



teens' crossroads



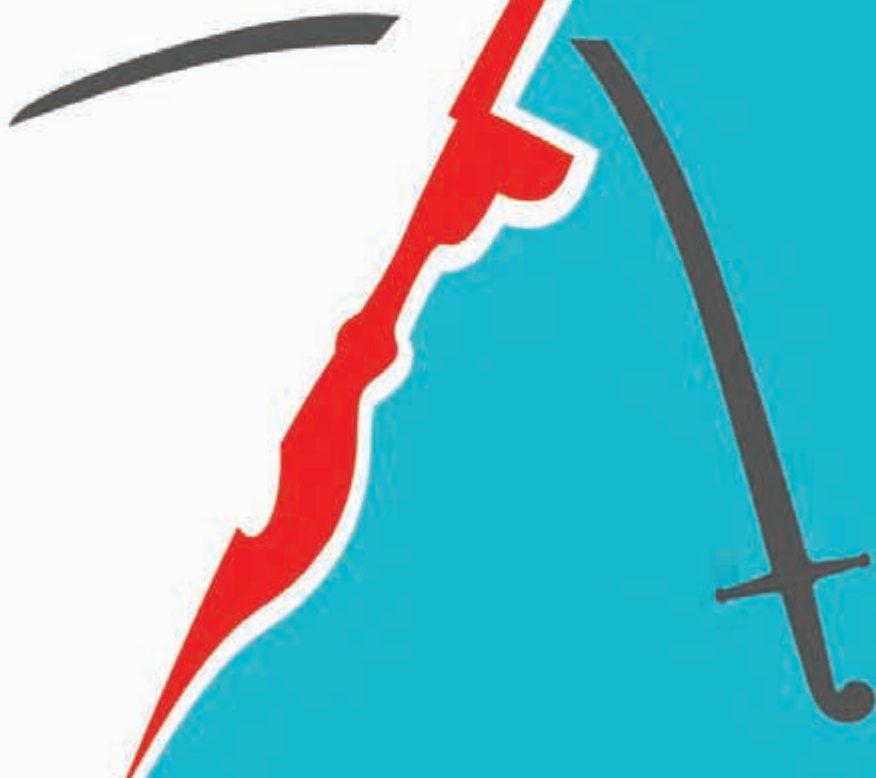
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the *Pen*  
is **MIGHTIER**





A pen and a drop of ink  
Makes the whole world think



# Contents

## Features

**6** As a Muslim, I believe the pen is mightier

**30** Have we fulfilled our purpose?

**17** 9 Misconceptions about Chinese Muslimah Converts in Singapore

**44** The problems of translation



## Common abbreviations

AS: 'Alayhis Salam (Arabic)

Meaning: Peace be upon him

Other similar abbreviations: PBUH (peace be upon him), PBOH (peace be on him)

Usage: For the Prophets (AS) who came before Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

RA: Radiyallahu 'Anhu / 'Anha / 'Anhum (Arabic)

Meaning: May Allah be pleased with him / her / them

Usage: For the Companions (RA) of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

SAW: Sallallahu 'Alaihi Wassallam (Arabic)

Meaning: Peace be upon him

Other similar abbreviations: PBUH (peace be upon him), PBOH (peace be on him)

Usage: For Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

SWT: Subhanahu Wa Ta 'ala

Meaning: Glorified and Exalted One

Usage: For Allah (SWT)

# Contents



## Verses

**8** Al-Qalam (The Pen), 68:7-14

**11** Al-Maedah (The Table), 5:15-16

**22** Maryam (Mary), 19:76

**32** Al-Isra (The Night Journey),  
17:23-24

**37** Al-Imran (The family of  
Imran), 3:185

**38** Al-A'raf (The Heights), 7:206

## Editor's note

With fresh new look, handy size, and colourful spread of 50 pages, TC in this edition features a collection of thoughts about the few situations that we keep finding ourselves circling around, during these recent years.

From looking at the limitation and the strength of the written word, to the questions about our purpose and the misconceptions towards us, TC highlights these opinions as reminders that the continued efforts are necessary towards building understanding and demystifying our religion amongst our friends of other faiths.

In our journey towards a better, safer, and more peaceful future, let us remember even in the most difficult of times, that the lessons from Quran and Hadith are still the most relevant tools in helping us to shape our form and character as Muslims, in our service to Allah (SWT) and in our function within society.

# Contents

## Regulars

**13** What is your / his / her name?

**23** Friends are precious

**24** The meanings in Adhan (the call to prayer)

**25** What to do while listening to Adhan

**27** Soccer boy

**33** Show gratitude to Allah and to your parents

**39** Creations of Allah: The Angels

## Hadith

**15** The truly religious person will smile in the face of everyone

**16** Iman, Islam, Ihsan

**31** The love of God

Arabic terms have been represented by basic Roman alphabets, and their meanings briefly provided, to ease your reading.

For accurate pronunciation and detailed meanings, it is highly advised to refer to the original terms and specific meanings in Arabic.

TC contains some of Allah's names and Quranic verses.

Please do not dispose in the trash. Kindly keep, shred, or recycle the magazine.

Thank you for your kind consideration and gesture.

# TC

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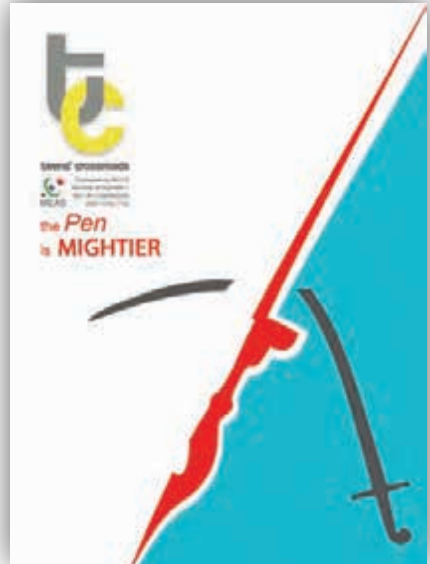
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# As a Muslim, I believe the pen is mightier

By Dr Musharraf Hussain al-Azhari

WE MUST ALL UPHOLD OUR COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

As an Imam and faith leader in the Muslim community I deplore the actions of the gunmen who carried out the killings at the offices of Charlie Hebdo in Paris. In light of the massacre of ten journalists and two police officers we must once again reiterate a fundamental pillar of human freedom - freedom of speech.

What we write and how we express ourselves is also important, the pen is a tool that can be used for the good of humanity and also to ruin it.

*"By the pen and all they write!*


*By the grace of your Lord you are not madman, and for your hard work there is never ending reward. Surely you have a strong character."*

*Al-Qalam (The Pen), 68:1-4*

These are the opening verses of chapter 68 of the Quran that stress the importance of the pen and what it writes. At that time the majority of society were illiterate and could not read and write. The pen was the instrument for preserving Divine Writ, Holy Scripture and life transforming wisdom.

