

Chapter 112
Tafsīr Sūrah al-Iklāṣ
Exegesis of *The Purity of Faith*

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The Chapter

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿٤﴾

- 1) Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One!
- 2) Allāh, the Everlasting Sustainer of all.
- 3) He begets not, nor is He begotten.
- 4) And no one is comparable to Him.

Introduction

In the view of ibn Mas`ūd, ibn `Abbās, al-Ḥasan, `Aṭā', `Ikrimah, and Jābir, this Sūrah is Makkī. Another view of ibn `Abbās, as well as the view of Qatādah and Ḍaḥḥāk is that it is Madanī.¹ The number of verses are five in the view of the Meccans and Syrians, and four in the view of the rest. It consists of eleven words and forty seven letters.²

Rāzī and Fayrozabādī list a total of twenty titles for this chapter such as *al-Tawḥīd*, *al-Tajrīd*, *al-Tafrīd*, *al-Ikhlāṣ*, *al-Najāh*, *al-Wilāyah*, *al-Ṣamad*, *al-Asās* and *Nūr al-Qur`ān*.

Aḥmad recorded, on the authority of Ubayy bin Ka`b, that the polytheists asked the Prophet (SAW), “Muḥammad, tell us the lineage of your Lord,” whereupon Allāh revealed “*Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One! Allāh, the Everlasting Sustainer of all; He begets not, nor is He begotten. And no one is comparable to Him.*”³

Bukhārī recorded, on the authority of `Amrah bint `Abdu'l-Raḥmān – a woman who used to stay in the apartment of `Ā'ishah, the wife of the Prophet (SAW), that `Ā'ishah said, “The Prophet sent a man as the commander of a war expedition and he used to lead his companions in prayer with recitation (of the Qur`ān). He would complete his recitation by reciting, ‘*Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One.*’ When they returned they mentioned this to the Prophet (SAW) and he said, “Ask him why he did that.” So they asked him and he said, ‘Because it contains the description of the All-Merciful and I love to recite it.’ So the Prophet said, “Inform him that Allāh, Most High, loves him also.”

Bukhārī recorded, on the authority of Abū Sa`īd, that a man heard another man reciting “*Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One,*” repeating it over and over again. When morning came, the man went to the Prophet (SAW) and mentioned this to him, and it was as though he thought it insignificant. The Prophet said, “By Him in whose hand is my soul, it is equivalent to a third of the Qur`ān.”⁴

Mālik records that Abū Hurayrah said, ‘I went with the Prophet (SAW) and he heard a person reciting, “*Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One,*” and said, “It is obligatory.” I asked him what was obligatory and he replied, “Paradise.”’⁵

al-Ḥasan said, ‘This chapter is pure, it does not contain mention of anything to do with this world or the next.’⁶

Daruqūṭnī said, ‘In terms of authentic narrations, this Sūrah has the most dealing with its excellence.’⁷

Commentary

1) **Say: He is Allāh,
the Absolutely One!**

“Say” with certainty, unwavering belief and firm understanding that “*He is Allāh, the Absolutely One,*” oneness is something unique to Him in that He is the One, singular in His perfection, possessing the Most

Beautiful Names and perfect Lofty Attributes coupled with pure deeds. There is nothing comparable to Him or like Him.⁸ The verse proclaims that He is not subject to plurality and that there is only one true god. As such the verse repudiates the doctrine of trinity, the doctrine of the dualists who believe in the gods of light and dark, the doctrine of those who believe in divination through stars and celestial zones, and polytheism in general.⁹

In this verse, He has announced His *Tawhīd* and ordered the addressee to proclaim it. Therefore, when the servant says, “*Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One,*” he has singled out Allāh in the same way that He singled out Himself. He (SAW) said, “*Say*” to actualise this reality, and to highlight that he was nothing save a conveyor; he would communicate exactly what was related to him.¹⁰

Ibn al-Qayyim said, while explaining the *Mu`awwidhatayn*,

If it is then asked: Why is it that the order (in these chapters) is implemented by reciting the order and the ordered? It is known that when one commands, ‘*Say: Alḥamdulillāh. Say: Allāhu Akbar. Say: SubḥānAllāh*’ the person ordered responds by saying, ‘*Alḥamdulillāh, Allāhu Akbar and SubḥānAllāh*’ without repeating the word, ‘*Say.*’ However, in these chapters one recites them by saying,

“*Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak.*”¹¹

“*Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Mankind.*”¹²

I reply by saying: this is the exact same question that Ubayy ibn Ka`b asked the Messenger of Allāh (SAW). Bukhārī records that Zirr ibn Ḥubaysh said, ‘I asked Ubayy ibn Ka`b concerning the *Mu`awwidhatayn* and he said, “I asked the Messenger of Allāh concerning this and he replied, ‘This is how it was said to me, so I recite (the word): say’ so we recite as the Messenger of Allāh (SAW) recited.”’

Bukhārī then records that Zirr ibn Ḥubaysh asked Ubayy ibn Ka`b, ‘Abū Mundhir, your brother ibn Mas`ūd says such and such.’ He replied, ‘I asked the Messenger of Allāh and he replied, “This is how it was said to me, so I recite (the word): say” so we recite as the Messenger of Allāh (SAW) recited.’¹³

The reason is that the duty of the Prophet (SAW) was to convey the Qur`ān as it was revealed from Allāh and he had no say whatsoever as to its content or recitation. Therefore when Allāh said, “*Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak,*” the dictates of conveying in a complete way demanded that the Messenger of Allāh (SAW) say, “*Say: I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak.*”

This is the meaning of his words, “*This is how it was said to me...*” i.e. I do not say this of my own accord rather I say what is said to me for I only convey the words of my Lord as He revealed them to me.

So abundant peace and blessing be upon him for he did indeed convey the message, completely fulfil his duty and trust and said as was said to him. This fact alone suffices us from the deviancy of the Jahmiyyah, the Mu`tazila and their brothers who say, ‘This is an Arabic Qur`ān whose wording and phraseology was conceived by the Prophet.’ The ḥadīth quoted here clearly repudiates their stance and explicitly states that the Prophet (SAW) conveyed the Qur`ān exactly as it was revealed to him to the extent that when it was said to him, ‘*Say*’ he conveyed this word as well. The duty of the Messenger is only to convey.¹⁴

The purpose of the message is to call mankind to Allāh, in order to achieve this one must know what he is being called to, as such some form of definition is required. Commencing the *Sūrah* with “*Say,*” points to the Messenger’s duty of conveying this message, it provides the definition for him, clears him of those who accused him of falsehood or madness by indicating that he is merely passing on what has come to him, and alludes to the fact that the intellect by itself cannot come to know Allāh as is required.¹⁵

The primary addressee of “*Say*” is the Prophet, and then all who read it and can pass the message on, for this reason the object of the address has been left unmentioned so as to generalise it. As

such, the address proves the universality of the message and that it is not just restricted to the Arabs or a particular people or a particular tribe.¹⁶

Generalising the recipients of the address also proves that the statement that is commanded to be said is clear and understandable to all.¹⁷

The personal pronoun, *huwa*, is also called a concealed noun since its significance is not shown by itself alone. Here it is acting as the *ḍamīr al-sha`n*,¹⁸ which is employed to stress the importance of the information following and direct the readers attention to it, since the personal pronoun itself is explained by what follows.

By commencing the sentence with this personal pronoun, the verse is effectively, in the first instance, abstracting the subject matter and thereby highlighting that the essence or nature of Allāh is unseen, *ghayb*, and that He is the necessary existent.¹⁹ Also highlighted is the fact that His existence is so well-known and widely accepted that each and every person can bring Him to mind.²⁰

In a direct sense, since the verse was revealed in response to the question posed, it is as if it reads ‘Say: (In answer to your question, the One you are asking about) is Allāh.’²¹

Allāh

This name has been explicitly mentioned here because it subsumes all the Attributes of perfection: all those pointing to His magnificence and beauty.²²

He is the Lord, the One who is worshipped, the One deserving of being singled out for worship due to the Perfect Godly Attributes that He is described with.²³

Ṭabarī said,

Allāh is derived from *al-ilāh*, the *hamzah* which is the *fā* of the noun has been removed and so the *lām*, which is the *ʿayn* of the noun, meets with the *lām* which is additional and has a *sukūn* on it, hence this *lām* mixes with the other and becomes one with a *shaddah*.’ He said, ‘As regards the meaning of Allāh, it has been reported to us on the authority of `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās who said, “He is the One who everything takes as deity (*ilāh*) and is worshipped by every object of creation.” Ḍaḥḥāk said that `Abdullāh ibn `Abbās said, “Allāh is the One possessing divinity (*dhū`l-ilāhiyyah*) and deserving worship (*ʿubūdiyyah*) from all His creation.” He then said, ‘If someone were to ask: what is the proof that *ulūhiyyah* is worship (*ibādah*), and that the word *al-ilāh* means *al-ma`būd* (one who is worshipped), and that it follows the form *fa`ila yaf`alu*?’ He said, ‘The word *ta`alluh* is undoubtedly on the form *tafa`ul* deriving from *aliha ya`lahu* and the meaning of *aliha*, when spoken, is *ʿabada* (to worship). The verbal noun of this word has also been mentioned proving that the Arabs articulated it upon the form *fa`ila yaf`alu* without adding anything. Sufyān ibn Wakī` narrated to us; ...; that ibn `Abbās recited,

“...and abandon you and your *ilāha*?”²⁴

and said, “i.e. and your worship,” and he said, “He was one who was worshipped and did not worship.” He also quoted another isnād to ibn `Abbās where he said of this verse, ‘Pharaoh was worshipped and did not worship,’ and he quoted a similar narration from Mujāhid. Then he said, ‘The opinion of ibn `Abbās and Mujāhid clearly shows that the meaning of *aliha* is *ʿabada* and that the word *ilāha* is the verbal noun.’ He then quoted a ḥadīth on the authority of Abū Sa`īd that the Messenger of Allāh (SAW) said, “The mother of `Īsā gave him to a scribe that he may teach him. The teacher said, ‘Write *bismi`llāh*.’ `Īsā said, ‘Do you know what Allāh is? He is the God of the servants (*ilāhu`l-āliha*).’²⁵

