

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

## For Fast 29 – September 9

### Topic: (W) War

- “Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely Allah is Able to assist them — Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And if Allah did not repel some people by others, surely cloisters and churches and synagogues, and mosques in which Allah’s name is much remembered, would have been pulled down.” — 22:39-40

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This is the earliest permission given to the Muslims to fight. The words in which the permission is granted show clearly that war was first made on the Muslims by their opponents; and secondly, that the Muslims had already suffered great oppression at the hands of their persecutors.

It deserves to be noted that the lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed not only to stop their own persecution by their opponents and to save their own mosques, but to save churches, synagogues and cloisters as well — in fact, to establish perfect religious freedom. Mosques, though they are the places where the name of Allah is remembered most of all, are mentioned after churches and synagogues. Early Muslims closely followed these directions, and every commander of an army had express orders to respect all houses of worship, and even the cloisters of monks, along with their inmates.

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- “And fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you but do not be aggressive. Surely Allah does not love the aggressors.” — 2:190

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This is one of the earliest revelations permitting Muslims to fight. *Fighting in the way of Allah* is here expressly limited to *fighting in defence*. Muslims were required to fight *in the way of Allah*, but they could fight only against those who waged war on them. The enemies of Islam, being unable to suppress Islam by persecution, and seeing that Islam was now safe at Madinah and gaining strength, took up the sword to annihilate it.

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- “But if they cease, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.<sup>1</sup> And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is only for Allah. But if they cease,<sup>2</sup> then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.” — 2:192-193

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1. Muslims were to cease fighting if the enemy desisted from fighting.  
2. If they cease persecution, Muslims are at once to stop fighting against them, and hostilities are not to be continued against any except the aggressors.

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- “Say to those who disbelieve, if they cease (fighting), what is past will be forgiven them; and if they return (to it), then the example of those of old has already gone. And fight with them until there is no more persecution, and all religions are for Allah. But if they cease, then surely Allah is Seer of what they do.” — 8:38-39

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That is, if they cease fighting and put an end to their mischief, God's decree of punishment will not be executed. The words *religion is only for Allah* or *all religions are for Allah* in the above passages carry the significance that religion is a matter between man and God, a matter of conscience, in which nobody has a right to interfere.

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- “Fighting is ordained for you, though it is disliked by you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is harmful for you; and Allah knows while you do not know.” — 2:216

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Muslims were too weak to carry on the struggle against the mighty forces that were bent upon their destruction, and they disliked the war. They were few in numbers, poor, exiled, and distressed, yet it became inevitable that they should fight in self-defence or they would be destroyed. It was their utter weakness and the enormous disparity of numbers that made them dislike the fighting.

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- “So those who fled and were driven forth from their homes and persecuted in My way and who fought and were slain, I shall truly remove their evil and make them enter Gardens in which rivers flow — a reward from Allah.” — 3:195

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This shows that Muslims were first made to flee, were driven from their homes, and were persecuted for worshipping the One God, by their enemies, and it was then that they fought in battles in which they were slain. They fought only after war was made upon them.

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- “And if they incline to peace, you (must) incline to it also, and trust in Allah. Surely He is the Hearer, the Knower. And if they intend to deceive you, then surely Allah is sufficient for you.” — 8:61-62

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Even if the enemy intends deceit by his offer of peace, it should still be accepted by trusting in God. The Holy Prophet made treaties of peace with his enemies; one such treaty brought about the famous truce of Hudaibiyah, the terms of which were disadvantageous to the Muslims. According to the terms of this treaty “if an unbeliever, being converted to Islam, went over to the Muslims, he was to be returned, but if a Muslim went over to the unbelievers, he was not to be given back to the Muslims”. This clause of the treaty cuts at the root of all allegations of the use of force by the Holy Prophet.

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- “If anyone of the idolaters seek your protection, protect him till he hears the word of Allah, then convey him to his place of safety. This is because they are a people who have no knowledge.” — 9:6

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This refers to a state of war with the Arab idolaters. An enemy soldier, on his request, is to be granted protection to come and learn about Islam. If he chooses not to accept it, Muslims must conduct him securely to his place of origin, where he is *safe from Muslims* and rejoins the very enemies whom the Muslims are fighting! Such are the humane, tolerant teachings of Islam.

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- “It may be that Allah will bring about friendship between you and those of them whom you hold as enemies.<sup>1</sup> And Allah is Powerful; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

Allah does not forbid you, with regard to those who do not fight you for religion, nor drive you forth from your homes, that you show them kindness and deal with them justly. Surely Allah loves the doers of justice. Allah forbids you only with regard to those who fight you for religion, and drive you forth from your homes and help (others) in your expulsion, that you make friends of them; and whoever makes friends of them, these are the wrongdoers.<sup>2</sup>” — 60:7-9

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1. This verse makes it clear that the prohibition against friendly relations with the disbelievers was only temporary, to be operative only so long as the war continued. The friendship prophetically referred to here was brought about after the conquest of Makkah.

2. These verses, revealed at a time when the relations between Muslims and the disbelievers were most strained on account of a continual state of war between the two parties, settle conclusively that friendly relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, as such, are not prohibited. It is in the light of these verses that all the verses forbidding friendly relations with the disbelievers should be read, because here the true principle is revealed in unmistakable language, allowing friendly relations with one type of disbelievers and prohibiting such relations with those of another type.

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