The written word had the power to transform people's beliefs, ideas and assumptions about reality, this changed people's attitudes and outlook on life. It gave them a purpose of life, and opened new horizons far beyond the confines of carnal desires. In fact, it gave them the ability to peep into their future, the life Hereafter and see the consequences of their good and bad actions. This led to changes in their behaviour. The pen is mightier than the sword.





THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN  
THE KALASHNIKOV, MIGHTIER  
THAN THE TANK. MIGHTIER  
THAN THE ATOMIC BOMB.

In 1400BC, the Egyptian pharaoh was very powerful with an army and thousands of swords. But Moses had a pen and Ten Commandments written on a tablet which laid the foundations for civilised society. Whose influence has endured?

In the First Century CE, King Herod had a mighty army and thousands of swords but, beyond the part he played in Jesus' early life, no one remembers him. On the other hand, Jesus Christ brought wisdom that was written down by the pen - it transformed people then, after him and continues to do so to this day. The pen is mightier than the sword.

In the aftermath of the French tragedy, can our world leaders also grasp this? Human hearts and minds cannot be conquered with swords, fighter planes or remotely

controlled drones. Human beings need the gentle touch of soothing speech, words that move and phrases that help build relationships.

The pen is mightier than the Kalashnikov, mightier than the tank, mightier than the atomic bomb. Let us lift our pens to condemn the killing of human beings, and let us ask our world leaders to use diplomacy and peaceful means to bring about a world of fairness and justice for all. **tc**

*Dr Musharraf Hussain al-Azhari is  
the chief Imam at Karimia Institute,  
Nottingham, UK.  
([www.karimia.com](http://www.karimia.com))*

# Al-Qalam (The Pen)

CHAPTER 68. 52 VERSES  
MECCA PERIOD

Surely your Lord is He Who knows best  
who is astray from His way, and He knows  
best those who are rightly guided.

So pay no heed to (the desires of) those  
who persistently deny (God's Message).

They wish you to compromise (with  
them in matters of faith), so they would  
compromise (with you).

Pay no heed to any contemptible  
oathmaker (who swears much with no  
consideration of truth, and no will to act  
on his word);

A defamer, ciculating slander (in all  
directions),

Who hinders the doing of good,  
transgressor of all bounds (of sense or  
decency), one addicted to sinning,

Cruel and ignoble, and in addition to all  
that, morally corrupt,

Because he has wealth and many sons.

*Verses 7 to 14*  
*Translation of the Quran*



# Have we fulfilled our purpose?

By Sharifah Nabila Al-Jufry



Every school has its mission. Every project has an aim. Every report has an objective.

We may have no trouble highlighting the purpose of each place, duty, or object, but how often do we ponder and ask ourselves: what is the true purpose of this life itself? Why did God make us exist in this world in the first place?

For many, 'the purpose of life is a life of purpose' – an inspiration quote by Robert Byrne. Such purposes - that keep us pushing ourselves forward each day - could be trying to get perfect grades for admission into the top university or leading one's self towards fame.

In the Quran, the purpose for the existence of mankind is purely to worship Allah:

*'And I (Allah) did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.'*

*Al-Dharyyat (The Winds That Scatter), 51:56*

It is a common misconception that ibadah, an Arabic term for worshipping Allah, is only confined to acts like praying, making dzikr (or remembrance to Allah), fasting, or performing pilgrimage to Mecca.

Scholars have defined the meaning of ibadah as doing anything that gains the pleasure of Allah. If you spend your day studying in school with the sincere intention of gaining beneficial knowledge, you are also making ibadah!

In fact, being in the search of knowledge is considered one of the most honourable acts, as Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

*'When a man dies, all his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, beneficial knowledge or a righteous child who will pray for him.'*

A renowned scholar Ibn Qayim said that ibadah is love for the One and Only, Allah. He further defined the meaning of loving Allah (SWT) in a poem:

*Love is to be in agreement with the loved one.  
To accept by heart things which (even) he does not like.  
Concordance with it is submitting to his instructions.  
The goal (is), to gain the consent of Allah.*

*Ibn Qayim*

Expressing our love towards Allah (SWT) is not merely a vocal exercise, but to adhere to His teachings and commandments as stated in the Quran.

We all know that actions speak louder than words do.

How can a person claim to love Allah (SWT) with his tongue but refuse to perform the most fundamental act of worship ordained by Allah (SWT), like the five daily prayers?

The purpose of life, in worshipping Allah (SWT), involves performing good, righteous deeds, such as giving alms, upholding ties of kinship and greeting one another.

In the Quran, Allah (SWT) mentions:

*'(Allah) who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving'*

*Al-Mulk (The Dominion), 67:2*

The life on this earth is like a key that opens the door to Paradise, of which only those who pass the test could obtain. One scholar, Shaykh Abdulbary Yahya, said that this life has no meaning without the afterlife:

*'To emphasize the afterlife is to have a life. Without the afterlife, life is not worth living'*

*Shaykh Abdulbary Yahya*

True contentment lies in fulfilling the purpose of the life that has been bestowed upon us by Allah and it is our duty to stay faithful in this commitment. **tc**



# Al-Maedah (The Table)

CHAPTER 5. 120 VERSES  
MEDINA PERIOD

Surely there has come to you from God a light (which enlightens your minds and hearts, and illuminates your way), and a Book clear in itself and clearly showing the truth.

Whereby God guides whoever strives after His good pleasure (by acting in the way He approves) to the ways of peace, salvation, and safety. And He leads them by His leave out of all kinds of (intellectual, spiritual, social, economic, and political) darkness into light, and guides them to a straight path (in belief, thought, and action).

*Verses 15 to 16  
Translation of the Quran*





# What is your / his / her name?

By Madrasati

māsmukā / māsmukí / māsmuhu / māsmuhá

ما اسْمُكَ - ما اسْمُكِ - ما اسْمُهُ - ما اسْمُهَا ؟

What is your / his / her name?

Al-Ustáthu : māsmukā yá wālādí

الْأُسْتَاذُ : ما اسْمُكَ يَا وَوَلْدِي؟

The male<sup>1</sup> teacher : What is your name, my son<sup>2</sup>?

Attálibu : ismí Muhammadu yá ustáth

الطَّالِبُ : اسْمِي مُحَمَّدٌ يَا أُسْتَاذ!

The male student : My name is Muhammed, Teacher!

Al-Ustáth : wā ānti yābnātí māsmukí

الْأُسْتَاذُ : وَأَنْتِ يَا ابْنَتِي ما اسْمُكِ ؟

The male teacher : And you, my daughter<sup>3</sup>, what is your name?

Attálibatah : ismí fátimatu yá ustáth

الطَّالِبَةُ : اسْمِي فَاطِمَةٌ يَا أُسْتَاذ!

The female student : My name is Fatimah, Teacher!

Al-Ustáth : wā ummuki yā fátimatu māsuhá

الأستاذ : وَأُمِّكَ يَا فَاطِمَةَ، مَا اسْمُهَا؟

The male teacher : And your mother, what is her name?

Attálibatah : ismu ummí Jamilah

الطالبة : اسْمُ أُمِّي جَمِيلَةٌ.

The female student : My mother's name is Jamilah.

