

Al-Qalam

T H E A Z H A R A C A D E M Y G I R L S S C H O O L N E W S L E T T E R

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AAGS DIARY

Ramadhan and Eid
Break:
3rd – 16th October
2007

Eid Dinner:
27th October 2007

AAGS HOUSES Credits

Daar-ul-Ilm	15
Daar-ul-Hikmah	20
Daar-ut-Taqwa	30
Daar-ul-Haqq	30

Ramadhan Mubarak!

Assalamu aleykum and welcome to a special Ramadhan edition of Al-Qalam.

Alhamdulillah, the new term at AAGS has coincided with the onset of Ramadhan, making it more challenging than usual for many members of our school community following the long summer break. However, at the same time it has insh'Allah also been more rewarding as so many of us have had to struggle a lot harder to maintain our school work and carry out the

extra *ibadah* this sacred month warrants.

Whilst the prospect of 70 times more reward for each fardh deed we undertake in this month is more than reason enough to love this month, the blessings of Ramadhan are such that we often find the love between Muslims brothers and sisters also increases through our shared sacrifices and efforts as well as in our coming together at suhoor and iftar times.

In the words of one Year 7 student "Ramadhan is my favourite time of year because I love getting together with the family, after a long hard day of fasting. I love fasting and knowing that I'm getting rewarded for it insh'Allah. I fast for Allah and only for Allah." (Eshe, Yr. 7A).

Here, we find one reason to love Ramadhan, insh'Allah in this issue of Al-Qalam you will find many more.

Ramadhan: the Best of Months

Alhamdulillah, once again Allah (SWT) has given us all the opportunity to see the best of all months – Ramadhan.

A month of blessings

This is the month in which Allah (SWT) showers his choicest blessings and barakah upon his beloved servants. A month in which at least one dua is accepted daily of every Muslim, the reward of one sunnah/nafl act is equal to one fardh act, and one fardh act is rewarded 70 times manifold. It is the month in which lies Laylat-ul-Qadr, a night whose virtue is equal to 1000 months.

Allah had divided this month into three parts, His mercy is showered on us in the first, forgiveness is granted in the

second and freedom from hellfire is granted in the last.

During this month the shayateen are caged, the gates of Jahannam are closed and the gates of Jannah are flung open. In this way, Allah (SWT) makes it easy for his servants to acquire Jannah and to be saved from the fire of Hell.

"O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed upon you as it has been prescribed upon those before you, so that you may attain taqwaa." (2:183)

A month of change

Despite this great rehman, we have witnessed the passing of this auspicious month many times, and yet we have not valued it or made the most of this great opportunity that Allah has granted us. Let us make this Ramadhan different. Let it be a turning point in our life as there is no guarantee that we will witness or live through another one.

A month of purification

To ensure we meet this purpose as well as suppressing our need of hunger we must abstain from all sin, safeguard our eyes, ears, tongues, hearts and minds, i.e. keep ourselves away from sin at all times and resolve to continue to do so after Ramadhan.

Poetry

Ramadhan, A Time of Peace

*A holy month, a blessed one for all
So take this chance to revive your soul*

*A time of remembrance, a time of peace
A time for everyone's blessings to increase*

*Give your devotion, straight, from the heart
A new beginning, a new start.*

*Talk to your Lord, with courtesy and respect,
Sincere duas, our Lord will surely not reject.*

*A month when fasting is dear to our Lord
And a good act earns a blessed reward.*

*So please do not eat during the day
Until maghrib, don't wander astray.*

*Be firm in your religion
Don't rush your ablution.*

*Safeguard your tongue in every way.
Backbiting is wrong, it will lead you astray.*

*It's truly a time to put your faith to the test.
Now go out there and do your best!*

(Kashka Rowlands, Yr. 10B)

Ramadhan: The Best of Months

A month of worship

Furthermore, we must strive to not waste a single second of this auspicious month but busy ourselves constantly in worship, performing salah, reciting the holy Qur'an, dhikr, tauba.

We should also make a point of doing shukhr (thanking Allah) as even though we have been so ungrateful and failed to live our lives in the way He has commanded and his beloved Prophet (saw) showed us, He has been so forgiving and merciful upon us. Last but not least we should make a firm intention, to improve our future lives

as Muslims insh'Allah.

Rasulullah (saw) has mentioned four things that need to be performed in great number in the month of Ramadhan, two are for the pleasure of Allah and two that we cannot do without. The first two are to recite the kalimah, "laa ilaaha illallah" abundantly and make istighfar, i.e. seeking Allah's forgiveness whilst the latter two are begging Allah (SWT) for entry into paradise and seeking his refuge from the fires of Jahannam (Baihaqi).

A month of dua

May Allah accept our fasting our worship our dua's throughout this blessed month and may He make it a turning point in our lives (Ameen).

