

22200 - The difference between al-Rahmaan and al-Raheem

the question

What is the difference between al-Rahmaan and al-Raheem?.

Detailed answer

Al-Rahmaan and al-Raheem are two of the names of Allaah which refer to Allaah's attribute of Mercy.

Al-Rahmaan refers to the vastness of Allaah's mercy, and al-Raheem refers to its effect on His creation. So al-Rahmaan is the Owner of vast Mercy, and al-Raheem is the Owner of Mercy that encompasses His creation.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said: "Al-Rahmaan is the Owner of vast mercy, because the fa'laan form in Arabic indicates vastness and abundance, as it is said *rajal ghadbaan* (a very angry man) when he is filled with anger.

Al-Raheem is a name which refers to the action, as the fa'eel form refers to the doer of an action. So the phrase al-Rahmaan al-Raheem indicates that the mercy of Allaah is vast, as is understood from the name al-Rahmaan, and that it encompasses His creation, as is understood from the name al-Raheem. This is what some of them meant when they said that al-Rahmaan refers to mercy in a general sense and al-Raheem refers to mercy that is specifically for the believers. But what we have mentioned is more accurate."

From Sharh al-'Aqeedah al-Waasitiyyah, 1/22

And Allaah knows best.