

Texts for Scriptural Reasoning Justification for War

The Scriptural Reasoning Society

Matthew 5:38-48

³⁸ Ἰκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη Ὁφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὀφθαλμοῦ καὶ ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος ³⁹ ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ· ἀλλ' ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα [σου] στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην· ⁴⁰ καὶ τῷ θέλοντί σοι κριθῆναι καὶ τὸν χιτῶνά σου λαβεῖν ἄφες αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ ἱμάτιον· ⁴¹ καὶ ὅστις σε ἀγαρεύσει μίλιον ἔν ὑπαγε μετ' αὐτοῦ δύο ⁴² τῷ αἰτοῦντί σε δός καὶ τὸν θέλοντα ἀπὸ σοῦ δανίσασθαι μὴ ἀποστραφῆς ⁴³ Ἰκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου καὶ μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν σου ⁴⁴ ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς ⁴⁵ ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους ⁴⁶ ἐὰν γὰρ ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ τελῶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν ⁴⁷ καὶ ἐὰν ἀσπάσησθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν μόνον τί περισσὸν ποιεῖτε οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ ἔθνηκοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν ⁴⁸ Ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι ὡς ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστιν

³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹ But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; ⁴⁰ and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; ⁴¹ and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴² Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 21:33-43

³³ Ἄλλην παραβολὴν ἀκούσατε Ἄνθρωπος ἦν οἰκοδεσπότης ὅστις ἐφύτευσεν ἀμπελῶνα καὶ φραγμὸν αὐτῷ περιέθηκεν καὶ ὥρυξεν ἐν αὐτῷ ληνὸν καὶ ὠκοδόμησεν πύργον καὶ ἐξέδετο αὐτὸν γεωργοῖς καὶ ἀπεδήμησεν ³⁴ ὅτε δὲ ἤγγισεν ὁ καιρὸς τῶν καρπῶν ἀπέστειλεν τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ πρὸς τοὺς γεωργοὺς λαβεῖν τοὺς καρποὺς αὐτοῦ ³⁵ καὶ λαβόντες οἱ γεωργοὶ τοὺς δούλους αὐτοῦ ὃν μὲν ἔδειραν ὃν δὲ ἀπέκτειναν ὃν δὲ ἐλιθοβόλησαν ³⁶ πάλιν ἀπέστειλεν ἄλλους δούλους πλείονας τῶν πρώτων καὶ ἐποίησαν αὐτοῖς ὡσαύτως ³⁷ ὕστερον δὲ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ λέγων Ἐντραπήσονται τὸν υἱόν μου ³⁸ οἱ δὲ γεωργοὶ ἰδόντες τὸν υἱὸν εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ κληρονόμος· δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτὸν καὶ σχώμεν τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ ³⁹ καὶ λαβόντες αὐτὸν ἐξέβαλον ἔξω τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος καὶ ἀπέκτειναν ⁴⁰ ὅταν οὖν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος τί ποιήσῃ τοῖς γεωργοῖς ἐκεῖνοις ⁴¹ λέγουσιν αὐτῷ Κακοὺς κακῶς ἀπολέσει αὐτούς καὶ τὸν ἀμπελῶνα ἐκδώσεται ἄλλοις γεωργοῖς οἵτινες ἀποδώσουσιν αὐτῷ τοὺς καρποὺς ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς αὐτῶν ⁴² λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς Οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς Λίθον ὃν ἀπεδοκίμασαν οἱ οἰκοδομοῦντες οὗτος ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας· παρὰ κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη καὶ ἔστιν θαυμαστὴ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν ⁴³ διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ἀρθήσεται ἀφ' ὑμῶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ δοθήσεται ἔθνει ποιοῦντι τοὺς καρποὺς αὐτῆς

³³ "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. ³⁴ When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. ³⁵ But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. ³⁶ Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. ³⁷ Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' ³⁸ But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.' ³⁹ So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. ⁴⁰ Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" ⁴¹ They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time." ⁴²

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'? ⁴³ Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom.

