

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem
Say He is God, the One and Only God. The Needless (the independent) God; He begets not nor is He begotten, and there is none like unto Him.

This Surah contains the praise of God as explained by the Messenger who said, *He is Nur (the divine light) that has no shred of darkness and He is the knowledge that contains no ignorance. He is Samad, the one above all needs and who needs no helpers. He begets not nor is He begotten and there is none equal or comparable to Him.' He has no helpers and no partners.*

Ibn Abbas said that once the Quraysh came to the Messenger in Makkah and asked him to enumerate the attributes of his God so that they too may understand and realize and worship Him. It was then that this Surah was revealed. "Haiy" means that nothing has been separated from Him nor is He part of any thing else. He has no conditions that increase or decrease.

He is "Samad" the mastership of the universe rests on Him. All the heavens and the earth depend upon Him.

He has not begotten any son as the Jews claim about Hazrat Uzair and the Christians claim about Hazrat Isa; they incur the wrath of God for this. He has no partners like the sun, the moon or the others that the idolaters claim. He is not created out of anything and no one is His partner. He rules the creation with omnipotence.

TAFSIR AL-BAYAN AL-JAMA AL-ULUM

AT-TUSI

- The word “Ahad” has been read as “Ahadu” and “Ahadun”.
 - The word “Kufu” has been read as “Kufuwan.”
 - Also, in the beginning of the Surah the word “Qul” is a command revealed by Jibrail (AS) to the messenger just as it is in Surah al Kafirun.
 - He has been asked to distance himself from disbelief and this order is for all human beings. “Huwa Allah” means he only deserves to be worshipped.
 - The word “Ahad” means the single that has no follower in numbers.
 - He is one who cannot be divided.
 - When “Ahad” is taken as an attribute then it means that no one shares in His glory and His kingdom.
 - No one can be worshipped with Him.
 - He is without any physical form or shape.
 - “Samad” means needless, the one who deserves to be worshipped and the Master of all.
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- The second interpretation is that everything needs His help and is dependent upon Him.
 - He has no father and no son and He has no equals or partners.
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- The Messenger used to pause after every ayah.

Ibn Mujahid used to recite it in the same manner in his daily prayers.

In Kafi and at-Tawhid say some Jews came to the Messenger and asked him about God. The Messenger remained silent and then this Surah was revealed.

Imam Muhammad Baqir said that “Ahad” is used in the sense of “Wahid” or one that is incomparable. It contains Tawhid and the consent to His Oneness. He is such a “One” that nothing can be separated from Him and He too is joined to anything. Wahid denotes numbers but it does not evolve from numbers itself. The numbers are not existence in this One but this one is followed by Two or more.

TAFSIR AL-SAFI **AL-KASHANI**

The words of the Qur'an here mean that He alone is the Master creator and so His creation cannot fully comprehend Him. He is unique in His oneness.

Imam Baqir said, My father Ali Bin Husain has quoted his father Husain bin Ali to have said, *Samad is one without any stomach. And Samad is He who is the omnipotent Master. He who never sleeps, who is ever-prevalent and never diminishes or decays in His power.*

Muhammad Hanafia said, *Samad is the ever prevalent One who is above all needs, and mischief. He is almighty and Samad is the one who cannot be explained through changes in time and conditions.*

The Imam said, *He (Samad) is the Master who is obeyed and who has no superiors.*

Imam Zainul Abidin when asked about "Samad" said, *Samad is one who has no aides or partners and who never feels a burden of protecting anything and moreover nothing is hidden from Him.*

The narrator says that Imam Zainul Abidin said,

- Samad is He who when He decides to do something says, "Be" and it is.
- Samad is the one who grants existence to the creations and creates them all with separate identities each unique in its own way.

The narrator says Imam Sadiq quoted his father that once the people of Basra asked Imam Husain about the explanation of the word "Samad" and he replied:

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Raheem

Reflect more upon the Qur'an. Do not discuss it without adequate knowledge. Indeed I have heard my grandfather say, "The one who interprets the Qura'n with knowledge is the one who will be resident of Hell."

This Hadith has been discussed earlier in details.

