

# The Qur'an on War, Peace, and Justice

It is often said that the Qur'an calls for Muslims to wage *jihad*, or holy war, against the enemies of Islam. But the Qur'an actually contains sometimes conflicting passages about war, peace, revenge, justice, and various forms of killing. Consider the following.

O Believers! Stand up as witnesses for Allah by righteousness: and let not hatred of others induce you not to act uprightly. Act uprightly. (Sura 5:8)

O Believers! Retaliation for killing is prescribed to you according to who is slain: the free for the free, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. (Sura 2:178)

Fight for the cause of Allah against those who fight against you; but commit not the injustice of attacking them first; Allah does not love such injustice. . . . Whoever commits aggression against you, do you commit the like aggression against him, and fear Allah, and know that Allah is with those who fear Him. (Sura 2:190, 194)

And do not make Allah's name an excuse in your oaths against doing good, or acting rightly, or making peace between persons. For Allah is One who hears and knows all things. (Sura 2:224)

O Believers! do not kill yourselves; of a truth, Allah is merciful to you. (Sura 4:29)

We ordained therein for them, "Life for life, and eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds retaliation." But if any one forgoes the retaliation as an act of charity, it is an act of atonement for his sin for that person. (Sura 5:45)

The punishment of those who war against Allah and his Apostle, and strive with might and main to produce disorders through the land, is that they shall be slain, or crucified, or have their alternate hands and feet cut off, or be banished from the land. That shall be their disgrace in this world, and a heavy punishment shall be theirs in the next world. (Sura 5:33)