Please remember me, my colleagues, my students, AAGS and the whole ummah in your humble duas.

(Apa Hajra Patel)

"If my ummah were to realise what Ramadhan really is then they would wish that the whole year would be Ramadhan"
(Fazail-e-amaal)

Ramadhan Ahadeeth

"Whoever established prayers on the night of Qadr out of sincere faith and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven; and whoever fasts in the month of Ramadhan out of sincere faith, and hoping for a reward from Allah, then all his previous sins will be forgiven." *(Sahih Bukhari)*

'All the deeds of Adam's sons (people) are for them, except fasting which is for Me, and I will give the reward for it.' *(Sahih Bukhari)*

On the Day of Judgement, "Fasting will say: O My Lord I prevented him from food and desires so accept my intercession for him." *(Ahmad, al-Haakim and Abu Nu'aim, Hasan)*

There is a gate to Paradise that is called ar-Rayyan. On the Day of Resurrection it will say: 'Where are those who fasted?' When the last [one] has passed through the gate, it will be locked." *(Sahih Bukhari and Muslim)*

Sahuur is a blessed meal, do not neglect it even if it is a mouthful of drink. For Allah and the Angels bless

those who observe it." *(Ahmed)*

"Whoever does not give up forged speech and evil actions, Allah is not in need of his leaving his food and drink (i.e. Allah will not accept his fasting.)" *(Sahih Bukhari)*

"Fasting is not only to restrain from food and drink, fasting is to refrain from obscene (acts). If someone verbally abuses you or acts ignorantly towards you, say (to them) 'I am fasting; I am fasting.'" *(Ibn Khuzaimah)*

"The fasting person has two occasions for joy, one when he breaks his fast because of his breaking it and the other when he meets his Lord because of the reward for his fast." *(Sahih Bukhari)*

"Indeed as to the one who fasts, during the time he breaks his fast, this supplication will not be turned away by Allah." *(Ibn Majah)*

Ramadhan Wordsearch



See if you can you find the 14 Ramadhan words below in the wordsearch square above. It's not easy!

- | | | |
|---------|--------------|--------|
| ADHKAR | RAMADHAN | EID |
| IFTAR | LAYLATULQADR | MERCY |
| MOON | QURAN | REWARD |
| SADAQAH | SALAT | SAWM |
| SUHOOR | TARAWIH | |

The first pupil to hand in a solved puzzle to the School Office will get points for her House!

Azhar Academy Charity / Fundraising Appeal

Among the many special virtues this blessed month of Ramadhaan brings, charity occupies a prominent position. We are told in hadith that, in this month, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) was more generous with good than the flowing breeze.

Alhamdulillah, the school has come a long way since we started, firstly, due to Allah's blessings and not least, due to your kind and continued support.

However, our projects are far from complete. We still owe nearly £800,000 in Qardha Hasanah, which has to be paid urgently. Site development at the school and the newly acquired Sixth Form building is also a priority. The Grange Farm development, commencing soon, will require significant funding.

We request you to continue your support and while donating yourself, please urge friends and family to contribute too.

For various contributing options, please visit the Donations page on our website: www.azharacademy.org/donations.htm

**Please note our new IBB account details:
Account No.: 01133601 | Sort Code: 30-00-83**

Poetry

Ramadhan Sonnet

*Ramadhan, the most blessed month of the year
A time of mercy, a time that is rare
A time to worship, a time to forbear
A month when Allah opens the gates of Jannah
A month when He closes Jahannam's doors
A month to offer lots of taraweeh salaah*

*Try your very best to keep all your fasts
This Ramadhan could be your very last
Seek out the night of Laylut-ul-Qadr
Don't miss out on its majestic reward
As Ramadhan draws to an end
Do not stray, as Allah you shall offend
When the month of Ramadhan is over
To Allah you should inshallah be closer.*

(Armara Rowlands, Yr. 11)

Recipes

*Do you have a sweet tooth?
Well, why not try these
delicious recipes...*

Banoffee Pie

Preparation time: 20 minutes
Chilling time: 1 and ½ hours

Ingredients:

- Base:
250g (9oz) digestive biscuits
100g (3½ oz) melted butter
- Filling:
100g (3½ oz) butter/margarine
100g (3½ oz) dark brown soft sugar
397g Carnation Condensed Milk can
4 small bananas
248ml double cream, whipped
Grated chocolate



(Fahima Mehta, Yr. 8B)

Fruit Smoothies

1. Put two scoops of ice cream into a jug/blender (I prefer chocolate).

2. Add some fresh fruit (2/3 bananas, a handful of strawberries, mango etc.)

3. Add some sugar for an extra sweet flavour..

4. Fill the jug with milk and blend it all together.

5. Finally pour it all into a glass and top with some Cadbury's chocolate powder.

(Iqra Naukhez, Yr. 8B)

Method

1. To make the base, process the biscuits until the look like fine breadcrumbs. Then tip into a bowl. Stir in the melted butter. Press the mixture into the base. Chill the base.