Isaiah 5:1-7

¹ אֲשִׁירָה נָא לְיַדַי שִׁירַת דּוּדַי לְכַרְמִי כֶּרֶם
הָיָה לְיַדַי בְּקֶרֶן בֶּן־שָׁמֶן:
² וַיַּעְזְקֵהוּ וַיִּסְקְלֵהוּ וַיִּטְעֵהוּ שֶׁרֶק וַיִּבֶן מִגְדָּל בְּתוֹכוֹ
וַנְּסִיֵּקֵב חֶצֶב בּוֹ וַיִּקְוֵ לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲנָבִים וַיַּעַשׂ בְּאֲשִׁים:
³ וַעֲתָה יוֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה שִׁפְטוּ־נָא בֵּינִי וּבֵין
כְּרָמִי:
⁴ מִה־לַּעֲשׂוֹת עוֹד לְכַרְמִי וְלֹא עָשִׂיתִי בּוֹ מִדּוּעַ קִוִּיתִי
לַעֲשׂוֹת עֲנָבִים וַיַּעַשׂ בְּאֲשִׁים:
⁵ וַעֲתָה אֹדִיעֶה־נָּא אֶתְכֶם אֶת אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה לְכַרְמִי הַסֵּר
מִשׁוֹכְתּוֹ וְהִיָּה לְבַעַר פְּרִץ גִּדְרוֹ וְהִיָּה לְמֶרְמָס:
⁶ וְאֲשִׂיתָהוּ בְתֵה לֹא יִזְמַר וְלֹא יַעֲדֵר וְעַלָּה שָׁמִיר וְשִׁית
וְעַל הָעֵבִים אֲצֹוֶה מִהַמְטִיר עָלָיו מִטֵּר:
⁷ כִּי כֶּרֶם יְהוָה צִבְאוֹת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִישׁ יְהוּדָה נָטַע
שִׁעֲשׂוּעָיו וַיִּקְוֵ לְמִשְׁפָּט וְהִנֵּה מִשְׁפַּח לְצַדִּיקָה וְהִנֵּה צַעֲקָה: ס

¹ Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. ² He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. ³ And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴ What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? ⁵ And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

Matthew 5:3-11

³ Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ⁴
μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται ⁵ μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς ὅτι αὐτοὶ
κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν ⁶ μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην
ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται ⁷ μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται ⁸
μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται ⁹ μακάριοι οἱ
εἰρηνοποιοὶ ὅτι [αὐτοὶ] υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται ¹⁰ μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν
δικαιοσύνης ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ¹¹ μακάριοί ἐστε ὅταν
ὀνειδίσωσιν ὑμᾶς καὶ διώξωσιν καὶ εἴπωσιν πᾶν ποιηρὸν καθ' ὑμῶν ψευδόμενοι
ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. ¹⁰ "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

QURAN 2:190-194

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ١٩٠

وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ ثَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ
عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِن قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ١٩١

فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ١٩٢

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ ١٩٣

الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنِ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى
عَلَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ ١٩٤

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

191 And slay them wherever ye catch them, and turn them out from where they have Turned you out; for tumult and oppression are worse than slaughter; but fight them not at the Sacred Mosque, unless they (first) fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who suppress faith.

192 But if they cease, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.

193 And fight them on until there is no more Tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah; but if they cease, Let there be no hostility except to those who practise oppression.

194 The prohibited month for the prohibited month,- and so for all things prohibited,- there is the law of equality. If then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, Transgress ye likewise against him. But fear Allah, and know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves.

