

## The 4 Quls

1. There are a group of 4 suras called the 'Quls'; why are referred to in this manner? What is the meaning of 'Qul'?

They all begin with 'Qul' which means 'Say'.

The 4 suras can be further sub-grouped as Al Muawwidhataan (The Two Protectors) and Al Muqashqishataan (The Two Cures). Complete the table below.

	Kafirun	Ikhlas	Falaq	Naas
<b>Sura number</b>	109	112	113	114
<b>English meaning of name</b>	Disbelievers	Sincerity	Daybreak	Humankind
<b>Total no. ayats</b>	6	4	5	6
<b>Protector or Cure?</b>	Cure	Cure	Protector	Protector

2. Sura Kafirun was revealed in response to what proposal made by the Quraysh to Prophet Muhammed (saw)?

They proposed that they and the Muslims should both agree to worship each other's God/gods. They proposed that for one year the Muslims should worship who the unbelievers worshipped and for the next year the unbelievers would worship Allah (swt) and then the pattern would be repeated again.

3. Give the English translation of the following ayat. What is the purpose of its repetition in this sura?

وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ

'Nor are you worshippers of what I worship'

The repetition could be to provide emphasis. Some scholars think that the two statements refer to the present and future tenses, as if to say 'I do not now worship what you worship; nor are you now worshippers of what I worship; nor will I ever be a worshipper of what you worship.'

4. What conclusion does Sura Kafirun make in the end?

Essentially it says to each his own. It implies that believers should not argue with disbelievers (in relation to theology), but simply leave them to their own devices, for Allah (swt) will deal with them accordingly.

5. In Sura Ikhlas, what do scholars tell us of the use of the word ‘ahad’ rather than the word ‘waahid’ to denote Allah’s (swt) Oneness in the first ayat?

The most widely held interpretation is that ‘waahid’ is a numerical one to which another number can be added, while ‘ahad’ denotes an Absolute Oneness that is unique and cannot take a second or be divided (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

6. The word ‘ahad’ is again used in the last ayat of Sura Ikhlas; what is this verse telling us?

“This verse underscores the previous verses by emphasizing that God is not only the One, but also unique. As created things can be described by attributes such as living, seeing and hearing, by which God is also described, the meaning here is that nothing bears any likeness or equality with God’s Essence or Self. Nonetheless, nothing can exist independently of God. With regard to the Divine Essence, God is absolutely transcendent...yet with regard to the manner in which God manifests in the world He is immanent” (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

7. In Sura Falaq, we seek refuge from what 4 evils?

The evil of what He created, the darkness, those who blow on knots (black magic), and envy.

8. The Holy Quran tells us, ‘What comes to you of good is from Allah (swt), but what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself’ (4:79). So then according to Sura Falaq, what evil has ‘He created’?

This can be understood as a reference to Shaytan and his ilk or to Hellfire. It may also be a general reference to all that is evil or to all the evil that is committed or manifested by those whom Allah (swt) created because ultimately no thing/person is wholly independent of Allah (swt) (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)

9. Sura Naas describes Allah’s (swt) position in relation to humankind using the following titles; give their English translations. What are these three verses telling us?

‘Lord of Humankind’

‘King of Humankind’

‘God of Humankind’

رَبِّ النَّاسِ  
مَلِكِ النَّاسِ  
إِلَهِ النَّاسِ

These ayats are seen as an indication that, in order to find true refuge, we must recognise the complete sovereignty of Allah (swt) – that He is the only One to be worshipped and the only One upon Whom we can call for help. We acknowledge our complete dependence on Allah (swt) by saying ‘Oh my Lord! Oh my King! Oh my God!’

**10. In Sura Naas, what do scholars understand by the Arabic word: وَسْوَائِسُ ?**

Technically whispering (waswaasah) refers to something said quietly and repeatedly. Here it is taken to indicate all manner of temptation. And here it is Shaytan who is whispering but elsewhere in the Holy Quran it is the 'passionate' soul (nafs al ammaarah) that is described as whispering, prompting to evil. From one perspective it is Shaytan who suggests, tempts, prompts and whispers, and the passionate soul then follows the caprices that arise over the commands of Allah (swt). From another perspective, it is only nafs al ammaarah which has this propensity, and 'waswaasah' is the subtle whispering from within our innermost being which inclines us to evil (The Study Quran by Seyyed Hossein Nasr)