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○ Issue 2 | ○ September | ○ 2009



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Strengthening Our Deen

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE ISLAMIC CENTER OF FORT COLLINS

Allah doesn't like injustice. He loveth not those who do wrong. If you end up suffering injustice, we do not know what Allah had planned in the bigger picture of things. Allah is the Just; and will bring justice. If not now, then in the hereafter.

Ramadan is Upon Us

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. It is "the month in which we sent down the Holy Quran, as a guide to mankind" (2:185). The Quran "was sent down from heaven, a guidance unto men, a declaration of direction, and a means of Salvation."

Ramadan is a time to concentrate on our faith and spend less time on the concerns of our everyday lives. This is a time of worship and contemplation.

"O you who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, so that you attain taqwa (self-restraint)" (2:183).

While we fast, we should try to attain purity of thought and action. Fasting

is meant to direct our hearts away from worldly mundane activities, towards Allah.

Ramadan is the time for spiritual reflection, prayer, recitation of Quran, doing Dhikr, endurance, and self-discipline. By doing these things, we train our soul and body for the rest of the year.

During this month, we should call upon the mercy of Allah since mercy is poured down to Earth during Ramadan.

Remember that we may eat and drink at any time during the night "until you can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daylight: then keep the fast until night." If we fast as Allah has asked us to, with the correct intentions,

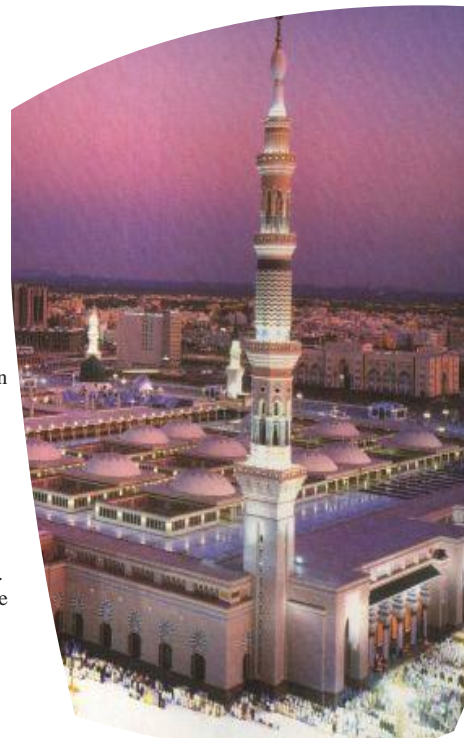
than inshallah we will be rewarded in the hereafter.

Although fasting is crucial, it is not enough during the month of Ramadan - - it is not a month just to exhibit self-restraint while eating. It is also a month to exhibit self-restraint in other aspects of our lives. The good that is acquired through the fast can be destroyed by five things:

- Telling a lie
- Slander
- Denouncing someone behind their back
- False oath
- Greed or covetousness

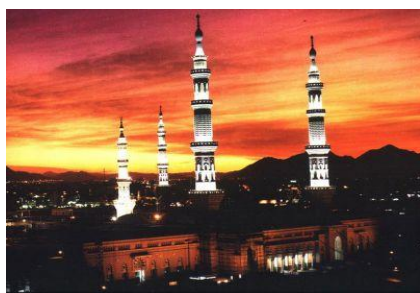
We must try to restrain our negative characteristics and build upon our positive characteristics.

While we fast, we should remember those less fortunate than ourselves.



Remember that you are denied food only for one month, while many are denied food everyday of their lives. If you are able, try to help those who are struggling with poverty.

Inshallah you will succeed in purifying your mind and body this Ramadan.

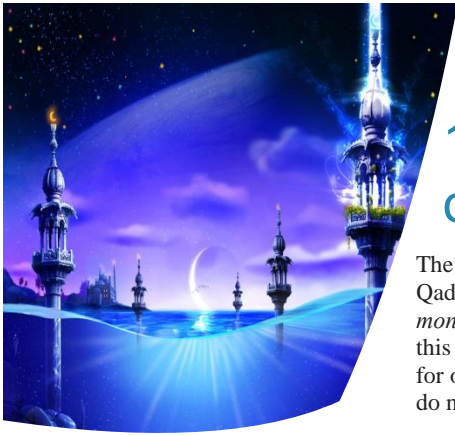


IQAMA TIMES: SEPTEMBER

Week of:	Fajr	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha
August 30	5:30	1:15	5:00	**	9:10
September 6	5:40	1:15	4:50	**	9:00
September 13	5:40	1:15	4:40	**	9:00
September 20	5:50	1:15	4:30	7:10	8:30
September 27	6:00	1:15	4:30	7:00	8:15

*Juma'ah prayers are fixed at 12:10pm

** Maghrib prayer during Ramadan is 10 minutes after Adhan



When the world pushes you to your knees, you are in the perfect position to pray.

