

TOLERANCE AMONG MUSLIMS: THE CONCEPT OF TOLERANCE AND THE METHOD OF CHARACTER EDUCATION FOR TOLERANCE AMONG MUSLIMS IN THE QUR'AN

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Abstract

It is an undeniable fact that within the Muslim community, there are various differences, especially in practical worship practices (Fiqh). If not addressed with proper tolerance, these differences can easily lead to friction. Another issue arises when some Muslims equate intra-Muslim tolerance with interreligious tolerance, which, if left unchecked, could trigger internal conflicts among Muslims. This journal focuses on three main questions: (1) What is the concept of tolerance among Muslims? (2) What are the foundations for establishing this concept? (3) What are the methods of character education for tolerance among Muslims in the Qur'an? This study employs a library research approach with a descriptive-analytical method and thematic exegesis. The analysis refers to the interpretation of relevant Qur'anic verses, including Sūrat al-Ma'idah (5:8), Sūrat Al 'Imrān (3:103 and 3:105), and Sūrat al-Anbiya' (21:78-79). The study concludes that: (1) Differences among Muslims are generally in the domain of al-Furu' al-Zānniyah (branches of jurisprudence based on conjecture), and the appropriate concept of tolerance is Tasāmuḥ Ḍāhir wa Bāṭin (outward and inward tolerance). (2) The foundation of this concept is Surah al-Ma'idah (5:8), which commands Muslims to act justly in addressing internal differences. (3) The methods of character education for tolerance in the Qur'an include the obligation to maintain unity, the prohibition of division, the understanding that differences are not prohibited by Allah, and reinforcement through exemplary stories.

Keywords: Intra-Muslim Tolerance, Thematic Qur'anic Exegesis, Tasāmuḥ.

مستخلص البحث

من الحقائق التي لا يمكن إنكارها أن هناك اختلافات متنوعة داخل المجتمع المسلم، خاصة في الممارسات التعبديّة العمليّة (الفقه). وإذا لم يتمّ التعامل مع هذه الاختلافات بالتسامح المناسب، فإنّ هذه الاختلافات يمكن أن تؤدي بسهولة إلى الاحتكاك. وهناك مشكلة أخرى تنشأ عندما يساوي بعض المسلمين بين التسامح بين المسلمين والتسامح بين الأديان، وهو ما يمكن أن يؤدي إلى نشوب صراعات داخلية بين المسلمين إذا لم يتمّ التعامل معها بالتسامح بين المسلمين. ركزت هذه المجلة على ثلاثة أسئلة رئيسية: (1) ما هو مفهوم التسامح بين المسلمين؟ (2) ما هي أسس ترسيخ هذا المفهوم؟ (3) ما هي أساليب التربية على التسامح بين المسلمين في القرآن الكريم؟ اعتمد هذا البحث على منهج البحث المكتبي بالمنهج الوصفي التحليلي والتفسير الموضوعي. وشار التحليل إلى تفسير الآيات القرآنية ذات الصلة، بما في ذلك سورة المائدة (5:8)، وسورة آل عمران (3:103 و 3:105)، وسورة الأنبياء (21:78-79). وخلص البحث إلى أن (1) أن الاختلافات بين المسلمين تدخل عموماً في مجال الفروع الفقهيّة المبنية على الاجتهاد، وأنّ المفهوم المناسب



للتسامح هو التسامح ظاهرا وباطنا. (٢) وأساس هذا المفهوم هو سورة المائدة (٥ : ٨) التي تأمر المسلمين بالعدل في معالجة الاختلافات الداخلية. (٣) تشمل أساليب تربية الشخصية على التسامح في القرآن الكريم وجوب الحفاظ على الوحدة، والنهي عن الفرقة، وإفهام أن الاختلاف ليس محظورا من الله تعالى، والتعزيز من خلال القصص القدوة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسامح بين المسلمين، التفسير الموضوعي للقرآن، التسامح بين المسلمين، التفسير الموضوعي للقرآن، التسامح.

INTRODUCTION

The term “tolerance” or *Tasāmuh/Samahah*¹ is already quite popular among us. The most familiar scholarly discussion related to this concept is interfaith tolerance, which essentially emphasizes the need to cultivate full awareness in respecting the existence of religions or beliefs held by others,² without coercing them to convert to our faith or religion.³

Another important discussion that deserves attention, yet has received very little academic focus, is tolerance among Muslims. In reality, it is undeniable that within Islam itself, there exist various differences regarding the details of worship practices,⁴ which, if not approached with wisdom and sufficient religious understanding, can easily spark conflicts or disputes among Muslims.⁵ Scholarly works on efforts to cultivate internal tolerance within the Muslim community remain scarce, especially when compared to the extensive academic discussions on interfaith tolerance.

Therefore, this brief journal will address the theme of tolerance among Muslims in responding to existing differences.

Based on the above background, the author formulates the following research questions: (1) What is the concept of tolerance among Muslims? (2) What are the foundations for establishing this concept? and (3) What are the methods of character education for tolerance among Muslims in the Qur’an?

¹ “Al-Ma’aniy Li Kull Rasm Ma’na”, al-maany.com, 2024, <https://doi.org/https://www.almaany.com/id/dict/ar-id/toleransi/>.

