

mutual love among the creation so much so that the animal lifts up its hoof from its young one, fearing that it might harm it.” So we must be merciful, remember this Name of God and contemplate more to realize the consequences of It.

Prophet Muhammad says: “Allah shows compassion only to those among His slaves who are compassionate.” May God help all of us to be merciful and compassionate.

We say this name before we eat, in our prayers, and numerous other times throughout the day. There is even a Surah in the Quran named after it. But do we truly understand the meaning of the name Ar-Rahman, or is it so normalized in our daily habits that we’ve forgotten its divine value? Let’s avoid the latter by re-examining the definition of one of Allah’s 99 Names. Only when we comprehend Allah’s divine names can we begin to truly embrace them in our lives.

A lot of us are aware that Ar-Rahman correlates with Allah’s mercy, but we might get it confused with the translation of Ar-Raheem. Just keep in mind that the former refers to Allah’s intense mercy in this Dunya and the latter is his mercy in the Ākhirah. What comes to mind when you think of intense mercy in this Dunya?

It signifies that the name Ar-Rahman goes beyond just mercy. It’s inclusive of all other divine characteristics – including the most gracious, most kind, most giving, and most loving.

Without having mercy, you can’t enable the other qualities. It is only He, the Almighty, that can be all of the above – all the time. Allah’s mercy is so vast and exceptional that it is mentioned 57 times in the Qur’an and has an entire chapter named after it. In Sūrat ar-Rahmān (55), Allah talks about all of his creations from the sun and the moon to the humans and the jinn.

The intensity in the Surah builds up when He repeats a specific ayah: “So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?” to highlight those who are ungrateful for what they have been given. But as you go on, the chapter gets softer and softer as He begins to describe Jannah (paradise) and the people of Jannah. And guess what? That same ayah, “So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?” is used again. This chapter reiterates the fact that Allah (swt) created all of the above to serve as reminders for mankind. For example, when we are mesmerized by a beautiful sunrise, we say Subhān Allāh (God is perfect) and remember the Creator above us who is responsible for

what your eyes see. There are reminders of Him everywhere we look – if – we decide to open our hearts to him. And after witnessing all these blessings and creations day in and day out, how can we become so distracted by everything else and carelessly deny His favors?

We are only human – it is so easy for us to forget and digress from our true purpose in this world. Allah knows that, which is why Sūrat ar-Rahmān was sent down to us. Just look at how many times one ayah was repeated and yet we still fail to simply remember our Lord’s favors. Salah was sent down to us as a divine remedy and yet we still fail to simply remember our Lord and his blessings.

This dunya was created to remind us of the Almighty, but instead, we are completely distracted by it.

That is what we do best as humans – we’re always missing the point, asking unnecessary questions, and easily straying off of the right path. But how does Allah (swt) respond to our carelessness and remorse?

He responds with Rahma (mercy).

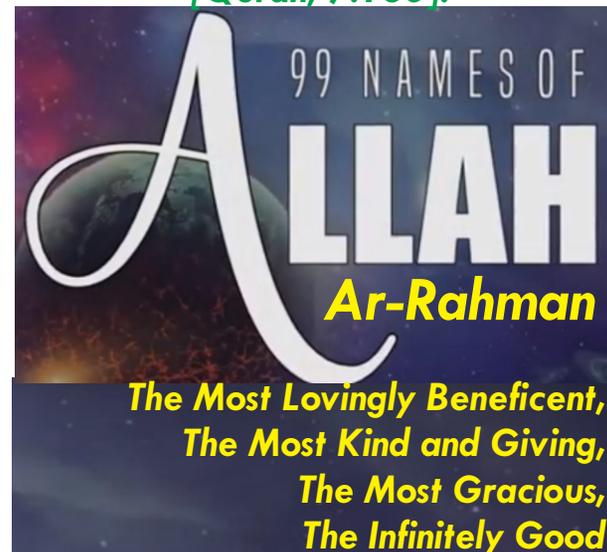
No matter how many times we sin or walk away from our faith, when we come back searching for answers – desperate and hopeless – He is waiting for us. When we drop down to our knees in despair, He is listening to us. When the burdens of this Dunya are too heavy to carry, He relieves us. When we forget the roots of our faith and ancestors, He reminds us. When our souls are starving and we sincerely repent & humble ourselves, He forgives us.

We all know this is easier said than done, but that’s the beauty of realizing you are not as invincible as you might think. There is a greater power above you who is responsible for it all – your health, your knowledge, your trials, and your blessings. Because only He knows best. And if we open our eyes just a little wider, we will begin to see Ar-Rahman in places we never did before. And if we learn to open our hearts in absolute devotion, they too will be filled with Rahma. Say, “Call upon Allah or call upon the AR-RAHMAN. Whichever name you call – to Him belong the best names.” (Isra: 110)

WARNING: The danger, not only among scholars, but among mystics as well, is that because they have access to knowledge of unexplored & unseen realms, they have a tendency to become arrogant. When that happens, they lose the love element. Arrogance is a form of ignorance, and it stains the mirror of your knowing faculty. The diamond body of guidance is made of pure rahma, pure love. The inner guide is a manifestation of Allah’s perfect love—ar-Rahman.

“And to Allah belong the Best Names, so invoke Him by them.”

[Quran, 7:180].



Invoking God is not a drug that anesthetizes (Karl Marx) or a dream that deludes (Sigmund Freud). It helps to remove the yawning chasms that stand between heaven and earth, today and tomorrow, the physical and the spiritual. The knowledge of Allah's Beautiful Names is the greatest knowledge a human being can possess. If we open our eyes just a little wider, we will begin to see Ar-Rahman in places we never did before. And if we learn to open our hearts in absolute devotion, they too will be filled with Rahma.

