

Quotes from the Koran that support tolerance among Shi'ites and Sunnis

"Do not be like those who are divided among themselves and fall into disputations after receiving clear evidence; for those [who are divided] will be a great punishment" **Holy Quran 30:31, 32**

"Be united by holding onto God's Covenant, and do not be divided" **Holy Quran 8:46**

"Obey Allah and his Messenger, and fall into no disputes, losing your heart and your power, and be patient, surely Allah is with those who are patient" **Holy Quran 6:159**

"The believers are brothers, make peace between your brothers, and be aware of Allah, that you may receive mercy" **Holy Quran 59:10**

"The believers, men and women, are Auliya (friends) of one another" **Holy Quran 9:71**

The Prophet Mohammed said: "A Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim; he doesn't do him wrong and does not abandon him. Whosoever comes to the aid of his brother at the time of need, Allah will aid him at his time of need. Whosoever lifts a burden off of his brother, Allah will remove from upon him a burden from burdens of the day of judgment."

More Sunni Information

Sunnis are members of one of the two major branches of Islam, the branch that consists of the majority of that religion's adherents. Sunni Muslims regard their sect as the mainstream and traditionalist branch of Islam, as distinguished from the minority sect, the Shi'ites. The Sunni recognize the six "authentic" books of the Hadith, which contain the spoken tradition attributed to Muhammad of his words and deeds. The Sunni also accept as orthodox one of the four schools of Muslim law. In the 20th century, the Sunni constituted the majority of Muslims in all nations except Iran, Iraq, and perhaps Yemen. They numbered about 900 million in the late 20th century and constituted nine-tenths of all the adherents of Islam.

"Sunnite." Encyclopedia Britannica. 2005. Encyclopedia Britannica Online School Edition.
31 Jan 2005 <<http://new.school.eb.com/eb/article?tocId=9070378>>.

More Shi'ite Information

The **Shi'a** or **Shi'ites**, are members of the smaller of the two major branches of Islam. In early Islamic history the Shi'ites were a political faction that supported the power of 'Ali, who was a son-in-law of Muhammad and the fourth caliph, spiritual ruler, of the Muslim community. 'Ali was killed while trying to maintain his authority as caliph, and the Shi'ites gradually developed a religious movement that asserted the legitimate authority of 'Ali's lineal descendants, the 'Alids. This stand contrasted with that of the more pragmatic Sunni majority of Muslims, who were generally willing to accept the leadership of any caliph whose rule afforded the proper exercise of religion and the maintenance of order in the Muslim world.

Over the centuries the Shi'ite movement, and its adherents numbered, about 60 to 80 million in the late 20th century, or one-tenth of all Islam. Shi'ism is the majority faith in Iran, Iraq, and perhaps Yemen and has some followers in Syria, Lebanon, East Africa, India, and Pakistan. In the late 20th century, notably in Iran, the Shi'ites became the chief voice of militant Islamic fundamentalism.

"Shi'ite." Encyclopedia Britannica. 2005. Encyclopedia Britannica Online School Edition.
31 Jan. 2005 <<http://new.school.eb.com/eb/article?tocId=9067367>>.