10 Things You Can Do on the Night of Power

The Night of Power (Laylatul Qadr) is "better than a thousand months" (97:3). Any action on this night is better than acting for one thousand months which do not contain the night of Qadr.

In Arabic: "Allahumma innaka 'afuwwun tuhibbul 'afwa fo 'fu 'annee."

4. Recite Quran & reflect of its meaning

5. Get your sins wiped out - -

The Prophet said "Whoever stands in prayer in Laylatul Qadr while nourishing his faith with self-evaluation, expecting reward from Allah, will have his previous sins forgiven" (Bukhari & Muslim).

6. Evaluate yourself and plan for the next year

7. Make long, sincere & deep Dua's - - the best time is during the last part of the night

8. Memorize a different Dua's every night - - they can be just one line

9. Have Iftar with family & take them to Tarawih

10. Finish reading a book on the Prophet - - Reading about the Prophet's life can increase your love for him and Islam by seeing how much he struggled for Allah's sake.

Inshallah you will make the most of Ramadan and Laylatul Qadr. May Allah accept all of your efforts.

The Prophet (SAW) said, "Look for Laylatul Qadr on an odd-numbered night during the last ten nights of Ramadan" (Bukhari).

Here are some things you can do on Laylatul Qadr:

1. Take a vacation for Allah - - If it is possible, take a few days off. This can make it easier to stay awake at night without worrying about working the next day.

2. Do Itikaf (period of retreat in the Masjid) - - Those in Itikaf stay in the Masjid performing various forms of Dhikr (remembrance of Allah). Itikaf can be for the last 10 days of Ramadan or just one night.

3. Make this special Dua'a - - Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her said: I asked the Prophet: "O Messenger of Allah, if I know what night is the night of Qadr, what should I say during it?" He said: "Say: O Allah, you are pardoning and you love to pardon, so pardon me" (Tirmidhi).

One Step Closer to \$1 million

On Saturday, 29 August 2009, over 200 guests enjoyed a Middle Eastern iftar at the Fort Collins Hilton.

Imam Mahdi Bray, the featured speaker, encouraged Muslims to work towards positive change in American society.

In all, \$42,000 was raised at the fundraiser and another \$46,000 was pledged.

Ibn Abbas said: "The Prophet (PBUH) was the most generous of

people, but he would be his most generous during the month of Ramadan." Al-Bukhari and Muslim

By the magnanimity of Allah (SWT) we need just **\$75,000** to reach the **\$1 million** mark in our fundraising campaign to build a new masjid.

Please donate generously during the blessed month of Ramadan. You can donate using cash, checks, credit card, direct bank deposit, or online. For details, see any committee member or www.icfc.org.

The Choosing of a King

Prophet Dawood (AS) was also a king during his life. He had 19 sons and every one of them wanted to inherit his throne. He agreed with one of his wives to nominate their eldest son to the throne. Allah (SWT) commanded him not to appoint anyone, but to wait for His order.

One day, he was asked to decide in a dispute between Elia, who was a cultivator, and his neighbor, Yohanna, who was a herdsman. Elia complained that the sheep belonging to Yohanna had grazed in his cornfield and had eaten the vegetables, causing him a great loss. Yohanna admitted that it had happened at night while he was asleep. By the command of Allah (SWT), Prophet Dawood (AS) called all his sons and told them that whoever decided the case correctly, would become his heir.

Sulayman (Soloman) (AS), who was the youngest son, ruled that Yohanna would have to surrender to Elia the milk and the wool that he would obtain from his sheep during that year. Dawood (AS) asked him how he had decided the manner.

Sulayman (AS) replied, "The sheep did not eat the plants, but only the fruits; thus only the produce from the sheep should make up for the loss."

Allah (SWT) informed Dawood (AS) that the ruling given by Sulayman (AS) was the best and he should be made his heir. Dawood (AS) gathered all his sons in the presence of the learned people and chiefs of tribes and declared, by Allah's command, Sulayman (AS) to be a prophet of Allah (SWT) and his heir to the throne.

