

Texts for Abrahamic Group

References to killing are generally accepted to be Medinan ie. Those revealed in Medina after the hijra, the migration. Almost all Quranic verses of jihad exhort spiritual striving or the struggle to establish justice, when the Quran discusses fighting it uses a different word. The Prophet called armed jihad as the lesser jihad and the greater jihad is peaceful and is the struggle against the self.

Chapter The Criterion verse 52

Therefore listen not to the Unbelievers but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness with the (Qur'an).

“Strive (Jihad) against the unbelievers” with God’s word implies using beauty, power and persuasive eloquence of the Quran to win people to the faith.

After many years of persecution in Mecca and after the migration to Median permission to fight was given:

Chapter Al Hajj 22 verse 39

“To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged; ... and verily, God is most powerful for their aid. “(Al-Hajj 22:39)

Verse 39 of Surah Haj shifts from pilgrimage to defence when oppressed, permitting this for the first time. When you are unjustly expelled from your homes merely because you believe in God, when places of worship are destroyed, permission is given to fight (**qital**). Here places of worship include churches and synagogues as well as mosques. Ibn Abbas one of the earliest commentators on the Quran calls this the first verse of jihad, which was revealed now because it “would have been disastrous” for him to have fought while at Mecca. Having been “expelled from their homes unjustly” permission was now given “at an appropriate time”.

Chapter Al-Baqarah 2 verse 190

“Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for God loveth not transgressors.”

Violating a truce the Meccans came to attack the Muslims after they had migrated to Medina and this verse makes war permissible only for self defence.

Chapter 3 Ale Imran verse 146

“In the past many Prophets have fought, in the way of Allah, with a large number of godly people. They did not loose heart during the adversities that befell them in the path of Allah; they neither showed weakness nor submitted to falsehood. Allah loves the steadfast.”

The commentator Yusuf Ali states that war is only permissible in self-defence and under well defined limits. When undertaken strict limits must not be transgressed, women, children, old and infirm men should not be molested, nor trees and crops cut down, nor peace withheld when the enemy comes to terms. In general Islam is a religion of peace but it will not acquiesce in wrong doing and sacrifice their lives in defence of honour and justice.

Chapter 4 verse 91

“You will find other hypocrites who wish to be safe from you as well as from their own people; but who would plunge into mischief whenever they get an opportunity. Therefore if they do not keep distance from you and neither offer you peace, nor cease their hostilities against you, you may seize them and kill them wherever you find them, against such people We give you absolute authority.”

The only possible justification of war has been maintained throughout the Quran is evident from the concluding sentence of 4:91. This verse also commands Muslims to fight those who practice oppression or persecution. These verses were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad(SAW) at the time when Muslims were attacked by the non-Muslims of Mecca

on a regular basis. Using contemporary jargon there were constant terrorist attacks on Medina and in this situation Muslims were given permission to fight back the "terrorist" and are **not** a permission for terrorism but they are a warning against the "terrorists" and even in these warnings restraint and care are emphasized. The Quran clearly condemns murder, for example in chapter 5 verse 32:

"On account of that incident, We ordained for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a person, except as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land, it will be written in his book of deeds as if he had killed all the human beings on the surface of the Earth and whoever will save a life shall be regarded as if he gave life to all the human beings on the surface of the Earth. Yet, even though Our Apostles came to them one after the other with clear revelations, it was not long before, many of them committed excesses in the land."

Chapter 9 verse 5

"Kill the disbelievers wherever you find them"

Chapter 9 verse 6

"And if anyone of the idolaters seeketh thy protection (O Muhammad), then protect him so that he may hear the word of Allah; and afterward convey him to his place of safety. That is because they are a folk who know not."

Verse 5 was revealed towards the end of the revelation period and relates to a limited context. Hostilities were frozen for a three month period when the Arabs pledged not to wage war. The Prophet was inspired to use this period to encourage the combatants to join the Muslim ranks or to leave the area under Muslim rule, however they were to resume hostilities, then the Muslims would fight back.

Surah 9 verse 12

But if they break their solemn pledges after having concluded a covenant, and revile your religion, then fight against these archetypes of faithlessness who, behold, have no [regard for their own] pledges, so that they might desist [from aggression].

Surah 9 verse 13

Will you not fight against those people who have broken their oaths, conspired to expel the Rasool and were the first to attack you? Do you fear them? Nay, it is Allah Who is more deserving of your fear, if you are true believers.

Surah 9 verse 14

Fight them; Allah will punish them by your hands and humiliate them. He will grant you victory over them and soothe the hearts of a believing people.