

# An Extended Translation of Surah “IKHLAS”

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**Receive:** 08/01/2017

**Accept:** 23/11/2017

## Abstract

Surah Ikhlas, (Oneness): Chapter 112, Number of Verses: 4. The name of this chapter “*al-Ikhlās*” means the purification (in God worshipping). Another name of that is “*Tawhid*” which means Oneness and Unity (of God). “**In the Name of Allah**” Christian Trinitarian formula is “In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”. So the phrase “In the name” is the exact equivalent for “Bism-i” in Arabic. The word “*Allah*” mainly used by Muslims to refer to God in Islam, and it’s the most complete and comprehensive name among the God's many names. This is because each of Allah's names, which are found in the Holy Qur'an, truly reflects one particular aspect of Allah's Attributes. In other words, the only name that refers to all of His attributes is “*Allah*”.

**Keywords:** English Translations of Quran, Chapter Al-IKHLAS, Model of Word Selection, Google Translate, Chosen Words

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Another piece of evidence which is a clear indication that the name "*Allah*", is all-inclusive is that the acceptance of Faith, in Islam, is possible only by reciting the sentence: "*lâ ilaha illallah*": (There is no god, but Allah); and each of the other phrases such as "Creator", alone, is not sufficient enough to proclaim as evidence of Monotheism in Islam. And, that is why in religions other than Islam, the God of Muslims is referred, to as "*Allah*". (<http://www.al-islam.org>)

### **"The All-Merciful"**

- The words "*Rahman*" and "*Rahim*" are adjectives, both derived from "*Rahmah*" which means: mercy and grace; two vital religious terms whose meanings are often misunderstood. According to the Bible exegesis, mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve (as punishment); grace is God giving us something we do not deserve (as extra reward).
- In Habakkuk 3:2, the prophet asks the Lord to "in wrath remember mercy". Despite God's judgment, He asked for God to relent and not pour out the full wrath they deserved. King David sought this mercy in Psalm 51:1-2 in confessing his sin: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!"

Despite his many failures, David asked God to relent and not bring upon him the full consequences of his sin.

- Grace, on the other hand, is God extending favor toward us that we do not deserve. Both Ephesians 2:5 and 2:8 state it is “by grace you have been saved”. God's salvation comes from His grace. Some describe grace as unmerited or unearned favor. In theology, two kinds of grace are often distinguished.
- Common grace is defined as God's grace given to all humanity regardless of their response to Him. This can include the beauty of creation, the provision of food and other essentials, and every good thing that happens to a person regardless of whether the person is a believer or unbeliever.
- Saving grace is grace from God that provides salvation to a person. This is the grace described in Ephesians 2:8-9 that states, “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast”. (<http://www.compellingtruth.org/mercy-grace.html>)
- The word “*Rahman*” as it is popularly recognized among some commentators, refers to the General Mercy of Allah which is bestowed upon all creatures; among them are the believers and the disbelievers, good-doers and evildoers. So, my preferred equivalent for “*Rahman*” is “the All-merciful”.

that is endowed upon the believing, obedient servants alone. The believers, because of their true belief, good actions, and faithful active obedience.

### “The Gracious”

- According to Lane (Arabic-English Lexicon Dictionary), “*rahmān*” has the more intensive meaning, taken to include as objects of sympathy both the believer and the unbeliever, and may therefore be rendered as “the All-merciful”, and “*rahīm*”, on the other hand, is taken to include as objects the believer in particular, may be ←rendered as “the Gracious”. And no need to add the word “All”, because the “*rahim*” has not that intensive meaning. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basmala>)

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ (١)

#### 1.Say: “He, Allah, is One”

- The Arabic word “*Qul*” is an imperative verb means “say”.
- The Arabic word “*huwa*” is a pronoun-third-male-person-singular which means “He”.
- In addition to the above, the word *Allah* is a proper name for God, which is used for nothing but God, while other names for Him, each of which usually refers to one of His qualities of

Beauty and Glory, are often used for other than Him.

- The term “*ahad*” is derived from the root “w-h-d”, and some believe that “*ahad*” and “*wahid*” are the same in many cases. “*Ahad*” means “the One”; He Who has always been one and alone; or He Who has no second. In this verse “*ahad*” is a substitute for Allah, that God is Allah, i.e. One; One in the sense of Absolute Oneness of *Allah*, not in the numerical sense of the word, which has its second and third, but, the One which has no second, therefore, it’s better to be said “unique” or “alon”. But it’s a littel exegetical and far from the surfacial meaning. Moreover, most of Quran’s translators have prefered the word “One” instead.

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ (٢)

## 2. “Allah, the Intended Lord”

- The literal meaning of “*Samad*” is a lord, all people are heading toward him. (See: *Raghib for Qur’anic Vocabulary*)
- Of course some others have said “*samad*” means “independent of anyone”, “All perfect”, “Eternal”, “Indipendent”, “Who is besought by all”, “The Everlasting Sovereign” and etc. No mention, that most of them is not surfacial meaning, but exegetical meaning. According to the narations the term “*samad*” has such a vast meaning that we cannot mention them completely, The word “*Rahim*” refers to that Specific Mercy

and it cannot be translated to convey the exact sense of fullest meaning of the terms. In addition, it was not used in Arabic even at time of Prophet and his pure progeny (P.U.T).

That’s why people have asked them to explain it more and more. But as it mentioned above, the meaning of “*samad*” in the *Raghib* Dictionary for Quranic Words is: “A lord who is intended by everyone”. And the meaning of being needless, everlasting, perfect, independent and etc is just extracted from interpretations of Holy Quran.

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ (۳)

### 3. “He neither Begat, nor was Begotten

- The word “*lam*” literally means “not”, and it changes the meaning of present tense to the past tense. In addition, the repetition of “*lam*” in the verse, is just like the pairing “neither/nor” in English, which is used when mentioning two things that are not true or possible. There are a lot of translators have used the pairing “not/nor” that I couldn’t find it in any source. There is the pairing “not/or” that is not good equivalent for this case. (See: Longman Dictionary)

- The term “*yaliḍ*” means to bear a child as his mother, while the English verb “beget” means to become the father of a child, which is more suitable equivalent for He, as God. Besides, the word “*begotten*” used in the original Greek of the New Testament. [John 3:16](#) teaches that Jesus is God's "only begotten Son" (King James Version). (<http://www.compellingtruth.org/only-begotten-son.html>)

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ (٤)

**“and there is one Equal to Him”**

- This verse seems to explain the previous verse. When Imam Husain (a.s) was asked about the meaning of “*samad*”, he said: “The following verse is explaining the meaning of it. He is *Samad*; neither begot, nor begotten and no one is equal for Him” Taht’s why we didn’t capitalise the word “and” at the beginning of the verse.
- The term “*kufw*” originally means “similar in size, number, amount, value, etc”, then, it is used for any similarity. Considering this meaning that He is unique in every aspect, this verse is the best explanation to word “*Ahad*” at the first verse.