

Sura Ankabut

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

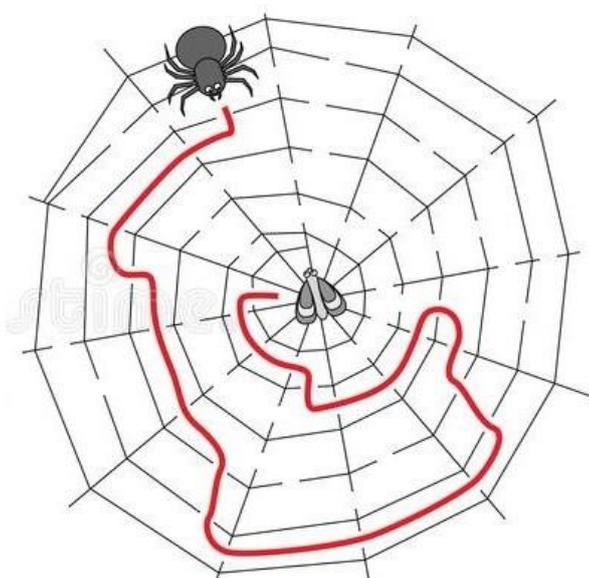
2. This sura, like all of those in last week's quizzes, starts with special code letters whose meaning only Allah (swt) knows. What is the Arabic name (and its English meaning) given to these special letters? How many suras of the Holy Quran start this way?

Huroof al-Muqatta'at or 'separated letters' are a combination of between 1 and 5 Arabic letters that start a sura and whose true meaning is unknown. 29 suras in the Holy Quran start this way

3. What is 'Ankabut' in English and in which ayat of this sura is the word used? In your own words, explain the analogy made by this ayat in reference to 'ankabut'.

It means spider. Ayat #41 compares those who take allies/seek protection from anyone/anything other than Allah (swt) with a spider's web. And indeed, the weakest of homes is the spider's web – it is frail and easily destroyed. So Allah (swt) is warning such people that no one/nothing will be able to help or protect them except Allah (swt).

Help this 'ankabut' find its way to its dinner



4. **The Holy Quran poses an interesting question at the beginning of this sura. Read ayats #2-3 and in your own words, describe what Allah (swt) is telling us. Why is this important?**

Allah (swt) is telling us that it is not enough to claim belief with our words, it needs to be demonstrated with our actions. Therefore, in this life we will encounter many trials as a way of testing our faith in Allah (swt). It should be noted that Allah (swt) is All Knowing and that He tries us, not to learn our true natures, but to make our true natures manifest.

This is important as it teaches us that we should not take for granted that simply calling ourselves Muslims is enough. Moreover, it reminds us that this life is meant to be difficult, and even the true believers are not exempt from this fact. We must continue to strive in the way of Allah (swt), since truth rarely prevails without great effort and sacrifice.

5. **In ayat #41 of this sura, the Holy Quran lists a variety of punishments sent upon peoples who rejected the guidance of Allah's (swt) messengers. List each of these disbelievers in accordance with their punishment:**

people of Prophet Nuh, people of Thamud, Firawn, people of Prophet Lut, people of Prophet Shuayb, people of Korah.

<u>Storm of stones</u>	<u>Lightning ('the Cry')</u>	<u>Swallowed by earth</u>	<u>Drowned</u>
a) people of P. Lut	a) people of Thamud	a) people of Qarun	a) people of P. Nuh
	b) people of P Shuayb		b) Firawn

6. **What did Allah (swt) save Prophet Ibrahim from, according to this sura? Give the ayat number.**

Ayat #24 – Allah (swt) saved him from the fire

Briefly summarise this story of Prophet Ibrahim (you can also refer to sura Anbiya, ayats #51-70) and what we can learn from it.

Prophet Ibrahim challenged the idol worshipers of his time who insisted on continuing idol worship on the basis that it was what their forefathers did. So one day, Prophet Ibrahim went and destroyed all the idols except the biggest one. When the people came to him in anger to question why he destroyed their gods, Prophet Ibrahim referred them back to ask the biggest idol (that was the only one not broken). But of course it could not speak! This angered them more and they decided to punish Prophet Ibrahim by creating a huge fire and throwing him in to burn in it. However, Allah (swt) protected Prophet Ibrahim and he came out of the fire unharmed. This shows us that in the end, the believers will be saved, despite severe trials.

7. This sura contains the famous phrase: **كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ**. In which ayat is it found? Give its English translation.

Ayat #57 – ‘Every soul shall taste death’

8. According to this sura, which two adjectives are used to describe ‘this worldly life’? Give the ayat number

Ayat #64 – pastime/diversion and play/amusement

According to this sura, ‘salah’ prevents what two things? Give the ayat number.

Ayat #45 – Immorality/indecency and wrongdoing/abomination

9. What does the Holy Quran tell us in ayat #6 of this sura?

Since we are punished and rewarded for our own actions, ultimately we strive only for ourselves. Our deeds are not for Allah (swt), since He is beyond need of anything we can do, and those deeds cannot be counted for or against another person, because the Holy Quran teaches us that ‘none shall bear the burden of another’ (sura Najm, ayat #38). This ayat thus indicates a moral reflexivity in which the ultimate impact of our actions, whether good or evil, falls upon ourselves (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

10. What are some things we can do to strengthen our faith in Allah (swt) so that it is not destroyed as easily as a spider web?

There are many possible answers to this question, here are a few suggestions: pray to Allah (swt) with sincerity, recite the Holy Quran and seek out its guidance, be humble, show respect to our elders, help our parents, share with our neighbours, use our time each day wisely, thank Him for all we have every night before sleeping, be patient when life is hard, give generously to those who are less fortunate than us, always remember there are people who are less fortunate, focus on the rewards of the Hereafter, be honest, be kind, seek knowledge, learn from the experiences of others around us, learn from our mistakes, eat halaal food, treat others with dignity, etc.