Al-Ustáthu : wā ābuki māsuh

الأستاذ : وَأَبُوكِ، مَا اسْمُهُ؟

The male teacher : And your father, what is his name?

Attálibatah : ismu abí sāeed

الطالبة : اسْمُ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ!

The female student : My father's name is Said!

1. Every noun in Arabic has a gender specification (male / female).
2. With respect to the age difference, in Arabian culture, we tend to call the younger ones by the title of 'my son' (yā wālādi), especially in a teacher-student relationship.
3. The above (no 2) applies to females as well, as to 'my daughter' (yābnāti). **tc**

**Interested to learn Arabic? Contact Madrasati to find out more about it.**

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THE TRULY RELIGIOUS PERSON WILL SMILE IN THE FACE OF EVERYONE, AS DID THE PROPHET (SAW).

“

Religion is easy, and no one exerts himself too much in religion but it over-powers him; so act right and keep to the mean and be of good cheer and ask for Divine help in the morning, in the evening, and during a part of the night.

”

**Prophet Muhammad (SAW)**



# Iman, Islam, Ihsan

“

---

One day, the Prophet (SAW) was sitting outside among the people when a man came to him and asked. “What is Iman (faith)?” He said, “Iman is that you believe in Allah and His angels and in meeting with Him and in His Messengers, and that you believe in being raised to life after death.”

Then he asked, “What is Islam?” The Prophet (SAW) said, “Islam is that you shall worship Allah and not associate any with Him and that you shall keep up prayer, pay the zakat as ordained, and fast in the month of Ramadhan.”

The man then asked, “What is Ihsan (goodness)?” The Prophet said: “That you worship Allah as if you see Him for if you see Him not, surely He sees you.”

(The man who questioned was Angel Gabriel [AS] in human form.)

---

”

# 9 *Misconceptions* about **Chinese Muslimah** Converts in Singapore

By Meryem Chin

A COMPILATION OF THOUGHTS THAT MERYEM BLOGGED ABOUT IN MARCH 2015. THIS LIST IS A GENTLE (AND HUMOUROUS) REMINDER ABOUT BEING CONSIDERATE AND THINKING TWICE BEFORE COMMENTING AND ASSUMING - EITHER OUT OF IGNORANCE OR WHILE FORGETTING OUR OWN SHORTCOMINGS.



**1. WE AUTOMATICALLY  
CHANGED OUR RACE WHEN  
WE BECAME MUSLIM.**

“So you can speak Malay too?”

“OMG, you can speak Chinese???”

“I don’t get it... so you’re half-Malay  
and half-Chinese?”

“Are you going to change your name to  
Siti bte...?”

I’m Chinese, my parents are Chinese,  
my grandparents are Chinese, and my  
great-grandparents and great-great-  
grandparents are Chinese. Becoming a  
Muslim did not suddenly transform one  
of my ancestors to Malay and neither  
did it give me a sudden gift to speak  
Malay out of the blue (although I do  
wish I had such a gift for languages).

Yes, I get it that most of our  
Chinese dishes have pork in them.

But linking the fact that we no  
longer eat pork to losing our  
‘Chinese-ness’ is akin to saying  
that our ‘Chinese DNA’ is somehow  
located in a pig.

Thanks but no thanks.

By the way, Chicken ‘bak kut teh’  
is just as nice. So is Dendeng (the  
chicken version of ‘bak kwa’).

**2. WE ARE NO LONGER  
CHINESE BECAUSE WE  
CANNOT EAT PORK.**

I don't blame you if you think that way because it is quite common for Converts to be introduced to Islam through love.

**3. WE DEFINITELY  
CONVERTED BECAUSE OF  
OUR MUSLIM PARTNER/  
FIANCE/HUSBAND.**

It does not mean that we lack a brain and the ability to think for ourselves. After all, we are not forced to convert.

Contrary to popular beliefs, many of us do read up on Islam before we actually take the step to convert. Please do NOT, I repeat, DO NOT start preaching to us as if we did not consider all the 'repercussions' of our conversion.

We appreciate the concern, but at the same time, we do not wish for you to look... uninformed. I also apologise beforehand if you meet me and make such an assumption - it is inevitable that I might roll my eyes uncontrollably. It is not directed at you, just at the fact that it has happened virtually EVERY SINGLE TIME I tell someone I am Muslim.

I get this a LOT. Frankly, I am really tired of this question, because I am getting attacked from the front, left, right, and back with it. Islam is the ONLY religion to dictate that the men should marry just one, if he cannot see himself to be just to more than one wife.

Plus what our husbands choose to do will not affect you in any way. It is between them and us.

Having said this, won't you ask yourself why we have chosen to subjugate ourselves to Islam despite such obligations? Doesn't it say so much more about the authenticity of the message of Islam?

**4. WE ARE OKAY WITH  
POLYGAMY SINCE  
OUR HUSBANDS ARE  
ALLOWED TO MARRY UP  
TO 4 WIVES.**

5. WOMEN ARE OPPRESSED IN ISLAM! WE'LL HAVE TO STAY IN THE KITCHEN AND SERVE TEA FOREVER.

How about, men are oppressed in Islam because they have to slog and earn money to provide for their wives while their wives get to earn their keep?

Just because men and women have different roles does not mean one is superior over the other.

And we women definitely do not feel at all oppressed one little bit, so stop harping over it.

We are not brainwashed, nor have we been possessed to become meek, subservient wives.

No, you'll just get a lengthy counseling session. This is Singapore, not ISIS.

Many times though, there still is a social stigma linked to converting (as do all other religions), especially prevalent amongst the older, more traditional generation.

But for us Converts, whose parents and relatives mostly do not share our joy in us becoming muslim, converting out of it is easy-peasy, as we'd be seen as going back to 'normal'.

But - Nauzubillah (I seek refuge in Allah from it) - I shiver at the thought that I was this close to continue being non-Muslim, and the thought of ever converting out of Islam. I pray I die a Muslim, Insha'Allah (Godwilling)!!

6. ONCE YOU'RE IN, YOU CAN'T GET OUT. THEY'LL PUNISH YOU. THAT'S WHY THERE ARE SO FEW PEOPLE CONVERTING OUT OF ISLAM.

7. WE BELIEVE  
NON-MUSLIMS  
GO TO HELL.

Actually, we would be the ones to go to hell for ever assuming that about you.

Go read this post (<http://www.thenewmuslim.co/do-all-non-muslims-go-to-hell>) as it will give you a better picture.

Yeah, the probability is as high as you becoming one, too. It is the same thing when the word 'expat' is given only to you if you're Caucasian, while the word 'immigrant' is given if you're Asian, African, or Indian, etc. A crazy Christian terrorist, therefore, is called a 'crazy man', whereas the word 'terrorist' is only applied to Muslims.

Stop following the mainstream media and open your eyes to the rest of the terrorist attacks by other non-Muslim groups that these propagandic media conveniently leave out.

8. WE MIGHT BECOME  
TERRORISTS ONE DAY.

Yeah, like suddenly, we became dumb and unable to make rational decisions, because of the fact that we did not consider all the points, especially those mentioned earlier.