² Salma Mursyid, “Konsep Toleransi (Al Samahah) Antar Umat Beragama Perspektif Islam”, *Jurnal Aqlam; Journal Of Islam and Plurality* 2, no. 1 (2016), <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30984/ajip.v1i2.504>.

³ Muhammad Rifat, “Dakwah Dan Toleransi Umat Beragama (Dakwah Berbasis Rahmatan Lil ‘Alamin)”, *Alhadharah Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* 13, no. 26 (2014), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18592/alhadharah.v13i26.1709>.

⁴ Ala’i Najib Ali Muhtarom, Mahnan Marbawi, *Integrasi Moderasi Dalam Mata Pelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Islam Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2021).

⁵ Imam Suprayogo, “Bukan Konflik Antar Agama Melainkan Saling Berkompetisi,” Gema UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2015, <https://doi.org/https://uin-malang.ac.id/r/150101/bukan-konflik-antar-agama-melainkan-saling-berkompetisi.html>.

METHOD

This journal employs a library research approach, utilizing descriptive analysis methods. As a thematic exegesis, it bases its principles on the interpretation of several related verses, drawn from various tafsir books to enrich the information. This approach aims to strengthen the analysis in addressing the aforementioned research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Inform a number of important data (original) fields obtained from questionnaires, surveys, documents, interviews, observations, and other data collection techniques. It can be completed with a table or graphic to clarify the result.

According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI), tolerance is defined as the disposition or attitude of allowing (permitting, respecting, and letting be) principles (opinions, beliefs, views, behaviors, habits, and so forth) that are contrary to or different from one's own.⁶ In Arabic, the term for tolerance is often referred to as *Tasāmuḥ*.⁷

Terminologically, experts define tolerance as granting individuals the freedom to practice their beliefs and to manage and determine their own destinies, as long as these actions do not conflict with or violate public order.⁸

Based on general observations, discussions on tolerance within Islamic studies often focus on interfaith tolerance. The core concept emphasizes recognizing the existence of all religions, refraining from compelling others to embrace our own faith, and striving to establish positive interactions while maintaining individual beliefs.⁹

This concept is reinforced by Allah's words in *Sūrat al-Kāfirūn*, verse 6:

{لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ}

"You have your way, and I have my Way".¹⁰

Allah the Exalted states in *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, verse 256:

{لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ}

⁶ Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, "Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (KBBI): Kamus Versi Online / Daring (Dalam Jaringan)", Balai Pustaka, 2023, <https://doi.org/https://kbbi.kemdikbud.go.id/entri/toleransi>.

⁷ "Al-Ma'aniy Li Kull Rasm Ma'na".

⁸ Umar Hasyim, *Toleransi Dan Kemerdekaan Beragama Dalam Islam Sebagai Dasar Menuju Dialog Dan Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama*, 1st ed. (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1979).

⁹ Abdul Mu'ti, *Toleransi Yang Otentik: Menghadirkan Nilai Kemanusiaan Dan Keterbukaan Dalam Beragama, Berpolitik, Dan Peradaban Sosial*, ed. Dinan Hasbunin AR, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Al-Wasat Publishing House, 2019).

¹⁰ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag," Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2022, <https://quran.kemenag.go.id/quran/per-ayat/surah/21?from=78&to=79>.

“Let there be no compulsion in religion”.¹¹

Allah, the Exalted, declares in *Sūrat Saba*, verse 24:

{قُلْ مَنْ يَرْزُقُكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قُلِ اللهُ وَإِنَّا أَوْ إِيَّاكُمْ لَعَلَىٰ هُدًى أَوْ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ}

“Ask ‘them, O Prophet’, “Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth?” Say, “Allah! Now, certainly one of our two groups¹ is ‘rightly’ guided; the other is clearly astray”.¹²

Allah, the Exalted, declares in *Sūrat al-Mumtaḥanah*, verse 8:

{لَا يَنْهَكُمُ اللهُ عَنِ الدِّينِ لَمْ يُفَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَن تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُقْسِطِينَ}

“Allah does not forbid you from dealing kindly and fairly with those who have neither fought nor driven you out of your homes. Surely Allah loves those who are fair”.¹³

The author succinctly formulates the theory of tolerance between Muslims and adherents of other faiths with the expression *Tasāmuh Zābir wa Baṭin*. Outwardly, Muslims should exhibit a high degree of tolerance, to the extent that, from the perspective of others, it appears as though Muslims acknowledge and validate their beliefs. However, inwardly, Muslims are obliged to firmly believe that only Islam is accepted by Allah, while other religions are entirely erroneous, as emphasized in *Sūrat Āl Imrān*, verses 19 and 85.

In contrast, discussions on tolerance within the Muslim community itself have received relatively little scholarly attention, especially when compared to interfaith tolerance studies. This is despite the importance of such discussions for Muslims across generations.

It is an undeniable fact that within the Muslim community, there are various differences, some related to detailed beliefs and others to specific forms of worship practices. If not approached wisely, these differences can easily lead to friction among Muslims.¹⁴

Discussion

The Concept of Tolerance Among Muslims in the Qur’an

Although the term *Tasāmuh* (tolerance) is not explicitly mentioned in the Qur’an or Sunnah, numerous evidences implicitly highlight its importance and general concept. Among these are commands to act justly, maintain proportionality, and exercise wisdom in various situations, adhering to appropriate measures and standards. Tolerance is thus an application of the principle of justice in life.