Dawood (AS) died and Sulayman (AS) became a king at the age of thirteen.

Upcoming Events

*Qiyam
-11 through 19 September
- starts @ 3:00am

*Salatul Eid
-20 September 2009
-starts @ 8:00am

*Eid ul-Fitr
-20 or 21 September 2009

Dua'a

رَبَّنَا عَلَيكَ تَوَكَّلْنَا

وَإِلَيْكَ أُنَبِّئْنَا

وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

Our Lord! In You we have placed our trust, and to You do we turn in repentance, for unto You is the end of all journeys.(60:4)

Did you know?

The first treatise on smallpox and measles was written by Abu Bakr Ar-Razi (c. 864-925). Due to this inoculation against smallpox became a common practice in Muslim lands. Despite this, scientific text books credit the invention of the smallpox vaccine to Edward Jenner (1749-1823)

Hadith

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

"Allah's messenger (SAW) said: When there comes the month of Ramadan, the gates of mercy are opened and the gates of Hell are locked and the devils are chained."

Whoever saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind.

-Quran 5:32

Islamic Relief Worldwide

Islamic Relief Worldwide is this month's featured charity. They are dedicated to alleviating the poverty and suffering of the world's poorest people.

Islamic Relief is an international relief and development charity. It is an independent Non-Governmental Organization. As well as responding to disasters and emergencies, Islamic Relief promotes sustainable economic and social development by working with local communities - regardless of race, religion or gender. You can visit their website at <http://www.islamic-relief.com>

If you would like to contact Islamic Relief, write to the following address:
Internet Department
Islamic Relief Worldwide Headquarters
19 Rea St South
Digbeth
Birmingham
B5 6LB
United Kingdom

Mind, Body, & Spirit

Last month, we discussed tips to improve our bodily health. This month's focus will be the mind. It is important that we nurture our minds - - even if we have healthy and well-maintained bodies, our lives are wasted without a healthy mind.

Tips for nurturing our minds:

- **Read** - - by reading, especially Islamic materials such as Quran, hadith, etc, we improve our mental capacity
- **Memorize Quran** - - memorizing Quran not only makes Allah happy, but also improves our minds
- **Work on crossword puzzles, Sudoku, etc** - - puzzles are great for keeping our minds active and help avoid Alzheimer's Disease
- **Eat brain friendly foods** - - blueberries, sage, turmeric, walnuts, wild salmon
- **Stay positive**
- **De-stress** - - too much stress is harmful to all aspects of our lives



Kid's Corners

How to make easy homemade ice cream

Buying ice cream can be expensive so here is an easy recipe for you and your kids.

Ingredients:

- * 1tbsp sugar
- * 1/2 cup milk
- * 1/4 tsp vanilla
- * 6 tbsp salt (rock salt works best)
- * 1 pint size Ziploc bag
- * 1 gallon size Ziploc bag
- * ice cubes

Directions:

1. Fill gallon bag halfway with ice and add salt
2. Put milk, vanilla, and sugar into pint size bag and seal it
3. Shake the pint size bag a little in order to mix the three ingredients together
4. Place pint size bag into gallon bag and seal it carefully
5. Shake bags until milk thickens - - about 5 minutes
6. Wipe off small bag and enjoy



1/2 cup of milk equals 1 scoop ice cream

A Recipe For: Keftedes

Middle Eastern Meatballs

Keftede (meatballs):

- 1 lb ground beef or lamb
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/4 cup oil

Sauce:

- 15 oz can tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

- 3 potatoes, sliced
- 3 tomatoes, sliced
- 1/2 onion, sliced
- 3 cups water

Directions:

1. Heat oven to 375°
2. Combine meat, onion, parsley, salt, and pepper
3. Mix well
4. Form into 1 1/2 inch ball, then flatten slightly into patties. Place 1/4 cup oil into pan and heat oil. Fry slightly, turning over once. (meatballs do not need to be cooked thoroughly)
5. Remove from heat.
6. Combine all ingredients listed under 'sauce,' then add meat patties
7. Stir gently
8. Bake 45-60 minutes until tender.
9. Serve with rice pilaf. Makes 6-8 servings.

If you would like to contact "Strengthening Our Deen" with any questions, comments, or articles, please email strengtheningourdeen@yahoo.com or drop off your ideas in the suggestion box in the Masjid. If you would prefer a personal paper copy of the newsletter, please contact us.



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