

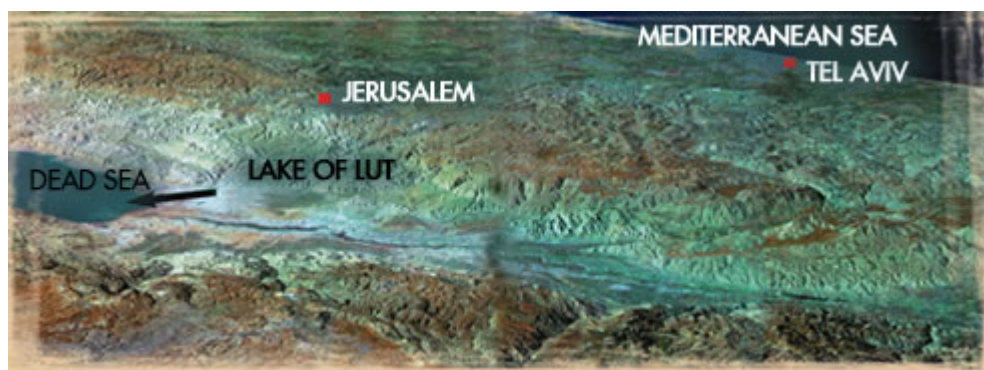
The victory of byzantium

Another miraculous aspect of the Qur'an is its prediction of future events, all of which have so far been fulfilled. This is one of the proofs that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah. In the following pages, we will dwell on some of these events.

An astonishing prediction is found in the first verses of Surat ar-Rum, which refers to the Byzantine Empire, the eastern part of the later Roman Empire: The Byzantine Empire, which had met with a great defeat, would soon gain victory.

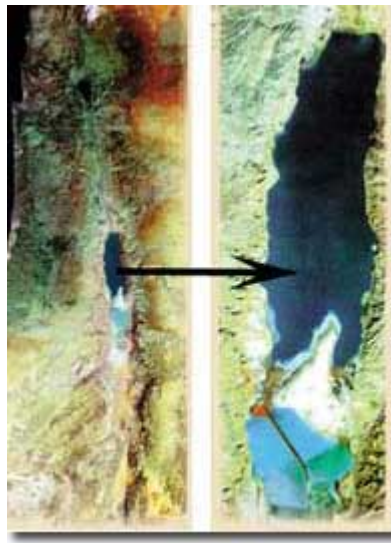
Alif, Lam, Mim. The Romans have been defeated in the lowest land, but after their defeat they will be victorious within three to nine years. The affair is Allah's from beginning to end. On that day, the believers will rejoice. (Qur'an, 30:1-4)

These verses were revealed around 620, almost 7 years after the idolatrous Persians had severely defeated Christian Byzantium in 613-14. In fact, Byzantium had suffered such heavy losses that it seemed impossible for it even to survive, let alone be victorious again. Following their defeat of the Byzantines at Antioch in 613, the Persians seized control of Damascus, Cilicia, Tarsus, Armenia, and Jerusalem. The loss of Jerusalem in 614 was particularly traumatic for the Byzantines, for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was destroyed and the Persians seized the "True Cross," the symbol of Christianity.¹⁷⁴ In addition, the Avars, Slavs, and Lombards also were posing serious threats to the Byzantine Empire. The Avars had reached as far as the walls of Constantinople. Emperor Heraclius ordered the gold and silver in churches to be melted and turned into money in order to meet the army's expenses. When this proved insufficient, bronze statues were melted down in order to mint more money. Many governors had revolted against Heraclius, and Byzantium was on the point of collapse.¹⁷⁵ Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Armenia, which had earlier belonged to Byzantium, were invaded by the idolatrous Persians.¹⁷⁶



The Dead Sea basin where Byzantium was defeated by Persians. Above is a satellite photograph of the region. The Lake of Lut region, which is the lowest region of the world, is 395 meter below the sea level.

In short, everyone was expecting Byzantium to be destroyed. But during this time, the first verses of Surat ar-Rum were revealed, announcing that Byzantium would triumph in 3 to 9 years. This predicted victory seemed so impossible that the Arab polytheists thought it would never come true.



On top a satellite photograph of the Dead Sea basin. The altitude of the Dead Sea could only be determined with modern measurement techniques. These measurements led to the discovery that this region is the "lowest region on the Earth."

Like all the other predictions in the Qur'an, however, this one also came true. In 622, Heraclius gained a number of victories over the Persians and conquered Armenia.¹⁷⁷ In December 627, the two empires fought a decisive battle at Nineveh, some 50 kilometres east of the Tigris river, near Baghdad. This time too, the Byzantine army defeated the Persians. A few months later, the Persians had to sue for peace with Byzantium, which obliged them to return the territories they had taken from it.¹⁷⁸

The Byzantine victory was completed when Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persian ruler Khosrow II in 630, recaptured Jerusalem, and regained the "True Cross" for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹⁷⁹ In the end, "the victory of the Romans" proclaimed by Allah in the Qur'an miraculously came true within the verses' stated "three to nine years" time frame.

Another miracle revealed in these verses is the announcement of a geographical fact that could not have been known by anyone at that time: that the Romans had been defeated in the lowest region of Earth. This Arabic expression *adna al-Ard* is interpreted as "a nearby place" in many translations. However, this is not the literal meaning, but rather a figurative interpretation. The word *adna*, derived from the word *dani* (low), means "the lowest". The word *ard* means "the world." Therefore, *adna al-ard* means "the lowest place on Earth."

Some interpreters of the Qur'an, considering the closeness of the region in question to the Arabs, prefer the "closest" meaning of the word. However, the actual meaning indicates a very important geological fact: The Dead Sea, one of the regions in which the Byzantines were defeated in 613-14, is the lowest region on Earth.¹⁸⁰

As stated earlier, for Christian Byzantium, the loss of the True Cross was the heaviest blow in that defeat in Jerusalem, located near the shores of the Dead Sea.



The Byzantines and the Persians actually fought at the Dead Sea basin, which is situated at the intersection point of the lands belonging to Syria, Palestine, and Jordan. At 399 meters below sea level, the Dead Sea is the "lowest" place on Earth's surface.¹⁸¹

However, as only modern measuring methods and equipment can prove this fact, it would have been impossible for anyone living at that time to realise this truth. Yet, the Qur'an states clearly that this region was the "**lowest land**" on Earth and thereby provides further evidence that it is the Word of Allah.

174. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclius>.⁺

175. Warren Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press: 1997), 287-99.⁺

176. *Ibid.*⁺

177. <http://fstav.freesevers.com/emperors/heraclius.html>.⁺

178. Treadgold, *A History*, 287-99.⁺

179. <http://web.genie.it/utenti/i/inanna/livello2-i/mediterraneo-1-i.htm>;

http://impearls.blogspot.com/2003_12_07_impearls_archive.html; and

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclius>.⁺

180. "The Lowest Part on the Face of the Earth," www.beconvinced.com/science/QURANLOWEST.htm.⁺

181. "Dead Sea," *World Book Encyclopedia*, 2003, Contributor: Bernard Reich, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science and International Affairs, George Washington University ⁺

<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/the-victory-of-byzantium>