

Sura Ruum

1. The first ayat of this sura is has three letters of the Arabic alphabet. Can you circle these letters?

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش
ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن ه
و ي

2. 'Ruum' is sometimes translated as 'Romans' and sometimes as 'Byzantines'. What is the historical relationship between these two groups of people?

Byzantium began as the 'Eastern Roman Empire'. It continued after the fall of the 'Western Roman Empire' in the fifth century CE. In fact, throughout its existence, the people of Byzantium referred to themselves as Romans; it was only after the fall of the Byzantine Empire that historians have retrospectively referred to them as Byzantines.

The Eastern Roman Empire transformed into the Byzantine Empire over time, so it's pretty hard to neatly separate the histories of the two empires, but most scholars agree that Emperor Constantine's reign was the start of the Byzantine Empire. Some of the changes it made after the fall of Rome were to move to the capital to Constantinople, changed official religion to Christianity and the official language from Latin to Greek.

3. This sura contains the only verses in the Holy Quran which reference political events contemporary to Prophet Muhammad but beyond the Arabian Peninsula. Most scholars believe the beginning verses were in reference to the defeat of the Byzantines by the Sassanids. What empire did the Sassanids comprise?

The Persian Empire

Why were the Meccans pleased, and Prophet Muhammad (saw) saddened at the defeat of the Byzantines?

The Prophet disliked the fact that the Sassanids had the upper hand over the Byzantines, as the former were Magians and the latter were followers of an Abrahamic religion. The disbelievers of Mecca, however, were said to have been exultant and gloating. When they met the Prophet's Companions, they said to them, "You are People of the Book and the Christians are People of the Book. We are without a revealed scripture and our brothers the Persians have defeated your brothers the Byzantines. If you ever fight us we will defeat you too" (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

4. Use the map below to colour in the Roman Empire. Use one colour for the Western Roman Empire and another for the Eastern Roman Empire. Add in the cities of 'Rome' and 'Constantinople'.



5. Allah (swt) tells us in this sura to observe the fate of people who were before us, and more powerful than us, by doing what? Give the ayat number(s).

Ayats #9 and #42 – to travel the earth

Try and identify where in the world these images are taken from!



These tombs were built by slaves under the rule of pharaohs
GIZA, EGYPT



These ancient peoples who built their houses in mountains are thought by some to have been the people of Prophet Salih!
PETRA, JORDAN



The city's remote location kept it a secret from the outside world, and it became the safest city in the empire
PERSOPOLIS, IRAN



This colosseum was built centuries ago by an empire which spanned over five million kilometres at its peak
ROME, ITALY

6. Allah (swt) tells us in this sura that “corruption has appeared on land and sea because...” of what? Give the ayat number. What does this tell us?

Ayat #41 – Of the doing of people’s hands, that He may make them taste something of what they have done so that they may come back

It highlights to us that we have a hand in the evils that are present in our world; we cannot simply sit back and blame Allah (swt) for our problems. Also that by experiencing the consequences of our actions we may learn from it and seek to improve our behaviour

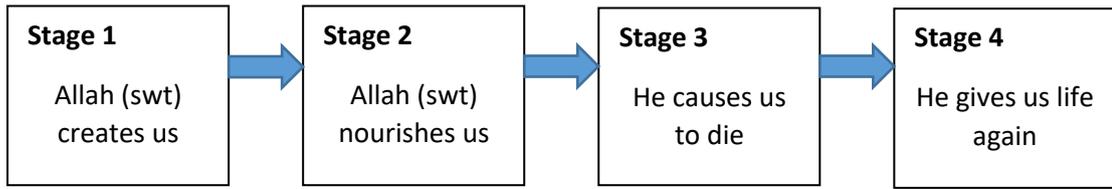
7. Allah (swt) talks about the circle of life in ayat #54. In what state do you start from and travel to and where do you end? Fill in the table below with the descriptions provided in the ayat.

Child	Youth/Maturity	Old Age
weakness	strength	weakness

What does Islam teach us is important to keep in mind about this circle of life, in relation to death?

Death can come to us at any time and any stage – we are not guaranteed to progress to old age before we die. However, we pray to Allah (swt) to grant us a long and healthy life so that we may experience each of these phases of life!

He also talks about the stages of existence in ayat #40. Fill in the diagram below with the descriptions provided in the ayat.



In which stage does the aforementioned 'circle of life' take place?

Stage 2

8. In ayat #55, when 'the Hour' sets in, what will the guilty say?

The guilty will swear that they remained only for an hour. In other words, that their worldly life was very short.

What is another Arabic term (found in the next ayat), and its English translation, for 'the Hour'?

Yawmul Ba'ath – Day of Resurrection

9. Ayats #20-25 and #46 begin with the phrase: وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ . What is the English translation of this phrase?

'And among His signs'

Match each of the below with its function/purpose.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Created from dust | A. Arousing fear and hope |
| 2. Created mates for you | B. Human beings of varying tongues and colours |
| 3. Lightning | C. Bear glad tidings |
| 4. Sends water from sky | D. Revive the earth |
| 5. Sends the winds | E. Find tranquillity in them |

1)B 2)E 3)A 4)D 5)C

10. What does Allah (swt) command in the last ayat of this sura? Who/what is He referring to?

To have patience in spite of those who have no convictions; not to be disheartened because Allah's (swt) Promise is true.

It is understood to be addressing Prophet Muhammad (saw) and God's Promise to aid him and make him prevail. It also hearkens back to the beginning of this sura in which Allah (swt) claims the 'Ruum' will overcome their defeat.