

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Surah Al-Ikhlās

The Sincerity · Makki · 4 ayat — reflections on surah
112 of the Qur'an

QURAN

CONTENTS

Surah Al-Ikhlās

- | | | |
|----------|---------------------------|--|
| 1 | The surah in brief | What it is, when it came, what it sets out to do |
| 2 | Its themes | 5 threads running through the surah |
| 3 | Key verses | 4 passages, with a reflection on each |
| 4 | Reading it closely | 4 sections |
| 5 | Carrying it | 4 things to take from it |
-

الإخلاص — Al-Ikhlās, “The Sincerity”. Surah 112 of 114, revealed in Makkah, 4 ayat. The full text and a recitation are on the web edition at deen2u.com/quran/112/.

ONE

The surah in brief

The essence of pure tawheed: Allah is One, the Self-Sufficient Eternal Refuge, who neither begets nor is begotten, and there is nothing at all comparable to Him. It is said to equal a third of the Qur'an.

Al-Ikhlās is the pure charter of Islamic monotheism, revealed when questioners asked the Prophet to describe his Lord. It declares God as Ahad — absolutely One — and as al-Samad, the Eternal Refuge upon whom all depend while He depends on none. It denies Him offspring and parentage, and affirms that nothing is comparable to Him. The Prophet taught that this surah equals a third of the Qur'an, for it distils the entire creed of God's oneness into four verses.

TWO

Its themes

- Absolute oneness (tawheed)
- God the Eternal Refuge
- No offspring or origin
- Nothing comparable to Him
- Foundation of the creed

THREE

Key verses

Say: He is Allah, the One and Only;

Qur'an 112:1

'He is God, One' — Ahad is a oneness beyond number, admitting no partner, part, or peer.

Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;

Qur'an 112:2

Al-Samad means all creation turns to Him in need while He needs nothing — the anchor to which every dependent thing clings.

He begetteth not, nor is He begotten;

Qur'an 112:3

He neither begets nor is begotten, cutting away every notion that makes God resemble His creation.

And there is none like unto Him.

Qur'an 112:4

'There is nothing comparable to Him' — the mind must affirm God while refusing to liken Him to anything it can imagine.

FOUR

Reading it closely

Context & character

Al-Ikhlās — 'The Sincerity' or 'Purity of Faith' — is four short verses that the Prophet ﷺ declared equal to a third of the Qur'an. Though brief, it is one of the most weighty surahs in the entire Book, for it states the doctrine of God's oneness in its purest form. It is generally regarded as Makkan, revealed when the idolaters — and, in some reports, others — asked the Prophet ﷺ to describe his Lord, to name His lineage, to say what He was made of. The surah is the answer.

Its name, al-Ikhlās, means the making of something pure and unmixed, and it is called this because it purifies the concept of God of every association and defines tawhid without contamination. It contains no command, no story, no law — only a description of who Allah is. The Prophet ﷺ taught that loving this surah is a cause of entering Paradise, and it holds a central place in the daily prayers and remembrances of every Muslim. Its character is that of a creed distilled to its essence.

How the surah unfolds

The surah opens with a command to declare, answering the questioners directly: Say: He is Allah, One (112:1) — qul huwa Allahu ahad. Every word carries weight. 'Say' makes it a proclamation the believer must voice. 'He is Allah' names the true God. And 'ahad' — One — is a form stronger than the

ordinary word for one; it means uniquely, indivisibly One, one in a way nothing else is one, admitting no partner, no plurality, no second.

Then His nature: Allah, the Eternal Refuge (112:2) — Allahu al-Samad. Al-Samad is a dense and untranslatable name that the commentators unfold at length: the One to whom all creation turns in every need while He needs nothing; the Master who is depended upon by all and depends on none; the perfect, self-sufficient, everlasting One who is sought in every want. If the first verse establishes His oneness, this verse establishes His absolute independence and the total dependence of everything else upon Him.

Then two denials that guard His uniqueness. He neither begets nor was begotten (112:3): He has no child and no parent, no lineage above Him or descendants below Him — a direct refutation of the claim that God has offspring. And there is none comparable to Him (112:4) — wa lam yakun lahu kufuwan ahad: nothing is His equal, His like, or His peer in any respect. The surah closes having ruled out every form of association: no partner beside Him, no lineage around Him, no equal anywhere. The word ahad, 'one,' which opened the surah, is echoed in its final word — a perfect enclosure of oneness.

The major themes, in depth

Oneness that admits no division. The surah's foundation is tawhid — that Allah is One in a sense no created thing shares. The choice of ahad rather than the ordinary wahid is deliberate: ahad negates all multiplicity and all internal division. Allah is not one of a kind among others, nor a unity made of parts; He is

uniquely, absolutely One. Al-Sādi and the classical scholars explain that this single word excludes every conception of God that would compromise His singularity — three-in-one, a supreme god among lesser gods, or a divine being composed of elements. The surah begins by settling this and never wavers from it.

Al-Samad: the One upon whom all depend. The name al-Samad (112:2) is one of the richest in the Qur'an, and the commentators gather many complementary senses: the Lord who is perfect in every attribute; the Master to whom creation turns in every need; the Self-Sufficient who is utterly free of need Himself; the Everlasting who does not pass away. Ibn Kathir compiles the sayings of the early scholars that al-Samad is the One 'sought after' by all beings for all their wants while He is dependent on nothing. This name is the pivot of the surah's argument: because Allah is al-Samad, everything else is by definition needy and contingent, and so nothing else can share His divinity. The needy cannot be a god.

The negation of lineage and likeness. The final two verses defend God's uniqueness against the two great errors of the nations. 'He neither begets nor was begotten' (112:3) refutes those who ascribed sons or daughters to God — the pagans who called the angels His daughters, and any claim of divine offspring — for to have a child or a parent is to be part of a chain of causes, dependent and finite, which the Eternal cannot be. 'There is none comparable to Him' (112:4) then closes off the subtler error of imagining anything like Him at all — no equal in

essence, attribute, or act. Together these verses fence the divine oneness on every side, so that when the surah ends, no room is left for shirk in any of its forms.

Points of reflection

Al-Ikhlās is called equal to a third of the Qur'an because the Qur'an's message rests on three great pillars — the oneness of God, prophethood, and the Hereafter — and this surah establishes the first and greatest of them in its purest form. To carry al-Ikhlās in the heart is to carry the very core of faith: a God who is One, self-sufficient, without child or parent, without equal, upon whom all things depend. Everything else in religion grows from this root.

For the believer, the surah is not merely a doctrine to affirm but a lens for living. If Allah alone is al-Samad — the One to whom all turn in every need — then it reorders where the heart looks for help, security, and satisfaction. The soul that truly grasps this surah stops leaning on lesser things as though they were self-sufficient, and turns its deepest need toward the only One who is. To recite it with understanding is to renew, again and again, the pure and undivided devotion from which its name is taken.

FIVE

Carrying it

1. Root your understanding of God in absolute oneness, free of any likeness.
2. Turn to al-Samad in every need, knowing He alone is self-sufficient.
3. Reject any belief that ascribes offspring or origin to God.
4. Recite it often, honouring the Prophet's teaching that it equals a third of the Qur'an.

Where this reading draws from. Ibn Kathir, al-Tabari, al-Sa'di. A summary is not a tafsir: for the verse-by-verse treatment go to the works themselves, or to the close studies at deen2u.com/tadabbur/.