Ibn al-Qayyim said,

This Noble Name has ten characteristics in its physical wording that are specific to it,' he mentioned them and then said, 'as regards its specific characteristics with regards to meaning, the most knowledgeable of creation (SAW) said, "I cannot enumerate praise of You, You are as You have praised Yourself." How is it possible to enumerate the specificities of a Name, the object of which has every single perfection without restriction, who deserves all commendation and praise, all lauding and veneration, who possesses all magnificence and perfection, and all nobility and beauty? All goodness, beneficence, generosity, grace, and gifts belong to Him and come from Him. This Name is not mentioned over something paltry except that it becomes plentiful, nor at a time of fear except that it removes it, nor at a time of hardship except that it lifts it, nor at a time of distress and worry except that it alleviates it, nor at a time of constraint except that it liberates it. No weak creature depends upon it except that it grants him strength, nor one undergoing humiliation except it grants him honour, nor one who is poor except that it leads him to richness, nor one who is left alone except that it grants him comfort, nor one who is overcome except that it aids him and supports him, nor one in a state of dire need except that it lifts his need, nor one who is run astray except that it draws him back. It is the Name through which hardship is removed, through which blessings descend, through which supplications are answered, through which the foot does not slip, through which evil is repressed and good is promoted. It is the Name through which the heavens and earth stand, because of which the heavenly scripture descended, the Messengers were sent, the legal laws legislated, the legal punishments established, and Jihād legislated. Through this Name is the creation divided into the felicitous and the wretched, and through it does the Undeniable Reality come to pass and the Final Convulsion occur. Because of it are the Scales erected, the Path laid out, and Paradise and Hell made ready. Through it is the Lord of the worlds worshipped and praised, and to establish its rights were the Messengers sent. It is about it that the questions will be asked in the grave and on the Day of Resurrection. Because of it did the dispute arise and to it one goes for judgment. Love and hate is based on it. Felicitous is one who has come to know it and establish its right, wretched is one who is ignorant of it and left off its right. It is the core of the creation and the command and through it do both stand and become firm, and to it do they end. ...

"Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Transcendent are You! Safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire."^{26,27}

The Absolutely One (*Aḥad*)

Unique (*Wāḥid*).²⁹ He is the Absolutely One (*Aḥad*), i.e. Unique (*Wāḥid*), singular and unparalleled in every aspect, and there is nothing like Him.³⁰ He has no peer, no companion, no son and no partner;³¹ He is One with regards lordship, *rubūbiyyah*, and One with regards divinity, *ulūhiyyah*.³² Allāh, Most High, says,

The majority have stated that *Aḥad* has the same meaning as *Wāḥid*,²⁸ and this is proven by the recitation of ibn Mas'ūd, 'Say: He is Allāh, the

"Your God is One God; there is no God save Him, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful."³³

"They have taken their rabbis and their monks and the Messiah son of Mary as lords beside Allāh, when they were bidden to worship only One God. There is no God save Him. Be He Glorified from all that they ascribe as partner (to Him)!"³⁴

"Say: I am only a warner, and there is no God save Allāh, the Unique, the All-Conquering."³⁵

"And no one is comparable to Him."³⁶

"Nothing is like Him; He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing."³⁷

Ibn `Aṭīyyah said, ‘The whole of the Qur’ān, all of Muḥammad’s message, rather all the messages, came with this purpose: to affirm that Allāh is Unique, Absolutely One. Everything in creation actually points to this reality.’ Allāh, Most High, says,

“This is a clear message for mankind in order that they may be warned by it, and that they may know that He is only One God, and that men of understanding may take heed.”³⁸

“A Book whose verses are perfectly constructed and then demarcated, coming from One who is All-Wise, All-Aware. ‘Do not worship anyone but Allāh, I am a warner and a bringer of good tidings to you from Him.’”³⁹

“We sent a Messenger among every people saying: ‘Worship Allāh and avoid all that is worshipped besides Him.’ Among them were some whom Allāh guided but others received the misguidance they deserved. Travel about the earth and see the final fate of the deniers.”⁴⁰

Ibn al-Qayyim said,

The *Tawḥīd* that the Messengers called to, and with which the Books were revealed, is of two types: *Tawḥīd al-Ma`rifah wa`l-Ithbāt* and *Tawḥīd al-Ṭalab wa`l-Qaṣd*. The first deals with affirming the being of the Lord, Most High, His Attributes, His Names, His actions, His speaking His Books and His conversing with whoever He wills of His servants; it also deals with affirming His decree and destiny and His infinite wisdom. This category has been articulated in the Qur’ān with complete clarity as can be seen in the beginning of *Sūrah al-Ḥadīd*, *Sūrah Ṭā Hā*, the end of *al-Ḥashr*, the beginning of *Tanzīl Sajdah*, the beginning of *Āli `Imrān*, the whole of *Sūrah al-Ikhlās*, and others.

The second category is dealt with in His sayings,

“Say: ‘Disbelievers! I do not worship what you worship....’”⁴¹

“Say, ‘People of the Book! Come to a proposition which is the same for us and you – that we should worship none but Allāh and not associate any partners with Him and not take one another as lords besides Allāh.’ If they turn away, say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’”⁴²

and can be found in *Tanzīl al-Kitāb* and its end, the beginning of *Sūrah al-Mu`min*, its middle and its end, the beginning and end of *Sūrah al-A`rāf*, the generality of *Sūrah al-An`ām*, and the generality of the chapters of the Qur’ān.

Indeed every *Sūrah* in the Qur’ān deals with both types of *Tawḥīd* and calls to them. This is because the Qur’ān either contains information about Allāh, His Names and Attributes, and His actions and words, this then is *Tawḥīd* dealing with knowledge and information [about Allāh]; or it calls man to worship Him alone without any partner and to relinquish all that is worshipped besides Him, this then is *Tawḥīd* dealing with intent and goal; or it contains command and prohibition and the injunction to obey Him, His prescriptions and proscriptions, this then is the rights of *Tawḥīd* and those matters that complete it; or it deals with honouring the people of *Tawḥīd* and information about how they were dealt with in this life and the honour they receive in the Hereafter, this then is the recompense of *Tawḥīd*; or it deals with information about the people of *shirk* and how they were dealt with in this life and what will be unleashed against them of punishment at the final destination, this then is the recompense of those who left the bounds of *Tawḥīd*. Therefore the whole Qur’ān deals with *Tawḥīd*, its rights and its recompense, and it deals with *shirk*, its people, and their recompense.⁴³

Ibn Taymiyyah said,

The *Tawhīd* that the Messengers came with affirmed divinity (*ilāhiyyah*) for Allāh Alone such that one bears witness that *lā ilāha illAllāh*: none is to be worshipped save Him, ones *tawakkul* is only placed in Him, ones love and hate is only for His sake, and that no deed should be done except for His sake; and it comprises affirming what He affirmed for Himself of His Names and Attributes. Allāh, Most High, says,

“Your God is One God. There is none worthy of worship besides Him, the All-Merciful, the Most Merciful.”⁴⁴

“Allāh says, ‘Do not take two gods, He is only One God. So dread Me alone.’”⁴⁵

“Whoever calls on another god together with Allāh, has no grounds for doing so at all and his reckoning is with his Lord. Truly the disbelievers have no success.”⁴⁶

“Ask those We sent before you as Our Messengers: Have We ever designated any gods to be worshipped besides the All-Merciful?”⁴⁷

He informs us that every Prophet called man to the worship of Allāh Alone without any partners,

“You have an excellent example in Ibrāhīm and those with him, when they said to their people, ‘We wash our hands of you and all that you worship apart from Allāh, and we reject you. Between us and you there will be enmity and hatred for ever unless and until you have faith in Allāh alone.’”⁴⁸

and He says about the polytheists,

“When they are told, ‘There is none worthy of worship save Allāh,’ they were arrogant. They said, ‘Are we to forsake our god for a mad poet?’”⁴⁹

The likes of these verses are many in the Qur’ān. The meaning of *Tawhīd* is not restricted to *Tawhīd al-Rubūbiyyah*: the belief that Allāh Alone is the creator of the worlds as thought by the people of theological rhetoric (*ahlu’l-kalām*) and the *Ṣūfīs*. These people thought that if they were affirm this aspect, along with its proof, they would have affirmed the pinnacle of *Tawhīd*, that if they were to witness this and were to obliterate themselves in it they would have done so in the pinnacle of *Tawhīd*.

In reality, if a man was to accept what the Lord deserves of His Attributes and was to absolve Him of everything He should be absolved of, and accept that He Alone is the creator of everything, he would not be a *muwahhīd* until he bore witness that none has the right to be worshipped save Allāh Alone and therefore accepts that He is the God deserving of worship, and affixes himself to the worship of Allāh Alone without any partner. The *ilāh* is the one who is taken as god and worshipped (*ma’lūh ma’būd*), who deserves worship, He is not an *ilāh* with meaning that He is able to create from nothing. If someone were to explain *al-ilāh* to mean one who was capable of creating from nothing and believed that this meaning was the single distinguishing meaning of the word, and thought that affirmation of this was the pinnacle of *Tawhīd*, as was the way of those who affirmed the Attributes and dealt into *kalām* – and this is what they say of Abū’l-Ḥasan and his followers – then they have not known the reality of the *Tawhīd* with which Allāh sent His Messenger (SAW). This is because the polytheist Arabs affirmed that Allāh Alone was the creator of everything, yet despite this belief they remained polytheists. Allāh, Most High, says,

“Most of them do not have faith in Allāh without associating others with Him.”⁵⁰

A group of the Salaf said, “If you ask them, ‘Who created the heavens and the earth,’ they would answer, ‘Allāh,’ yet despite this they would worship others besides Him.”⁵¹ Allāh, Most High, says,