COMMENTARY OF IBN KATHIR ON QURAN 2:190-194

The Command to fight Those Who fight Muslims and killing Them wherever They are found

Abu Ja`far Ar-Razi said that Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that Abu Al-`Aliyah commented on what Allah said:

[وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ]

(And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you,)

Abu Al-`Aliyah said, "This was the first Ayah about fighting that was revealed in Al-Madinah. Ever since it was revealed, Allah's Messenger used to fight only those who fought him and avoid non-combatants. Later, Surat Bara'ah (chapter 9 in the Qur'an) was revealed." `Abdur-Rahman bin Zayd bin Aslam said similarly, then he said that this was later abrogated by the Ayah:

[فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ]

(then kill them wherever you find them) (9:5).

However, this statement is not plausible, because Allah's statement:

[الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ]

(...those who fight you) applies only to fighting the enemies who are engaged in fighting Islam and its people. So the Ayah means, `Fight those who fight you', just as Allah said (in another Ayah):

[وَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً]

(...and fight against the Mushrikin collectively as they fight against you collectively.) (9:36)

This is why Allah said later in the Ayah:

[وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجُوكُمْ]

(And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out.) meaning, `Your energy should be spent on fighting them, just as their energy is spent on fighting you, and on expelling them from the areas from which they have expelled you, as a law of equality in punishment.'

The Prohibition of mutilating the Dead and stealing from the captured Goods

Allah said:

[وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ]

(but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors.)

This Ayah means, `Fight for the sake of Allah and do not be transgressors,' such as, by committing prohibitions. Al-Hasan Al-Basri stated that transgression (indicated by the Ayah), "includes mutilating the dead, theft (from the captured goods), killing women, children and old people who do not participate in warfare, killing priests and residents of houses of worship, burning down trees and killing animals without real benefit." This is also the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, `Umar bin `Abdul-`Aziz, Muqatil bin Hayyan and others. Muslim recorded in his Sahih that Buraydah narrated that Allah's Messenger said:

«اغزوا في سبيل الله، قاتلوا من كفر بالله، اغزوا ولا تغلوا ولا تغدروا ولا تمثلوا ولا تقتلوا وليدًا ولا أصحاب الصوامع»

(Fight for the sake of Allah and fight those who disbelieve in Allah. Fight, but do not steal (from the captured goods), commit treachery, mutilate (the dead), or kill a child, or those who reside in houses of worship.)

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Ibn `Umar said, "A woman was found dead during one of the Prophet's battles and the Prophet then forbade killing women and children." There are many other Hadiths on this subject.

Shirk is worse than Killing

Since Jihad involves killing and shedding the blood of men, Allah indicated that these men are committing disbelief in Allah, associating with Him (in the worship) and hindering from His path, and this is a much greater evil and more disastrous than killing. Abu Malik commented about what Allah said:

[وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ]

(And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) Meaning what you (disbelievers) are committing is much worse than killing." Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Sa`id bin Jubayr, `Ikrimah, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak and Ar-Rabi` bin Anas said that what Allah said:

[وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ]

(And Al-Fitnah is worse than killing.) "Shirk (polytheism) is worse than killing."

Fighting in the Sacred Area is prohibited, except in Self-Defense

Allah said:

[وَلَا تُقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ]

(And fight not with them at Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the sanctuary at Makkah))

It is reported in the Two Sahihs that the Prophet said:

«إِنَّ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ حَرَّمَهُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ، فَهُوَ حَرَامٌ بِحُرْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَلَمْ يَحِلَّ لِي إِلَّا سَاعَةٌ مِنْ نَهَارٍ، وَإِنَّهَا سَاعَتِي هَذِهِ حَرَامٌ بِحُرْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، لَا يُعْضَدُ شَجَرُهُ، وَلَا يُخْتَلَى خَلَاهُ، فَإِنْ أَحَدٌ تَرَخَّصَ بِقِتَالِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقُولُوا: إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَذِنَ لِرَسُولِهِ وَلَمْ يَأْذَنْ لَكُمْ»

(Allah has made this city a sanctuary since the day He created the heavens and the earth. So, it is a sanctuary by Allah's decree till the Day of Resurrection. Fighting in it was made legal for me only for an hour in the daytime. So, it (i.e., Makkah) is a sanctuary, by Allah's decree, from now on until the Day of Resurrection. Its trees should not be cut, and its grass should not be uprooted. If anyone mentions the fighting in it that occurred by Allah's Messenger, then say that Allah allowed His Messenger, but did not allow you.)