¹¹ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an.

¹² Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an.

¹³ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an.

¹⁴ Khalid Kabir Alal, *Al Ta’assub Al Mazḥaby Fi Al Tarikh Al Islamy* (Dar Al Muhtasib, 2008).

Allah, the Exalted, declares in *Sūrat al-Mā'idah*, verse 8:

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا لِإِعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ }

“O believers! Stand firm for Allah and bear true testimony. Do not let the hatred of a people lead you to injustice. Be just! That is closer to righteousness. And be mindful of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Aware of what you do”.¹⁵

Sabab al-Nuzūl Verse:

Al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr reported that his father gave him a valuable gift. His mother, 'Amrah bint Rawḥah, said, “I will not be satisfied until you make the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) a witness to this gift.” His father went to the Prophet (peace be upon him) and said, “I have given a gift to my son from 'Amrah bint Rawḥah, and she asked me to have you witness it, O Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) asked, “Have you given the same to all your children?” He replied, “No.” The Prophet (peace be upon him) then said, “Fear Allah and be just among your children.” He also said, “I do not bear witness to injustice”.¹⁶

Al-Nu'mān ibn Bashīr further narrated that his father returned home and retracted the gift.¹⁷

Interpretation of the Verse:

1. *Tafsīr al-Sa'dī*.

O you who believe in what you have been commanded to believe, strengthen your faith so that you may stand before Allah as witnesses to justice, employing both your outward actions and inner intentions to uphold fairness. Ensure that this objective is solely for Allah, not for worldly purposes, and that justice is administered appropriately, neither excessively nor deficiently, in words or deeds, applying it equally to those near and far, friends and foes alike.¹⁸

2. *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*.

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice...” This means: uphold justice by speaking the truth. Allah commands them to be just and truthful in their actions and words. “...and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just.” That is, do not abandon justice towards them due to enmity. “Be just,” meaning: towards

¹⁵ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, “Qur'an Kemenag.”

¹⁶ Muhammad bin Ismail Abu Abdillah Al Bukhari, *Shahih Al-Bukhari*, 2nd ed. (Dar Thuruq Al Najah, 1442).

¹⁷ Abu Muhammad Al Husain Bin Mas'ud Bin Muhammad Al Farra' Al Baghawī, *Ma'alim Al Tanzīl Fi Tafsīr Al Qur'an*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Ihya' Turats 'Araby, n.d.).

¹⁸ Abdu Al Rahman Bin Nashir Bin Abdillah Al Sa'di, *Taisir Al Karim Al Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam Al Manan* (Al Risalah, 2000).

both allies and enemies. “That is nearer to righteousness,” meaning: it leads to piety. “And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what you do”.¹⁹

3. *Tafsir Ibn al-Kathir*.

“O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah...” This means: stand firmly for Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, not for the sake of people or reputation. “...witnesses in justice,” that is: with justice, not injustice. “...and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just.” This means: do not allow your hatred for a people to lead you to abandon justice towards them; rather, apply justice to everyone, friend or foe. Therefore, “Be just; that is nearer to righteousness,” meaning: your justice is closer to piety than abandoning it.²⁰

Although scholars of *tafsir* (Qur’anic exegesis) explain the interpretation of the above verse with different expressions and styles, their substantive meanings are not significantly different. This verse emphasizes the command to always act justly in all aspects of life, including when dealing with differences among Muslims.

The Verse’s Connection to Tolerance:

In this verse, Allah the Exalted emphasizes that Muslims must always act justly in all aspects of their worldly lives.²¹ The term “justice” encompasses a broad range of meanings:²² placing things in their proper positions, being wise, proportional, not arbitrary, and adhering firmly to the truth.²³ Exercising tolerance in addressing differences, tailored to the specific context, is a manifestation of justice.

Concept of Tolerance:

Based on the aforementioned verse that commands Muslims to always act justly, an appropriate concept of tolerance in addressing differences within the Muslim community can be formulated or adjusted according to the specific nature of the existing differences. To study the objects of differences in religious aspects, a simple approach can be viewed from two perspectives: (1) the subject matter of the disputed issue, and (2) the foundational evidence supporting it.²⁴

¹⁹ Abu Muhammad Al Husain Bin Mas’ud Bin Muhammad Al Farra’ Al Bagawi, *Ma’alim Al Tanzil Fi Tafsir Al Qur’an*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Ihya’ Turats ‘Araby, n.d.).

²⁰ Abu Al Fida’ Isma’il Bin Umar Bin Katsir Al Qurasyi Al Basari, *Tafsir Al Qur’an Al ‘Azim* (Dar Al Tayyibah, 1999).

²¹ Muhammad Abdul Latif Bin Al Khatib, *Andah Al-Tafasir*, 6th ed. (Kairo: Mathba’ah Mishriyah, 1964).

²² Bahder Johan Nasution, “Kajian Filosofis Tentang Konsep Keadilan Dari Pemikiran Klasik Sampai Pemikiran Modern,” *Jurnal Yustisia* 3, no. 2 (2014), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.20961/yustisia.v3i2.11106>.