The narrator says he heard Imam Sadiq say, Once a group from Palestine came to Imam Baqir and asked him some questions. He replied to all and then they asked about "Samad". The Imam said the explanation of "Samad" "is in its five ayahs. These words are the certitude of His glory and the proof is the words of God, *No one else but He deserves to be worshipped*

- The words Alif and lam are used in writing and they deny the existence of any other god.
- The word Ilah therefore means the creator and He cannot be described, discerned or comprehended. His greatness lies in creating things and installing the soul in them. When a person reflects upon himself he does not see his soul just like the Lam in Samad until it is written. When the person reflects upon God he is amazed for he fails to comprehend and visualize His existence. It is only then that he realizes that god is the one who has given him existence and it is He who created his soul and his body.
- The alphabet “Saad’ is the proof that God is Sadiq or truthful and the invitation to the creations to obey is also a truth. His promises are all true.
- The Mim is proof of His Mulk or kingdom and rule. He never weakens and can never be weakened. His kingdom never wanes.
- “Dal” is the proof of “Dawam” or eternal existence for He is the ever lasting entity though all His creations have a limited life. The universe exists because it depends upon Him.”

The Imam then said if only I could find a person who could carry the knowledge that God has bestowed upon me to preach the Oneness of God and Islam, belief, Shariah and religion - but I find it impossible.

In the same way there was no one to inherit the knowledge and wisdom from my grand sire Amirul Mu’minin. He used to sigh and announce from the pulpit, Ask me what you want to ask before you lose me. Indeed in my chest is the treasure of knowledge but there is none to inherit it. It is indeed that I am the sign of God for you.

But the people did not pay heed, may God curse them. They were hopeless about their future just in the way the disbelievers are hopeless about those who are interred.

Imam Baqir further said, All praise is for God and every person is obliged to Him. He who is alone and needless made us stand for prayers. He who has not begotten anyone nor has anyone begot him. He has no equals. He has kept us away from the sin of worshipping idols. We praise and thank Him.

God says, He begets not nor is He begotten. He has not given birth to anyone otherwise He would have had a son who would inherit His powers and kingdom. No one has begotten Him who could be His father and a partner in His kingdom. He has no equals who can be partners in His kingdom.

Majmaul-Bayan says that when some one asked Hazrat Ali for an explanation of this Surah he said,

- He is Allah who cannot be explained by numbers.
- He is Samad for He is above all needs.
- No power has given birth to Him and He has not sired anyone to inherit His kingdom or be His partner.
- No one is His partner in any deed.

This is how the Imam explained this Surah. He was sired by no one who He would have to respect and make a partner.

Kafi records that when Imam Sajjad was asked about Tawhid he said, *God knew that in the later stages of history there would be thinking people and so He revealed This Surah and then revealed the verse from Surah al Hadid. Any one who stays behind or turns away is damned.*

Imam Muhammad Baqir said, *Surah Ikhlas is one-third of the Qur'an.*

In Ikmal Amirul Mu'minin said, *Whoever recites Surah Tawhid once has recited one-third of the Qur'an. Whoever recites it twice has recited two-third of the Qur'an, while anyone who has recited it thrice has read the whole Qur'an.*

In Thawabul Aamal and Majmaul-Bayan Imam Sadiq is quoted to have said, *If a full day passes and some does not recite Surah Tawhid in his daily prayers then he will be told that he is not one from among the worshippers.*

He has also said, *If a Friday is spent by a person without reciting the Surah Tawhid then that person if dies would have died on the religion of Abu Lahab.*

We have already discussed the background of this Surah's revelation.

It is by the decree of god that the lives and instances of the prophets are different from each other and they are different from others because of the circumstances in their days. When a Prophet of God speaks, his words are a reflection of his deeds, his attributes and his personality for in him is found the active presence of God.

- This then is the divine revelation spoken through him but it is termed as Hadith Qudsi.
- It is revealed only on god's Prophets and Messengers.
- When the words are linked with knowledge and its propagation then it is called Messengership.

- When the words come as a divine realization but no angel is involved then it is called the Hadith of the Prophet.
- But when the prophet speaks to preach and to develop the worldly life then it will be regarded as the words of a human.
- It may be done even before the announcement or proclamation of divine ministry. But when the words are revealed to be delivered as a message to the people through an angel then it is regarded as the word of God or the divine book.

When the prophet is addressed by the unseen then the message is restricted to him only but when the same is for propagation of the Oneness of God then it is for his ministry. But when the revelation describes the His attributes then it is a Message regarding Tawhid or His Oneness.