We have people telling us we're stupid, and looking at us piteously because we can no longer show off our hair and wear short dresses and skirts.

We have people trying to advise us based on the misconceptions mentioned above. Seriously, I don't mind well-meaning advice, debates, and intense talks on religion, but do not try to convert me by telling me that Muslim women are not allowed to drive, or something along that line.

As much as I believe in your ability to think, so should you respect mine as well. So please, the next time you see a Chinese Muslim in Singapore, please do know that we are as Chinese as the (Singaporean) Chinese can be. As much as we appreciate your concern, we'd rather you see that we've chosen Islam for the beauty of the Faith rather than for the unfortunate, screwed-up misconceptions which you hold of it.

9. WE ALL LOST  
OUR MINDS.

Waleikumsalam (And peace be with you). **tc**

# Maryam (Mary)

CHAPTER 19, 98 VERSES  
MECCA PERIOD

God strengthens in guidance those who have sought and found guidance. The righteous, good deeds of lasting merit are best in your Lord's sight for reward, and best for returns.

*Verse 76*

*Translation of the Quran*





# Friends are precious

By Shasel

Friendship is an awesome gift  
Reconcile speedily after a tiff  
It is a gem that needs a polish  
Every minute we must cherish  
Never take friends for granted  
Drop a note to stay connected  
Sincere friends are so precious

Always befriend the righteous  
Reject them not when they err  
Everytime we must remember

Prophets are the best examples  
Really good, they had disciples  
Even if they were condemned  
Curses hardly came from them  
Inspire our buddies to be kind  
Out of sight, but often in mind  
Until forever our ties will last  
Sure it will if we are steadfast. tc



# The meanings in *Adhan* (the call to prayer)

The Adhan must be performed for each Salah (prayer) to invite people to prayer. It is Sunnah (highly recommended) to listen to the Adhan and to respond to the Adhan (see next page). The Muadhhdhin, the one performing the Adhan, stands up facing the Qiblah in Mecca, places his index fingers in his ears and recites the Adhan as follows.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Allah is the Greatest,  
Allah is the Greatest

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

I bear witness that there is no god  
but Allah

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

I bear witness that Muhammad is  
the Messenger of Allah

حَيَّ عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ

Hasten to prayer

حَيَّ عَلَى الْفَلَاحِ

Hasten to success

\* this verse is recited at this position of the Adhan for the Subuh/Fajr (before sunrise) only

الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

Prayer is better than sleep

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Allah is the Greatest,  
Allah is the Greatest

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

There is no god but Allah

# What to do while listening to *Adhan*

It is necessary to stop everything, even Quranic recitation, when we hear the Adhan. We should listen to the Adhan with respect, reflect on its meanings, and respond to the verses as we hear them being recited. The following is the line-by-line response to the Adhan.

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Allah is the Greatest,  
Allah is the Greatest

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

I bear witness that there is no god  
but Allah

أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ

I bear witness that Muhammad is  
the Messenger of Allah

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

There is no force and no power  
except the Power of Allah

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

There is no force and no power  
except the Power of Allah

\* this response is for the corresponding verse (for the Subuh/Fajr [before sunrise] only)


الصَّلَاةُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ النَّوْمِ

Prayer is better than sleep

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ، اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

Allah is the Greatest,  
Allah is the Greatest

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

There is no god but Allah 



# Soccer boy

By Noreen Yek Boussetta

Tucked in a quiet corner of the Northern side of Singapore is one school that offers the best of both worlds, i.e. education and sports. It is the Singapore Sports School.

Danial Izaac bin Hazree, or Izaac, as he is fondly called, has great soccer skills that his parents made up their minds to enroll him there. Since then, no one has regretted the decision. "It was a dream come true. I believe all boys who love sports would want to be in this school," chuckles the 15-year-old.

He recalls how passionate he had been about soccer at a very young age. It all



*Danial Izaac*

started when he was only nine years old. He had been secretly using his dad's socks and borrowing a friend's boots to play soccer. Izaac's dad forbade him to play soccer as he had a phobia towards the sports due to his own injury while playing a match when he was younger. Out of concern, his father prohibited him from doing the sport.

However, all that changed when Izaac's school soccer coach called his mother one day and informed her how well he played.

"My coach urged my mom to take me to FAS for JCOE trials". It was there and then

that everyone in the family got convinced with Izaac's super skills.

FAS is Football Association of Singapore and JCOE stands for Junior Centre of Excellence, one of the platforms for youth development in Singapore football. Since that fateful event, the rest is history.

Izaac's mom, Mdm Norlinda Mohamed Osman, 41 years old, admits that it was a difficult decision to let Izaac go to the sports school at first, considering the fact that he would only come home once a week. "However, as time went by, I started to let go bit by bit and it turned out well."

Citing an equilibrium of academic and sports in the school, the Business Development Manager with Standard Chartered Bank (S) Ltd says, "It is a rare opportunity that shouldn't be missed as my son can strengthen his soccer skills and balance his studies both at the same time."

Izaac has been at the sports school since he was 13 years old (Secondary 1). He still has two more years to go before graduating.

After completing his O-Levels, he intends to further his studies in a polytechnic and

*Izaac and his family*





*Izaak and his team at the airport on 13 March 2016*

after that, he wants to pursue his passion in becoming a professional national footballer.

Although Izaak is away from home often, his mother trusts him very much. She doesn't have to worry about her son's religious duties towards Islam. His daily routine includes getting up at 7.30AM before commencing classes around two hours later. His soccer training starts at 6.00PM for one and a half hour, before calling it a day at 10.15PM. In between, he makes sure he does his five obligatory daily prayers.

"As for Friday prayers, the school caters a private 44-seater bus for the Muslim students to go to the mosque. While during Ramadhan, we will still fast and training will be conducted daily after iftar. We will do our terawih prayers right after the training is over," he shares.

Speaking of her son, Mdm Norlinda is full of praises for him. "Izaak is very disciplined and punctual. A very shy but funny, responsible and independent person. He is family-oriented. He takes care of his little brothers well. He can even change their diapers and make milk for them. A gentleman ... who will automatically help to carry all the heavy things when we shop. He helps out in any event. He loves his family so much and protects them."



She is also grateful that the sports school has cultivated positive values in her son. "The kids at school have been trained to be organised and to always keep their rooms clean."

Izaak still keeps in touch with his primary school mates and they call him "their idol". Well, not just his friends are saying good things about him. Even Fandi Ahmad sang praises about him. "He (Fandi Ahmad) used to comment how well my son played," shares Mdm Norlinda with pride.

Although Izaak has been at the sports school for three years, he still gets homesick.

The feeling is stronger when he goes away for overseas tournaments.

Without shyness, he admits that he still messages and calls his mother every night before going to bed.

When he gets out from school once a week, the family spends quality time together. "It's a must to go out every Saturday... have lunch and dinner, watch movie, shop, cycle and do karaoke. Communication is the key. Seeing all my children laughing away when my husband cracks jokes... that is happiness for us," says the mother of five.


