





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

CXII AL-IKHLĀŞ

الإِخْلَاصِ

INTRODUCTION

Name

Al-Ikhlāş is not merely the name of this Sūrah but also the title of its contents, for it deals exclusively with *Tauhīd*. The other Sūrah of the Qur'ān generally have been designated after a word occurring in them, but in this Sūrah the word *Ikhlāş* has occurred nowhere. It has been given this name in view of its meaning and subject matter. Whoever understands it and believes in its teaching, will get rid of *shirk* (polytheism) completely.

Period of Revelation

Whether it is a Makki or a Madani Sūrah is disputed, and the difference of opinion has been caused by the traditions which have been related concerning the occasion of its revelation. We give them below *ad seriatum*:

- (1) Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ūd has reported that the Quraish said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): "Tell us of the ancestry¹ of your Lord." Thereupon this Sūrah was sent down (Ṭabarānī).
- (2) Abul-'Āliyah has related on the authority of Hadrat Ubayy bin Ka'b that the polytheists said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace): "Tell us of your Lord's ancestry." Thereupon Allah sent down this Sūrah. (Musnad Aḥmad, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ibn Jarīr, Tirmidhī, Bukhārī in *At-Tārikh*, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ḥātim, Baihaqī). Tirmidhi has related a tradition on the same theme from Abul-'Āliyah, which does not contain any reference to Ḥaḍrat Ubayy bin Ka'b, and has declared it to be more authentic.
- (3) Ḥaḍrat Jābir bin 'Abdullah has stated that a beduin (according to other traditions, some people) said to the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace); "Tell us of your Lord's ancestry." Thereupon Allah sent down this Sūrah. (Abū Ya'lā, Ibn Jarīr, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ṭabarānī in *Al-Ausat*, Baihaqī. Abū Nu'aim in *Al-Hilyah*).
- (4) 'Ikrimah has related a tradition from Ibn 'Abbās, saying that a group of the Jews, including Ka'b bin Ashraf, Ḥuyayy bin Akhtab and others, came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and said: "(O) Muḥammad (upon whom be Allah's peace and blessings), tell us of the attributes of your Lord, Who has sent you as a Prophet." Thereupon Allah sent down this Sūrah. (Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ibn 'Adī, Baihaqī in *Al-Asmā' was-Ṣifāt*).

In addition to these, some other traditions also have been cited by Ibn Taimiyyah in his commentary of Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ, which are as follows:

1. The custom among the Arabs was that whenever they wanted to be introduced to a stranger they would say: *Insibhu lanā*: "Tell us of his ancestry" for among them the foremost thing required to be known was the lineage of the stranger and the tribe he belonged to. That is why when they wanted to ask the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) who his Lord was and what were his attributes they said: *Insib lanā Rabbaka*: "Tell us of your Lord's lineage."

- (5) Ḥaḍrat Anas has stated that some Jews of Khaiber came before the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) and they said: "O Abul-Qāsim, Allah created the angels from light, Adam from rotten clay, Iblīs from the flame of fire, the sky from smoke, and the earth from the foam of water. Now tell us about your Lord (of what He is made)." The Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) did not give any reply to this question. Then Gabriel came and he said: "O Muḥammad, say to them: *Huwa Allahu aḥad.*"
- (6) 'Āmir bīn aṭ-Ṭufail said to the Holy Prophet: "O Muḥammad, what do you call us to?" The Holy Prophet replied: "To Allah." 'Āmir said: "Then, tell us of what He is made, whether of gold, silver, or iron?" Thereupon this Sūrah was sent down.
- (7) Daḥḥāk, Qatādah and Muqātil have stated that some Jewish rabbis came before the Holy Prophet, and they said: "O Muḥammad, tell us what is your Lord like, so that we may believe in you. Allah in the Torah has sent down His description. Kindly tell us of what He is made, what is His sex, whether He is made of gold, copper, brass, iron, or silver, and whether He eats and drinks. Also tell us from whom He has inherited the world, and who will inherit it after Him." Thereupon Allah sent down this Sūrah.
- (8) Ibn 'Abbās has reported that a deputation of the Christians of Najrān along with seven priests visited the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace), and they said: "O Muḥammad, tell us what is your Lord like and of what substance He is made." The Holy Prophet replied: "My Lord is not made from any substance: He is unique and exalted above everything." Thereupon Allah sent down this Sūrah.