²³ Majid Khadduri, *Majlum Al ‘Adl Fi Al Islam* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, n.d.).

²⁴ Isn’an Anshory, *Jika Semua Memiliki Dalil, Bagaimana Aku Bersikap?*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Rumah Fikih Publishing, 2016).

Based on the subject matter of the disputes, differences can be categorized into two types: (1) *Uṣūl al-Dīn* (the principles of religion or theology), and (2) *Furu' al-Dīn* (the branches of religion or jurisprudence).²⁵

Furthermore, each of these two major themes can be subdivided based on the nature of their foundational evidence into two categories: (1) *Qaṭ'iyyah* (definitive, certain, absolute), and (2) *al-Zanniyyah* (speculative, presumptive, relative).²⁶

From the above breakdown, the objects of difference in the religious context can be classified into four types:

1. *Al-Uṣūl al-Qaṭ'iyyah*,
2. *Al-Uṣūl al-Zanniyyah*,
3. *Al-Furu' al-Qaṭ'iyyah*,
4. *Al-Furu' al-Zanniyyah*.

First: Differences in the Domain of *al-Uṣūl al-Qaṭ'iyyah*

When differences arise in the realm of *Al-Uṣūl al-Qaṭ'iyyah* —matters related to core beliefs or theology established by definitive evidence (*dalīl Qaṭ'i*) from the Qur'an or Sunnah—they pertain to fundamental aspects of faith. Examples include the existence and oneness of Allah, the existence of angels, the Prophets, the divine scriptures, the Day of Judgment, and predestination.²⁷

Differences in this domain define one's adherence to the faith: those who correctly uphold these beliefs are considered Muslims, while those who deny them are deemed disbelievers (*kaḥfīr*).²⁸

The concept of tolerance applied here aligns with the previously mentioned principle of *Tasāmuh Zābir wa Baṭīn*.

This means that outwardly, Muslims should exhibit a high degree of tolerance, appearing to acknowledge and validate others' beliefs. However, inwardly, they must firmly believe that only Islam is accepted by Allah, while other religions are erroneous.

²⁵ Sa'd Bin Nashir Al-Syari, *Al-Uṣūl Wa Al-Furu'*, 1st ed. (Riyad: Dar Kunuz Isyabaliya, 2005).

²⁶ Muhammad Mustafa Al-Khan, *Al-Qaṭ'i Wa Al-Zanni Fi Al-Subut Wa Al-Dilalah 'Inda Ushuliyyin*, 1st ed. (Damaskus: Dar Al-Kalim Al-Tayyib, 2007).

²⁷ Firdaus, "Konsep Qaṭ'h'i Dan Zhanni Al Dilalah Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Penafsiran Al Qur'an," *Jurnal Hukum Diktum* 11, no. 1 (2013), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35905/diktum.v11i1.71>.

²⁸ Anshory, *Jika Semua Memiliki Dalil, Bagaimana Aku Bersikap?*

Second: Differences in the Domain of *al-Uṣūl al-Zānniyyah*

Al-Uṣūl al-Zānniyyah refers to matters of creed or belief that are based on speculative evidence (*dalīl Zānni*) in terms of understanding or indication (*al-Dalālah*), allowing for multiple interpretations.²⁹ Examples include: 'The nature of the Qur'an: Is it created or the speech of Allah?'³⁰ 'The essence of human actions: Are they created by Allah the Exalted, or are they solely the result of human will?'³¹ These issues have been subjects of scholarly debate due to the interpretative nature of the evidence supporting them.

Differences in this domain are referred to as *al-Firqah* (sects). Those who adhere correctly are termed *Ahl al-Sunnah* (People of the Sunnah), while those who deviate are labeled *Ahl al-Bid'ah* (People of Innovation). However, scholars are generally reluctant to expel them from the fold of Islam unless compelling evidence (*al-Hujjah*) has been established against them.³²

In the contemporary context, particularly among Indonesian Muslims, the author observes that differences pertaining to *al-Uṣūl al-Zānniyyah* are relatively rare within the community

Third: Differences in the Domain of *al-Furū' al-Qaṭ'iyyah*

Al-Furū' al-Qaṭ'iyyah refers to issues within the branches of religion (*Furū' al-Dīn*) that generally pertain to practical applications. These are derived from definitive evidence (*dalīl Qaṭ'i*) in terms of understanding or indication (*al-Dalālah*), whether from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, or explicit consensus (*al-Ijmā' al-Ṣarīḥ*), leaving no room for multiple interpretations.³³

Among the straightforward examples are the obligation of performing the five daily prayers, the duty of Hajj, and the prohibition of adultery. In such areas, the possibility of differences arising among Muslims is minimal or even non-existent, especially among the Mujtahidun scholars. In fact, scholars have established the principle:

²⁹ Anshory.

³⁰ Abdu al-Rahman Bin Nasir Bin Barak Bin Ibrahim Al-Barak, *Syarb Al-Aqidah Al-Tabaniyyah* (Dar al-Tadmuriyah, 2008).

³¹ Al-Barak.

³² "Hukmu Man Yaqulu Bi Anna Al-Qur'an Makhluq," islamweb.net, 2003, <https://doi.org/https://www.islamweb.net/ar/fatwa/42856/>.