Mdm Norlinda's other children are aged 17, 12, seven and five years old. Izaak is the

second in the family. She has no qualms about allowing Izaak nor her other children to go overseas one day in pursuit of their studies. To her, she will always support her children's interests.

This ambitious young boy has a strong principle. He has this to say, "in order to be successful in life, work so hard that one day your signature will be called an autograph".



*Izaak (right) pictured in 2013 with Fandi Ahmad and son, Ikhsan (left)*

As this was written, Izaak and his team mates just left for Thailand's FAS-NFA (National Football Academy) Under 15 soccer tournament. We wish Izaak all the best in his pursuit to be a successful footballer! 





# The love of God

A man came before Prophet Muhammad (SAW) with a carpet, and said, "Oh Messenger, I passed through a wood, and heard the voices of the young birds. I took and put them into my carpet, and their mother came fluttering around my head. I uncovered the young, and the mother flew down after them. Then I wrapped them up in my carpet, and here they are."

Then Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Put them down." And when he said so, their mother joined them.

And Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Do you wonder at the affection of the mother bird towards her young? I swear by Him Who has sent me, verily God is more loving to His creatures than the mother to these young birds. Return them to the place from where you took them, and let their mother be with them:'



# Al-Isra (The Night Journey)

CHAPTER 17, 111 VERSES  
MECCA PERIOD

Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him alone, and treat parents with the best of kindness. Should one of them, or both, attain old age in your lifetime, do not say 'Ugh!' to them (as an indication of complaint or impatience), nor push them away, and always address them in gracious words.

Lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say: 'My Lord, have mercy on them even as they cared for me in childhood'.

*Verses 23 to 24  
Translation of the Quran*



# Show gratitude to Allah and to your parents

By Shaik Kadir

“Show gratitude to Me and to your parents” is Allah’s command reflected in the title of this article. The command is taken from the Quran, in Chapter 31 (Luqman), Verse 14.

This instruction from Allah (SWT) shows that a person whether they are an adult or a child, ought to be grateful for their life first to Allah (SWT) and immediately after that not to anyone else but to their parents.

Sometime back, my daughter’s friend told my daughter: “It’s nice that you have a mother. She loves you, cooks for the family, and brings you and your brother up so adoringly. But I am not as fortunate as you.”

It is sad to hear that my daughter’s friend had lost her mother when she was a child. But she did face all odds of living



and grew up to be a school-teacher. She is not alone in being deprived of a mother at an early age. Many others had faced the same situation, too. For instance, our own prophet, Prophet Muhammad (SAW), was doubly orphaned when he was a little child. His father passed away before he was born. His mother passed away when he was only six years old. But life must go on even without parents. But those with parents are fortunate, so be grateful to Allah (SWT) for it, and do good and show your gratitude to them. This is the advice of Islam.

Nowadays, we do see many Muslims, taking their mothers out to celebrate Mother's Day to show their love for them.

This is a good move to shower love on mothers by various means, such as by taking them out to restaurants, or presenting them with gifts on this special day dedicated to mothers.

After all, our Prophet (SAW) did say, "Paradise lies at the feet of our mother." This is to acknowledge the fact that mothers do their best for their children's welfare. It is a dedication to show how a mother makes sacrifices in caring for her baby from the time the baby is in her womb for nine months and right to at least two years after its birth, the period when the baby most needs the mother's care and attention for survival.

To remind people of the great sacrifice a mother always does to her children, Allah (SWT) points out, "We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents. His

mother bore him by bearing hardship, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years. (Hear the command O man!): Show gratitude to Me and to your parents." (Luqman, 31:14)

Loving one's mother and taking care of her is an Islamic obligation. Hence, many adult children who are already working take Mother's Day (in May) as an opportune occasion to dedicate their love for their mothers.

Fathers are not forgotten either as they too play an important role in nurturing children and guiding them into adulthood. For this reason, there is a Father's Day celebration too, in June.

Both Mother's Day and Father's Day were introduced in the United States about a hundred years ago, while Islam instructs people to show gratitude to both parents more than 1,400 years ago. As can be seen, the instruction given in Chapter 31, Verse 14, asks people to show gratitude not to mothers only but to both parents.

The Quran provides numerous instructions in which both parents are mentioned together. Some of the instructions are:

*"Do good to your parents..."*

*An-Nisa (The Women), 4:36; Al-An'am (The Cattle), 6:151*

*"Treat your parents with kindness..."*

*Al-Baqarah (The Heifer), 2:83*

*“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both attain old-age in your lifetime, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour.”*

*Al-Isra (The Night Journey), 17:23*

*“Bear them (your parents) company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to Me (in love)...”*

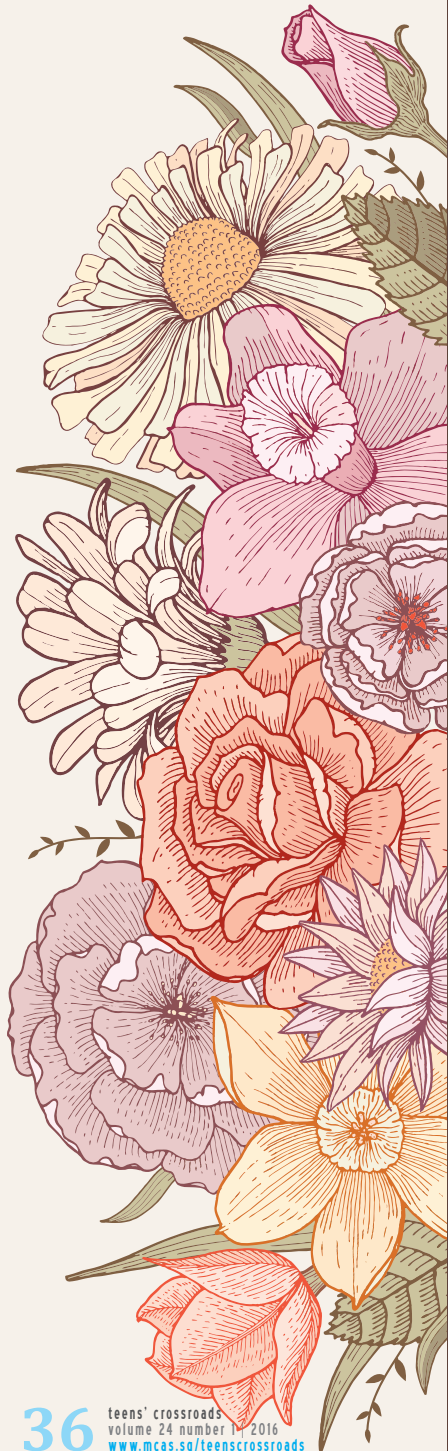
*Luqman, 31:15*

The above quotations show that Muslims ought to do good to their parents and show their gratitude to them every day, not once a year. They ought to pay tribute to both parents for all their love and care, and make them feel special every day.

In turn, they too are in need of our love, care, and concern every day in all our interactions with them. Here are some notes for when you are dealing with your parents:

- *Do not use harsh words on them*
- *Do not hurt their feelings*
- *Do not be rude to them*
- *Do not be rough towards them*
- *Do not abuse them through speech or action*
- *Do not neglect them*





Allah (SWT) says in Chapter 17 (Luqman), Verse 23: "Whether one or both attain old-age in your lifetime, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honour."

