

## A Middle East Update December 2024

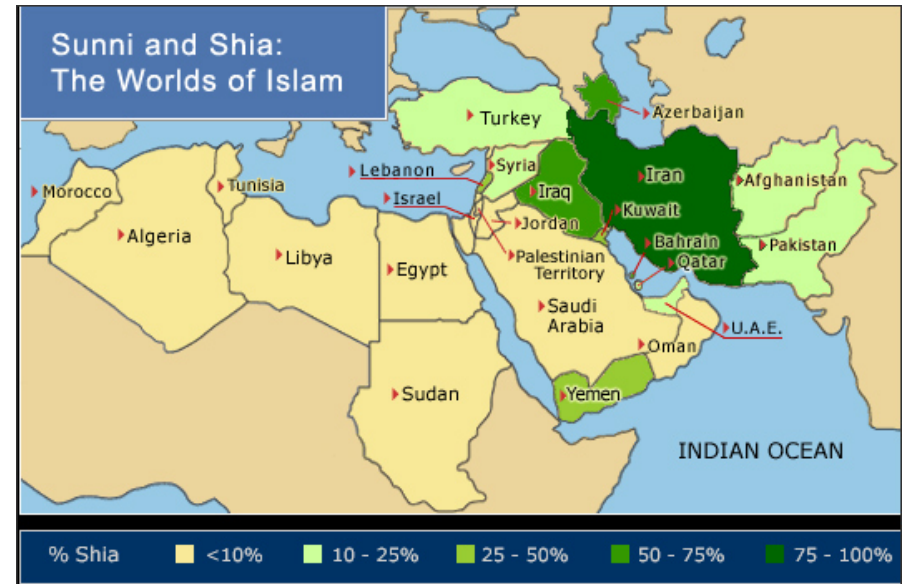
And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Luke 2:8-14 (NIV)

### Discussion:

1. In historical terms, Israel's continued existence is surprising given that it is surrounded by enemies. To what do you attribute Israel's survival since 1948?
2. Why do you think that the Middle East, and specifically Israel, have been the center of world attention and conflict? What makes this part of the world a focus of attention?
3. Do you think there will be peace in the Middle East? If so, what do you think will bring it about?

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*Shia Muslims in a Predominantly Sunni World*



Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)  
A Sunni Islamist Group controlling most of Syria, led by  
Abu Muhammad al-Joulani