In this Hadith, Allah's Messenger mentions fighting the people of Makkah when he conquered it by force, leading to some deaths among the polytheists in the area of the Khandamah. This occurred after the Prophet proclaimed:

«مَنْ أَعْلَقَ بَابَهُ فَهُوَ آمِنٌ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَ الْمَسْجِدَ فَهُوَ آمِنٌ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَ دَارَ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ فَهُوَ آمِنٌ»

(Whoever closed his door is safe. Whoever entered the (Sacred) Mosque is safe. Whoever entered the house of Abu Sufyan is also safe.)

Allah said:

[حَتَّى يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ كَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ]

(...unless they (first) fight you there. But if they attack you, then kill them. Such is the recompense of the disbelievers.)

Allah states: 'Do not fight them in the area of the Sacred Mosque unless they start fighting you in it. In this case, you are allowed to fight them and kill them to stop their aggression.' Hence, Allah's Messenger took the pledge from his Companions under the tree (in the area of Al-Hudaybiyyah) to fight (the polytheists), after the tribes of Quraysh and their allies, Thaqif and other groups, collaborated against the Muslims (to stop them from entering Makkah to visit the Sacred House). Then, Allah stopped the fighting before it started between them and said:

[وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ عَنْهُمْ بِبَطْنِ مَكَّةَ مِنْ بَعْدِ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ]

(And He it is Who has withheld their hands from you and your hands from them in the midst of Makkah, after He had made you victors over them.) (48:24) and:

[وَلَوْلَا رِجَالٌ مُؤْمِنُونَ وَنِسَاءٌ مُؤْمِنَاتٌ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوهُمْ أَنْ تَطَّوَّهُمْ فِتْصِيبِكُمْ مِنْهُمْ مَكْرَةٌ بَغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ لِيُدْخِلَ اللَّهُ فِي رَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ لَوْ تَزَيَّلُوا لَعَذَّبْنَا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا]

(Had there not been believing men and believing women whom you did not know, that you may kill them and on whose account a sin would have been committed by you without (your) knowledge, that Allah might bring into His mercy whom He wills - if they (the believers and the disbelievers) had been apart, We verily, would have punished those of them who disbelieved with painful torment.) (48:25)

Allah's statement:

[فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ]

(But if they cease, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.) which means, 'If they (polytheists) cease fighting you in the Sacred Area, and come to Islam and repent, then Allah will forgive them their sins, even if they had before killed Muslims in Allah's Sacred Area.' Indeed, Allah's forgiveness encompasses every sin, whatever its enormity, when the sinner repents it.

The Order to fight until there is no more Fitnah

Allah then commanded fighting the disbelievers when He said:

[حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةً]

(...until there is no more Fitnah) meaning, Shirk. This is the opinion of Ibn `Abbas, Abu Al-`Aliyah, Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Qatadah, Ar-Rabi`, Muqatil bin Hayyan, As-Suddi and Zayd bin Aslam.

Allah's statement:

[وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ]

(...and the religion (all and every kind of worship) is for Allah (Alone).) means, 'So that the religion of Allah becomes dominant above all other religions.' It is reported in the Two Sahihs that Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said: "The Prophet was asked, 'O Allah's Messenger! A man fights out of bravery, and another fights to show off, which of them fights in the cause of Allah' The Prophet said:

«مَنْ قَاتَلَ لِيَكُونَ كَلِمَةُ اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا فَهُوَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ»

(He who fights so that Allah's Word is superior, then he fights in Allah's cause.) In addition, it is reported in the Two Sahihs:

«أُمِرْتُ أَنْ أُقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَقُولُوا لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، فَإِذَا قَالُوا عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّهَا وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ»

(I have been ordered (by Allah) to fight the people until they proclaim, 'None has the right to be worshipped but Allah'. Whoever said it, then he will save his life and property from me, except for cases of the law, and their account will be with Allah.)

