wants,*

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/03/what-isis-really-wants/384980/>

*Challenging Radical Islam,*

<http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/01/challenging-radical-islam>

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