

## Jesus and Jihad

# What Jesus taught us about Jihad

Jesus said: "Peace is upon me,  
the day I was born,  
the day I die and  
the day I am raised alive."  
(Qur'an: Surat Maryam 19:33)

وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيَّ يَوْمَ وُلِدْتُ وَيَوْمَ

أَمُوتُ وَيَوْمَ أُبْعَثُ حَيًّا

Pilate ordered that Jesus be crucified. As he was hanging on the cross, Jesus prayed to his heavenly Father for those who had nailed him there: "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*" (The Gospel according to Luke 23:34). What an amazing prayer. Could you pray that for your enemies?

**Jesus' death was an illustration of forgiving enemies:** Because of our disobedience to God's laws, we could no longer be God's friends. "*You were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behaviour.*" (Colossians 1:21)

But instead of taking the lives of his enemies, Jesus gave his own life for them. "*And since, when we were his enemies, we were brought back to God by the death of his Son, what blessings he must have for us now that we are his friends and he is living within us!*" (Romans 5:10). Jesus' death has reconciled us to God.

**Jesus' death was for the forgiveness of our sins:** At the Last Supper, his final meal with his followers before he died, Jesus said: "*This is my blood, sealing the New Covenant. It is poured out to forgive the sins of multitudes.*" (The Gospel according to Matthew 26:28)

If we put our trust in Jesus, we can now live in peace with God. "*So now, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith in his promises, we can have real peace with him because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. For because of our faith, he has brought us into this place of highest privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to actually becoming all that God has had in mind for us to be.*" (Romans 5:1-2)

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**Jesus Christ, *Isa al-Masih*, taught about many things. But he was more than just a teacher of theory. He also demonstrated practically in his own life the truths that he taught. An important topic today is how to deal with our enemies and with violent opposition from others.**

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**Jesus opposed a never-ending cycle of violence:** Jesus had preached publicly for three years. Like every teacher of the truth he made some enemies. Eventually soldiers came to arrest him. Jesus' followers drew their swords to fight. Jesus told them: "*Put your sword away*" (The Gospel according to John 18:11) Jesus knew that violence only leads to more violence, which will result in even more people being killed. He told his followers: "*Whoever lives by the sword, dies by the sword.*" (The Gospel according to Matthew 26:52) He rebuked his followers who wanted violence against those who rejected them (Gospel of Luke 9:52-56)

**Jesus told his followers to expect opposition:** Because they were trying to obey God and bring peace, the followers of Jesus would be oppressed by violent people. Such opposition is not a sign of failure but of success. Jesus said to his followers:

*"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because your reward in heaven is great, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."* (The Gospel according to Matthew 5:11,12)

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**Jesus taught his followers how to deal with their enemies:** He said: "*Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on both the upright and the wicked.*" (The Gospel according to Matthew 5:44-45). And "*Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called sons of God.*" (Matthew 5:9)

**Jesus showed this love for his enemies in a practical way:** When the soldiers came to arrest Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, one of Jesus' followers drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the High Priest. Malchus was among those who had come to arrest Jesus. (The Gospel according to John 18:10). Then Jesus did something amazing. "*He said: "No more of this!" And he touched the man's ear and healed him.*" (The Gospel according to Luke 22:51) What an amazing action. Jesus used his miraculous power to heal a man who had come to seize Jesus and take him to his death.

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**Jesus prayed for his enemies even as they were in the process of killing him:** Jesus was convicted of blasphemy because he claimed to be the Son of God (The Gospel according to John 19:7). The Roman governor Pontius