“Say, ‘To whom does the earth belong, and everyone in it, if you have any knowledge?’ They will say, ‘To Allāh.’ Say, ‘So will you not pay heed?’ Say, ‘Who is the Lord of the Seven Heavens and the Lord of the Mighty Throne?’ They will say, ‘Allāh.’ Say, ‘So will you not have *taqwa*?’ Say, ‘In whose hand is the dominion over everything, He who gives protection and from whom no protection can be given, if you have any knowledge?’ They will say, ‘Allāh’s.’ Say, ‘So how have you been bewitched?’”⁵²

Not everyone who affirms that Allāh, Most High, is the Lord of everything and its creator necessarily worships Him and only Him, supplicating to Him and no one else, placing his hope and fear in Him and no one else, loving and hating for His sake only, obeying His Messengers and enjoining to what He enjoins to and prohibiting from what He prohibits from. The generality of the polytheists believed that Allāh was the creator of everything but they set up intercessors through whom they committed *shirk*, and they set up partners with Him. Allāh, Most High, says,

“Or have they adopted intercessors besides Allāh? Say, ‘Even though they do not control a thing and have no awareness?’ Say, ‘Intercession is entirely Allāh’s affair. The kingdom of the heavens and earth is His.’”⁵³

“They worship, instead of Allāh, what can neither harm them nor help them, saying, ‘These are our intercessors with Allāh.’ Say, ‘Would you inform Allāh of something about which He does not know either in the heavens or on earth?’ May He be glorified and exalted above what they associate with Him!”⁵⁴

“You have come to Us all alone just as We created you at first, leaving behind you everything We bestowed on you. We do not see your intercessors accompanying you, those you claimed were partners with Allāh.”⁵⁵

“Some people set up equals to Allāh, loving them as they should love Allāh.”⁵⁶

This is why you will find amongst the followers of these people⁵⁷ those who prostrate to the sun, moon, and stars and invoke them, fast for them, sacrifice to them, and try to draw close to them. They then claim that this is not *shirk* and that “*shirk* can only be committed when one believes that these objects regulate and control my affairs, but if I was to take them as a mere means (*sabab*) and intermediary (*wāsiṭah*), I would not be a *mushrik*.” However, it is known by necessity in the religion of Islām that this is *shirk*.⁵⁸

Aside from textual proofs directing one to His oneness, Allāh also provides rational proofs:

“Say: If there had been other gods with Him, as they say, they would certainly have sought out a way to the Master of the Throne! Glory to Him! He is high above all that they say in greatness and sublimity!”⁵⁹

“If there had been any gods beside Allāh in heaven or earth, they would both be ruined. Glory be to Allāh, the Lord of the Throne, beyond what they describe!”⁶⁰

“Allāh has not chosen any son, nor is there any god along with Him; else would each god have assuredly championed that which He created, and some of them would assuredly have overcome others. Glory be to Allāh above all that they allege.”⁶¹

Others said that *al-Aḥad* and *al-Wāḥid* are not synonymous; rather each has its own specific meaning. Azharī said that only Allāh is ever described as being *Aḥad*, one does not say *rajul aḥad* or *dirham aḥad*, rather one says *rajul wāḥid* and *dirham wāḥid*. In affirmation one would say, *ra’aytu rajulan wāhidan* and in negation one would say, *mā ra’yatu aḥadan*.⁶² Therefore, Khaṭṭābī

said, ‘The difference between the two is that *al-Wāḥid* is One with respect to His essence and nothing resembles Him in it; *al-Aḥad* signifies that He is One with respect to His Attributes and qualities and none shares with Him in them.’ Ḥalīmī said, ‘*al-Aḥad* is One whom nothing resembles and *al-Wāḥid* is One who has no partner or equal.’⁶³ Others said that *al-Aḥad* denotes that He is not limited or subdivided or apportioned whereas *al-Wāḥid* signifies that He has no partner or like.

Ibn Rajab said, ‘The people of theological rhetoric, *ahlu’l-kalām*, explained *al-Aḥad* to mean one who could not be subdivided or apportioned. If what they mean is that He is not composed of separate individual components or that He cannot be split up into component parts, this is correct. But if they mean that one (quality) cannot be discerned from another – and this is what they mean when they use the term *mujassim*, anthropomorphist – this is completely false.’

In the verse, the Name *Aḥad* follows Allāh because Allāh signifies His being the one deserving worship, one whom all creation need yet needs no one, and such can only be One. Therefore divinity, *ilāhiyyah*, dictates Oneness but oneness does not necessarily dictate *ilāhiyyah*, hence the sequence of Names here.⁶⁴

The Name *Aḥad* cannot be unrestrictedly applied to any besides Allāh in an affirmatory context since He is the One who is perfect in all His Attributes and actions.⁶⁵

2) Allāh, the Everlasting Sustainer of all.

Allāh is the One who is sought for the fulfilment of all needs. The inhabitants of the lower and upper world all stand in need of him in the direst of ways. They ask Him for their needs and they place their

hope in Him to fulfil their desires. This is because He is perfect in His Attributes: the All-Knowing whose knowledge is perfect, the Forbearing whose forbearance is perfect, and the Most-Merciful whose mercy encompasses everything. The same applies to all His Attributes.⁶⁶ The verse affirms His generosity and mercy because one is not recoured to unless he is someone who grants grace.⁶⁷ It also negates all defect from Him as this is implied by the word *al-Ṣamad*, just as it negates the fact that there is anyone above Him who could overcome Him.⁶⁸

Linguistically, the word *al-Ṣamad* has two essential meanings: intent and objective (*qaṣd*), and hardness and rigidity (*ṣalābah*). It is the first that is meant here for all of creation turn to Allāh and seek Him in supplication and entreaty.⁶⁹ Ibn al-Anbārī stated that all linguists agreed that this was the correct meaning.⁷⁰

Abū Ja`far al-Ṭabarī said,

In the language of the Arabs, *al-Ṣamad* is one who is sought or betaken to, to whom one recurs and One who has nothing above him... Since this is the case, the most befitting explanation of this word should be that which conforms to its well-known meaning in the language of those whose tongue the Qur`ān was revealed in.⁷¹

One says: ‘*ṣamada ilayhi*,’ i.e. he betook himself, directed himself, aim towards him, recoured to him. ‘*ṣamada ilayhi fī’l-ḥawā’ij*,’ he betook himself to him or took recourse in him in exigencies. ‘*ṣamada al-amr*,’ he betook himself to the thing, aimed at it, sought it. A *ṣamad* is also a lord or chief because one repairs, betakes himself, or has recourse to him in exigencies; or because he is one to whom obedience is rendered, without whom no affair is accomplished; or one to whom lordship ultimately pertains.⁷²

Therefore, in exegesis to this word, Suddī said, ‘He is the One who is sought to fulfil all desires, whose succour is pleaded for in calamity.’⁷³ Ibn `Abbās said, ‘The One to whom creation resorts in

times of need and asks of to fulfil requests.’⁷⁴ Abū Hurayrah said, ‘He is One who stands in no need of anyone yet everyone is in dire need of Him.’⁷⁵ Allāh, Most High, says,

“Mankind! You are the poor in need of Allāh whereas Allāh is the Rich Beyond Need, the Praiseworthy.”⁷⁶

“Any blessing you have is from Allāh. Then when harm touches you, it is to Him that you cry for help.”⁷⁷

The Salaf illustrated the meaning of *al-Ṣamad* in various ways, all of them revolving around its essential meaning:

1) He neither hungers nor thirst, and is not hollow

Ibn `Abbās said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the One who is not hollow.’⁷⁸ Mujāhid said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: solid and not hollow.’⁷⁹ This same view was quoted by Ṭabarī from al-Ḥasan, Sa`īd ibn al-Jubair and Ḍaḥḥāk.

Ṣha`bī said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: One who does not eat food and does not drink.’⁸⁰ Sa`īd ibn al-Musayyib said, ‘The One who has nothing to fill.’⁸¹

Allāh, Most High, says,

“Say: ‘Am I to take anyone other than Allāh as my protector, the Bringer into Being of the heavens and the earth, He who feeds and is not fed?’”⁸²

“I only created jinn and man to worship Me. I do not require any provision from them and I do not require them to nourish Me. Truly Allāh, He is the Provider, the Possessor of Strength, the Sure.”⁸³

2) The One from whom nothing comes out.

`Ikrimah said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the One from whom nothing comes out, He does not give birth and is not born.’⁸⁴

3) The One who does not give birth and is not born

Abū`l-`Āliyah said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the One who does not give birth and is not born. There is nothing that gives birth except that it is inherited from, and nothing that is born except that it will die. So He, Most High, informed them that He will not be inherited from, nor will He die.’⁸⁵

Abū Sa`d al-Ṣaghānī said in commentary to the first two verses, ‘This is because nothing is born except that it will die, and nothing will die except that it will be inherited from, but Allāh will not die and will not be inherited from.’⁸⁶

So in this case the ensuing verse would serve as an explanation to the word.⁸⁷ Ibn Kathīr was of the opinion that this was a good exegesis.

