

Violence & violent protest

Islam means **peace** and Muslims should act in a peaceful manner, but violence may be used in self-defence. Muslims have a duty to protest about anything unfair and in the UK we have seen protests over wars and issues in the Middle East, what is perceived as **Islamophobia**, **terrorism** and **racism** issues.

"If you raise your hand to kill me, I shall not raise my hand to kill you. I fear Allah, Lord of the worlds" (Qur'an)

Just War & Holy war

Holy war = it is right to fight in the name of God
Just war = It is right to fight in the interests of justice & the greater good

For **Muslims** a holy war is a just war. There are rules for how Muslims should fight a war in the Qur'an. These include a just cause, a proper authority and proportional force. A jihad may only be fought as a last resort and must never be against a Muslim nation.

Sometimes if you do not fight, you allow a greater evil to happen than a war would have caused, so you have to fight.

Religion, peace & conflict

Peace & justice

Justice = fairness; **Peace** = to live in harmony & without fear
Muslims believe that peace is the absence of oppression, tyranny, injustice and corruption. It is linked to there being justice in the world.

"When the ignorant address them, they say words of peace" (Qur'an)

The personal struggle for peace is a greater jihad for Muslims. They all belong to the **Ummah**, which demonstrates the idea of living together peacefully. In some cases, it may be necessary to go to war to secure peace.

Pacifism

Pacifists believe that all violence is morally wrong. They will not participate in any war, regardless of the reasons for that war.

Islam is not a pacifist religion. When Muhammad was forced to leave Makkah, he was forced to use violence so historically pacifism has not been a part of Islam.

Muslims believe it is important to resist **Zulm** (cruelty and injustice) and teaches the importance of reconciliation and working together to achieve peace.

The **Arab Spring** was a democratic uprising that spread across much of the Arab world in 2011. It contained elements of protest and passive resistance.

WMD

Weapons of mass destruction are capable of killing & maiming large groups of people. These weapons are considered unjust because they kill civilians. Some religious believers accept the existence of nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

"If any one slew a person it would be as if he slew the whole people" (Qur'an)

It is impossible to regulate WMD under Islamic conditions because of the damage that could be caused.

Religion & peace making

Islam means **peace** and if both of these teaching were adhered to then there would be peace. Religious groups are regularly involved in peace-keeping in war torn areas and in negotiations to prevent wars happening.

On occasions people have claimed that religion is the cause of war. For example, some fundamentalist groups such as ISIS believe that an Islamic State needs to be created.

Sometimes even with all the best efforts, religion cannot keep peace because there are overriding factors, such as the craving for power, the need to react or attack or to join allies to protect others.