If there are some disagreements between them and you, talk about the matter nicely and politely with them. Any grievances should be discussed with them openly, honestly, politely, and kindly. There should be no scolding, shouting, or raising your voice at them. Always maintain good relationship with them.

The sincerity in kindness and love to parents would not go unrewarded. Children who take care of their parents in old age would themselves be taken care of by their children later on. The Prophet (SAW) said, "Be of good service to your parents for surely your children will be of good service to you."

Apart from the celebration and recognition accorded to parents, Allah (SWT) advises a Muslim to say a do'a (supplication) for them regardless of whether they are still alive or have passed away. The do'a goes as follows, "O My Lord! Bestow Your grace upon them as they had cherished and reared me when I was a child." (Al-Isra [The Night Journey], 17:24) **tc**

# Al-Imran (The family of Imran)

CHAPTER 3. 200 VERSES  
MEDINA PERIOD

(No one will live forever doing what they do.) Every soul is bound to taste death. So (O people), you will but be repaid in full on the Day of Resurrection (for whatever you have done in the world). Whoever is spared the Fire and admitted into Paradise has indeed prospered and triumphed. (Know that) the present, worldly life is nothing but a transient enjoyment of delusion.

*Verse 185*

*Translation of the Quran*



# Al-A'raf (The Heights)

CHAPTER 7. 206 VERSES  
MECCA PERIOD

Indeed your Lord is God, Who has created the heavens and the earth in six days, then He has established Himself on the Supreme Throne, covering the day with the night, each pursuing the other swiftly, with the sun, the moon, and the stars obedient to His command. Blessed and Supreme is God, the Lord of the worlds.

Call upon your Lord (O humankind) with humility and in the secrecy of your hearts. Indeed your Lord does not love those who exceed the bounds.

*Verses 54 to 55  
Translation of the Quran*





# Creations of Allah: The Angels

By Ust Bani Ali

Allah. There is no god except Him, the Creator of all that exist. Allah (SWT) created everything in the heavens and on earth by His Decree, by His Might and His Wisdom. Allah (SWT) says, 'Kun' (Be), and things come into being and ever since, things are still coming into being, as the word 'Fayakun' is in present and future tense.

*He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth; whenever He decrees a matter He (merely) says: 'Be' and it is.*

*Al-Baqarah [The Heifer], 2:117*

*Praise be to Allah, Who created (out of nothing) the heavens and the earth, Who made the angels messengers with wings, two, or three, or four (or more), He adds to Creation as He pleases, for Allah has power over all things.*

*Al-Fatir [The All-Originating],  
35:1*

Out of nothing Allah the Almighty creates, as the verse indicates by the use of the word -'Fatir' (literally means 'separate') to denote the separation between nothing



and something, between Al-Khaliq (Allah, the Creator) and Mahkluq (Creation).

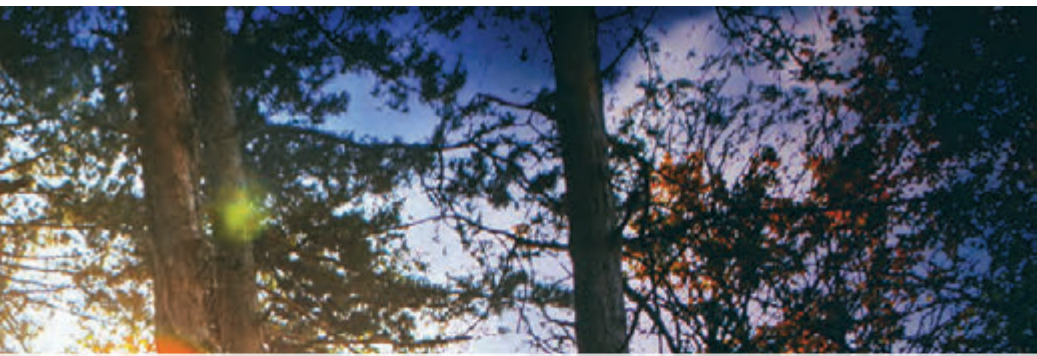
The process of creation continues with separation and thus we see the distinctive phenomena of time, space and matter. Allah (SWT) separates the heavens and the earth, the physical (seen) and the metaphysical (unseen). Then creatures multiply and occupy the realms by this Fitrah (Nature) as we see around us. Thus we find countless varieties of species be it discovered or yet to be discovered by mankind. All these creations of Allah (SWT) are 'obedient' in their nature as they continuously function consistently. The following verse explains clearly this phenomenon categorically, of celestial bodies, Angels, and creatures other than that of Jinn and Insan (Human).

*All the animate creation in the heavens and the earth, and all creatures and the Angels prostrate (obey) themselves in adoration before Allah and they are not arrogant.*

*An-Nahl (The Bee), 16:49*

The nature of all that Allah (SWT) created with the purpose of supporting and preserving other life form, such as humanity, is without arrogance, a characteristic not befitting for an 'obedient servant'. The Angels serve Allah (SWT) in total obedience, looking after the wellbeing of others in creation, and in turn, the earth's ecological system is made subservient to living creatures including





mankind. Truly, Allah (SWT) is the Rabb (Lord, Creator, Sustainer and Provider) of all that exists.

### **The Mala'ikah (Angels)**

Allah (SWT) created the Mala'ikah (Angels) to be His obedient servants to serve as messengers between the realms. The root word "Malak" means message, as in one who is assigned to communicate between Allah the Creator and creation.

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said in a Hadith, narrated by Aishah (RA), summarising the three types of beings, saying:

*Angels were created from light,  
Jinn were created from smokeless  
fire, and Adam was created from*

*that which has been described to  
you (in the Quran and Sunnah, i.e.  
dust).*

The Angels are spiritual creatures with intelligence. The Angels do not have desires like humans do, for example, like the need to procreate or the need for food, and they are without genders. As mentioned, they are totally obedient and do not have the ability to disobey.

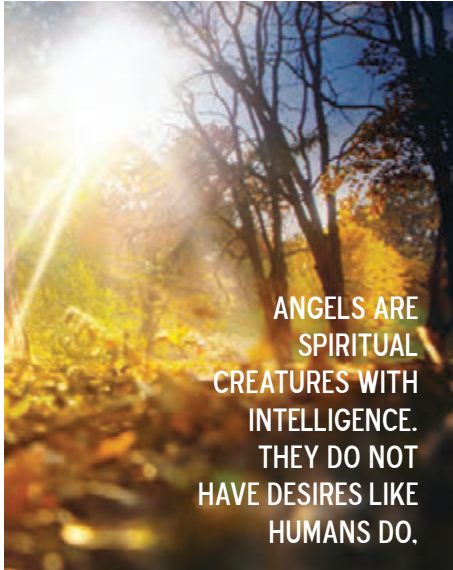
To serve Allah (SWT) in administering creation, the Angels are vested with powers, and as such are far superior to any other creatures. The Angels can travel inter-dimensionally with speed, whether in the spiritual realm or the physical realm, and they can take on a physical form.