“He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How could He have a son when He has no wife? He created all things and He has knowledge of all things. That is Allāh, your Lord. There is none worthy of worship but Him, the Creator of everything. So worship Him. He is responsible for everything.”⁸⁸

4) The absolute Master or Chief

Shaqīq⁸⁹ and Abū Wā`il⁹⁰ said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the absolute master.’ This is also recorded from ibn Mas`ūd.⁹¹

Ibn `Abbās said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the one with perfect mastery, The Exalted whose greatness is perfect, the Forbearing whose forbearing is perfect, The Rich whose self-sufficiency is perfect, the Compeller whose compelling is perfect, the All-Knowing whose knowledge is perfect, the All-Wise whose wisdom is perfect. All aspects of excellence and mastery are perfected in Him, He is Allāh, this is His description and it applies only to Him.’⁹²

Sa`īd ibn Jubayr said, ‘The One who is perfect in all His Attributes and actions.’⁹³ Rabī` and Maqātil said that it meant One who is free from all defect and blemish.⁹⁴

5) The Everlasting who will never perish

al-Ḥasan and Qatādah said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the One who continues forever after His creation perishes.’⁹⁵ Qatādah said, ‘The ever-enduring.’⁹⁶ Allāh, Most High, says,

“Everyone on it will pass away but the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity.”⁹⁷

6) The governor of affairs

Mujāhid, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: One who is in charge of everything.’⁹⁸ `Alī and `Ikrimah said, ‘The One above whom is no-one.’⁹⁹ Allāh, Most High, says,

“He is the Absolute Master, over His servants.”¹⁰⁰

Ṭabarānī, *Kitāb al-Sunnah*, after quoting most of the above opinions said,

All of these (views) are correct and they are all the qualities of our Lord, Mighty and Magnificent. He is the One who is resorted to in exigencies, He is the absolute master, He is not hollow, He does not eat and drink and He is the One who will remain after His creation perishes.¹⁰¹

Ibn al-Qayyim summarised the meaning as follows:

al-Ṣamad is a master or chief whose mastery is perfect, and it is for this reason that the Arabs would apply this name to their nobles due to the plenitude of their praiseworthy qualities. The *Ṣamad* is one to whom hearts recourse and betake in hope and fear, this is because of his many good traits and praiseworthy qualities. It is for this reason that the majority of the Salaf, amongst them, ibn `Abbās, explained it to mean, ‘The master with perfect mastery, The Exalted whose greatness is perfect, the Forbearing whose forbearing is perfect, The Rich whose self-sufficiency is perfect, the Compeller whose compelling is perfect, the All-Knowing whose knowledge is perfect, the All-Wise whose wisdom is perfect. All aspects of excellence and mastery are perfected in Him, He is Allāh, this is His description and it applies only to Him.’ Those who said that it meant that He was not hollow did not contravene this exegesis for the word signifies a gathering, someone who gathers the attributes of perfection. No one is comparable to Him because He is perfect in His being *al-Ṣamad*.¹⁰²

The word *Ṣamad* is preceded by the definite article prefix (*al*), this is because the initial addressees accepted and knew of His Self-Sufficiency, however they did not accept, or know of, His absolute Oneness and it is to express this that *Aḥad* is left as an indefinite noun.¹⁰³ It is also said that the word *Aḥad*, in any context outside of enumeration and negation, is only ever applied to Allāh, hence it’s being left indefinite since it does not need the definite article to particularise it. *Ṣamad* is applied to others besides Allāh, and hence it is given the definite article prefix to highlight that He is the one and absolute *Ṣamad*.¹⁰⁴

The word Allāh is repeated again to emphasise the fact that anyone who does not have the quality of absolute oneness and the quality of self-sufficiency is not deserving of divinity, *ulūhiyyah*.¹⁰⁵

The two sentences are not connected by a connecting particle because one is like a conclusion to the other, when looked at from one perspective, and an evidence for it, when looked at from another.¹⁰⁶ This is because One who is self-sufficient in and of Himself, in whom the whole creation stands in dire need, can only be one, everything besides that one is needy and whose existence is dependent on another; or absolute oneness necessitates total self-sufficiency and independence.¹⁰⁷

3) He begets not,
nor is He begotten.

Ibn `Abbās said, ‘*He begets not* such that a son comes from Him, *nor is He begotten* such that He comes from something.’¹⁰⁸ He also said, *He begets not* as Maryam did, *nor is He begotten* as were `Īsā and

`Uzayr.¹⁰⁹ The claims of the polytheists, the beliefs implicit in the questions they asked the Prophet (SAW) are now tackled and explicitly negated.¹¹⁰ It is for this reason, the reason that the claims made are not new, that the verbs employed are in the past tense.¹¹¹ The verse negates all lineage from Him from each and every perspective. He is the first before whom was nothing and He is the last, after whom will be nothing.¹¹² Anything that is born is generated (*ḥādith*), and anything that is generated cannot be divine and does not deserve to be worshipped.¹¹³ Hence, the verse further emphasises the absoluteness and perfection of his being *Aḥad* and *al-Ṣamad*.¹¹⁴ Ibn Taymiyyah said,

It is impossible that He give birth or be born. This is because it is impossible to give birth or be produced, or any other words bearing these meanings, without having two sources, or parents. Whatever is born, an object that exists in and of itself, must have a source substance from which it comes out. Whatever is an accident (*ʿaraḍ*) which can only exist in another must have a substance to exist in. The first is negated by His being *Aḥad* for this signifies that no one is comparable to Him and none is equal to Him. Therefore it is impossible that He have a companion and giving birth requires the communion of two. Allāh, Most High, says

“How could He have a son when He has no wife? He created all things and He has knowledge of all things.”¹¹⁵

Here He, Glorious is He, negated His having a son by stating the impossibility of the implications thereof. Negating the consequence negates the cause. He also states that He created everything, i.e. everything is created by Him, nothing is born of Him.

The second is negated by His being *al-Ṣamad* for something born comes from portions separating from two sources, such as the birth of a child coming from the sperm and egg of the mother and father. As such one portion is dependent on the other in order to actually produce something and all of this is impossible for Allāh, Most High. He is *Aḥad*: there is no one comparable to Him who could be a companion or equal, and He is *al-Ṣamad*: nothing emits from Him. Therefore both of these Names negate His having a son and being born.¹¹⁶

Ālūsī said,

He begets not, this is to be negated from Allāh, Most High, because giving birth dictates that some portion of Him be separated from Him, the consequence of accepting this would be to accept that Allāh is composite which in turn negates His qualities of being *al-Ṣamad* and *al-Aḥad*. Additionally, the son is of the same genus as the father whereas nothing is like Allāh, Most High: He is the necessary existent and everything else is a possible existent. A son is usually sought for support and aid and to continue one’s lineage, but Allāh is ever-existent and not in need of anything.¹¹⁷

The above words highlight some of the reasons why one would desire or require a child: to continue ones line and to preserve oneself through descendants, but Allāh has no need of this:

“They say, ‘Allāh has taken a son.’ Glory be to Him! No, everything in the heavens and earth belongs to Him. Everything is obedient to Him.”¹¹⁸

and He owns everything,

“It is not fitting for the All-Merciful to have a son. There is no one in the heavens and earth who will not come to the All-Merciful as a slave.”¹¹⁹

Another reason is to have the child inherit him but Allāh says,

“Everyone on it will pass away but the Face of your Lord will remain, Master of Majesty and Generosity.”¹²⁰

“Allāh is the inheritor of the heavens and the earth and Allāh is aware of what you do.”¹²¹

Abū'l-`Āliyah said, ‘*al-Ṣamad*: the One who does not give birth and is not born. There is nothing that gives birth except that it is inherited from, and nothing that is born except that it will die. So He, Most High, informed them that He will not be inherited from, nor will He die.’¹²²

Abū Sa`d al-Ṣaghānī said, ‘This is because nothing is born except that it will die, and nothing will die except that it will be inherited from, but Allāh will not die and will not be inherited from.’¹²³

Allāh has praised Himself for all of this with His words:¹²⁴

“And say: ‘Praise be to Allāh who has no son and who has no partner in His kingdom and who needs no one to protect Him from abasement.’ And proclaim His greatness repeatedly!”¹²⁵

Allāh highlights the sheer depravity of the claim that He has a son with His words:

“They say, ‘The All-Merciful has a son.’ They have devised a monstrous thing. The heavens are all but rent apart and the earth split open and the mountains brought crashing down, at their ascription of a son to the All-Merciful! It is not fitting for the All-Merciful to have a son. There is no one in the heavens and earth who will not come to the All-Merciful as a slave. He has counted them and numbered them precisely. Each of them will come to Him on the Day of Rising all alone.”¹²⁶

“The say, ‘The All-Merciful has a son.’ Glory be to Him! No, they are honoured slaves! They do not precede Him in speech and they act on His command.”¹²⁷

“He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How could He have a son when He has no wife? He created all things and He has knowledge of all things. That is Allāh, your Lord. There is none worthy of worship but Him, the Creator of everything. So worship Him. He is responsible for everything.”¹²⁸

Bukhārī and Muslim record on the authority of Abū Mūsā al-Ash`arī that the Prophet (SAW) said, “There is none who is more patient upon hearing blasphemy than Allāh, they claim He has a son whereas He provides for them and grants them good health.”¹²⁹

Bukhārī records on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (SAW) said, “Allāh, Mighty and Magnificent, says, ‘The Son of Adam denies me though he has no right to do so and he abuses me though he has no right to do so. His denying Me is his saying, ‘He will not resurrect me as He

created me,” whereas the first creation is not any easier for Me than repeating it. His abusing Me lies in his saying, ‘Allāh has taken a son,’ whereas I am the One, the Everlasting Sustainer who does not beget and is not begotten, and no one is comparable to Him.’”¹³⁰

Not only was the claim made that He had a son, daughters and general kinship were also claimed,

“Yet they make the jinn co-partners with Allāh when He created them! And they attribute sons and daughters to Him without any knowledge. Glory be to Him! He is far above what they describe!”¹³¹

“They claim there is a blood-tie between Him and the jinn but the jinn know very well that they will be arraigned. Glory be to Allāh above what they describe.”¹³²

A proof that He does not beget is that He is not begotten, and this is what is mentioned next.¹³³ Abū Su’ūd said,

“*Nor is He begotten,*” nothing comes from Him due to His being eternal *a parte post* and *a parte ante*, and never being absent. This has been explicitly negated here, even though the addressees accepted the import of this statement, to further affirm the previous negation and to emphasise it by alluding to the fact that both go hand-in-hand.¹³⁴ Experience proves that everything that gives birth must, in turn, be born; whatever does not give birth is not born.¹³⁵

It is also for this reason, the reason that “*nor is He begotten,*” is generally accepted, that negation of giving birth was mentioned first since this was the claim current amongst them, and therefore the claim that should have been immediately dealt with.¹³⁶

The verse also shows that He is Rich Beyond Need and as such His grace and beneficence is granted, not because He needs creation or fears harm from them, but through pure mercy and generosity.¹³⁷

4) And no one is comparable to Him.