³³ Muhammad Abu Zahra, *Ushul Fiqh*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Firdaus, 1994).

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“*Ijtihād is not recognized in matters that have been definitively established by explicit texts (dalil Qaṭ’i dan Ṣarih)*”.³⁴

In this matter, an individual is considered a Muslim when they fully submit and comply with these obligations. Those who deny them are referred to as *ẓindīq* (heretic), *murtadd* (apostate), or *kāfir* (disbeliever).³⁵

Fourth: Differences in the Domain of *al-Furū’ al-Zanniyyah*

Al-Furū’ al-Zanniyyah refers to issues within the branches of religion (*Furū’ al-Dīn*) that generally pertain to practical applications. These are derived from speculative evidence (*al-Zannī*), which allows for multiple interpretations in terms of indication (*al-Dalālah*) and establishment (*al-Thubūt*).³⁶

Examples include the ruling on the *Qunūt* supplication during the *Fajr* prayer,³⁷ and the minimum obligatory extent of wiping over the head during *wuḍū’* (ablution).³⁸

In practice, such differences are prevalent within the Muslim community. In this context, these variations are referred to as *madhhab* (schools of thought). Discussions in this area extensively cover topics in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).³⁹ Each scholar who engages in *ijtihād* (independent reasoning) analyzes the evidence and determines rulings on specific issues, striving to reach the most robust conclusion (*al-Rājih*), based on the available evidence and the necessary analytical tools for *ijtihād*. Every *mujtahid* (scholar qualified to perform *ijtihād*) has the right to assert that their conclusion (*madhhab*) is the strongest (*al-Rājih*), while considering other opinions as outweighed (*al-Marjuh*).⁴⁰

The concept of tolerance that should be cultivated among Muslims when differences arise in this domain is termed *Tasāmuh Zāhir wa Bāṭin*—tolerance both outwardly and inwardly. Outward tolerance involves recognizing and respecting the existence of other opinions or conclusions (*al-Madhhab*), as well as valuing others’ inclinations in choosing their respective *al-Madhhab*. Inward

³⁴ Abd al-Raqib Shaleh al-Hasan Al-Sami, *Qa’idah La Ijtihada Fi Mauridi Al-Nas* (Kairo: Majallah al-Adab, 2018).

³⁵ Ahmad Bin al-Husain Bin Ahmad Abu Syuja Syihab al-Din Abu Thayyib Al-Asfahani, *Matnu Abi Syuja Al-Musamma Al-Ghayab Wa Al-Taqrīb* (Alam al-Kutub, n.d.).

³⁶ Tatang Hidayat dan Endis Firdaus, “Analisis Atas Terbentuknya Mazhab Fikih, Ilmu Kalam, Dan Tasawuf, Serta Implikasinya Dalam Membangun Ukhuwah Islamiyah,” *Al-Islah Jurnal Pendidikan* 10, no. 2 (2018), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v10i2.81>.

³⁷ Ibn Rusyd Al-Hafiz, *Bidayah Al-Mujtahid Wa Nihayah Al-Muqtashid* (Kairo: Dar al-Hadis, 2004).

³⁸ Al-Hafiz.

³⁹ Noor Harisudin, *Pengantar Ilmu Fikih*, 1st ed. (Surabaya: Pena Salsabila, 2013).

⁴⁰ Farid Naya, “Al Mujmal Dan Al Mubayyan Dalam Kajian Ushul Fiqh,” *Jurnal Tabkīm* 9, no. 2 (2013).

tolerance entails acknowledging that what we believe, and what others believe in these matters, have an equal possibility of being correct in the sight of Allah the Exalted, as long as the conditions and requirements of *ijtihad* are met and valid

This concept aligns with the perspective of *Muṣṭafā al-Zarqā'*, who stated:

المذاهب الفقهية كلها نسبتها إلى الشريعة الإسلامية متساوية.

“All *fiqh* schools of thought are equally related to Islamic Sharia”.⁴¹

This implies that all outcomes of *ijtihād* in *fiqh* are considered equally valid within Islamic law.

It is inappropriate for us, in such contexts, to consider others as engaging in wrongdoing or disobedience merely because they incline towards a different *Madhhab* than our own.

لا إنكار في مسائل الاجتهاد

“There should be no denunciation in matters subject to *ijtihad*”.⁴²

The correlation between the aforementioned types of differences and the Quranic exhortation to act justly is that practicing tolerance in addressing these differences is a manifestation of justice. The concept of tolerance varies according to the nature of the differences; accurately determining the appropriate form of tolerance is an expected form of justice. Therefore, differences within the Muslim community, especially those related to methods of worship (*al-Fiqh*), should be approached with the appropriate concept of tolerance, namely *Tasāmuḥ Zāhir wa Bāṭin* (outward and inward tolerance). This approach should not be equated with the concept of tolerance among different religions, as such an equivalence would deviate from the fundamental principles of justice and could lead to injustice.

Qur’anic Methods for Character Education in Fostering Interfaith Tolerance among Muslims

The Qur’an outlines at least three methods to strengthen the character education of tolerance among Muslims in addressing differences, particularly in the context of *al-Furū’ al-Zannīyyah* (branches of religion open to interpretation)

1. Mandating unity and prohibiting division.⁴³
2. Clarifying that differences are or forbidden by Allah *Ta’ālā*.⁴⁴
3. Providing exemplary narratives.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Mustafa Al-Zarqa, *Al-Madkhal Al-Fiqhi Al-'Am*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar al-Qalam, n.d.).

