

Background and Virtue

Al-Ikhlas presents Allah's oneness and perfection in four short ayat. Ibn Kathir explains that Allah has no equal, partner or likeness, and that He is perfect in His attributes and actions. His introduction gathers reports about the surah's special virtue. Among the authentic reports is the Prophet's ﷺ statement that it is equivalent to a third of the Qur'an, recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari. The parent should understand its meaning alongside memorising its words: it teaches whom we worship and how Allah differs from His creation.

Tafsir of the Surah

Ayah 1: Allah is One. Ibn Kathir explains Ahad as Allah's unique oneness: He has no rival, counterpart or equal. This affirmation includes His perfection in every attribute and action. The surah begins with a command to declare this truth. It gives a clear foundation for worship by directing the heart to Allah alone, with no one sharing His divine perfection.

Ayah 2: Allah, al-Samad. Ibn Kathir records Ibn 'Abbas's explanation that all creation turns to Allah for its needs and requests. He also records descriptions of Allah's complete greatness, knowledge, wisdom and mastery. Al-Samad therefore teaches the dependence of creation upon the One who is perfect. Our need for provision, help and guidance does not end, while Allah's perfection is not dependent on His creation.

Ayah 3: He neither begets nor is born. Ibn Kathir explains that Allah has no child, parent or spouse. The relationships through which created beings come into existence do not describe their Creator. The verse rejects attributing offspring or ancestry to Allah. Read with the preceding ayah, it protects the meaning of His oneness and perfection from ideas drawn from the limitations of created life.

Ayah 4: No one is comparable to Him. Ibn Kathir connects this declaration with Allah's creation and ownership of everything. Nothing He has created can stand as an equal beside Him. His commentary draws on other Qur'anic passages that reject attributing children to Allah and describe creation as His servants. The closing ayah completes the surah's account of His uniqueness: no being is a match for Him.

The surah's place in worship. Ibn Kathir records authentic reports about loving and reciting this surah, including the account of a man who loved it because it described the Most Merciful. These reports show the value of learning its meaning as well as its wording. Its special virtue invites regular recitation, while its message calls the believer to sincere worship, reliance on Allah and recognition of His complete perfection.



112 | Surah al-Ikhlās

سورة الإخلاص

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ



Say, "He is Allah, the One.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ



Allah, the Absolute.

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ



He begets not, nor was He begotten.

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ



And there is none comparable to Him."

Parent tafsir: adapted from Ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim, 112:1-4.

Arabic commentary: quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/katheer/sura112-aya1.html

Virtue of the surah: Sahih al-Bukhari 5013; love for it: 7375, cited by Ibn Kathir.

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