Allah's statement:

[فَإِنْ انْتَهَوْا فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ]

(But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against the wrongdoers.) indicates that, 'If they stop their Shirk and fighting the believers, then cease warfare against them. Whoever fights them afterwards will be committing an injustice. Verily aggression can only be started against the unjust.' This is the meaning of Mujahid's statement that only combatants should be fought. Or, the meaning of the Ayah indicates that, 'If they abandon their injustice, which is Shirk in this case, then do not start aggression against them afterwards.' The aggression here means retaliating and fighting them, just as Allah said:

[فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ]

(Then whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him.) (2:194)

Similarly, Allah said:

[وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِثْلُهَا]

(The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof.) (42:40), and:

[وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ]

(And if you punish them, then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted.) (16:126)

'Ikrimah and Qatadah stated, "The unjust person is he who refuses to proclaim, 'There is no God worthy of worship except Allah'."

Under Allah's statement:

[وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ]

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah) Al-Bukhari recorded that Nafi` said that two men came to Ibn `Umar during the conflict of Ibn Az-Zubayr and said to him, "The people have fallen into shortcomings and you are the son of `Umar and the Prophet's Companion. Hence, what prevents you from going out" He said, "What prevents me is that Allah has forbidden shedding the blood of my (Muslim) brother." They said, "Did not Allah say:

[وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ]

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah))" He said, "We did fight until there was no more Fitnah and the religion became for Allah Alone. You want to fight until there is Fitnah and the religion becomes for other than Allah!"

`Uthman bin Salih added that a man came to Ibn `Umar and asked him, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman! What made you perform Hajj one year and `Umrah another year and abandon Jihad in the cause of Allah, although you know how much He has encouraged performing it" He said, "O my nephew! Islam is built on five (pillars): believing in Allah and His Messenger, the five daily prayers, fasting Ramadan, paying the Zakah and performing Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House." They said, "O Abu `Abdur-Rahman! Did you not hear what Allah said in His Book:

[وَإِنْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا فَإِنْ بَغَتِ إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا الَّتِي تَبْغِي حَتَّى تَفِيءَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ]

(And if two parties (or groups) among the believers fall to fighting, then make peace between them both. But if one of them outrages against the other, then fight you (all) against the one that which outrages till it complies with the command of Allah.) (49:9) and:

[وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ]

(And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief))

He said, "That we did during the time of Allah's Messenger when Islam was still weak and (the Muslim) man used to face trials in his religion, such as killing or torture. When Islam became stronger (and apparent), there was no more Fitnah." He asked, "What do you say about `Ali and `Uthman" He said, "As for `Uthman, Allah has forgiven him. However, you hated the fact that Allah had forgiven him! As for `Ali, he is the cousin of Allah's Messenger and his son-in-law." He then pointed with his hand, saying, "This is where his house is located (meaning, `so close to the Prophet's house just as `Ali was so close to the Prophet himself)."

[الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَتُ قِصَاصٌ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ]

(194. The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for the prohibited things, there is the Law of equality (Qisas). Then whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him. And fear Allah, and know that Allah is with Al-Muttaqin.)

Fighting during the Sacred Months is prohibited, except in Self-Defense

Ibn `Abbas, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi, Qatadah, Miqsam, Ar-Rabi` bin Anas and `Ata said, "Allah's Messenger went for `Umrah on the sixth year of Hijrah. Then, the idolators prevented him from entering the Sacred House (the Ka`bah in Makkah) along with the Muslims who came with him. This incident occurred during the sacred month of Dhul-Qa`dah. The idolators agreed to allow them to enter the House the next year. Hence, the Prophet entered the House the following year, along with the Muslims who accompanied him, and Allah permitted him to avenge the idolators' treatment of him, when He said:

[الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَتُ قِصَاصٌ*]

(The sacred month is for the sacred month, and for the prohibited things, there is the Law of equality (Qisas).)

