

make to fighting, whether by offering opinions or joining the physical fight.

The prohibition on overstepping the limits applies to all such acts, such as killing non-combatants like women, the insane, children, monks and the like; mutilating the bodies of the slain; or killing animals and cutting down trees, and other acts that bring no benefit to the Muslims.

Another kind of overstepping the limits is fighting those from whom *jizyah* may be accepted if they agree to give it. That is not permissible.

﴿And slay them wherever you find them﴾. This is a command to fight them wherever they are found, at all times, whether defending or attacking.

Then an exception is made to this general command to fight them: ﴿but do not fight them in the Sacred Mosque﴾. That is not permissible unless they are the ones who initiate the fighting there, in which case they are to be fought in requital of their aggression.

This is ongoing at all times, until they give up their disbelief and become Muslim. Then Allah will accept their repentance, no matter what they did (in the past) of disbelieving in Allah and worshipping others alongside Him in the Sacred Mosque and preventing the Messengers and the believers from reaching it. This is out of His mercy and kindness towards His slaves.

Because fighting in the Sacred Mosque may make people think that this is mischief in this holy city, Allah tells us that the mischief in that place caused by associating others with Allah and persecuting the Muslims is worse than the mischief of slaughter, so there is no sin on you – O Muslims – for fighting them.

From this verse is derived the well-known principle of committing the lesser of two evils in order to ward off the greater.