There is nothing like Him in His Names, His Attributes and His Actions, Blessed and Exalted is He.¹³⁸ He does not have an equal, and He does not have an opposite:¹³⁹ “*Nothing is like Him, He is*

the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.”¹⁴⁰

In Arabic, the words *kufu’*, *kafi’*, *kifā’a* all mean comparability, likeness or equality.¹⁴¹ This is one of its two basic meanings; the other is to incline or lean towards something.¹⁴² In light of this meaning the Salaf illustrated this by giving two general cases:

1) There is nothing like Him

Abū’l-’Āliyah said, ‘There is nothing comparable to Him, nothing equal to Him, there is nothing like Him.’¹⁴³ Ka’b said, ‘Allāh, Most High, founded the seven heavens and the seven earths on this chapter. Not one of Allāh’s creation is like Him.’¹⁴⁴ Ibn ‘Abbās said, ‘There is nothing like Him, so Glory be to the One, the Subduer.’¹⁴⁵

2) That it comes from *kifā’ah* or equality in marriage.¹⁴⁶ Mujahid said that it meant wife or companion.¹⁴⁷

The import of this verse is further clarified in other verses,

“Do not try and make metaphors for Allāh, Allāh knows and you do not know.”¹⁴⁸

“Do not, then, knowingly make others equal to Allāh.”¹⁴⁹

“Praise belongs to Allāh who created the heavens and the earth and appointed darkness and light. Then those who disbelieve make others equal to their Lord!”¹⁵⁰

and exemplifies one of the pillars of our faith in Allāh. Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Wāsiṭiyyah*, said,

Part of faith in Allah is to believe in what He has described Himself with in His Book and what His Messenger, Muḥammad (SAW), has described Him with without distorting,¹⁵¹ denying,¹⁵² questioning how,¹⁵³ or likening;¹⁵⁴ rather they believe about Allāh, Glorious is He, that “*nothing is like Him and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.*”¹⁵⁵ As such they do not negate what He has described Himself with, they do not distort words from their proper places, and they do not deviate in the topic of His Names and Signs.¹⁵⁶ They do not ask after the how and they do not liken His Attributes with the attributes of His creation.¹⁵⁷ This is because He has no namesake; there is none who is comparable to Him, and none who is equal to Him.¹⁵⁸

He, Glorious and Most High, is not to be compared to His creation for He best knows Himself and others; He is more truthful in speech and better in discourse than His creation. Moreover His Messengers are truthful and entrusted (to accurately convey the revelation) and therefore stand in contrast to those who speak about Him without knowledge. It is for this reason that He says,

“Glorified be your Lord, the Lord of Might, beyond anything they describe. And peace be upon the messengers. And praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds!”¹⁵⁹

Here, He glorified Himself above what the opponents of the messengers described Him with, and He invoked peace and safety on the messengers because what they said was safe from shortcoming and flaw.

He, Glorious is He, has combined negation¹⁶⁰ and affirmation¹⁶¹ in what He described and named Himself with. Consequently, *Ahlu'l-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah* have no recourse but to turn to what the Messengers brought for that is the Straight Path: the path of those whom Allāh favoured: the path of the Prophets, the sincerely truthful, the martyrs, and the righteous.¹⁶²

When negating the comparison, the negation made is that creation is not comparable to Him, not that He is not comparable to creation. This is because it does not befit His praise and glory that he be compared to something as relatively insignificant as His creation. If someone were to say, ‘The king is not like an animal,’ the simile, articulated like this, would not actually be regarded as something meritorious; if one were to say, however, ‘There is no one comparable to the king,’ this would be a statement of praise.¹⁶³

In normative speech one would expect the sentence to read, *lam yakun ahadun kufuwan lahu*, but here the word *kufuwan* has been brought forward to highlight and stress the fact that nothing is comparable to Him. The personal pronoun has been placed before *kufuwan* to give emphasis to the essence of Allāh and to further highlight His dissimilarity to anything.¹⁶⁴

It is for this reason that ibn `Abbās said, ‘Contemplate everything but do not contemplate the essence of Allāh,’ because the intellect cannot comprehend it.¹⁶⁵

These last three phrases are all connected with the particle, *waw*, unlike the rest of this chapter because they have all been stated with the same purpose in mind: to negate a comparison and likeness to Allāh, Most High, in all aspects: This is because things that are comparable are either a parent, a child, or a peer, all have been negated here.¹⁶⁶

The meaning of *aḥad* at the end of this chapter is not the same as that of *Aḥad* in the beginning.¹⁶⁷

There are two authentic recitations of this verse, reading *kufuwan* and *kuf'an*; both are correct and valid dialects of the Arabic language.¹⁶⁸

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter, despite its brevity, negates each and every type of *shirk* and affirms all the foundations of *Tawḥīd* and absolving of defect.¹⁶⁹

Nasafi's recapitulation of this *Sūrah* is as follows:

In response to their request to describe Allāh, He revealed a chapter that encapsulates His qualities. "*He is Allāh,*" alludes to the fact that He is the creator of all things and their originator; implicit in this is that He is Able, Omnipotent and All-Knowing since these qualities are necessary pre-requisites for an act of creation, the finesse of which left all creation in perfect harmony. Also implicit in this is that He is Ever-Living since someone who knows and is able must also be living. Affirmation of this then leads to accepting that He is Hearing, Seeing, one who has an intent, one who speaks and all other attributes of perfection since, were He not to be described with these, He would be described with the opposite which in turn are defective qualities. Deficiency is the hallmark of something generated or something contingent and to ascribe it to the pre-existent is a logical impossibility. "*The Absolutely One,*" He is One and all aspects of polytheism are negated. He alone brought all things into existence and He alone knows all hidden affairs. "*The Everlasting Sustainer of all,*" He is the Rich Beyond Need, needing no one at all whereas everything is in need of Him. "*He does not beget,*" negates the existence of a like, kinship or something of the same genus. "*Nor is He begotten,*" negates His being generated and affirms His pre-existence and His preceding everything. "*And no one is comparable to Him,*" negates that anything be similar to Him. Whoever thinks that this negation, composed in the past tense, excludes a negation in the present tense, whereas the claim of the disbelievers is current, in the present, is wandering aimlessly in misguidance. This is because if (the claimed gods) were not existent in the past, there would be no need to negate them in the present since something generated, something contingent, can never compare to something pre-existent. The words of the disbelievers revolve around polytheism, anthropomorphism and nullification and this chapter repudiates all of these.

Ibn al-Qayyim penned the following in summary to this chapter,

This chapter encapsulates *Tawḥīd* of belief and cognisance. It establishes what is obligatory to affirm for the Lord, Most High: His Absolute Oneness which negates each and every aspect of polytheism, and His being the Everlasting Sustainer which subsumes all of His Attributes of perfection, qualities that are not subject to any type of defect. It negates His having a parent or a child which are both consequences of His being the Everlasting Sustainer and His Oneness. It negates a comparison to Him which in turn dictates that there is nothing like Him, nothing similar to Him and nothing equivalent to Him. Therefore this chapter affirms all perfection for Him and it absolves Him of all defect. It negates anything being close or comparable to His perfection and it negates His having any partner in any form or fashion. These are the pillars of *Tawḥīd* of belief, the one who holds to this belief is clearly demarcated from the misguided and the polytheists in all their various hues and shades. This is why this chapter equates to a third of the Qur'ān for it is either constructive in its style or it is informative. Its being constructive subsumes command, prohibition, and permissibility. Its being informative subsumes its informing about Allāh, His Names, His Attributes and His commands, and its informing about His creation. This chapter devotes itself entirely to Him and His Names and commands, as such it is like a third of the Qur'ān.¹⁷⁰

Explaining the flow and structure of this *Sūrah*, Baqā'ī wrote,

First He established His pure and unblemished reality through stating the (personal pronoun), *huwa*, there can be no name to describe that reality save this pronoun. Therefore one realises that He, in Himself and for no reason save this, is the necessary existent. Following this is an exposition (of the pronoun) stating His divinity which is the most immediate consequence of that reality and is the most definite of all names: (Allāh). Since divinity dictates oneness, being an expression of total independence coupled with the complete dependence of everything else on Him, this was stated by mention of the ensuing Name, *al-Aḥad*. The meanings covered by the Names Allāh and *al-Aḥad* were then further reinforced by stating that He is *al-Ṣamad* which again points to His being the necessary existent and His being the Master of all existence such that nothing resembles Him. Both these meanings are then further clarified by stating that He does not give birth and is not born and that nothing is comparable to Him. So the *Sūrah*, from its beginning to *al-Ṣamad* expounds on His reality, Glorious is He, its absolute oneness and uniqueness and the implications thereof in a well ordered, logical manner. From that point to the end, the *Sūrah* explains that there is nothing comparable to Him, He has no kin and there is nothing of the same genus as Him. He is not a species such that He is born of something or that something is born of Him. This then leads to a complete cognisance of His essence.

