

SPREAD KNOWLEDGE

THE
HOLY QURAN

ENGLISH TAFSEER
CHAPTER 112
SURAH AL-IKHLAS

COMMENTARY & EXPLANATORY

By
ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

www.quran.live

HOLY QURAN

CHAPTER

112

SURAH AL-IKHLAS

ABDULLAH YUSUF ALI

Introduction and Summary

This early Makkan Surah sums up in a few terse words the Unity of the Godhead---often professed, but frequently mixed up in the popular mind with debasing superstitions.

C.292 (The running Commentary, in Rhythmic Prose)

Keep Faith all pure and undefiled.

There is Allah, the One and Only:

*Eternal, Free of all needs; on Whom
Depend; to Whom go back, all things;
He hath no son nor father nor partner.
There is no person like Unto Him.*

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

فُلْ هُوَ اللّٰهُ اَحَدٌ (۱)

1. Say: He is Allah, the One and Only;

C6296. The nature of Allah is here indicated to us in a few words, such as we can understand. The qualities of Allah are described in numerous places elsewhere, e.g., in 49:22-24, 62:1, and 2:255.

Here we are specially taught to avoid the pitfalls into which men and nations have fallen at various times in trying to understand Allah.

- The first thing we have to note is that His nature is so sublime, so far beyond our limited conceptions, that the best way in which we can realise Him is to feel that He is a Personality, "He", and not a mere abstract conception of philosophy. He is near us; He cares for us; we owe our existence to Him.
- Secondly, He is the One and Only God, the Only One to Whom worship is due; all other things or beings that we can think of are His creatures and in no way comparable to Him.
- Thirdly, He is Eternal, without beginning or end, Absolute, not limited by time or place or circumstance, the Reality.
- Fourthly, we must not think of Him as having a son or a father, for that would be to import animal qualities into our conception of Him.

- Fifthly, He is not like any other person or thing that we know or can imagine: His qualities and nature are unique.

the One and Only;

C6297. This is to negative the idea of Polytheism, a system in which people believe in gods many and lords many. Such a system is opposed to our truest and profoundest conceptions of life. For Unity in Design, Unity in the fundamental facts of existence, proclaim the Unity of the Maker.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (٢)

2. Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;

C6298. Samad is difficult to translate by one word. I have used two, "Eternal" and "Absolute". The latter implies:

1. that absolute existence can only be predicated of Him; all other existence is temporal or conditional;
2. that He is dependent on no person or things, but all persons or things are dependent on Him,

thus negating the idea of gods and goddesses who ate and drank, wrangled and plotted, depended on the gifts of worshippers, etc.

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (٣)

3. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten;

C6299. This is to negative the Christian idea of the godhead,

- "the Father",
- "the only-begotten Son" etc.

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (٤)

4. And there is none like unto Him.

C6300. This sums up the whole argument and warns us specially against Anthropomorphism, the tendency to conceive of Allah after our own pattern, an insidious tendency that creeps in at all times and among all peoples.