AR-RAHMAN

Ar-Rahman is one of the recurrent names of Allah in the Quran. For mercy is a dominant attribute of Allah. We possess all that we have owing to His mercy. While keeping in mind this excellent name of Allah we should be kind & helpful to fellow human beings. Likewise, we should make it a point to follow the way prescribed by Him, Who is Most Merciful. It is in our own interest to do only that to which the Most Merciful One has guided us. The following Prophetic supplication brings out the centrality of this divine name: O Lord! Reliever of worry, Remover of anxiety, Responder to the call of those under duress, the Merciful & the Mercy-Giver in this world & in the Hereafter. It is You Who will have mercy on me in a way that frees me from seeking mercy from anyone besides You.

Allah calls Himself Ar-Rahman — The Most Gracious, the intensely Merciful— on 55 occasions in the Quran & 114 times in the invocation of Bismillah (In the Name of God)...Bismillah occurs at the beginning of 113 of the 114 chapters and once as part of a sura's text in verse 30 of the 27th sura ("An-Naml"). The divine appellation "ar-Rahman" appears in the opening formula which precedes every sura except Sura 9 ("In the Name of God, the Lord of Mercy, the Giver of Mercy").

We say Ar-Rahman so often that it is so normalized in our daily habits that we might have forgotten its divine value. Let's avoid the latter by re-examining the definition of one of Allah's 99 Names. Only when we comprehend the Divine Names can we begin to truly embrace them in our lives.

Ar-Rahmaan is the One whose intense and perfect Mercy embraces the whole creation! The Most Gracious, Most Lovingly Beneficent Rahmaan comes from the root raa-haa-meem, which points to four main meanings. The first meaning is to have gentleness and

to love, and the second is to have mercy. The third meaning is to show favour, and the fourth is to have all that is required for beneficence. This root appears 339 times in the Quran in nine derived forms. Examples of these forms are rahima ("bestows mercy"), al-arhaam (the wombs") and rahmatan ("mercy").

Linguistically, rahmaan shows intensity (thus the ending is -aan). For example ghadbaan means extremely angry. Ar-Rahmaan points out to the intensity, abundance, and vastness of the mercy (rahmah) of Allah, and the attribute of grace is inseparable from the Almighty. Allah first mentioned His name - Allah - that is exclusively His and described this name by Ar-Rahmaan, which no one else is allowed to use, just as Allah said, Say, invoke Allah or invoke Ar-Rahmaan, by whatever name you invoke Him it is the same, for to Him belong the Best names. [Quran, 17:110] Ar-Rahmaan Himself says: This is a revelation from the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful ... [Quran, 41:2]

Ar-Rahmaan is endless love. It is the infinite, unconditional reality of love. This is the Name said in the Quran to be inscribed on the heart of Allah. In other words, God's essence necessarily includes this quality of love. Ar-Rahmaan might be imagined as the inner self of God, an infinite container that is incredibly compassionate, kind, and tender. It is the sun of loving compassion that is endlessly shining. Ar-Rahman includes all the other divine Names. It is the source of all; it is the gate that opens onto all God's qualities, and an inner secret of each one.

The root meaning comes from the word rahm, "womb." In human beings, this quality is naturally felt in relation to pregnancy. Allah provides human beings a womb to be born into and through which to have the realization of the love that is at the very foundation of all that exists. Invocation of Ya Rahmaan is a healing remedy for all who feel disconnected from God and for those marked by a wound of self-loathing.

Everything exists in the absolute, but there is a unique individuality. Ar-Rahmaan, for example, can refer to God not only as an oceanic loving mercy but also as an individual who is made of divine love, who actualizes it.

A chapter of the Quran starts with ar-Rahman and links this quality of compassionate love with the

activity of teaching the Quran. It can be translated, "It is endless love who teaches the Quran and who has brought humanity into being, and has taught meaning." It then refers to the next stage of the teaching and learning process, which is God's creation of the complete human being, al-'insaan kaamil, and then instructing al-'insaan kaamil to read the signs of God in his or her own self and in the world. In Arabic, "teaching" has the same root as "learning," 'aleem.

Ar-Rahman is "The Entirely Merciful." It comes from mercy which means love, care, and consideration. Owing, perhaps, to the sura's poetic beauty, it is often regarded as the "beauty of the Quran", in accordance with a hadith: Muhammad (p) said, "Everything has an adornment & the adornment of the Quran is Surah ar Rahman"

In the Quran, God mentions this Name many times. For example, He says: "And your god is one God. There is no deity worthy of worship except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful. Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the ships which sail through the sea with that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every kind of moving creature, and His directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and the earth are signs for a people who use reason."

In the first part, God states that His mercy is one of the things that instigate us to worship Him alone. And in the second part, God gives us examples of his mercy in this life.

Prophet Muhammad (p) says: "When Allah created the creatures, He wrote in the Book, which is with Him over His Throne: 'Verily, My Mercy prevails over My Wrath.'" The surprise here is that God's mercy in this life is general. Those who believe in God and even those who do not believe in Him benefit from this mercy in this life.

Prophet Muhammad says: "Allah created mercy in one hundred parts and He retained with Him ninety-nine parts, and He has sent down upon the earth one part, and it is because of this one part that there is

ALLAH SAYS, "MY PUNISHMENT – I AFFLICT WITH IT WHOM I WILL, BUT MY MERCY ENCOMPASSES ALL THINGS." A'RAF:156

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