*Ar Rahman Ar Raheem (The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful)*

*Ramadan – Ashton Central Mosque – 26/07/13*

How close were you to Allah last Ramadan? At the beginning of Ramadan? Ramadan comes but once a year and no one knows if he/she will live to see next Ramadan, therefore do your best in everything from prayer to supplication to helping others to giving in charity.

**We will cover six main points:**

1. The meaning of the name "The All Merciful, The Ever Merciful"
2. How to sense this name and feel rejoiced.
3. The effect of this name on the universe.
4. Calamities and Ibtila'at (trials).
5. Special mercies of this name.
6. How to live with this name.

As for the difference between the two names, it has been subject to ample discussions by Muslim scholars, but it can be simplified as follows:

Ar-rahman (The All Merciful) is when Allah bestows His mercy upon all the creatures in this universe.

"Say, "Who will take good care of you by night and in the daytime from The All-Merciful?" No indeed, (but) from the Remembrance of their Lord they are veering away." (21:42).

However, Ar-raheem (The Ever Merciful) is when Allah bestows His special mercy upon the believers only. For example, eating and drinking is a general mercy, while worshiping Allah in Ramadan is a special one.

**How To Rejoice At The Name Of Allah The All-Merciful, The Ever Merciful**

This joy is sensed throughout the universe. Allah's mercy is manifested in all creatures from the beginning of creation. When Adam was created, the first thing he did was sneezing. The angels immediately asked him to say: "All praise be to Allah". Then Allah said to him: "May my mercy be upon you". In the same way, he very beginning of the ever-glorious Qur'an reads what can be translated as, "In the name of Allah, The All Merciful, The Ever Merciful". (1:1)

The Prophet says that Allah created 100 units of mercy on the day He created the heavens and earth, each of these units can contain all that is between the heaven and earth. Out of these units one mercy is used by His creation for mutual love and affection. On the Day of Judgment, Allah will complete and perfect His mercy by adding this one mercy to the remaining ninety nine mercies and bestow them upon the believers. The Prophet confessed that he will enter Paradise, not by his deeds, but by Allah's mercy on him.

Therefore, mercy exists side by side with creation from the beginning of time till the Day of Judgment. Throughout our lives we are subjected to various ordeals, which are in a way mercies even death.

**The Effects Of Allah's Mercy On The Universe**

The Prophet says that Allah is much more merciful to His creatures than a compassionate mother is to her child. This comparison shows us that Allah's mercy has an effect on relationships between mankind, especially motherhood. Allah to brought mercy into the relationships between the parents and their children as well as within one's extended family.

Another of Allah's mercy upon us is the basic elements we need for life, which are beyond the control of humans, such as rain. No one can live without water and Allah is the only one who can order the sky to rain, even if some tries to build dams you find water in wells or on mountain tops in the shape of ice. The other blessing is air. No one can live without it yet no one can control it or deny it to someone.

Allah's mercy is reflected on all the social relations that surround us. He planted the seed of love in the hearts of parents and created that special bond between the different members of a family. Even the womb in the Arabic language is named rahem , meaning mercy. You find Allah talking about this in the Hadith Qudsy mentioning that kinship ties are so important that if you uphold them then you would be maintaining your tie with Allah and vise versa.

His mercy is also evident in sending the Prophet. "And in no way have We sent you except as a mercy to the worlds." (21:107)

While we were in our mother's wombs we were happy although it was a very small place similar to a prison, but we knew nothing else so we were happy with it and when we come out to life we become unhappy, but then found out that it is a better and larger place. Nevertheless it is still a limited space compared with what Allah has created for us in the jannah.

Death is also a mercy from Allah. All through our present life we are constantly being tested, as if in an exam. But when we die we can relax and wait for the final result to come out, which will eventually be the jannah if Allah wills it.

The Prophet says that at the time of death of any true believer the angels are present and the deceased person can see them, this is also a mercy from Allah as he wants to reassure you before you enter an unknown world. The angel of death will sit by your head and read Allah's words,

" O you self (that is) composed, Return to your Lord satisfied with Supreme Satisfaction! So enter among My bondmen! And enter My Garden! "(89:27-30).

Surely you will be happy when you hear this. Your soul will then immediately be lifted by the angels in a huge parade to Allah. All this occurs before you enter your grave, as a way of assurance. In your grave you will have your good deeds manifested as a very handsome man who will accompany you till the Day of Judgment and all that time you can see your place in jannah and what is waiting for you. He is the Merciful.

**Our duty towards this name**

* Have mercy on others such as the poor, the needy, your wife, your family any person.
* Pray two raka'at with your wife during the night.
* Strengthen your kinship ties.
* Be dutiful to your parents
* Read the Qur'an and pray the qiyam (voluntary night prayer).
* Just rejoice that Allah is The All-Merciful, The Ever-Merciful.

"Say, “By the Grace of Allah, and by His mercy; so with that let them exult; it is more charitable (i.e., better) than whatever they (heap) together. (Literally: whatever they gather") (10:58).