Points of Benefit

a) The points of creed covered thus far are mentioned by Ṭaḥāwī in the beginning of his famous treatise on creed:

Allāh is one, without partner. Nothing is like Him. Nothing incapacitates Him. Nothing should be worshipped besides Him. He is pre-existent without beginning, eternal without end. He neither perishes nor ceases to exist. Nothing will be except what He wills. Imaginations cannot attain Him; comprehensions cannot perceive Him. Creatures do not bear any similarity to Him. Alive, He never dies; all-sustaining, He never sleeps. He is a creator without any need to create and a provider without any stores of provision.

b) Qurṭubī said,

This chapter combines two of Allāh's Names which subsume all types of perfection, and they are not found in any other chapter: *al-Aḥad* and *al-Ṣamad*. They prove the absolute oneness of the Divine Essence which is described with every quality of perfection.¹⁷¹

c) Qurṭubī said,

It is said that this *Sūrah* equates to a third of the Qur'ān because of the presence of these two Names which are not found in any other *Sūrah*, Allāh knows best. It is also said that Qur'ān was revealed dealing with three general areas: rules and regulations, promise and threat, and Names and Attributes. This chapter deals with the Names and Attributes which is one of the three areas, as such it is said that it equates to a third of the Qur'ān. This explanation is proven by the ḥadīth of Abū'l-Dardā' in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim that the Prophet (SAW) said, "Allāh has apportioned the Qur'ān in three sections and made 'Say: He is Allāh, the Absolutely One,' one of those sections."^{172,173}

Discussing the issue of whether one part of the Qur'ān can be regarded to be better than another, ibn Taymiyyah said,

This is an important issue and people have differed about it greatly. Some opine that some of Allāh's words are better than others and this has been stated by the Prophetic texts such as the ḥadīth stating that a *Sūrah* comparable to *al-Fātiḥah* has not been revealed in the three Divine Scriptures.¹⁷⁴ He informed us that *Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ* equates to a third of the Qur'ān¹⁷⁵ and this must refer to something other than the number of letters it contains. He announced that *Ayatul-Kursī* is the greatest verse of the Qur'ān as is also established in the Ṣaḥīḥ. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

records that the Prophet (SAW) asked Ubayy ibn Ka`b, “Abū’l Mundhir, do you know which verse in the Book that is with you is greatest?” He replied, ‘Allāh and His Messenger know best.’ He asked again, “Abū Mundhir, do you know which verse in the Book that is with you is greatest?” I replied, “*Allāh, there is none worthy of worship besides Him, the Ever-Living, the Self-Sustaining...?*”¹⁷⁶ He then struck me on my chest and said, “Abū’l-Mundhir, may knowledge be made easy for you!”¹⁷⁷ Ibn Abī Shaybah also records this ḥadīth with the same isnād as that of Muslim with the additional wording, “By the One in whose hand is my soul, this verse has a tongue and two lips...”¹⁷⁸ It is also reported that it is the chief of the Qur’ān.¹⁷⁹ He said about the *Mu`awwidhatayn* that the likes of them has never been seen.¹⁸⁰

Allāh, Most High, says,

“Whenever We abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or equal to it.”¹⁸¹

hence informing us that He replaces it with something better or similar, this then proves that some verses are similar and others differ in excellence. Moreover, the Tawrāt and the Injīl are both the speech of Allāh, yet all Muslims know that the Qur’ān is the best of the three Books. Allāh, Most High, says,

“It is We Who have sent down the Reminder and We who will preserve it.”¹⁸²

“And We have sent down the Book to you with truth, confirming and conserving the previous Books.”¹⁸³

“Say, ‘If both men and jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur’ān, they could never produce anything like it, even if they back each other up.’”¹⁸⁴

Allāh, Most High, says,

“Allāh has sent down the Best Discourse, a Book consistent in its frequent repetitions. The skins of those who fear their Lord tremble at it and their skins and hearts yeild softly to the remembrance of Allāh.”¹⁸⁵

thereby informing us that it is the best discourse of all discourses, be they revealed by Allāh or not. Allāh says,

“We have give you the Seven Oft-repeated (verses) and the Magnificent Qur’ān.”¹⁸⁶

Regardless of what is referred to here, *al-Fātiḥah* or the whole Qur’ān, the verse proves that the Qur’ān has been particularised with this quality. Allāh has called the Qur’ān, Glorious, Noble and Great. He has challenged creation to produce something like it, or ten *sūrah*s like it, or even one *sūrah* like it,

“Let them bring a discourse like it if they are telling the truth.”¹⁸⁷

“Then produce ten invented *sūrah*s like this...”¹⁸⁸

“...produce another *sūrah* like it.”¹⁸⁹

He has specified that only it can be recited in the prayer, none can recite anything else alongside it, none can recite something else altogether and prayer cannot be performed without recitation of the Qur’ān. As such nothing can take its place and nothing can take the place of *al-Fātiḥah* in every aspect by agreement of the Muslims. This is regardless if one opines that it is a pillar that if one leaves off, the prayer must be repeated, or that it is obligatory such that if one leaves it, he is sinful but does not have to repeat the prayer, or that it is a Sunnah. No one has

ever said that reciting something else in its place is equivalent to reciting it from every perspective.

He has particularised the Qur'ān such that none but the pure can touch the *mushaf* as is established from the Companions such as Sa'd, Salmān and ibn `Umar, and the majority of the Salaf and the Khalaf: the four Imāms and others. This was the Sunnah implemented by the Messenger of Allāh (SAW) and stated in his letter sent to `Amr ibn Ḥazm; there is no doubt that he did actually write it. It is also proven by the Book of Allāh. Likewise the ritually impure (*junub*) cannot recite the Qur'ān in the view of the majority of scholars: the four Imāms and others, and this is proven by the Sunnah.

Particularising one of two discourses with specific rules and regulations dictates that it, in and of itself, is of extra merit; to say otherwise would go against the way of the Lord, Most High, in His legal law, indeed even amongst His creation. It also goes against rational proofs in addition to going against legal proofs.

Allāh, Most High, says,

“Follow the best that has been sent down to you from your Lord.”¹⁹⁰

“So give good news to My servants. Those who listen well to what is said and follow the best of it.”¹⁹¹

“Seize hold of it vigorously and command your people to adopt the best in it.”¹⁹²

This then proves that, amongst what Allāh has revealed, is that which is good and that which is better. This is regardless if the better is abrogating, which must be taken to and the abrogated left, since a verse is not abrogated except that it is replaced with something better or its like, or it falls into another category.

The view that some parts of the speech of Allāh are better than the other parts is the opinion narrated from the Salaf, it is the view of the legal jurists from the four schools of law and others. Their statements concerning this are numerous and recorded in many books.¹⁹³

d) The absolute oneness of Allāh leads us to worship Him and Him alone. He Alone deserves to be worshipped and all other worship is futile,

“Say, ‘My prayer and my rites, my living and my dying are for Allāh alone, the Lord of the worlds. I am commanded to be like that and I am the first of the Muslims.’”¹⁹⁴

e) There are many aḥādīth proving the excellence of stating the *tahlīl* such as the ḥadīth recorded by Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet (SAW) said, “Whoever says, ‘None has the right to be worshipped save Allāh alone without any partner, to Him belongs sovereignty, to Him belongs praise, and He is powerful over everything,’ one hundred times in a day will have the reward of freeing ten slaves, one hundred good deeds will be credited to him, one hundred evil deeds will be wiped out for him and he will have a protection from Shayṭān for that day until evening. None can do anything better than what he did save a person who said it more frequently.”¹⁹⁵

f) One should take refuge with Allāh Alone, Qurtubī said,

It is obligatory upon every legally responsible person to know that the qualities of absolute oneness and everlasting sustaining belong to Allāh Alone. Therefore none should be sought save Him and none should be resorted to in cases on contingency save Him.¹⁹⁶

g) Witnessing His Oneness is the arena of the Prophets. Ibn al-Qayyim said,

This is the sphere of *Tawhīd* and His command. The servant witnesses the oneness of the Lord, the Creator, he witnesses His will being implemented, and he witnesses the creation dependent on Him... his witnessing the *Tawhīd* of the Lord and His being One with respect to creation, implementing His will, and the workings of His decree opens the door of seeking refuge and resorting to Him for him, and he realises his dire need of Him. It will guide him to the threshold of servitude and throw him at His door as one who is needy, incapable, indigent, one who does not possess the ability to bring harm or benefit, life or death, or resurrection for himself. Witnessing His command and prohibition, His reward and punishment leads him to praise Him, to do His utmost to obey him and to censure himself for his faults and shortcomings. Hence his life will revolve around witnessing the greatness, wisdom, perfect power, pre-eternal knowledge, and unfathomable providence (of Allāh), and his witnessing his own shortcomings, faults. He will then diligently correct his soul's defects and deeds. Such a servant is one who has been granted accord, who is aided, and has divine providence showered on him. This is the sphere of the Prophets. Ādam said,

“Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If You forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost!”¹⁹⁷

The first Messenger, Nūḥ said,

“My Lord, In You do I seek refuge that I should ask of You that whereof I have no knowledge. Unless You forgive me and have mercy on me I shall be among the lost.”¹⁹⁸

The Imām of the *Ḥunafā'* and the Shaykh of the Prophets, Ibrāhīm, said,

“Who created me, and He does guide me, who feeds me and waters me, when I am sick, He heals me, who causes me to die, then gives me life (again), and who, I ardently hope, will forgive me my sin on the Day of Judgment.”¹⁹⁹

and he supplicated,

“My Lord! Make safe this territory, and preserve me and my sons from serving idols.”²⁰⁰

Hence he knew that it is Allāh who comes between a servant and his committing *shirk* and worshipping idols, he knew that there was no Lord besides Him and therefore directed this request to Him.²⁰¹

h) It is possible that man possess some aspects of being *ṣamad*, Ghazālī said,

The one whom God has appointed to be a model for His servants in fulfilling their worldly and religious duties, and who secures the needs of His creatures by his word and action – to that one God bestows a share in this attribute. But the absolutely eternal is the one to whom one turns in every need, and He is God – may He be praised and exalted.²⁰²

i) Man should try to imitate this attribute as much as is humanly possible. Qurṭubī said,