Imam Ahmad recorded that Jabir bin `Abdullah said, "Allah's Messenger would not engage in warfare during the Sacred Month unless he was first attacked, then he would march forth. He would otherwise remain idle until the end of the Sacred Months." This Hadith has an authentic chain of narrators.

Hence, when the Prophet was told that `Uthman was killed (in Makkah) when he was camped at the area of Al-Hudaybiyyah, after he had sent `Uthman as his emissary to the polytheists, he accepted the pledge from his Companions under the tree to fight the polytheists. They were one thousand and four hundred then. When the Prophet was informed that `Uthman was not killed, he abandoned the fight and reverted to peace.

When the Prophet finished fighting with (the tribes of) Hawazin during the battle of Hunayn and Hawazin took refuge in (the city of) At-Ta'if, he laid siege to that city. Then, the (sacred) month of Dhul-Qa`dah started, while At-Ta'if was still under siege. The siege went on for the rest of the forty days (rather, from the day the battle of Hunayn started until the Prophet went back to Al-Madinah from Al-Ji`ranah, were forty days), as reported in the Two Sahihs and narrated by Anas. When the Companions suffered mounting casualties (during the siege), the Prophet ended the siege before conquering At-Ta'if. He then went back to Makkah, performed `Umrah from Al-Ji`ranah, where he divided the war booty of Hunayn. This `Umrah occurred during Dhul-Qa`dah of the eighth year of Al-Hijrah.

Allah's statement:

[فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ]

(...whoever transgresses against you, you transgress likewise against him.) ordains justice even with the polytheists. Allah also said in another Ayah:

[وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ]

(And if you punish, then punish them with the like of that with which you were afflicted.) (16:126)

Allah's statement:

[وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ]

(And fear Allah, and know that Allah is with Al-Muttaqin (the pious)) (2:194) commands that Allah be obeyed and feared out of Taqwa. The Ayah informs us that Allah is with those who have Taqwa by His aid and support in this life and the Hereafter.

[وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ]

(195. And spend in the cause of Allah and do not throw yourselves into destruction, and do good. Truly, Allah loves Al-Muhsinin (those who do good).)

Justification for War – Jewish Texts

Deuteronomy 20

1 When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. 2 And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people 3 and shall say to them, 'Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, 4 for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory.' 5 Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying, 'Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. 6 And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit. 7 And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.' 8 And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.' 9 And when the officers have finished speaking to the people, then commanders shall be appointed at the head of the people.

10 When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. 11 And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. 12 But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. 13 And when the LORD your God gives it into your hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, 14 but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. 15 Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here. 16 But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, 17 but you shall devote them to complete destruction, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded,