The original form of the Angels cannot be depicted in any image as humans do not know exactly how they look like. The number of Angels that Allah created is unknown to mankind, but there are Angels known to us, in particular those whom Allah (SWT) assigns with specific duties.

### Specific Angels and Their Duties

Jibril (Gabriel) is the Archangel, and is well known as the messenger between Allah (SWT) and creation. Allah (SWT) assigns Jibril (AS) with a noble task of sending Wahiy (Revelation or Inspiration from Allah) to the Prophets of Allah on earth. Jibril is also known from various verses in the Quran as Ruh-ul-Amin (The Spirit of Truth) and Ruh-ul-Qudus (The Holy Spirit) thus Jibril played an integral part in the history of humanity in the past.

Mika'il (Michael) is another Angel assigned by Allah (SWT) to sustain creation with the Grace and Blessings from Allah.



ANGELS ARE  
SPIRITUAL  
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HUMANS DO.

While Israfil (Uriel), will end creation by sounding the 'Sur' (Trumpet) on the Last Day. The Quran refers to the Angel of Death as 'Malak-ul-Maut' but known in some Hadith as Azra'il based on Isra'iliyat (Israel Folklore).

Raqib and Atid are assigned to record the deeds of mankind, while Munkar and Nakir will question those who have passed on in Barzakh (Realm of the tomb).

Malik is the guardian of Hell and Ridwan is the guardian of Paradise.

There are other Angels mentioned in the Quran like the eight Angels who guard the Throne of Allah:

*And the angels will stand on the sides, with eight of them bearing aloft the Throne of your Lord on that Day.*

*Al-Haqqa (The Sure Reality),  
69:17*

There were also Harut and Marut (Al-Baqarah [The Heifer], 2:102) specifically assigned by Allah (SWT) to Babylon.

The Angels serve Allah (SWT) dutifully and are compassionate towards Allah's creation and in particular humans.

*The heavens are almost rent asunder from above them (by His Glory): and the angels celebrate the Praises of their Lord, and pray for forgiveness for all beings on earth: Behold! Verily Allah is He, the Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.*

*Ash-Shura (The Counsel), 42:5*



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Several Hadith (Records of the Prophet Muhammad's teachings) narrate that Allah (SWT) assigns Angels to be present in gatherings where Allah's Name is mentioned in reverence.

One example is when the Prophet (SAW) said,

*Angels keep on descending from and ascending to the heaven in turn, some at night and some by daytime and all of them assemble together at the time of the Fajr (dawn) and 'Asr (afternoon) prayers. Then those who have stayed with you overnight ascend unto Allah Who asks them (and He knows the answer better than they): 'How have you left My slaves?' They reply, 'We left them while they were praying and we came to them while they were praying'.*

Then Abu Hurairah (RA), the narrator, added,

*If anyone of you says 'Amin' (during the prayer at the end of the recitation of Surah Al-Fatiha), and the Angels in heaven say the same, and the two sayings coincide; all his past sins will be forgiven.*

*Sahih Bukhari*

Such is the Wisdom of Allah (SWT) in creating, where all in creation are consistent in their respective functions, true to their nature, thus maintaining existence harmoniously.

*They hold their Lord, Who is above them, in fear, and do as they are commanded.*

*An-Nahl (The Bee), 16:50 **tc***

# The problems of translation

By Dr Adam Brown

A BRIEF LOOK INTO THE DYNAMICS AND LIMITATIONS OF TRANSLATIONS FROM ARABIC TO ENGLISH.

In the Quran, Allah (SWT) points out the simple logic that Arabic is the language of the Quran because Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was an Arab.

*If We had sent this as a Quran in a foreign language other than Arabic, they would have said: 'Why are not its verses explained in detail [in our language]? What! [A book] not in Arabic and [the messenger] an Arab?'*

*Fussilat (Expounded) 41:44*

Sources state that the number of Arabic speakers (both native and non-native) is around 250 million. While this makes Arabic the fifth most commonly-spoken language in the world, it still represents only about 3.6% of the world population. In short, the vast majority of the world population do not know Arabic.



As a result, most people wanting to learn about Islam by reading the Quran, will have to do so in a translation into a language they know.

There are various problems associated with translation. Some of them will be illustrated by examining translations of Surah Al-Ikhlās (112), or The Purity of Faith.



## 1 Reciting

The first thing to notice is that many Muslims when reciting the Quran do so by chanting it in a musical way. This may strike many non-Muslims as strange, as other holy books, such as the Bible, are normally simply read. So, many non-Arabic speakers may be surprised to hear the Quran recited musically.

## 2 The 'Bismillah' opening

'Bismillahir rahmannir rahim' is translated as "In the name of Allah" followed by two adjectives, 'rahman', 'rahim'. These adjectives are variously translated into English as "gracious, merciful, mercy-giving, beneficent, compassionate" etc. In Arabic, they are intensive forms of these adjectives, i.e. they are strongly

than simply “gracious, merciful”. They are often translated as “most gracious, most merciful”. However, this implies a comparison with others (that is, God is more merciful than all others). We are thus starting to compare God with others, such as humans, and this is something we should avoid.

Both ‘rahman’ and ‘rahim’ are derived from the Semitic root ‘r-h-m’ which indicates something of the utmost tenderness, which provides protection and nourishment, and that from which all of creation is brought into being. And indeed, the root ‘r-h-m’ has meanings of womb, kinship, relationship, loving-kindness, mercy, compassion, and nourishing-tenderness. ‘Rahman’ is only applied to God, but the attribute ‘rahim’ is a general term, and may also be applied to humans. This is a distinction that no English words can capture.

### 3 ‘-ad’ ending

Each of the four ayah (verses) of the surah ends in ‘-ad’. This ending makes the surah sound definite, self-evident and beyond discussion. Again, no English words can capture this.

### 4 ‘Qul’

‘Qul’ means ‘say’. It is easily translated, although non-Arabic readers may need to understand what this means. TB Irving says that this Surah “forms an answer to a previous rhetorical question implied in the first word, which is ‘Say’”.

That is, it is as if it is an answer to the question “What should I say when people ask me what God is like?” For this reason, translations often include the understood addressee ‘Say (O Muhammad)’.

### 5 He

The word ‘huwa’ means ‘he’. However, there is always the problem of using pronouns to refer to God. If you use ‘he’, skeptics will ask if God is male (e.g. does he have a beard?). If you use ‘she’, skeptics will ask if God is female (e.g. can God have babies?). If you use the neuter it, skeptics will ask if God is impersonal. You simply can’t win.

### 6 ‘Allah’

The word ‘Allah’ is often translated as ‘God’ with a capital G. However, capital letters are a feature of English, but many other languages, such as Arabic, Hebrew, Devanagari and Thai, have no distinction between capital and lower case letters. It is an English phenomenon. Also, the English word ‘god’ can be made plural (gods), made feminine (goddess), but this is not possible in Arabic. For this reason, many translators leave the word ‘Allah’ untranslated.