Moreover it is upon man to inculcate in himself the qualities of leadership and nobility such that people betake themselves to him and his door is sought. Hishām ibn `Urwah narrated that his father said, ‘I met Sa`d ibn `Ubadah and a caller would proclaim, “Whoever wants fat and meat, let him come to Sa`d.” Then I met his son, Qays, and a similar call would be proclaimed for him.’²⁰³

j) Tirmidhī records on the authority of `Abdullāh ibn Buraydah al-Aslamī from his father that the Prophet (SAW) heard a person supplication, ‘O Allāh, I ask You by virtue of the fact that I testify that none has the right to be worshipped save You, the Absolutely One, the Everlasting Sustainer who does not beget and is not begotten, and no one is comparable to Him.’ He said, “By the One in whose hand is my soul, he has asked Allāh by His greatest name which if used in supplication, He will respond, and if asked by it, He will grant.”²⁰⁴

k) Ibn Taymiyyah said,

Some of the people of innovated theological rhetoric adduced that the Lord, Most High, was a physical body from His saying, “*Allāh, the Everlasting Sustainer.*” Amongst these were those who held views similar to Hishām ibn al-Ḥakam, Muḥammad ibn Karrām and others. They said that He was *ṣamad* which means that He is not hollow and that this description only applies to solid bodies such as mountains and rocks. This is why it is said in exegesis to this word that He is the One from nothing comes out, nothing goes in, and He does not eat or drink. Such negations can only apply to a body. They further said that the essential meaning of *ṣamad* is to gather (*ijtimā`*) such as water collecting (*taṣmīd*) in one place, and this meaning can only apply to a body which is composite. Those who negated this said *al-Ṣamad* was one who could not be dispersed or subdivided whereas every body in creation can be subdivided. They further said that *al-Aḥad* was one who could not be subdivided or apportioned whereas every body in creation could. They stated, ‘If you say that He is a body which is composite made up of individual essences or from an essence and a form then something which is made of parts is in need of those parts whereas He, Glorious is He, is *al-Ṣamad* and this means that He is Rich Beyond Need, therefore something composite cannot be *ṣamad*.’²⁰⁵

l) Ibn Taymiyyah said,

Just as it is necessary to absolve the Lord of all defect and fault, so too is it necessary to absolve Him of being similar to any object of creation in any of those Attributes that are affirmed to be His. Both these categories make up the absolving that is obligatory. This *Sūrah* proves both types. His saying, “*no one is comparable to Him,*” negates likeness and partnership. His saying, “*the Everlasting Sustainer,*” subsumes all Attributes of perfection. Therefore the genus of defects has been negated from Allāh, Most High. Everything which is particular to objects of creation constitutes those defects that one must absolve the Lord of, but not so what the Lord has been described with. The servant is described with qualities as befit him such as knowledge, ability, mercy etc. and these are not defective qualities, rather their meanings are also established for Allāh but they are established for Him in way that no created of object can compare to let alone be like. Indeed the food and drink and clothes that Allāh has prepared in Paradise do not compare to anything in this world, even if the names of the two be the same and even though both be created. More so is it that the Creator be incomparable to His creation than one creation being incomparable to another. Allāh has named Himself as being Forbearing, Kind, Most Merciful, All-Hearing, All-Seeing, Almighty, King, Supreme and He has also called some of His creations with the same names, we know full well that the creations who have been given these names cannot ever compare to the Creator in any of (the qualities) indicated therein.²⁰⁶

m) Rāzī said,

This *Sūrah*, with respect to Allāh, is like *Sūrah al-Kawthar* with respect to the Messenger. They abused the Messenger by saying that he was cut off, without heir, having no son and they abused Allāh by saying that He had a son. A man without a son is seen to be deficient and the existence of a son of Allāh is a defect with respect to Allāh, Most High. It is for this reason that He commenced this chapter with, “*Say,*” i.e. you, Muḥammad, should stand up in defence of Me by saying this; however in the other chapter, I would say, “*Truly We have given you Great Abundance,*” (without commencing with, ‘Say’) so that I may stand in defence of you.

n) Ibn al-Qayyim said,

I heard Shaykhul-Islām ibn Taymiyyah saying, ‘The Sunnah prayers before Fajr act as the commencement of deeds (for the day) and the Witr prayer acts as the cessation of deeds. It is for this reason that the Prophet (SAW) would recite the Two Chapters of *Ikhhlās*²⁰⁷ in them since they gather together *Tawhīd* in knowledge and deed, *Tawhīd* in knowledge and intent, and *Tawhīd* in belief and motivation.’²⁰⁸

¹ Qurṭubī, Abū Ḥayyān

² Fairozabādī

³ Aḥmad #21219 and Tirmidhī #3364.

It was ruled ṣaḥīḥ by Ḥākim #3987 with Dhahabī agreeing, and ḥasan by Albānī and

⁴ Bukhārī #5013

⁵ Mālik, vol. 1, pg. 176, Tirmidhī #2899 who said it was ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ gharīb.

It was ruled ṣaḥīḥ by Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Tirmidhī*

⁶ Ṭabarī

⁷ Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Taḥṣīn al-Kabīr*

⁸ Sa`dī

⁹ Rāzī, Baqā`ī

¹⁰ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badā`i` al-Fawā`id*, vol. 2, pg. 659

¹¹ *al-Falaq* (113):1

¹² *al-Nās* (114): 1

¹³ Bukhārī #4976-4977.

¹⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badā`i` al-Fawā`id*, vol. 2, pp. 706-707. cf. Ibn Rajab

¹⁵ Baqā`ī

¹⁶ Baqā`ī

¹⁷ Baqā`ī

¹⁸ Abū Su`ūd, Abū Ḥayyān, Qāsimī, ibn `Uthaymīn

¹⁹ Baqā`ī

²⁰ Abū Su`ūd.

²¹ Ṭabarī, Sama`ānī, Shawkānī

²² Baqā`ī

²³ Ṭabarī, vol. 1, pp. 82-83; Sa`dī

²⁴ *al-A`rāf* (7): 127, i.e. ibn `Abbās and Mujāhid read it with the reading *ilāha* as opposed to the more standard *āliha*. The full verse reads, “The ruling circle of Pharaoh’s people said, ‘Are you going to leave Mūsā and his people to cause corruption in the earth and abandon you and your *āliha*?’”

²⁵ Ṭabarī, vol. 1, pp. 122-124 as quoted from Āli al-Shaykh, *Faḥḥū`l-Majīd*, pp. 21-22

²⁶ Āli `Imrān (3): 191

²⁷ Āli al-Shaykh, *Faḥḥū`l-Majīd*, pp. 22-23

²⁸ Sama`ānī

²⁹ Baghawī. Ibn `Aṭīyyah also quotes this from `Umar and Rabī` ibn Khaytham.

³⁰ Tha`ālabī, Ibn `Aṭīyyah, Abū Ḥayyān

³¹ Qurṭubī, ibn Kathīr

³² Ibn Rajab, Qāsimī

³³ *al-Baqarah* (2): 163

³⁴ *al-Tawbah* (9): 31

³⁵ *Ṣād* (38): 65

³⁶ *al-Ikhhlās* (112): 4

³⁷ *al-Shūrā* (42): 11

³⁸ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 52

³⁹ *Hūd* (11): 1-2

⁴⁰ *al-Naḥl* (16): 36

⁴¹ *al-Kāfirūn* (109): 1-2

⁴² Āli `Imrān (3): 64

⁴³ Āli al-Shaykh, *Faḥḥū`l-Majīd*, pp. 25-26

⁴⁴ *al-Baqarah* (2): 163

⁴⁵ *al-Naḥl* (16): 51

⁴⁶ *al-Mu`minūn* (23): 117

⁴⁷ *al-Zukhruf* (43): 45

⁴⁸ *al-Mumtaḥanah* (60): 4

⁴⁹ *al-Ṣāffāt* (37): 35-36

⁵⁰ *Yūsuf* (12): 106

⁵¹ Ibn Kathīr relates this from ibn `Abbās, Mujāhid, `Aṭā', `Ikrimah, Sha`bī, Qatādah, Ḍaḥḥāk, and `Abdu'l-Raḥmān ibn Zayd ibn Aslam.

⁵² *al-Mu`minūn* (23): 84-89

⁵³ *al-Zumar* (39): 43-44

⁵⁴ *Yūnus* (10): 18

⁵⁵ *al-An`ām* (6): 94

⁵⁶ *al-Baqarah* (2): 165

⁵⁷ i.e. those who think that *Tawḥīd* is restricted to this meaning.

⁵⁸ Āli al-Shaykh, *Faḥḥu'l-Majīd*, pp. 26-29

⁵⁹ *al-Isrā'* (17): 42-43

⁶⁰ *al-Anbiyā'* (21): 22

⁶¹ *al-Mu`minūn* (23): 91

⁶² Rāzī, Shawkānī

⁶³ Qurṭubī, *al-Asnā*, ibn Rajab.

⁶⁴ Baqā`ī

⁶⁵ Ibn Kathīr, ibn Rajab, Shawkānī who quotes this from Azharī

⁶⁶ Sa`dī

⁶⁷ Qurṭubī, *al-Asnā*, vol. 1, pg. 184

⁶⁸ Rāzī

⁶⁹ Ibn al-Fāris, *Mu`jam Maqāyīs al-Lughah*

⁷⁰ Abū Ḥayyān

⁷¹ Ṭabarī.

cf. Qurṭubī who attributes this view to Khaṭṭābī, Tha`ālabī, Abū Ḥayyān, Ḥalabī and Ālūsī

⁷² Lane's Lexicon, summarised

⁷³ Baghawī, Qurṭubī

⁷⁴ Ibn Kathīr

⁷⁵ Qurṭubī

⁷⁶ *Fāṭir* (35): 15

⁷⁷ *al-Naḥl* (16): 53

⁷⁸ Ṭabarī, Bayhaqī, *al-Asmā' wa'l-Ṣifāt* #100, ibn Abī `Āṣim, *al-Sunnah* #665

⁷⁹ Ṭabarī, `Abdu'l-Razzāq, ibn Abī Ḥātim, and ibn Abī `Āṣim #673-674-676,

⁸⁰ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, Bayhaqī #103, ibn Abī `Āṣim #682-683-684

⁸¹ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī `Āṣim #677

⁸² *al-An`ām* (6): 14

⁸³ *al-Dhāriyāt* (51): 56-58

⁸⁴ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Abī `Āṣim #667-668-670. Bayhaqī #102 from al-Ḥasan

⁸⁵ Ṭabarī

⁸⁶ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Khuzaymah, *al-Ṭawḥīd*, pg. 30, Tirmidhī #3364

⁸⁷ Baghawī, Qurṭubī, ibn Kathīr

⁸⁸ *al-An`ām* (6): 101-102

⁸⁹ Ṭabarī, `Abdu'l-Razzāq, ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Abī `Āṣim #666- 671-672, Bayhaqī #99

⁹⁰ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī `Āṣim #672

⁹¹ Ibn Kathīr.

⁹² Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim #19535, Abū'l-Shaykh #98, Bayhaqī #98

⁹³ Baghawī

⁹⁴ Baghawī

⁹⁵ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Abī `Āṣim #679, Abū'l-Shaykh #92-95-99-100, Bayhaqī #104

⁹⁶ Ṭabarī.

