

What does Islam say about war?

Like Christianity, Islam permits fighting in self-defense, in defense of religion, or on the part of those who have been expelled forcibly from their homes. It lays down strict rules of combat which include prohibitions against harming civilians and against destroying crops, trees and livestock. As Muslims see it, injustice would be triumphant in the world if good men were not prepared to risk their lives in a righteous cause. The Quran says:

Fight in the cause of God against those who fight you, but do not transgress limits. God does not love transgressors. (2:190)

If they seek peace, then seek you peace. And trust in God for He is the One that heareth and knoweth all things. (8:61)

War, therefore, is the last resort, and is subject to the rigorous conditions laid down by the sacred law. The term jihad literally means 'struggle', and Muslims believe that there are two kinds of jihad. The other 'jihad' is the inner struggle which everyone wages against egotistic desires, for the sake of attaining inner peace.