These traditions show that different people on different occasions had questioned the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about the essence and nature of the God to Whose service and worship he invited the people, and on every occasion he recited by Allah's command this very Sūrah in response. First of all, the pagans of Quraish asked him this question in Makkah, and in reply this Sūrah was sent down. Then, at Madīnah, sometimes the Christians, and sometime the other people of Arabia, asked him questions of this nature, and every time Allah

inspired him to recite this very Sūrah in answer to them. In each of these traditions, it has been said that this Sūrah was revealed on this or that occasion. From this one should not form the impression that all these traditions are mutually contradictory. The fact is that whenever there existed with the Holy Prophet a verse or a Sūrah previously revealed in respect of a particular question or matter, and later the same question was presented before him, Allah inspired him to recite the same verse or Sūrah to the people as it contained the answer to their question. The reporters of *Hadīth* describe the same thing, saying: When such and such a question or matter was presented before the Holy Prophet, such and such a verse or Sūrah was revealed. This has also been described as repetition of revelation, *i.e.* the revelation of a verse or Sūrah several times.

Thus, the fact is that this Sūrah is Makki, rather in view of its subject-matter a Sūrah revealed in the earliest period at Makkah, when detailed verses of the Qur'ān dealing with the essence and attributes of Allah Almighty had not yet been revealed, and the people hearing the Holy Prophet's invitation to Allah, wanted to know what was his Lord like to whose worship and service he was calling them. Another proof of this Sūrah's being one of the earliest Sūrahs to be revealed is that when in Makkah Umayyah bin Khalaf, the master of Ḥaḍrat Bilāl, made him lie down on burning sand and placed a heavy stone on his chest, Bilāl used to cry "*Ahad, Ahad!*" This word was derived from this very Sūrah.

Theme and Subject-Matter

A little consideration of the traditions regarding the occasion of the revelation of this Sūrah, shows what were the religious concepts of the world at the time the Holy Prophet began to preach the message of *Tauḥīd*. The idolatrous polytheists were worshipping gods made of wood, stone, gold, silver and other substances. These gods had a form, shape and body. The gods and goddesses were descended from each other. No goddess was without a husband and no god without a wife. They stood in need of food and drink and their devotees arranged these for them. A large number of the polytheists believed that God assumed human form and there were some people who descended from Him. Although the Christians claimed to believe in One God, yet their God also had at least a son, and besides the Father and Son, the Holy Ghost also had the honour of being an associate in Godhead; so much so that

God had a mother and a mother-in-law too. The Jews also claimed to believe in One God, but their God too was not without physical, material and other human qualities and characteristics. He went for a stroll, appeared in human form, wrestled with a servant of His, and was father of a son, Ezra. Besides these religious communities, the Zoroastrians were fire worshippers, and the Sabeans star-worshippers. Under such conditions when the people were invited to believe in Allah, the One, Who had no associate, it was inevitable that questions arose in the minds as to what kind of a God it was, Who was One and Only Lord and invitation to believe in Whom was being given at the expense of all other gods and deities. It is a miracle of the Qur'ān that in a few words briefly it answered all the questions and presented such a clear concept of the Being of Allah as destroyed all polytheistic concepts, without leaving any room for the ascription of any of the human qualities to His Being.