Ibn Abī `Āṣim #681 and `Abdu'l-Razzāq also record it from al-Ḥasan

⁹⁷ *al-Raḥmān* (55): 26-27

⁹⁸ Ṭabarī, Abū'l-Shaykh, *al-`Azamah* #96

⁹⁹ Baghawī

¹⁰⁰ *al-An`ām* (6): 18

¹⁰¹ Ibn Kathīr.

cf. Shanqīṭī to 6:14

¹⁰² Ibn al-Qayyim, *al-Ṣawā'iq al-Mursalāh*, pg. 1023

¹⁰³ Bayḍāwī, Rāzī

¹⁰⁴ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Daqā'iq al-Tafsīr*, Ibn Rajab, Baqā`ī, Ālūsī

¹⁰⁵ Bayḍāwī, Ālūsī, Shawkānī

¹⁰⁶ Bayḍāwī, Baqā`ī, Ālūsī

¹⁰⁷ Ālūsī

¹⁰⁸ Ibn Abī Ḥātim #19534

¹⁰⁹ Qurṭubī

¹¹⁰ Tha`ālabī

¹¹¹ Bayḍāwī, Rāzī, Abū Su`ūd, Ālūsī, Shawkānī

¹¹² Qāsimī

¹¹³ Qāsimī

¹¹⁴ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badā'i` al-Fawā'id*, vol. 1, pg. 159

¹¹⁵ *al-An`ām* (6): 101

¹¹⁶ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Daqā'iq al-Tafsīr*

¹¹⁷ cf. Bayḍāwī, Nasafī

¹¹⁸ *al-Baqarah* (2): 166

¹¹⁹ *Maryam* (19): 92-93

¹²⁰ *al-Raḥmān* (55): 26-27

¹²¹ *Āli`Imrān* (3): 180

¹²² Ṭabarī

¹²³ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, ibn Khuzaymah, *al-Ṭawḥīd*, pg. 30, Tirmidhī #3364

¹²⁴ Sālim

¹²⁵ *al-Isrā'* (17): 111

¹²⁶ *Maryam* (19): 88-95

¹²⁷ *al-Anbiyā'* (21): 26-27

¹²⁸ *al-An`ām* (6): 101-102

¹²⁹ Bukhārī #6099 and Muslim #2804

¹³⁰ Bukhārī #4974-4975

¹³¹ *al-An`ām* (6): 100

¹³² *al-Ṣāffāt* (37): 158-159

¹³³ Rāzī, Baqā`ī

¹³⁴ cf. Shawkānī, Sālim

¹³⁵ Refer also to ibn Rajab

¹³⁶ Rāzī, ibn Rajab, Ālūsī, Sālim

¹³⁷ Rāzī

¹³⁸ Sa`dī

¹³⁹ Rāzī, Ibn `Aṭīyyah, Tha`ālabī

¹⁴⁰ *al-Shūrā* (42): 11

¹⁴¹ Ṭabarī

¹⁴² Ibn Fāris

¹⁴³ Ṭabarī,

¹⁴⁴ Ṭabarī, ibn Abī Ḥātim, Abu'l-Shaykh #895

¹⁴⁵ Ṭabarī

¹⁴⁶ Zamakhsharī

¹⁴⁷ Ṭabarī

¹⁴⁸ *al-Naḥl* (16): 74

¹⁴⁹ *al-Baqarah* (2): 22

¹⁵⁰ *al-An`ām* (6): 1

¹⁵¹ ar: *tahrīf*. In the context of *`aqidah*, this is the term given to *ta`wīl*, or figurative interpretation which is 'to turn a wording away from its more obvious meaning to one that is less obvious and weaker, such as in the case of those who stated that *istawā* means *istawlā*.' This is because one is effectively, 'Divesting the word of what it signifies of meaning.' cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Dar' Ta`āruḍ*, vol. 5, pg. 385 and *Majmū` Fatāwā*, vol. 3, pg. 165.

¹⁵² ar: *ta`fīl*. In the context of *`aqidah* this term refers to the negation of Allāh's Attributes. cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Dar' Ta`āruḍ*, vol. 8, pg. 247.

¹⁵³ ar: *takyīf*, meaning to 'ask after the manner and form of something' and 'to seek out the reality and nature of something.' cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*, vol. 3, pg. 139 and *Dar' Ta`āruḍ*, vol. 7, pg. 328

¹⁵⁴ ar: *tamthīl*, meaning to equate Allāh with something else in that which is obligatory or permissible or disallowed (to affirm for Him) because 'Allāh, Most High, is to be absolved of being described with anything that is from the specific qualities of creation, or that there be anything comparable to any of His Attributes of perfection.' cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Bayān Talbīs al-Jahmiyyah*, vol. 1, pg. 53 and *al-Ṣafadiyyah*, pg. 101.

¹⁵⁵ *al-Shūrā* (42):11

¹⁵⁶ Deviation in the Names of Allāh occurs in a number of ways: 1) To name idols after the Names of Allāh such as al-Lāt, derived from *al-Ilāhiyyah*, or al-'Uzzah, derived from al-'Azīz. 2) Calling Allāh names that are unbecoming such as the Christians calling Him father 3) Describing Him with things that He is far removed from such as the saying of the Jews that He is poor 4) Divesting the Names of Allāh of their meanings and to deny their realities 5) Likening the Attributes of Allāh with those of His creation.

cf. Ibn al-Qayyim, *Badā'i` al-Fawā'id*, vol. 1, pg. 153 and *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, vol. 1, pg. 39

¹⁵⁷ Imām Aḥmad said, ‘Allāh is only described with what He described Himself with, or with what His Messenger (SAW) described Him with. One does not go beyond the Qur’ān and the ḥadīth.’ cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū’ Fatāwā*, vol. 5, pg. 382

¹⁵⁸ cf. *Maryam* (19): 65, *al-Ikhlās* (112): 4, *al-Baqarah* (2): 22

¹⁵⁹ *al-Şāffāt* (37): 180-182

¹⁶⁰ Negation of any defect, or any attributes that give a meaning that suggests defect such as sleep, tiredness, inability etc. cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 2, pg. 253

¹⁶¹ Affirmation of Attributes of perfection, none of his creation is like Him in any of His Attributes. cf. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 2, pg. 253

¹⁶² cf. *al-Nisā’* (4): 69

¹⁶³ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ighāthatu’l-Lahfān*, vol. 2, pg. 231. cf. Ibn Abī’l-‘Izz, *Sharḥ Aqīdah al-Ṭahāwīyyah*, pp. 387-388

¹⁶⁴ Zamakhsharī, Bayḍāwī, Rāzī, Tha’ālabī, Abū Su’ūd, Abū Ḥayyān, Ālūsī, Qāsimī, Shawkānī

¹⁶⁵ Tha’ālabī, ibn ‘Aṭīyyah

¹⁶⁶ Baqā’ī, Ālūsī

¹⁶⁷ Sama’ānī

¹⁶⁸ Ṭabarī

¹⁶⁹ Qāsimī

¹⁷⁰ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zādu’l-Ma’ād*, vol. 1, pg. 168

¹⁷¹ Ibn Ḥajr, *Fath*, vol. 9, pg. 61

¹⁷² Muslim #811

¹⁷³ Qurṭubī, *al-Asnā*, vol. 1, pg. 185

¹⁷⁴ Aḥmad #8682-9345-9788-21094-21095.

It was declared ṣaḥīḥ by ibn Ḥibbān #775, ibn Khuzaymah #500-501, and Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi’* #5560

¹⁷⁵ Bukhārī #5013

¹⁷⁶ *al-Baqarah* (2): 255

¹⁷⁷ Muslim #810

¹⁷⁸ Aḥmad #21278 and ‘Abdu’l-Razzāq #6001

¹⁷⁹ Tirmidhī #2878 and Ḥākim #2059 said it was ṣaḥīḥ with Dhahabī agreeing. However, Tirmidhī pointed out its weakness and it was ruled ḍa’if by Albānī, *al-Ḍa’if* #1348

¹⁸⁰ Muslim #814

¹⁸¹ *al-Baqarah* (2): 106

¹⁸² *al-Hijr* (15): 9

¹⁸³ *al-Mā’idah* (5): 48

¹⁸⁴ *al-Isrā’* (17): 88

¹⁸⁵ *al-Zumar* (39): 23

¹⁸⁶ *al-Hijr* (15): 87

¹⁸⁷ *al-Ṭūr* (52): 34

¹⁸⁸ *Hūd* (11): 13

¹⁸⁹ *al-Baqarah* (2): 23

¹⁹⁰ *al-Zumar* (39): 55

¹⁹¹ *al-Zumar* (39): 17-18

¹⁹² *al-A’rāf* (7): 145

¹⁹³ Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū’ Fatāwā & Tafṣīr al-Kabīr*

¹⁹⁴ *al-An’ām* (6): 162-163

¹⁹⁵ Bukhārī #3293-6403 and Muslim #2691

¹⁹⁶ Qurṭubī, *al-Asnā*, vol. 1, pg. 186

¹⁹⁷ *al-A’rāf* (7): 23

¹⁹⁸ *Hūd* (11): 47

¹⁹⁹ *al-Shu’arā’* (26): 78-82

²⁰⁰ *Ibrāhīm* (14): 35

²⁰¹ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Ṭarīq al-Hijratayn*, vol. 1, pg. 262

²⁰² Ghazālī, *The Ninety-Nine Beautiful Names of God*

²⁰³ Qurṭubī, *al-Asnā*, vol. 1, pg. 186.

The narration is referenced to Dāruqṭnī, *al-Askhiyā’* by ibn Ḥajr, *al-Iṣābah*, vol. 2, pg. 30

²⁰⁴ Abū Dāwūd #1493-1494 and Tirmidhī #3475 with a ṣaḥīḥ isnād.

²⁰⁵ Qāsimī

²⁰⁶ Qāsimī. cf. Ibn Rajab

²⁰⁷ i.e. *Sūrah al-Kāfirīn* and *Sūrah al-Ikhlās*

²⁰⁸ Ibn al-Qayyim, *Zādu’l-Ma’ād*, vol. 1, pg. 168

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