א כִּי־תֵצֵא לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל־אֵיבֶיךָ וּרְאִיתָ סוּס וְרֶכֶב
עִם רַב מִמֶּךָ לֹא תִירָא מֵהֶם כִּי־יְהוּדָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עִמָּךְ
הַמַּעֲלֵךְ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם: ב וְהָיָה כִּקְרַבְכֶם
אֶל־הַמִּלְחָמָה וְנִגַּשׁ הַכֹּהֵן וְדִבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם:
ג וְאָמַר אֲלֵהֶם שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל אַתֶּם קָרְבִים הַיּוֹם
לַמִּלְחָמָה עַל־אֵיבֵיכֶם אֶל־יָרֵךְ לְבַבְכֶם
אֶל־תִּירְאוּ וְאֶל־תִּחַפְּזוּ וְאֶל־תִּעְרָצוּ מִפְּנֵיהֶם:
ד כִּי יְהוּדָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הִהֲלִיךְ עִמָּכֶם לְהִלָּחֵם לָכֶם
עִם־אֵיבֵיכֶם לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶתְכֶם: ה וְדִבְרוּ הַשְּׂטָרִים
אֶל־הָעָם לֵאמֹר מִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה בַּיִת־חֲדָשׁ
וְלֹא חֲנָכוֹ יֵלֶךְ וְיָשֵׁב לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת בַּמִּלְחָמָה
וְאִישׁ אַחֵר יִחַנְכֶנּוּ: ו וּמִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר נָטַע כָּרֶם
וְלֹא חָלְלוֹ יֵלֶךְ וְיָשֵׁב לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת בַּמִּלְחָמָה
וְאִישׁ אַחֵר יִחַלְלֶנּוּ: ז וּמִי־הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אָרֶשׁ
אִשָּׁה וְלֹא לָקַחְהָ יֵלֶךְ וְיָשֵׁב לְבֵיתוֹ פֶּן־יָמוּת
בַּמִּלְחָמָה וְאִישׁ אַחֵר יִקְחָנָה: ח וְיִסְפוּ הַשְּׂטָרִים
לְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם וְאָמְרוּ מִי־הָאִישׁ הִירָא וְרָךְ
הַלֵּבֵב יֵלֶךְ וְיָשֵׁב לְבֵיתוֹ וְלֹא יִמַּס אֶת־לֵבִב אַחֲיו
כְּלַבְבוֹ: ט וְהָיָה כִּכְלַת הַשְּׂטָרִים לְדַבֵּר אֶל־הָעָם
וּפְקֻדוֹ שָׂרֵי צְבָאוֹת בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם:
י כִּי־תִקְרַב אֶל־עִיר לְהִלָּחֵם עָלֶיהָ וְקִרְאתָ אֲלֶיהָ
לְשָׁלוֹם: יא וְהָיָה אִם־שָׁלוֹם תַּעֲנֶנּוּ וּפְתַחְהָ לָךְ
וְהָיָה כָּל־הָעָם הַנֹּמְצָא־בָהּ יִהְיוּ לָךְ לְמַס וְעַבְדוּךָ:
יב וְאִם־לֹא תִשְׁלִים עִמָּךְ וְעָשִׂתָה עִמָּךְ מִלְחָמָה
וְצִרְתָּ עָלֶיהָ: יג וְנִתְּנָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְיָדְךָ וְהִכִּיתָ
אֶת־כָּל־זְכוּרָהּ לְפִי־חֶרֶב: יד רַק הַנְּשִׁים וְהַטָּף
וְהַבְּהֵמָה וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה בְּעִיר כָּל־שְׁלָלָהּ תִּבְזוּ
לָךְ וְאִכְלַתְּ אֶת־שְׁלָל אֵיבֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֶיךָ לָךְ: טו כֵּן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְכָל־הָעָרִים הַרְחֹקֹת
מִמֶּךָ מֵאֹד אֲשֶׁר לֹא־מַעֲרִי הַגּוֹיִם־הָאֵלֶּה הַנֶּהָ:
טז רַק מַעֲרֵי הָעַמִּים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
נָתַן לָךְ נַחֲלָה לֹא תַחֲיֶה כָּל־נַשְׂמָה: יז כִּי־הִחַרְמָה
תַּחֲרִימָם הַחַתִּי וְהָאֱמֹרִי הַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַפְּרִזִי הַחִוִּי
וְהַיְבוּסִי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

18 that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God.

19 When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you? 20 Only the trees that you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, that you may build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.

Sifrey Deuteronomy 202

לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִלְמְדוּ אֶתְכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת. מִלְּמַד שְׂאֵם עוֹשִׂים תְּשׁוּבָה אֵין נִהְרָגִים.