Merit and Importance

That is why the Holy Messenger of Allah (upon whom be peace) held this Sūrah in great esteem, and he made the Muslims realize its importance in different ways so that they recited it frequently and disseminated it among the people. For it states the foremost and fundamental doctrine of Islam (*viz. Tauḥīd*) in four such brief sentences as are immediately on human memory and can be read and recited easily. There are a great number of the traditions of *Ḥadīth* which show that the Holy Prophet on different occasions and in different ways told the people that this Sūrah is equivalent to one-third of the Qur'ān. Several *aḥādīth* on this subject have been related in Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Da'ūd, Nasā'ī, Ṭirmidhī, Ibn Mājah, Musnad Aḥmad, Ṭabarani and other books, on the authority of Abū Sa'īd Khudrī, Abū Hurairah, Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī, Abū ad-Dardā', Mu'ādh bin Jabal, Jābir bin 'Abdullah, Ubayy bin Ka'b, Umm Kulthūm bint 'Uqbah bin Abī Mu'ait, Ibn 'Umar, Ibn Mas'ūd, Qatādah bin an-Nu'mān, Anas bin Mālik, and Abū Mas'ūd (may Allah be pleased with all of them). The commentators have given many explanations of the Holy Prophet's this saying. But in our opinion it simply means that the religion presented by the Qur'ān is based on three doctrines: *Tauḥīd*, Apostleship and the Hereafter. This Sūrah teaches *Tauḥīd*, pure and undefiled. Therefore, the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) regarded it as equal to one-third of the Qur'ān.

A Tradition on the authority of Ḥaḍrat 'Ā'ishah has been related in Bukhārī, Muslim and other collections of the *Aḥādīth*, saying that the Holy Prophet sent a man as leader of an expedition. During the journey he concluded his recitation of the Qur'ān in every Prayer with *Qul Huwa-Allahu aḥad*. On their return his companions mentioned this before the Holy Prophet. He said: Ask him why he did so. When the man was asked, he replied: In this Sūrah the attributes of the Merciful God have been stated; therefore, I love to recite it again and again. When the Holy Prophet heard this reply, he said to the people: "Inform him that Allah holds him in great love and esteem."

A similar incident has been related in Bukhārī, on the authority of Ḥaḍrat Anas, He says: "A man from among the Anṣār led the Prayers in the Qubā Mosque. His practice was that in every *rak'ah* he first recited *Qul Huwa Allah* and then would join another Sūrah to it. The people objected to it and said to him: "Don't you think *Qul Huwa Allah* is by itself enough? Why do you join another Sūrah to it? You should either recite only this Sūrah, or should leave it and recite some other Sūrah. He said: I cannot leave it, I would rather give up leadership in the Prayer, if you so desired." The people did not approve that another man be appointed leader instead of him. At last, the matter was brought before the Holy Prophet. He asked the man. "What prevents you from conceding what your companions desire? What makes you recite this particular Sūrah in every *rak'ah*?" The man submitted: "I have great love for it." The Holy Prophet remarked: "Your love for this Sūrah has earned you entry into Paradise."



قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ
لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝



CXII AL-IKHLĀS

الْاِخْلَاصِ

Verses: 4

Revealed at Makkah

In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

Say:¹ "He is Allah,² the One and Only.³ Allah is Independent of 1-4
all and all are dependent on Him.⁴ Neither has He an offspring nor is
He the offspring of anyone,⁵ and none is equal with Him in rank."⁶

1. The first addressee of this Command is the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) himself for it was he who was asked: "Who is your Lord and what is He like? Again it was he who was commanded to answer the question in the following words. But after him every believer is its addressee. He too should say what the Holy Prophet had been commanded to say.

2. That is, "My Lord to Whom you want to be introduced is none but Allah." This is the first answer to the questions, and it means: "I have not introduced a new lord who I want you to worship beside all other gods, but it is the same Being you know by the name of Allah." "Allah" was not an unfamiliar word for the Arabs. They had been using this very word for the Creator of the universe since the earliest times, and they did not apply this word to any of their other gods. For the other gods they used the word *ilāh*. Then their beliefs about Allah had become fully manifest at the time Abrahā invaded Makkah. At that time there existed 360 idols of gods (*ilāhs*) in and around the Ka'bah, but the polytheists forsaking all of them had invoked only Allah for protection. In other words, they knew in their hearts of hearts that no *ilāh* could help them on that critical occasion except Allah. The Ka'bah also was called *Bait-Allah* by them and not *Bait-ilāhs* after their self-made gods. At many places in the Qur'ān the polytheistic Arabian belief about Allah has been expressed, thus:

In Sūrah Az-Zukhruf it has been said: "If you ask them who created them, they will surely say, 'Allah'." (v. 87)

In Sūrah Al-'Ankabū: "If you ask them, 'Who has created the earth and the heavens and Who has subjected the moon and the sun?' they will surely say: Allah ... And if you ask them, 'Who sent down rainwater from the sky and thereby raised the dead earth back to life?' they will surely say: 'Allah'." (vv. 61-63)

In Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn: "Say to them, 'Tell me, if you know, whose is the earth and all who dwell in it?' They will say, 'Allah's'... say to them, 'To Whom do the seven heavens and the Glorious Throne belong?' They will say, 'To Allah' ... Say to them, 'Tell me, if you know, Whose is the sovereignty over everything? And Who is that Being Who gives protection while none else can give protection against Him?' They will surely reply, 'This power belongs to Allah'." (vv. 84-89).

In Sūrah Yūnus: "Ask them: Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth? Who has power over the faculties of hearing and sight? Who brings forth the living from the dead and the dead from the living? Who directs the system of the universe? They will surely reply, 'Allah'." (v. 31)

Again in Sūrah Yūnus at another place: "When you set sails in ships, rejoicing over a fair breeze, then all of a sudden a strong wind begins to rage against the passengers and waves begin to surge upon them from every side and they realize that they have been encircled by the tempest. At that time they pray to Allah with sincere faith, saying: 'If thou deliverest us from this peril, we will become Thy grateful servants.' But when He delivers them, the same people begin to rebel on the earth against the Truth." (vv. 22-23)

The same thing has been reiterated in Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl, thus: "When a misfortune befalls you on the sea, all of those whom you invoke for help fail you but He (is there to help you), yet when He brings you safe to land, you turn away from Him." (v. 67)

Keeping these verses in view, let us consider that when the people asked: "Who is your Lord and what is He like to Whose service and worship you call us?" the answer given was "*Huwa Allah*: He is Allah." This answer by itself gives the meaning: "My Lord is He Whom you yourself acknowledge as your own as well as the whole world's Creator, its Master, Sustainer and Administrator, and He Whom you invoke for help at critical times beside all other deities, and I invite you to His service alone." This answer comprehends all the perfect and excellent attributes of Allah. Therefore, it is not at all conceivable that the Creator of the universe, its Administrator and Disposer of its affairs, Sustainer of all the creatures living in it, and the Helper of the servants in times of hardship, would not be living, hearing and seeing, that He would not be an All-Powerful, All-Knowing, All-Wise, All-Merciful and All-Kind Sovereign.

3. The scholars have explained the sentence *Huwa-Allah Aḥad* syntactically, but in our opinion its explanation which perfectly corresponds to the context is that *Huwa* is the subject and *Allahu* its predicate, and *Aḥad-un* its second predicate. According to this parsing the sentence means: "He (about Whom you are questioning me) is Allah, is One and only one. Another meaning also can be, and according to language rules it is not wrong either: "He is Allah, the One."

Here, the first thing to be understood is the unusual use of *aḥad* in this sentence. Usually this word is either used in the possessive case as *yaum ul-aḥad* (first day of the week), or to indicate total negative as *Mā jā'a a-nī aḥad-un* (No one has come to me), or in common questions like *Hal 'indaka aḥad-un* (Is there anyone with you?), or in conditional clauses like *Inja'a-ka aḥad-un* (If someone comes to you), or in counting as *aḥad, ithnān, aḥad'ashar* (one, two, eleven). Apart from these uses, there is no precedent in the pre-Qur'ānic Arabic that the mere word *aḥad* might have been used as an adjective for a person or thing. After the revelation of the Qur'ān this word has been used only for the Being of Allah, and for no one else. This extraordinary use by itself shows that being single, unique and matchless is a fundamental attribute of Allah; no one else in the world is qualified with this quality: He is One, He has no equal.

