

Sunni vs. Shiite



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The differences between Sunni and Shiite

Sunnis **don't believe the leadership of the Muslim world should necessarily pass through hereditary succession.** They believe in the example of the Sunni. They think the Shi'a have changed the meaning of multiple aspects of the Qur'an.

The Shiites believed the Prophet Muhammed should have been succeeded by his son in law, Imam Ali, and **leadership of the Muslim world should pass through the prophet's descendants.** They think that the Sunni have changed the meaning of multiple aspects of the Qur'an, and do not recognize the power of the Sunna.

What event led to the split of the Sunni and Shia?

The original event that led to the split of the Sunni and Shia was Muhammad's death.

War had erupted when Ali became the Caliph and was also killed fighting in the year of 661 near the town of Kufa, which is now present-day Iraq. The violence and war split the small community of Muslims into two branches that would never reunite.



The current situation between Sunni and Shiite

Currently in the world, about 85 percent of the 1.6 billion muslims are Sunni, and the other 15 percent are Shia. Also Shia represent the majority of the population in Iran, Iraq, Bahrain and Azerbaijan, and a part of Lebanon. But Sunnis are the majority in more than 40 other countries such as Morocco, Indonesia, and more.



Now-a-days, the fight is mainly for resources such as oil and the “Strait of Hormuz”. There have been many wars waged, such as in 1991, the Gulf War, to the Syrian conflict going on right now. As well as this, there is a heatwave and drought going in Iraq and Syria. All of these conflicts together are making the situation a lot worse.

Questions:

- Why did war erupt when Ali became Caliph and died?
- What is the impact of the Sunni and Shia on the world today?