⁴² Abdu al-Salam Muqbil Al-Majidi, *La Inkara Fi Masail Al-Ijtihad* (Kuwait: Majalah al-Wa'yi al-Islami, 2011).

⁴³ Hasan Azuzi, *Wabdah Al-Umah Al-Muslimah Baina Al-Tsabit Wa Al-Mutagayyir*, 1st ed. (Makkah: Rabithah Al-'Alam Al-Islamy, 2012).

⁴⁴ M.Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbab; Pesan, Kesan, Dan Kekeragaman Al Qur'an*, 5th ed. (Ciputat: Lentera Hati, 2012).

⁴⁵ Al-Qur'an, 21: 78 - 79.

First: The Qur'an mandates unity and prohibits division

Allah, the Exalted, states in *Sūrat Al Imrān* verse 103:

{وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ فُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ}.

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of Allah upon you—when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. And you were on the edge of a pit of the Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus does Allah make clear to you His verses that you may be guided”.⁴⁶

Interpretation of the Verse:

1. *Tafsīr al-Wasīṭ*

In this exegesis, “the rope of Allah” refers to His religion, covenant, or scripture, as adhering to these leads to safety and well-being. The meaning is: Be adherents of Allah’s Book, His religion, and His covenant, and do not become divided, for that was your condition during the pre-Islamic era (*Jāhiliyyah*), where you attacked and even killed each other. Instead, you should unite in obedience to Allah, forming a solid structure where each part strengthens the other. By doing so, you will achieve victory, happiness, and triumph over your enemies.⁴⁷

2. *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*

And hold firmly to the religion of Allah, which He has commanded you to follow, and to His covenant, which He has entrusted to you in His Book. Show compassion to one another and unite in truth and obedience to Allah. *Iṭṣāmū* is synonymous with *Tamassakū*.⁴⁸

3. *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*

And hold firmly together to the rope of Allah, which is His religion, and do not be divided after embracing Islam. And remember the blessing of Allah upon you, O people of Aus and Khazraj, when you were enemies before Islam, and He united your hearts through Islam, so that by His mercy, you became brothers in faith and nation.⁴⁹

The key takeaway from the three interpretations mentioned above is that this verse emphasizes the necessity for Muslims to make every possible effort to remain united and to

⁴⁶ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an, “Qur’an Kemenag.”

⁴⁷ Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Wasīṭ Li Al-Qur’an Al-Karīm*, 1st ed. (Kairo: Dar Nahdah Misra, 1997).

⁴⁸ Abu Ja’far Al-Tabarī, *Jamī’ Al-Bayān Fi Ta’wīl Al-Qur’an*, 1st ed. (Al-Risalah, 2000).

⁴⁹ Jalal Al-Din Muhammad Bin Ahmad Al-Mahali dan Jalal Al-Din Abd Al-Rahman Bin Abi Bakr Al-Suyuty, *Tafsīr Al-Jalālayn*, 1st ed. (Kairo: Dar Al-Hadith, n.d.).

avoid any actions or words that may lead to conflict. The unity of Muslims is an obligation, while discord and division are reprehensible and prohibited. One of the ways to strengthen unity is by exercising tolerance in addressing differences within Islamic teachings—differences that, from the outset,⁵⁰ have been difficult to avoid.

The Reason for the Revelation *Sabab al-Nuzūl* of the Verse:

Al-Naysābūrī, in his book *Asbāb al-Nuzūl*, mentions a narration that explains the background of the revelation of this verse:

“When the tribes of Aus and Khazraj were sitting together, some among them began recalling their past hostilities during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance (Jabīliyyah). This provoked anger among them to the point that they were on the verge of taking up arms against each other in conflict. Then, this verse was revealed to reconcile and prevent them from engaging in violence”.⁵¹

The Relationship Between the Verse and the Theme of Tolerance:

This verse is specifically addressed to the Muslim community, containing a firm command to maintain unity and a strict prohibition against division. If this command is deeply ingrained in the hearts of every Muslim, it will naturally be accompanied by all necessary efforts to realize it. One such effort is in the context of responding to differences within the realm of *al-Furū’ al-Zannīyyah*, which are inherently difficult to avoid. The appropriate attitude in this regard is to prioritize tolerance, both outwardly and inwardly.

Second: Clarifying that differences are or forbidden by Allah *Ta’alā*

Allah, the Exalted, states in *Sūrat Al Imrān* verse 105:

{ وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ }

“And do not be like those who split ‘into sects’ and differed after clear proofs had come to them. It is they who will suffer a tremendous punishment”.⁵²

Interpretation of the Verse:

1. *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ*

In this verse, Allah *Subḥānahu wa Ta’alā* explicitly and firmly prohibits the believers from resembling those who divide themselves into factions and engage in disputes or discord among themselves, like the Jews and Christians. One of the primary factors that led to their conflicts and disputes was the prioritization of their own groups while neglecting others. This was further exacerbated by negative desires that dominated them

⁵⁰ Muhammad Zuhdi dan Faisal, “Sikap Dan Etika Dalam Menghadapi Ikhtilaf Pendapat Mazhab Fiqih,” *Jurnal Al Qadha* 6, no. 2 (2019): 16.