Then, keeping in view the questions that the polytheists and the followers of earlier scriptures asked the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) about his Lord, let us see how they were answered with *aḥad-un* after *Huwa-Allah*.

First, it means: "He alone is the Sustainer: no one else has any share or part in providence. and since He alone can be the *Itāh* (Deity) Who is Master and Sustainer, therefore, no one else is His associate in Divinity either."

Socondly, it also means "He alone is the Creator of the universe: no one else is His associate in this work of creation. He alone is the Master of the universe, the Disposer and Administrator of its system, the Sustainer, of His creatures, Helper and Rescuer in times of hardship; no one else has any share or part whatever in the works of Godhead, which as you yourselves acknowledge, are works of Allah.

Thirdly since they had also asked the questions: of what is your Lord made? what is His ancestry? What is his sex? From whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit it after Him? —all these questions have been answered with one word *aḥad* for Allah. It means: (1) He alone has been, and will be, God for ever; neither was there a God before Him, nor will there be any after Him; (2) there is no race of gods to which He may belong as a member: He is God, one and single, and none is homogeneous with Him; (3) His being is not merely One (*wāhid*) but *aḥad*, in which there is no tinge of plurality in any way: He is not a compound being, which may be analysable or divisible. which may have a form and shape, which may be residing somewhere, or may contain or include something, which may have a colour, which may have some limbs, which may have a direction, and which may be variable or changeable in any way. Free from every kind of plurality He alone is a Being Who is *Aḥad* in every aspect. (Here, one should fully understand that the word *wāhid* is used in Arabic just like the word "one" in English. A collection consisting of great pluralities is collectively called *wāhid* or one, as one man, one nation, one country, one world, even one universe, and every separate part of a collection is also called one. But the word *Aḥad* is not used for anyone except Allah. That is why wherever in the Qur'ān the word *wāhid* has been used for Allah, He has been called *Itāh waḥid* (one Deity), or *Allah-ul-Wāḥid-al-Qahhār*. (One Allah Who is Omnipotent), and nowhere just *wāhid*, for this word is also used for the things which contain pluralities of different kinds in their being. On the contrary, for Allah and only for Allah the word *Aḥad* has been used absolutely, for He alone is the Being Who exists without any plurality in any way, Whose Oneness is perfect in every way.

4. The word used in the original is *samad* of which the root is *šmd*. A look at the derivatives in Arabic from this root will show how comprehensive and vast this word is in meaning. (Lexical discussion of the meanings of the derivatives is omitted).

On the basis of these lexical meanings the explanations of the word *as-Samad* in the verse *Allah-uṣ-Ṣamad*, which have been reported from the Companions, their immediate successors and the later scholars are given below:

Ḥaḍrat ‘Alī. ‘Ikrimah and Ka‘b Aḥbār: “*Ṣamad* is he who has no superior.”

Ḥaḍrat ‘Abdullah bin Mas‘ūd, Ḥaḍrat ‘Abdullah bin ‘Abbās and Abū Wā’il Shaḥīq bin Salamah: “The chieftain whose chieftancy is perfect and of the most extraordinary kind.”

Another view of Ibn ‘Abbās: “*Ṣamad* is he to whom the people turn when afflicted with a calamity.” Still another view of his: “The chieftain who in his chieftancy, in his nobility and glory, in his clemency and forbearance, in his knowledge and wisdom is perfect.”

Ḥaḍrat Abū Hurairah: “He who is independent of all and all others are dependent upon him.”

Other views of ‘Ikrimah: “He from whom nothing ever has come out, nor normally comes out:” “Who neither eats nor drinks.” Views containing the same meaning have been related from Sha‘bī and Muhammad bin Ka‘b al-Kurazī also.

Suddī: “the one to whom the people turn for obtaining the things they need and for help in hardships.”

Sa‘īd bin Jubair: “He who is perfect in all his attributes and works.”

Rabī‘ bin Jubair: “He who is immune from every calamity.”

Muqātil bin Ḥayyān: “He who is faultless.”

