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Saudi Arabia: Misguided, Misinterpreted Oppression in the Name of Allah

“Allah will help him who moves in the way of Allah.” An enticing statement by a man embedded in his faith. Abu Bakr is father-in-law to the prophet Muhammad. Muhammad wrote the Quran with the guidance of Allah who spoke to him through an angel setting the grounds for Islam. Centuries later Islam is a widely practiced religion with 1.6 billion followers globally. In the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, laws are based on the virtues and sins listed in the Quran. Saudi Arabia harbors a totalitarian monarchy run under a sacrosanct government. A sacrosanct government is a government that uses religion in their principles which guide the nation they rule. The difficulty with a government structured like Saudi Arabia is that it is hard to find freedom. One family speaks for the people, and the people have no say in electing a better future through any form of involvement. The people of Saudi Arabia stand no chance against the monarchy.

Saudi Arabia is home to Mecca, the Islamic holy city. Its current king is Al-Manlaka al-Arabiya as-Saudiya. Due to the constant reinforcement of religion, between 85 and 95 percent of Saudis are Sunni Muslims. Between 10-15 percent are Shia Muslims and anything smaller is undocumented. Shia Muslims and tourists of different faith struggle in Saudi Arabia because of Sunni implementation. The stigma for Sunni Muslims is that only certain people can practice Islam and those who do not are infidels and are then shunned or assaulted. Sunni Muslims are also noted for radicalism. In the recent century Sunnis caused harm through groups like Boko Haram or events like 9/11. They believe in fighting for Islam and the implementation of non-secular governments.

The Quran outlines the details of a typical household, demonstrated in every Saudi home. The size includes adults and their children as well as the grandparents. The grandparents are welcomed into the home because of their need for care. All families are patriarchal and the identity is tied to the man of the house. The man usually being the father. The men are breadwinners, and the women tend to the home.

This way of life is seen throughout hundreds of cultures and species world wide. If marriages seem to stop working out a man may have up to four wives. Divorce is damaging on children. As the children are cared for by their mother they have an unbreakable liking for her which will cause developmental issues. Each wife lives in a separate house with her children, the father comes to visit often. Marriage in Saudi Arabia is a contract, not a binding of soulmates.

Women in Saudi Arabia are forced to practice modesty as described in the Quran. Everything but the eyes should be covered. If not followed properly you can be tried for fitna, sexual arousal caused by acclaimed promiscuity. A woman may not leave the house without a man to accompany her. Any woman breaking code can be stoned or arrested whether or not they are native to the country or practice Islam.

Everyone in Saudi Arabia has access to education and affordable health care. Even good food, electricity, water, and so forth. The severity of hunger is far from needing to be concerned about, however, the trends in hunger security are decreasing. The geography can be described as arid yet humid on the coast of the Red Sea. Saudi Arabia's major domestic crops are wheat, barley, tomatoes, melons, dates, citrus, mutton, chicken, eggs and milk. They export oil, petroleum, petrochemicals, cement, construction equipment, fertilizer, and plastic. With partnerships in China, Japan, the United States, India and South Korea. A country with promise can not possibly be sinking towards famine. As of Saudi Arabia is getting less access to nourishing food and electricity. With their sacrosanct government starting to restrict speech, the country is slowly becoming more like North Korea, a country so poverty stricken and lacking in rights.

This seems near impossible but with restriction of speech comes restriction of access to prosperity. Rights are infringed because you can no longer voice your opinion on the government or oppose the standard of living. If you try, you are sentenced to prison and may be presented with a travel ban if Saudi court deems you worthy of punishment. When this happens, an idea is automatically tossed and never retrieved. Even if it fixes a problem it shows the bad side of the country.

Blogger, Waleed Abu al - Khair criticized Saudi Arabia on infringing human rights. al-Khair is serving a 15-year sentence. Alaa Brinji is serving 5 years in prison with an 8 year travel ban for tweets criticizing religious authorities voicing the right of women to drive. In 2016, Saudi Arabia's Terrorism Tribunal convicted Saudi Civil Rights and Political Rights Association (ACPRA) co-founder Abd-al Aziz and jailed most founders of the ACPRA.

When a country becomes focused on trying to look good, it is no longer good. This causes a challenge for citizens of Saudi Arabia because they are getting left behind for the government's need to be seen as an outstanding country. As the country shifts focus citizens don't get fed, they lose their money because the exports are getting maxed out. As the country works on appearance the loss of rights is put into action.

Citizens can not resist the government if they are blind to their actions. For example in the Holocaust, minorities and other citizens had no form of communication. No radio, no newspaper. In North Korea they have between 3 and 10 channels, based on where they live, and they receive propaganda about how good the regime is doing even though they are starving. A more modern example includes the Syrian crisis. Without rights for citizens Saudi Arabia can fall apart as easily as Syria has done in the 21st century.