⁵¹ Abu Al-Hasan Ali Bin Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Ali Al-Wahidi Al-Naisabury Al Syāfī’i, *Asbāb Nuzūl Al-Qur’an*, 2nd ed. (Damam: Dar Al-Ishlah, 1992).

⁵² Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an, “Qur’an Kemenag.”

and the envy they harbored toward one another. Their condition became even worse and more reprehensible in the sight of Allah *Subḥānahu wa Ta'ālā* when they continued to uphold these conflicts and divisions, despite the fact that divine scriptures, prophets, and rational guidance had been sent to them—none of which endorsed such disputes, let alone their harmful consequences.

This verse does not prohibit Muslims from forming groups, such as within organizational bodies, nor does it forbid differences of opinion in understanding Islamic teachings, especially in matters that remain open to *ijtibād*. What is prohibited, however, is forming groups or having differences of opinion that are accompanied by disputes and conflicts.⁵³

2. *Tafsīr Sha'rāwī*

This verse prohibits following base desires, as it can lead to disputes and conflicts. The previous communities continued to engage in disagreements and conflicts despite the clear prohibitions in the verses of Allah. This was because they prioritized their desires over divine guidance. As a consequence, Allah will cast them into Hell, and they will face severe punishment.⁵⁴

3. *Tafsīr Anḍaḥ al-Tafsīr*

(And do not be like those who divided themselves into sects and fell into disputes). They are the Jews and the Christians, who harbored enmity and declared each other disbelievers, (after clear evidence had come to them), namely the manifest and enlightening verses.⁵⁵

4. *Tafsīr al-Munīr*

Differences in opinion or conclusions are not blameworthy when they fall within the domain of *ijtibād* and the derivation of specific *Shari'ah* meanings. The Companions (*Ṣaḥābah*) often differed in their rulings on various issues, yet they remained united and maintained mutual affection. They did not become divided when discussing their differences, as all their efforts were ultimately aimed at the welfare of the ummah as a whole. This verse does not prohibit differences of opinion in partial and subsidiary matters.⁵⁶

⁵³ M.Quraish Shihab, *Tafsīr Al-Misbah; Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*, 5th ed. (Ciputat: Lentera Hati, 2012).

⁵⁴ Muhammad Mutawalli Al-Sya'rawi, *Tafsīr Al-Sya'rawi Al-Khawathir* (Akhbar Al Yaum, 1997).

⁵⁵ Muhammad Abd Al-Latif Bin Al-Khatib, *Anḍaḥu Al-Tafsīr*, 6th ed. (Kairo: Matba'ah Misriyah, 1964).

⁵⁶ Wahbah Bin Mushthafa Al-Zuhaili, *Al-Tafsīr Al-Munīr Fi Al-'Aqidah Wa Al-Syari'ah Wa Al-Manhaj*, 2nd ed. (Damaskus: Dar Al-Fikri Al-Mu'asir, n.d.).

The interpretation of verse 105 from *Sūrat Āl Imrān* in the aforementioned *tafsīr* works—at least four *tafsīr* books cited by the author—though expressed in different wording and narrative styles, share a common theme. The central message is a stern admonition from Allah *Subḥānahu wa Ta’ālā* for the Muslim ummah to avoid division and discord,⁵⁷ as was the case with previous communities, including the Jews and Christians

Specifically, as explained in *Tafsīr al-Miṣbah*, Allah *Ta’ālā* does not prohibit differences in matters that do not pertain to fundamental principles. What is prohibited is disagreement that is accompanied by conflict and discord.⁵⁸

Tafsīr al-Bayḍawī also explains that the prohibition against division specifically applies to *al-Uṣūl* (fundamental principles) of Islamic law. In contrast, differences in *al-Furū’* (secondary matters) are not prohibited.⁵⁹ What is forbidden is when these differences are approached with inappropriate attitudes, such as belittling or disrespecting others, leading to disputes and conflicts that become difficult to avoid.

Sabab al-Nuzūl (Context of Revelation) of the Verse:

The revelation of this verse is closely related to the previous verse, which narrates the story of the Aus and Khazraj tribes. These tribes had been united by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), but one day, they were on the verge of conflict again, similar to their disputes during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance (*Jahiliyyah*). Consequently, this verse was revealed as a rebuke and a means to prevent discord among them.⁶⁰

The Verse’s Connection to Tolerance:

Through this verse, the Qur’an seeks to educate us on the importance of exercising tolerance in addressing differences among Muslims, particularly in matters of *al-Ijtihādīyah* (jurisprudential reasoning).⁶¹ The Qur’an fosters an awareness that differences are not prohibited; rather, they are a part of *Sunnatullah* (the divine law of nature).⁶²

Third: The Qur’an Provides Exemplary Narratives

Allah *Subḥānahu wa Ta’ālā* states in *Sūrat al-Anbiyā’*, verses 78 and 79

⁵⁷ Abd. Wafi, *Persaudaraan Dalam Al-Qur’an* (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel, 2021).

⁵⁸ Shihab, *Tafsīr Al-Miṣbah; Pesan, Kesan, Dan Keserasian Al-Qur’an*, 2012.