Ibn Kaysān: “He who is exclusive in his attributes.”

Ḥasan Baṣrī and Qatādah: “He who is ever-living and immortal.”

Similar views have been related from Mujāhid, Ma‘mar and Murrat al-Ḥamadānī also.

Murrat al-Ḥamadānī’s another view is : “he who decides whatever he wills and does whatever he wills, without there being anyone to revise his judgement and decision.”

Ibrāhīm Nakha‘ī: “He to whom the people turn for fulfilment of their desires.”

Abū Bakr al-Anbārī “There is no difference of opinion among the lexicographers that *ṣamad* is the chief who has no superior and to whom the people turn for fulfilment of their desires and needs and in connection with other affairs.”

Similar to it is the view of Az-Zajjāj, who says "Samad is he in whom leadership has been perfected, and to whom one turns for fulfilment of one's needs and desires."

Now, let us consider why *Allahu-Aḥad* has been said in the first sentence and why *Allah-uṣ-Ṣamad* in this sentence. About the word *aḥad* we have explained above that it is exclusively used for Allah, and for none else. That is why it has been used as *aḥad*, in the indefinite sense. But since the word *ṣamad* is used for creatures also, *Allah-uṣ-Ṣamad* has been said instead of *Allah Ṣamad*, which signifies that real and true *Ṣamad* is Allah alone. If a creature is *ṣamad* in one sense, it may not be *ṣamad* in some other sense, for it is mortal, not immortal; it is analysable and divisible, is compound, its parts can scatter away any time; some creatures are dependent upon it, and upon others it is dependent; its chieftaincy is relative and not absolute; it is superior to certain things and certain other things are superior to it; it can fulfil some desires of some creatures but it is not in the power of any creature to fulfil all the desires of all the creatures. On the contrary, Allah is perfect in His attributes of *Ṣamad* in every respect; the whole world is dependent upon Him in its needs, but He is not dependent upon needs; everything in the world turns to Him, consciously or unconsciously, for its survival and for fulfilment of the needs of everyone; He is immortal and Ever-living; He sustains others and is not sustained by anyone; He is Single and Unique, not compound so as to be analysable and divisible; His sovereignty prevails over entire universe and He is Supreme in every sense. Therefore, He is not only *Ṣamad* but *Aṣ-Ṣamad*, i.e. the Only and One Being Who is wholly and perfectly qualified with the attribute of *ṣamad* in the true sense.

Then, since He is *Aṣ-Ṣamad*, it is necessary that He should be Unique, One and Only, for such a being can only be One, which is not dependent upon anyone and upon whom everyone else may be dependent; two or more beings cannot be self-sufficient and fulfillers of the needs of all. Furthermore, His being *Aṣ-samad* also requires that He alone should be the Deity, none else, for no sensible person would worship and serve the one who had no power and authority to fulfil the needs of others.

5. The polytheists in every age have adopted the concept that like men, gods also belong to a species, which has many members and they also get married, beget and are begotten. They did not even regard Allah, Lord of the universe, as supreme and above this concept of ignorance, and even proposed children for Him. Thus, the Arabian belief as stated in the Qur'an was that they regarded the angels as daughters of Allah. The Prophetic communities too could not remain immune from this creed of paganism. They too adopted the creed of holding one saintly person or another as son of God. Two kinds of concepts have always been

mixed up in these debasing superstitions. Some people thought that those whom they regarded as Allah's children, were descended from him in the natural way and some others claimed that the one whom they called son of God, had been adopted by Allah Himself as a son. Although they could not dare call anyone as, God forbid, father of God, obviously human mind cannot remain immune against such a concept that God too should be regarded as a son of somebody when it is conceived that He is not free from sex and procreation and that He too, like man, is the kind of being which begets children and needs to adopt a son in case it is childless. That is why one of the questions asked of the Holy Prophet (upon whom be peace) was: what is the ancestry of Allah? and another was: from whom has He inherited the world and who will inherit it after Him?