- In this Surah both the style of message is present therefore it is called Surah Tawhid.
- This Surah is often called Surah Tawhid, Surah Ikhlas and Surah Wilayah. This Surah teaches us the sincerity in worship against evil.
- It also speaks about the Unity of God and the glory of His ever living presence.
- It addresses the issue of Oneness of God and denies any partner for His glorified existence.
- This of course is not compatible with the words, “Say I seek refuge with God the Lord of the day break.” And, “Say I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind.”

We have already discussed the meaning of “Ahad” and “Samad” and the explanation given has been supported by different traditions. The passages regarding this have been repeated with minor differences hence have not been translated again.

See Surah Al Imran Verse 18 that says, **God bears witness that there is no God but He and so do the angels and those who possess knowledge, standing firmly for justice; there is no god but he, the almighty, the all-wise.**

Surah Mumtahinah verse 13 that says, **Indeed they despair of their hereafter as the believers despair about those in the graves.**

Surah Al Hadid verse 6 that says, **He has full knowledge of whatever is there in the hearts.**

All the three verses cited above explain His total control. The knowledge and realization of His might lies with Him, His angels and those on whom He has bestowed this knowledge.

Tafsir of Surah

The Surah explains the Oneness of God and denies any partners and through the traditions we learn that after reciting the passage we should add, “Kadhalik Allahu Rabbi.” For these words are concerned with obedience of His divine Will and the acceptance of Tawhid. It also denies Him having any partners.

Fadhil bin Yasar narrates, *Imam Baqir asked me to recite “Kadhalika Rabbi” thrice after reciting Surah Ikhlas for it refers to the one-ness of God, the partners they attribute to Him and confiscation of the grants.* There are three issues of knowledge in it as explained by the Holy Prophet. He said, *There are three kinds of knowledge, the commanding verse, the compulsory duties or the established Sunnah. These three issues are dealt in the entire Qur’an. This Surah is based on the commanding verse and whoever recites it has recited one-third of the Qur’an.*

The other explanation is that the person who walks the path of God he will not find the true path till such time that he immerses himself totally in obedience and saves himself from making partners for God. This will enable him to traverse the true path and be successful on the day of Resurrection. The entire Qur’an describes the three issues mentioned above and especially this Surah.

Another reason given is that Qur’an speaks about the agreement to god and His Oneness and the agreement to the creations and their numbers. There is that relation between the creator and the created. The seeker cannot reach his goal till such time he immerses himself totally into God and denies all the alleged partners for Him. If he cannot attain this stage then he will not reach God.

This is why it has been said that he who prays five times daily but does not recite Surah Tawhid will not be considered as a worshipper and he will die the death of Abu Lahab.

The Messenger of God said, *the boons are granted to anyone who recites this Surah even once. If he recites it twice then his family is included in the favors bestowed. If he recites it thrice then favors include him, his family and his neighbors. He who recites it a dozen times will get a dozen houses in Paradise. He who recites it a hundred times then he has paid the penance of 25 years of sins. If he recites it four hundred times then the penance is made for four hundred years of sin. If he recites it a thousand times then he will not die before seeing his station in Paradise.*

There are umpteen similar Hadiths that prove this Surah to be One –third of the Qur’an.

When someone complained about poverty to the messenger, he said, Greet someone in the house when you enter it and if no body is there even then you should greet and then recite Surah Tawhid once *the man followed this instruction and became rich and so much that he helped his neighbors too.*

If a man suffers a disease too severely but does not recite Surah Tawhid then he will join the residents of Hell when he dies. One learns to deny the partners for God mainly through this Surah and he who does not deny these partners is far removed from his covenant and nature and will die a resident for Hell. He no longer adheres to the purpose of his creation and becomes unnatural so his penance and plea for forgiveness is not accepted.

The Messenger said, *When a person believed in God, denied Him alleged partners and believed in the day of Resurrection while he was regular in reciting Surah Tawhid, all the boons from God are gathered for him in the hereafter. His parents and children are forgiven with him for doing this. Here duty means to attend to God and the hereafter.*

When a person says his compulsory prayers he pays heed to God and praises God through Surah Tawhid. These prayers are his source of denying the false gods, and immersing himself totally to God. If it is other wise then even his daily prayers curse him.

Imam Ali Naqi says when a person recites Surah Tawhid if he is confronted with his oppressor then God will prevent the oppressor from being unjust to him. When he recites the Surah in all directions then God increases his sustenance and protects him from all evil.