Without a strong government who provides care or guidance towards agriculture a nation can not thrive. A nation cannot thrive without materials needed for clothing, nutrition, or transportation. Agriculture is the pathway to food security. Many places without human rights such as North Korea, Eritrea, and Sudan are also some of the most famine ridden countries in the world and they each individually lack human rights. When individuals do not receive the basic necessities of, for example, freedom of speech, when faced with drought they are silenced by their land of residence to stay silent to preserve that nation's image. As Saudi Arabia continues to oppress citizens such as al-Khair the nation crucial support or aid from other countries through blockade.

The way to solve this decrease in food stability is to first change the entire government system. This can be done through missionaries sent to Saudi Arabia to practice and teach other religions. As this occurs the

religion in Saudi Arabia diversifies and the values change. The government can not arrest every civilian for breaking the law. The prisons would get too crowded and they would have to adjust rules, such as deregulating modesty, or providing free speech to citizens. Thus abandoning the laws of the Quran. Citizens will then be punished because their actions are a threat to public safety instead receiving the label haram (sin).

A democracy works best in the 21st century because of the access to information and the ability to share ideas internationally. The transition will be difficult for the current king as no one likes to give away power. Just like the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia can keep its king and queen, yet elect a Prime Minister and siding representatives for the country. This would be a smooth transition from a monarchy to democracy. When this is completed the sacrosanct government should now be secular. There would be too many ideologies to please. The citizens get to vote on laws and the representatives are now middle men.

By giving the citizens the freedom to vote on a Prime Minister and accompanists the citizens ultimately get a voice. They are now allowed to criticize the government to their content and exercise free speech. Currently the government needs to overcome the religious barrier. By abandoning religion in their laws and allowing the individual pursuit of religion this diversifies the schedules. For example if individuals choose to pursue Islam the loss of production during Ramadan there are still people indulge in other faith or those who choose to pursue no faith are still working. This is the same case during Hanukkah or Christmas.

Citizens individually can make the conscious choice to pursue and share the details of the lives they so desire. However restricted human rights require a platform larger than their own government and may result in coup d'etat. Unless citizens work together to voice their minds on individual liberties such as driving or freedom of speech they will remain silenced and oppressed. Despite previously mentioned riots within Saudi Arabia they can continue with peaceful methods of revolution. This strategy was strong during the Civil Rights movement as they remained peaceful those in favor came to work side by side with those fighting for racial freedom.

Aside from changing the government system, advocates for women's rights can step in. A law has been passed for 2018 that allows women to now drive. Radicals are outraged by the decision and there have even been riots in the name of the ban lift, many claiming the act of women driving is haram. In Saudi Arabia the patriarchal establishment is a nightmare for women. They are forced to conform to standards or they could be brutally beaten by their husbands as the Sunnis claim the Quran allows.

Saudi Arabia is blinded by religions and personal status that the concerns of citizens are voided. The only way to stop that is to get louder. One man can not ignore thirty-three million five hundred fifty four thousand and three hundred forty three individual voices. If the king does not help, the rest of the world will step in to create peace among citizens and their government and to introduce them to liberties known in other lands such as entrepreneurship, education, and personal liberties. If they develop those values and the confidence to revolt they can liberate themselves.

A severe issue for Saudi Arabia is that they export nineteen percent of the world's oil and ninety percent of the economy depends on that income. What makes this situation so bad is that the price of oil is decreasing because it has been located in a plethora of other locations and the rise in demand for green

energy. Only forty percent of Saudis have jobs. Job opportunities only come from neighbors and friends unlike our industrialized workforce. The best way to solve this is to hold more government jobs. Government jobs are rich in benefits because of their significance in the country. These workers can put in new roads and sidewalks for safer travel, work with foreign relations, farmers and even educators.

Providing government jobs is an incentive for shifting away from a monarchy. With the provision of jobs, that don't include oil, the government is protected from bankruptcy. Saudi Arabia should also encourage industrialization. Jobs beyond working for friends and family. This gives the individual more freedom of choice and the opportunity to live the lifestyle they desire.

Few private companies in Saudi Arabia hire workers however, employers are displeased with results as they lack education and basic efficiency skills. This leads to a decline in services such as electricians and waitresses. The old fashioned way of doing everything yourself crashes convenience and accuracy. To solve the job crisis, Saudi Arabia must look into instituting more post-secondary education for technical and commerce skills; then promote entrepreneurs to join in with their services. This modern take on their world of work will open up job opportunities for hundreds of citizens, closing the employment gap and raises the standard of living.

With the new arrival of job opportunities, citizens in Saudi Arabia no longer need to worry about a depression caused by the decrease in their economy. The kingdom will be stabilized enough with economic diversity to deter the decline in certain markets and reduce dependence on foreign guidance and aid.

A country as developed as Saudi Arabia is bountiful with opportunities for advancement. But the sacrosanct government following the guidelines of the Quran set them back. Saudi Arabian lifestyle is archaic compared to the modern requirements for prosperity in their homeland. By shifting the focus away from a god and his desires there will be a significant reduction in the risk of citizen suffering. The further a country moves towards modernism citizens ultimately become more happy, more peaceful, and more free.

“What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or in the holy name of liberty or democracy?” These are the words Mahatma Gandhi that remind us that what has been done cannot be undone. What will be done can be stopped. We can not change the past, only the future.

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