If these assumptions of ignorance are analysed, it becomes obvious that they logically necessitate the assumption of some other things as well.

First, that God should not be One, but there should be a species of Gods, and its members should be associates in the attributes, acts and powers of Divinity. This not only follows from assuming God begetting children but also from assuming that He has adopted someone as a son, for the adopted son of somebody can inevitably be of his own kind. And when, God forbid, he is of the same kind as God, it cannot be denied that he too possesses attributes of Godhead.

Second, that children cannot be conceived unless the male and the female combine and some substance from the father and the mother unites to take the shape of child. Therefore, the assumption that God begets children necessitates that He should, God forbid, be a material and physical entity, should have a wife of His own species, and some substance also should issue from His body.

Third, that wherever there is sex and procreation, it is there because individuals are mortal and for the survival of their species it is inevitable that they should beget children to perpetuate the race. Thus, the assumption that God begets children also necessitates that He should, God forbid, Himself be mortal, and immortality should belong to the species of Gods, not to God Himself. Furthermore, it also necessitates that like all mortal individuals, God also, God forbid, should have a beginning and an end. For the individuals of the species whose survival depends upon sex and procreation neither exist since eternity nor will exist till eternity.

Fourth, that the object of adopting some one as a son is that a childless person needs a helper in his lifetime and an heir after his death. Therefore, the supposition that Allah has adopted a son inevitably amounts to ascribing all those weaknesses to His sublime Being which characterise mortal man.

Although all these assumptions are destroyed as soon as Allah is called and described as *Aḥad* and *Aṣ-Ṣamad*, yet when it is said: "Neither has He an offspring nor is He the offspring of another", there remains no room for any ambiguity in this regard. Then, since these concepts are the most potent factors of polytheism with regard to Divine Being, Allah has refuted them clearly and absolutely not only in Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ but has also reiterated this theme at different places in different ways so that the people may understand the truth fully. For example let us consider the following verses:

"Allah is only One Deity: He is far too exalted that He should have a son: whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth belongs to Him." (An-Nisā': 171)

"Note it well: they, in fact, invent a falsehood when they say, 'Allah has children'. They are utter liars." (Aṣ-Ṣāffat: 151-152)

"They have invented a blood-relationship between Allah and the angels, whereas the angels know full well that these people will be brought up (as culprits)" (Aṣ-Ṣāffat: 158)

"These people have made some of His servants to be part of Him. The fact is that man is manifestly ungrateful." (Az-Zukhruf: 15)

"Yet the people have set up the Jinn as partners with Allah, whereas He is their Creator; they have also invented for Him sons and daughters without having any knowledge, whereas He is absolutely free from and exalted far above the things they say. He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth: how should He have a son, when He has no consort? He has created each and every thing." (Al-An'ām: 100-102)

"They say: the Merciful has offspring. Glory be to Allah! They (whom they describe as His offspring) are His mere servants who have been honoured." (Al-Anbiyā': 26)

"They remarked: Allah has taken a son to himself. Allah is All-pure: He is Self Sufficient He is the Owner of everything that is in the heavens and the earth. Have you any authority for what you say? What, do you ascribe to Allah that of which you have no knowledge?" (Yūnus: 68)

"And (O Prophet,) say: praise is for Allah Who has begotten no son nor has any partner in His Kingdom nor is helpless to need any supporter." (Bani Isrā'īl: 111)

"Allah has no offspring, and there is no other deity as a partner with Him." (Al-Mu'minūn: 91)

In these verses the belief of the people who ascribe real or adopted children to Allah, has been refuted from every aspect, and its being a false belief has also been proved by argument. These and many other Qur'ānic verses on the same theme explain Sūrah Al-Ikhlās fully well.

6. The word *kufū'* as used in the original means an example, a similar thing, the one equal in rank and position. In the matter of marriage, *kufū'* means that the boy and the girl should match each other socially. Thus, the verse means that there is no one in the entire universe, nor ever was, nor ever can be, who is similar to Allah, or equal in rank with Him, or resembling Him in His attributes, works and powers in any degree whatever.

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