⁵⁹ Nashiru Al-Din Abu Sa’id Abdullah Bin Umar Bin Muhammad Al-Syairazi Al-Baidawi, *Anwar Al-Tanzīl Wa Asrar Al-Takwīl*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Ihya Turats Al-Arabi, n.d.).

⁶⁰ Syafi’i, *Asbab Nuzūl Al-Qur’an*.

⁶¹ Abd Al-Rahman Bin Abi Bakr Jalal Al-Din Al-Suyuti, *Al-Dur Al-Manthur* (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, n.d.).

⁶² Ahmad Rochali, *Kebinekaan Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur’an Dan Implementasinya Dalam Kehidupan Bermasyarakat* (Jakarta: Institut PTIQ, 2021).

{وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفَسَتْ فِيهِ عَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ ۖ فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ ۖ وَكُلًّا آتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ }

“And ‘remember’ when David and Solomon passed judgment regarding the crops ruined ‘at night’ by someone’s sheep, and We were witness to their judgments. We guided ‘young’ Solomon to a fairer settlement,¹ and granted each of them wisdom and knowledge. We subjected the mountains as well as the birds to hymn ‘Our praises’ along with David. It is We Who did ‘it all’.”⁶³

Interpretation of the Verses:

1. *Tafsir al-Sa’di*

And remember these two honorable prophets, *Dāwūd* (AS) and *Sulaymān* (AS), to whom Allah granted vast knowledge and judgment among His servants, as evidenced by His words: “When they both issued a ruling concerning the field, as the field was damaged by the sheep belonging to their people.” That is, when the owner of the field was brought to trial before them, and the sheep of another group had ravaged it—meaning, they grazed at night, consuming what was on its trees and damaging its crops.

Dāwūd (AS) ruled that the sheep should be given to the owner of the field due to the negligence of their owner, thus imposing this penalty upon them. However, *Sulaymān* (AS) issued a more precise and just ruling: the owner of the sheep was to hand over his sheep to the owner of the field during the full moon period, allowing the latter to benefit from their wool while they, in turn, tended to the field until it was restored to its original state. Once the field had returned to its initial condition, each party would reclaim what originally belonged to them.⁶⁴

2. *Tafsir al-Marāghī*

Two men approached Prophet *Dāwūd* (AS), one of whom was the owner of a field, while the other owned a flock of sheep. The field owner complained, saying, “This man sent his sheep into my field, leaving nothing behind.” In response, Prophet *Dāwūd* (AS) ruled, “Go, for all the sheep now belong to you.”

The sheep owner then passed by Prophet *Sulaymān* (AS) and informed him of Prophet *Dāwūd*’s (AS) judgment. Upon hearing this, Prophet *Sulaymān* (AS) went to Prophet *Dāwūd* (AS) and said, “O Prophet of Allah, indeed, there is a ruling that is more just.”

Prophet *Dāwūd* (AS) asked, “How so?” Prophet *Sulaymān* (AS) then explained, “Grant the sheep to the field owner so that he may benefit from them—their wool, offspring, and milk—

⁶³ Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur’an, “Qur’an Kemenag.”

⁶⁴ Sa’di, *Tafsir Al Karim Al Rahman Fi Tafsir Kalam Al Manan*.

while giving the field to the sheep owner so that he may restore it to its original state. Once the field has fully recovered, each should reclaim their original property.” Ultimately, Prophet *Dāwūd* (AS) accepted this ruling, as clarified by Prophet *Sulaymān* (AS).⁶⁵

The Relevance of This Verse to Tolerance:

Through this verse, it is as if the Qur’an conveys the message that differences in opinion regarding certain matters are inevitable. Even among the Prophets, differences in judgment have occurred.⁶⁶

Secondly, it is crucial to emphasize that, despite their differing rulings in the case they were addressing, both Prophets upheld ethical conduct and mutual respect in their approach.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, the author draws three main conclusions that address the three research questions in this journal, namely:

1. In general, differences among Muslims pertain to the aspect of *al-Furū’ al-Zanniyyah*, and the appropriate concept of tolerance within the Muslim community concerning this domain is *Tasāmuh Zābir wa Bāṭin* —tolerance both externally and internally.
2. The foundation of this concept is the Qur’anic verse *Sūrat al-Mā’idab* (5:8), which commands Muslims to always act justly in addressing existing issues. Among the manifestations of justice is the ability to cultivate a character of tolerance, both externally and internally, in responding to differences within *al-Furū’ al-Zanniyyah* among the Muslim community
3. The method of character education for tolerance among Muslims in the Qur’an includes:
 - a. Mandating unity and prohibiting division.
 - b. Clarifying that differences are not forbidden by Allah *Ta’ālā*.
 - c. Providing exemplary narratives on tolerance in addressing differences.

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⁶⁵ Ahmad Bin Mustafa Al-Maragi, *Tafsir Al-Maragi*, 1st ed. (Kairo: Mustafa Al-Baba, 1946).

⁶⁶ Abu Hafs Siraj Al-Din Umar Bin Ali Bin Adil Al-Hanbaly Al-Damasyqi Al Nu’mani, *Al-Lubab Fi Ulum Al-Kitab*, 1st ed. (Beirut: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyah, 1998).

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