



EXCLUSIVE  
DEVOTION

In the Quran, God informs us that in order for our worship and devotion to be accepted by Him, we must offer it exclusively to God.

“...All they were commanded to do was to serve God alone, exclusively devoting their obedience to Him...” 98:5

Let us look at this further...



# What is Exclusive Devotion?

The Arabic word 'Ikhlas' is often translated into English as sincerity or purity. In essence, it means to serve God alone and never to offer one of the exclusive rights of God to anyone or anything in the creation whether in concepts exclusive to God or in ritual devotions. It also means to purify our actions of devotion and worship, so that there is no consideration in them for anyone besides God. Our worship therefore is not to show off, impress others or curry their praise or favour. We do not perform devotions and rituals because we think anything else beside God, will bring us harm or benefit, reward or punishment. It is purely and exclusively for God alone. This is 'Ikhlas' or sincerity.



This concept is extremely important and forms the essence of all good deeds and is a prerequisite for their acceptance. Followers of man made religions may have multiple gods or they may use intermediaries to come closer to God. Islam is God's system for us and is built on exclusivity of devotion to the One True God. The Messenger Muhammad informed us that God is Pure and only accepts that which is pure. This means our offerings must be pure in and of themselves and that our hearts must also be pure as we make the offerings. When our intention combines or associates others alongside God then that becomes problematic and can lead to our worship being rejected.

To show us the importance of this concept, many passages in the Quran speak of this subject. In fact, there is a whole chapter in the Quran named sincerity and exclusivity.



# The Chapter of Sincerity and Exclusivity

Chapter 112 of the Quran is called 'Ikhlas' Sincerity, Purity, and Exclusivity. In four clear and succinct passages, God describes Himself. Due to the greatness of this chapter and its message, the Messenger Muhammad informed us that it is equal to a third of the Quran. This is despite it being one of the shortest chapters of the Quran. It is a chapter that speaks about God which is the main theme of Scripture. It is a formal introduction of God. It tells us who God is and who He is not, so that we may understand why we worship Him alone and why we have no need to worship anyone besides Him.

Let us look at each of the four verses.



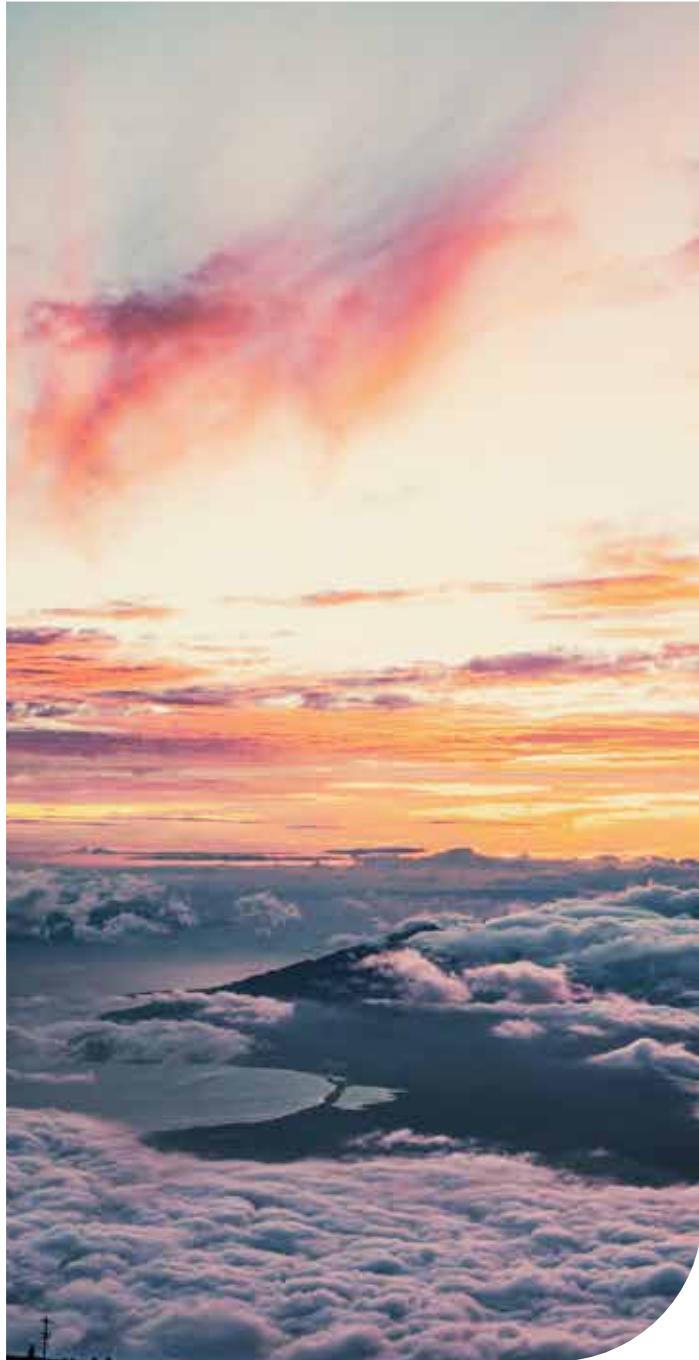
# Say He is God the One and Only

It is said that during the early days of Islam, the pagans of Mecca asked the Messenger Muhammad to detail God's genealogy. In reply, God revealed this chapter of the Quran. God begins by saying that He is One without a second, One of a kind, and One indivisible. God is unique, there is nothing similar to God. He is Perfect in every way and above any deficiency or imperfection. This is why we serve and worship Him. Everything besides God has some weakness or deficiency, which is why those creations also rely on God. God alone is self-sufficient as He mentions in the second verse.



# God the Ultimate Master and Sustainer of Everything

God is Self-Sufficient. He does not need to eat, drink or sleep. He doesn't become tired, forgetful or sick. God doesn't die or become afflicted with old age and infirmity. He needs nothing and no one. Yet at the same time, He sustains all of creation. Everything besides God is dependent upon Him. He provides for the smallest and biggest of creatures. Therefore, we worship God as He alone can offer us Divine care and protection. God does not need helpers as He states in the third verse.



# He begot no one nor was He begotten

No one begot God meaning He wasn't born to parents. He has no mother or father. All newborns are weak and need the help of others. God is free of weakness and need. Likewise, God has no children. He has no sons or daughters. It is we who require parents to care for us in our infancy and then children or helpers to look after us in old age. God does not require help or aid.





# No one is comparable to Him

We cannot compare God to anyone or anything else. This is why the statement of faith in Islam declares that there is no true deity worthy of worship except for the One True God.



# How to Ensure I have Sincerity

Having the correct and proper concept of God is the start and that is why it was the focus of every messenger's ministry. After having the correct concepts and beliefs, and before we perform any act of worship, we must look into our hearts and ensure we are only offering devotions exclusively to God and only to please Him. It cannot be to show off, impress a friend or someone else watching us, out of fear or because we want to hear the praise of others. Forget everything else and concentrate on God alone, seek His pleasure and focus on what He wants. With this in mind, God willing, you will be a sincere servant.

May God's protection be upon you.