

Reading Questions: Qur'an

1. What is meant in the text by the term "signs" or "clear signs?" What do the signs convey? What is their purpose, particularly as regarding disbelievers? Are they consistent with what Paul says in Romans 8.24-25 about faith?
2. Does the text present itself as breaking from the previous monotheistic religious traditions (Judaism and Christianity)?
3. What does it mean that the Qur'an "makes no distinction between" patriarchs like Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (Sura 3.84)? Could this mean that they are being made Muslims retroactively?
4. Is there evidence of covenantal thinking in the Qur'an? Do Muslims enter into a covenant with Allah/God?
5. What answer would Allah/God give to Job regarding suffering or injustice?
6. What titles or superlatives (most ___) are repeatedly credited to Allah/God?
7. What groups are named in the text as enemies or 'Others' (as opposed to believers)? What are the most commonly mentioned offenses that cause individuals to belong to these groups? How do these compare with the 'enemies' of other theistic texts?
8. Related to the above question: what are the three groups that emerge in response to the Quranic revelation?
9. How does the Qur'an suggest Muslims should treat non-believers? Is there evidence for toleration? Is there evidence against it? (See Sura 9, verses 1-16, in addition to the assigned reading)
10. Who are the People of the Book? How should they be treated?
11. Why do you think God is spoken of as having "begot no one?" What might this have to do with God being called incomparable?
12. What does it mean that some men "look upon [themselves] as self-sufficient?" What mistake do they make according to the text? Is there a parallel here with Augustine?
13. What two things characterize the "best people?"