

Verses often quoted out of context

Certain people with prejudiced beliefs often quote verses out of context to portray Islam as a violent religion. Here we shall provide the context of the oft misrepresented verses. It must be noted that when the Quran uses words such as "then slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captives" it is similar to a British General announcing during the Second World War "kill the Germans when you see them and take them captives if you capture them". These words are the normal way to speak within the context of a battlefield.

Misrepresented verse

{2: 191} and kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out.

Full context:

{2: 190} and fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits.

{2: 191} and kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter, and do not fight with them at the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you in it, but if they do fight you, then slay them; such is the recompense of the unbelievers.

{2: 192} But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

{2: 193} and fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.

Quite clearly the verses above are within the context of a defensive war. Verse 190 states that the fight is against those who started a fight with the Muslims. Verse 191 points out that these people drove the Muslims out of their homes. Verse 193 says that there should be no hostility if the enemy stops the

attack and only oppressors deserve a hostile approach.

Misrepresented verse

{8:65} O Prophet! Urge the believers to war; if there are twenty patient ones of you they shall overcome two hundred, and if there are a hundred of you they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they are a people who do not understand.

Context:

{8:61} and if they incline to peace, then incline to it and trust in Allah; surely He is the Hearing, the Knowing.

Misrepresented verse

{8:39} and fight with them until there is no more persecution and religion should be only for Allah; but if they desist, then surely Allah sees what they do.

Context:

The verse above states that if the enemies desist then there is no more fighting. This is a clear indication that its context is war and that the fight was defensive in nature because the enemy started the attack/persecution otherwise the words ***"if they desist" wouldn't be used. Another verse in the Quran with a similar meaning: {2:193}*** And fight with them until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah, but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors.

Misrepresented verse

{9:5} slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them captives and besiege them and lie in wait for them in every ambush,

Context:

A group of idolaters broke a peaceful agreement with the Muslims. Surah Nine (Tawbah) is thought to be a continuation of Surah Eight (Anfal), ***{8:56}*** Those with whom you make an agreement, then they break their agreement every time and they do not guard (against punishment).

This group of idolaters had a history of viscously persecuting the Muslims, they attacked the Muslims first. The verse 9:5 only refers to this specific group because the previous verses in the Surah state that a punishment was announced to this certain group and the other idolaters who did not break the treaty were not to be attacked:

{9:3} And an announcement from Allah and His Messenger to the people on the day of the greater pilgrimage that Allah and His Messenger are free from liability to the idolaters; therefore if you repent, it will be better for you, and if you turn back, then know that you will not weaken Allah; and announce painful punishment to those who disbelieve.

{9:4} Except those of the idolaters with whom you made an agreement, then they have not failed you in anything and have not backed up any one against you, so fulfill their agreement to the end of their term; surely Allah loves those who are careful (of their duty).

And even those who broke the treaty were given a chance to have peace and asylum with Muslims in safety:

{9:6} And if one of the idolaters seek protection from you, grant him protection till he hears the word of Allah, then make him attain his place of safety; this is because they are a people who do not know.

The behavior of the idolaters who broke the treaty is described in the following verse:

{9:13} What! Will you not fight a people, who broke their oaths and aimed at the expulsion of the Messenger, and they attacked you first; do you fear them? But Allah is most deserving that you should fear Him, if you are believers.

We haven't presented the full context of verse 9:5 and would advise people to read the Surah for themselves.

Misrepresented verse

{Yusufali 9:29} Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued

That verse talks of the Jizyah tax that had to be paid to the Islamic government. A large rebellious group refused to pay that minimal tax. Everyone has to pay a tax, even Muslims have to pay taxes. A government has a duty to look after the citizens and the citizens must pay the taxes to allow a government to function with a budget. The Jizyah tax is not for Muslims. The Muslims pay other types of taxes that non-Muslims don't have to pay. The Jizyah tax is for those non-Muslims who are exempt from joining the army of the state. This tax is substitute for their non-involvement in the army. Citizens cannot refuse to pay a tax if they are deriving all the benefits from a government including a protecting army. In early Islam non-Muslims who served in the army did not have to pay the Jizyah. In any case the Jizyah was less than the amount in taxes that the Muslims paid. The historical context of the verse should not be ignored.

Misrepresented verse

{4:89} ... then seize them and kill them wherever you find them,

Context:

{4:90} Except those who reach a people between whom and you there is an alliance, or who come to you, their hearts shrinking from fighting you or fighting their own people; and if Allah had pleased, He would have given them power over you, so that they should have certainly fought you; therefore if they withdraw from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not given you a way against them.

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