



## Uproar Over Anti-Islam Film Falls Flat

Quran Expert Interviewed by ABC News Reveals the Meanings Behind the Quranic Verses in the Film

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The leader of Netherlands' anti-immigration party, Geert Wilders, posted an anti-Islam film Thursday that was expected to raise an uproar among Muslims. So far, the fallout has fallen flat.

Wilders posted his film on the Internet after local distributors declined to release it. His film entitled, "Fitna," which translates to "Discord" in Arabic, suggests the Quran promotes violence and acts of terrorism. The 10-minute film shows various verses of the Quran followed by a montage of violent photos and video ranging from the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center to photos of the Shiite ritual of self-flagellation.

Wilders concludes the film with a graphic, saying it is up to "Muslims themselves to tear out the hateful verses of the Quran. Muslims want you to make way for Islam, but Islam does not make way for you." Wilders urges his audience to "stop Islamization, defend our freedom."

So far, the protests over the film have been largely over legal issues. European news reports say Danish cartoonist Kurt Westergaard will sue Wilders for using his copyrighted image of the prophet Muhammad with a bomb in his turban. News reports also say Dutch rapper Salah Edin is seeking legal recourse for his picture appearing in the film mistaking him for the man who murdered Dutch film director Theo van Gogh.

Small protests over the controversial film have sprouted in the Muslim world but have remained nonviolent.

ABC News spoke to a Quran expert to investigate what the verses in Wilders' film mean. Below are expert Mohammad Al-Hayek's translations of the meanings of the verses used in "Fitna."

**Verse from Fitna:** (Chapter 8; Verse 6) Prepare for them whatever force and cavalry ye are able of gathering to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of Allah and your enemies.

**Al-Hayek:** The purpose of this verse is to urge Muslim governments to be militarily strong in order to intimidate its enemies. Building up power is meant to serve as a deterrent to those wanting to attack Muslims.

This chapter was revealed about the major Battle of Badr that took place between the Muslims and the Quraish tribe of Mecca in the second year of the established Muslim state. The verse immediately after it says, "but if the enemy inclines toward peace, do thou also incline toward peace." Muslims are commanded to halt war immediately if the enemy shows signs of peace. Even in war, Muslims are instructed in the Quran to adhere to strict rules of engagement.

**Verse from Fitna:** (Chapter 4; Verse 56) Those who have disbelieved our signs, we shall roast them in fire whenever their skins are cooked to a turn, we shall substitute new skins for them that they may feel the punishment: verily Allah is sublime and wise.

**Al-Hayek:** This verse speaks of the punishment in hellfire for those who reject the signs of God. This verse explains what happens in hell in the Hereafter. It contains no directives for Muslims to behave in a certain way. The "we" in this verse refers to God. It is a commonly used Quranic technique of glorifying the majesty of God by referring to Him in the plural.

Chapter Four of the Quran deals primarily with Islamic laws, focusing heavily on inheritance laws.

**Verse from Fitna:** (Chapter 47, Verse 4) Therefore, when ye meet the unbelievers, smite at their necks and when ye have caused a bloodbath among them, bring a bond firmly on them.

**Al-Hayek:** Chapter 47 of the Quran is also called the Chapter of War. The chapter mainly outlines Muslim rules while in combat. Most of the translations of this verse reads, "when ye meet the unbelievers (in fight)..." This verse calls for Muslims to fight fiercely while in battle. The verse concludes "until the war lays down its burden."

Muslim scholars agree certain conditions must be met during war:

- Only a legitimate head of state can declare war;

- A war cannot be declared based on a difference of religion;
- Civilians may not be harmed.

**Verse from Fitna:** (Chapter 4, Verse 89) They but wish that ye should reject faith as they do, and thus be on the same footing as they, so take not friends from their ranks until they flee in the way of Allah.

**Al-Hayek:** This chapter speaks specifically about an incident in the Battle of Uhud. The word "friends" in the verse is actually translated to "allies." This verse is about a group of traitors who joined the ranks of the Muslim army, then aided their enemies. Verse 89 instructs those Muslims not to take those traitors as allies or protectors.

**Verse from Fitna:** (Chapter 8, Verse 39) Fight them until there is no dissension and the religion is entirely Allah's.

**Al-Hayek:** This chapter is about the Battle of Badr. "Dissension" should actually be translated in this verse as "persecution." This verse refers to the persecution the Muslims in Mecca faced as the minority. Verse 39 is a commandment from God to the Muslims to fight their oppressors.

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