### 7 ‘Ahad’

Allah is ‘ahad’, sometimes translated simply as ‘One’. The word ‘ahad’ is also translated as ‘the one and only’, ‘the only one’, ‘unique’. It is different from the Arabic word ‘wahid’, which is the everyday word for ‘one’ when counting. ‘Ahad’, on the other hand, means ‘one, but there is no two’. There is only one word in English: one.

### 8 ‘Samad’

‘Samad’ is a difficult word to translate because, like many Arabic words, it has more than one meaning or overtone. It is variously translated as ‘the Eternal, Absolute’, ‘the eternally Besought of all’, ‘the Source for everything’, ‘the everlasting Refuge’. Abdullah Yusuf Ali says, “...



BOTH **RAHMAN** AND **RAHIM** ARE DERIVED FROM THE SEMITIC ROOT **R-H-M** WHICH INDICATES SOMETHING OF THE UTMOST TENDERNESS, WHICH PROVIDES PROTECTION AND NOURISHMENT, AND THAT FROM WHICH ALL OF CREATION IS BROUGHT INTO BEING.



absolute existence can only be predicated of Him; all other existence is temporal or conditional. ... He is dependent on no person or things, but all persons or things are dependent on Him, thus negating the idea of gods and goddesses who ate and drank, wrangled and plotted, depended on gifts of worshippers, etc.” This is of course difficult to put into one English word. Perhaps ‘self-sufficient’ is the nearest. Some translations leave the word untranslated, with an explanation, e.g. “The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need, He neither eats nor drinks”.

### 9 Beget

The third ayat is often translated as “He begetteth, not nor is He begotten.” However, English dictionaries tell us that this verb ‘beget’ is old-fashioned, formal, used in religious contexts, etc. Certainly the ‘-th’ ending of ‘begetteth’ is equally old-fashioned. More modern translations use phrases such as: He has not fathered anyone nor was he fathered. Of course, skeptics will again say that this implies that God is male. Or: He does not give birth and He is not born from anyone.

Again, skeptics will say that this implies that God is female, because ‘give birth’ is normally used of mothers. In everyday English, we might say, “He is nobody’s father, and nobody’s son” or, sex-neutrally “He is nobody’s parent, and nobody’s child”.

### 10 Final ayat

The final ayat is in fact the simplest to translate without difficulty into English: “And there is nothing comparable to Him”. While this is the easiest ayat to translate, it is no less significant in meaning. It sums up the whole argument of the surah,



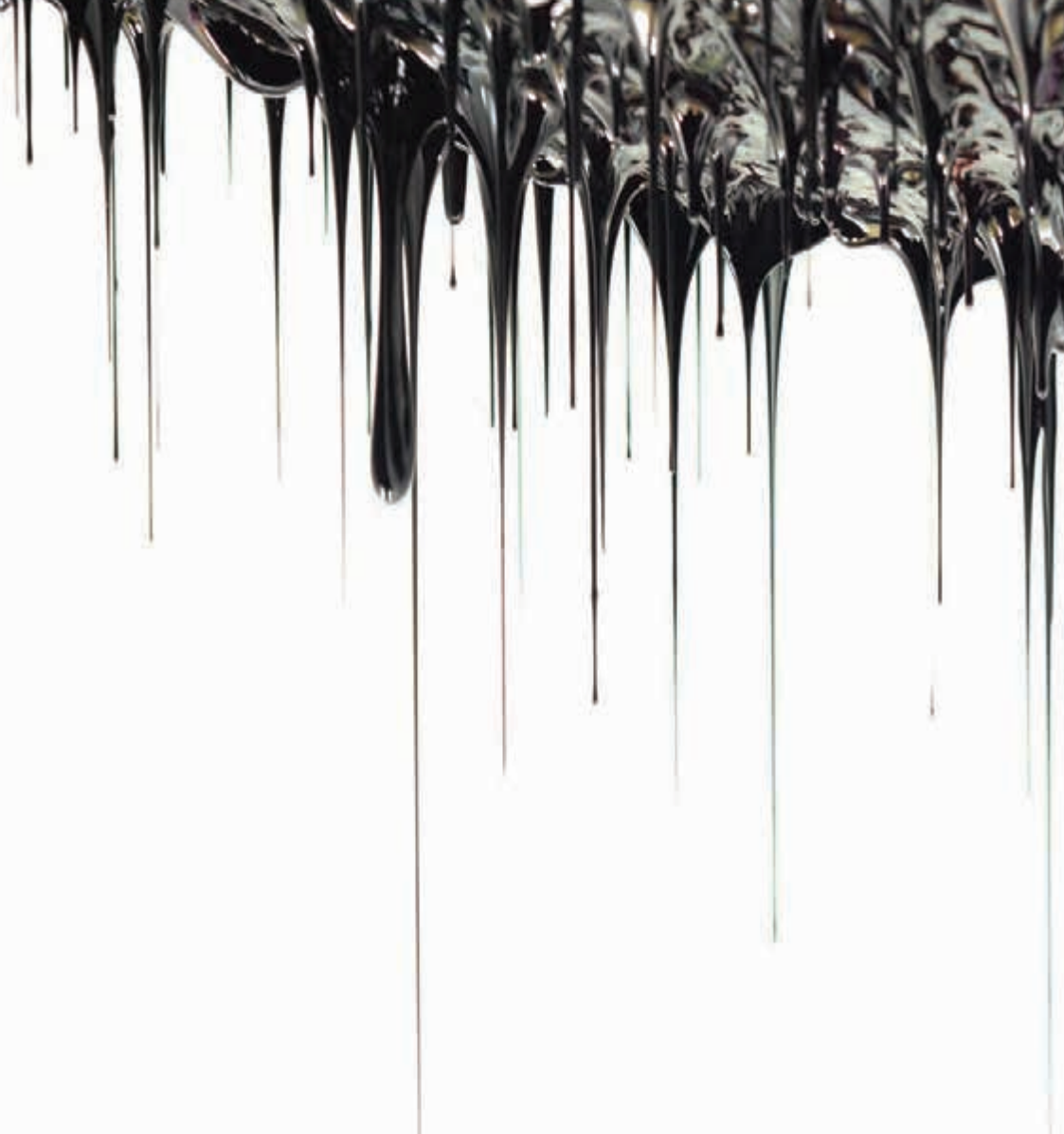
WHILE THIS IS THE EASIEST AYAT TO TRANSLATE, IT IS NO LESS SIGNIFICANT IN MEANING.

and argues strongly against ‘shirk’, i.e. associating others with Allah, saying that others are comparable to Allah.

### Conclusion

Like many surahs and ayats in the Quran, Surah Al-Ikhlās is short and deceptively simple-seeming. It is short: you can read it in ten seconds. But it is full of meaning, and for that reason, is not easy to translate adequately. **tc**

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Nothing weighs less than a pen and  
nothing gives as much as a pen.

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STAY TRUE TO YOUR WORDS.



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*There is no complete faith for he who lacks trustworthiness and there is no complete religion for he who can't keep a vow.*

– Prophet Muhammad  
(Peace Be Upon Him)

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