

# Tafseer Surah al-Ikhlaas (الإخلاص)

Notes on Nouman Ali Khan's Concise Commentary of the Quran

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## Introduction

- In this surah, we learn that Allah needs no one while we all need Allah
- If we properly understand this surah, it will be like reliving Islam all over again
- One of its names is the 'Surah of Rescue' because it saves you
- The reason this surah is called al-Ikhlaas even though it does not contain the word in it is because the word *ikhlaas* means to purify or cleanse something from impurities. This surah cleanses the heart, mind, sins, life, hereafter, etc.
  - The word *ikhlaas* also means sincerity because by it one cleanses his/her intentions
- This surah is a summary of the entire Quran
  - Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) described it as 1/3 of the Quran
  - So much of the Quran's meaning is encapsulated within it
- There are numerous virtues mentioned in the Sunnah for this surah
- The Arabic word Allah (الله)
  - There is a debate whether the word Allah came from the Arabic word *lilah* (إله) or not
    - Nouman Ali Khan leans towards the position that it does not and that the word Allah is unique and is not derived from any root
      - It is the original name of Allah taught to Prophet Adam
- The Arabic word *lilah* (إله)
  - Means something that is worshipped but can also mean the following:
    - Someone you turn to when you are desperate and have no one else
    - Someone that makes you wonder and captivates your imagination
      - Meaning you are in awe of it
    - The object of your protection
    - Something that is high and hidden
- This surah was sent down when the Quraysh requested the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to give the genealogy of Allah

## Tafseer of the Verses

### 1. Say, He is Allah, [who is] One

- a. It is commanding the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to tell the people about Allah
- b. The word *qul* (say) is being used by itself and is not followed up by any other word which means to tell everyone and not just a specific group of people
- c. The Arabic word *ahadun* (One):

- i. It is generally used in a negative sentence, such as, “No one (*ahadun*) else is in the mosque”
  - 1. However, in this surah it is being used in a positive sentence. This never happens in the Arabic language. It is as if to say that Allah is unique even in the way He describes His uniqueness
    - a. For humans when we have a unique person who is not known by anyone, we use the word *wahd* (وحد) but never *ahad* (أحد). This is why Allah did not use *wahd* here to describe Himself. He wants to indicate His special uniqueness
- d. Allah is unique in every way
  - i. His seeing, hearing, knowledge, mercy is not like ours
    - 1. This impacts how we think about other things in our life
  - ii. He does not owe us anything. Everything that He gives us is a gift

## 2. Allah, the Eternal Refuge

- a. The Arabic word *al-samad*
  - i. It means the one you turn to when in need and are never disappointed
    - 1. He has everything you need and never less than what you need
    - 2. We will always need Him but He needs no one. He is the fulfillment of all our needs
      - a. He is in touch with our deepest feelings and is precisely aware of our situations and circumstances
  - ii. It also means the highest authority after which there is no higher authority
    - 1. So there is no need to turn to someone else or find connections to get things done. We have direct access to the Highest authority which is Allah
  - iii. It also means the maker of all needs
    - 1. Who better to know how to resolve your needs than the One who created those needs?
  - iv. It also means the one sought after whenever you desire something
    - 1. When you really desire something, *al-samad* is the one that can fulfill it
  - v. It also can mean the ultimate goal
    - 1. We are all going to meet Him and our goal is to not disappoint Him in that meeting
- b. There are two types of situations:
  - i. Situation Allah puts you in
    - 1. These are things which are out of your control and happened without anyone else bringing it on to you
      - a. Ex: you were driving and then suddenly your brakes fail, you get a disease, earthquake, flood, etc.
    - 2. In such situations, you let go and trust in Allah
      - a. Meaning you realize that you are not in control
  - ii. Situation people put you in
    - 1. This is when people do you wrong and place you in situations
    - 2. In this case, you pursue justice

- c. This verse is teaching us to depend on Allah
  - i. We should not build extreme dependency in others where we make ourselves completely dependent on one person and not Allah

**3. He has never had offspring, nor was He born**

- a. It is mentioned in past tense because the *shirk* (idolatry) of the past is being negated
- b. Human beings cannot fathom a closer connection than family, therefore, many among them ascribed children to Allah. They wanted to build some sort of connection to Allah through family because they felt He was too distant and far away from them
  - i. Allah is negating such ascription towards Him because He is unique
    - 1. Closeness to Allah does not need a family connection
- c. The words “nor was He born” is to reject the idea that a God can be born
- d. Allah is noble due to the fact that He does not need children. It is unique to Him
  - i. For us, we seek nobility through our children

**4. Nor is there to Him any equivalent**

- a. Meaning there is no one that has ever existed that can be equivalent to Him
- b. There are external idols and internal ones. We as Muslims have to conquer and cleanse ourselves from both