[On Deut. 20:18] *That they may not teach you to do [according to all their abominable practices].* This teaches that if they repent they are not to be slain.

Mishnah Sotah 8:7

בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים, בְּמִלְחַמַּת הָרְשׁוּת. אֲבָל בְּמִלְחַמַּת מְצוּהָ, הַכֹּל יוֹצְאִין, אֲפֹלוּ חֵתָן מִחֲדָרוֹ וְכֵלָה מִחֲפָתָהּ. אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים, בְּמִלְחַמַּת מְצוּהָ. אֲבָל בְּמִלְחַמַּת חוֹבָה, הַכֹּל יוֹצְאִין, אֲפֹלוּ חֵתָן מִחֲדָרוֹ וְכֵלָה מִחֲפָתָהּ:

When does this apply [that certain people are exempt from the army, Deut. 20:5-8]? In a discretionary war. But in a war of duty [lit. commandment], all go out, even ‘the bridegroom from his chamber and the bride from her bridechamber’ [see Joel 2:16]. Rabbi Judah said: When does this apply? In a war of duty. But in a war of obligation, all go out, even ‘the bridegroom from his chamber and the bride from her bridechamber.’

Babylonian Talmud Sotah 35b (on the above mishnah)

אמר רבי יוחנן רשות דרבנן זו היא מצוה דרבי יהודה מצוה דרבנן זו היא חובה דרבי יהודה אמר רבא מלחמות יהושע לכבש דברי הכל חובה מלחמות בית דוד לרווחה דברי הכל רשות כי פליגי למעוטי עובדי כוכבים דלא ליתי עלייהו מר קרי לה מצוה ומר קרי רשות נפקא מינה לעוסק במצוה שפטור מן המצוה.

Rabbi Jochanan said: What the Rabbis call ‘discretionary’ Rabbi Judah calls ‘duty,’ and what the Rabbis call ‘duty’ Rabbi Judah calls ‘obligation.’ Rava said: Everybody agrees that Joshua’s wars of conquest were an obligation, and the wars of the house of David to expand [territory] were discretionary. Their argument concerns [wars waged] to weaken [lit. diminish] idolaters so that they would not attack them. [Rabbi Judah] considers them a duty, while [the Rabbis] consider them discretionary. The legal difference concerns [the principle of] one who is engaged in performing a commandment, who is exempt from [another] commandment.

Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Kings and their Wars (excerpts).

5:1. For a war of duty [the king] does not need to obtain the sanction of the court, but may go out at any time of his own accord, and compel the people to go out. But [in the case of] a discretionary war, he may only lead the people out [to battle] with the consent of the court of seventy-one [judges].

6:1. One must not make war on anyone at all unless one has first offered peace terms, whether it is a discretionary war or a war of duty, as it says: ‘When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it.’ If they make peace and accept the seven commandments given to the sons of Noah, not a soul is to be killed, and they become tributary. ...

6:7. When besieging a city to capture it, one must not surround it on all four sides but only on three, and one must leave space for anyone who wishes to take refuge and save his life to escape ...

'The Torah says: if someone comes to kill you, kill them first.' (Based on the law of the thief breaking in by night, Ex. 22:1.)

Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayyim 329:6-7 (16th century, text by Joseph Caro, glosses by Moses Isserles)

Heathens who besiege Israelite cities: if they have come to capture property, one may not break the Sabbath [to fight them]; if they have come to attack people lethally, or even for an unspecified purpose, one may go out against them with weapons and break the Sabbath to resist them. In a city close to the border, even if they have only come to capture fodder and straw, one may break the Sabbath to resist them. *Gloss: Even if they have not yet attacked, but want to attack (Or Zarua).*

There is an opinion that nowadays, even if they come to capture property, one may break [the Sabbath, to resist]; for if one Jew does not allow [them] to despoil and take booty, they will kill him, and [thus] it would be a lethal attack. *(But all depends on the circumstances.)*