2. Place the butter and sugar into a non-stick pan over a low heat, stirring until the butter melts and the sugar dissolves. Add the condensed milk and

Eid around the World

In **Iraq**, the family will enjoy a breakfast of buffalo cream with honey and bread before going on to the family lunch together. Here, a lamb may be sacrificed for the occasion, and a special Eid sweetmeat called klaicha, a date-filled pastry, is made.

Egypt sees four days of celebration, with preparations starting several days earlier. The women start work early in the morning, preparing the fish that will form the centrepiece of a great celebratory lunch.

In **Palestine**, in addition to prayers and family celebrations, a special sweetmeat, k'ak al-tamar, is made to serve with coffee.

In **Somalia**, a three-day celebration starts with a family lunch which includes rice mixed with meat and vege-

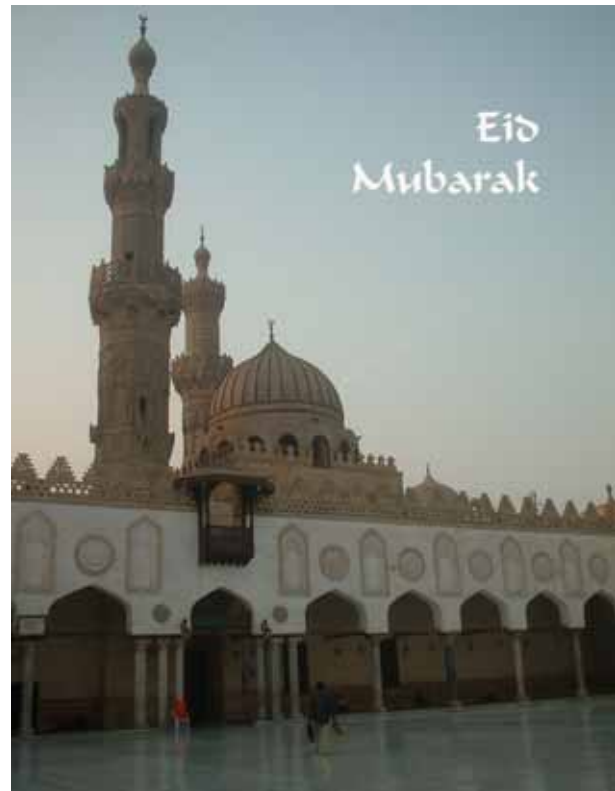
tables, and pasta accompanied by anjira (a thin bread prepared liked chapatti). Halva, (a cumin-flavoured custard), is also served, along with special fried (or baked) biscuits.

One of the special dishes in **India, Pakistan and Fiji** is savayya, a dish of fine, toasted vermicelli noodles, which is served for the first breakfast after the fast.

In **Indonesia**, the family lunch consists of dishes made of chicken, lamb or beef. The traditional sweet is lapis legit, a rich layered cake. Here, the celebrations will last for a whole month.

Please spare a dua for your poorer brothers and sisters in Palestine, Iraq and the rest of the ummah, when you sit down for your Eid dinner.

AAGS Eid Dinner



A Personal Prayer

*Oh Allah! Help me complete this beautiful month with ease
Erase all my sins from Jahanam.
Grant me blessings for all my good deeds.
Grant my family blessings, grant my friends blessings and
Grant this beautiful ummah with blessings.*

*Oh Allah! I have made many mistakes along the way,
So I am asking forgiveness from you the Almighty.
Oh Allah! Guide us to the straight path, even the ones
whom you are angry with. Shower your mercy on us!
We believe in you Allah. Makes us do good deeds and
please keep shaytan away from us!*

*Oh Allah, Lord of the Worlds, the Creator of the Heavens,
We believe in you and you Attributes.
You are the One and Only.
So I am praying to you, making this dua:
Laa illaha illallahu muhammadur rasulullah.
Please forgive us this community, this ummah!*

(Tasnim Rahman & Nazahah Jannah, Yr. 8B)



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*Azhar Academy Girls School cordially invites you to a
women-only Evening Dinner to mark the occasion of
Eid-ul-Fitr 1428 AH on
Saturday, 27th October 2007
from 5.30-9.30 p.m.*

*Insh'Allah the evening's programme of events will
include:*

- ◆ *A Three Course Meal*
- ◆ *Speeches from students & staff*
- ◆ *Live Nasheeds*
- ◆ *Charity Auction*

*Tickets cost £10
Limited places only; please book early to avoid
disappointment.*

*To book tickets please contact the School Office:
020 8555 5959*