

Pictured for the first time: Mother who murdered her son and set him on fire for failing to learn the Koran

- **Sara Ege is facing life sentence after being found guilty of murder**
- **Seven-year-old Yaseen was beaten 'like a dog' if he couldn't recite passages**
- **Originally thought fun-loving boy died in house fire but he died from beatings and his mother then tried to burn the body to destroy the evidence**
- **Sara Ege, 32, used stick to abuse her boy in months leading up to murder**
- **Ege earlier told officers she had been frustrated her son could not learn 35-pages of Islamic holy book in three months, saying he 'wasn't very good'**
- **Mother told GP she was told to kill him by Shaitan - Islamic name for devil**

By [Larisa Brown](#)

This is the mother who murdered her young son then set him on fire when he struggled to learn the Koran off by heart.

Pictured for the first time, Sara Ege, 32, leaves court today preparing to face life imprisonment after being found guilty of murder.

Ege, 32, used a stick to beat her seven-year-old son Yaseen 'like a dog' when he couldn't recite passages from the Islamic holy book.



Murderer: Sara Ege, pictured for the first time, beat her son Yaseen to death with a stick before burning down the house

A court heard the beatings were so brutal he died from his injuries and his mother tried to burn the body to destroy the evidence.

Fun-loving Yaseen was originally thought to have died in a tragic accident in the house fire.

But a post mortem examination showed Ege had been beating and abusing her little boy in the months leading up to his murder.

Prosecutor Ian Murphy said: 'When the smoke had cleared it emerged that Yaseen was dead before the fire had started.

'He had suffered significant abdominal injuries that were the cause of his death.

'There were multiple injuries including fractures which were non-accidental.

'Sara Ege made no attempt to seek the medical attention he so obviously needed.

'He clearly suffered terribly. She started the fire to hide what she had done.'

In a police interview Ege told officers she was trying to teach her son the Koran but he was not very good.



Beaten: Yaseen Ali, seven, was beaten by his mother for failing to learn parts of the Koran by heart

University graduate Ege said: 'I was getting more and more frustrated, if he didn't read it properly I would be very angry - I would hit him.

'We had a high target, I wanted him to learn 35 pages in three months. I promised him a new bike if he could do it.

'But Yaseen wasn't very good - after a year of practice he had only learned a chapter.'

Cardiff Crown Court heard Ege and her taxi driver husband Yousef, 38, had enrolled Yaseen in advanced classes at their local mosque.

They wanted him to become Hafiz - an Islamic term for someone who memorises the Koran.

Ege told the court: 'Memorising the whole of Koran is a great reward for the whole family.

'It brings honour and increases the standing of the whole family in the local community.'

But mischievous Yaseen preferred to play with his friends and got behind with his studies.

The schoolboy was coming to the end of a three-month trial period at the mosque and Ege was keen for him to impress his Imam.

The court heard Ege become more and more frustrated with her son's inability to learn the passages he needed to.

She told officers: 'I was getting all this bad stuff in my head, like I couldn't concentrate, I was getting angry too much, I would shout at Yaseen all the time.



A sketch shows Sara Ege sitting in the dock at Cardiff Crown Court. She has been found guilty of her son's murder today

'I was getting very wild and I hit Yaseen with a stick on his back like a dog.
'He would be doing his work and wouldn't complain and I would hit and hit him more and more.
'He was a good boy but I used to get angry and he wouldn't even stop me or say anything to anyone.'

The court was told how Ege would hit Yaseen with a stick, a hammer, a rolling pin and a slipper as well as repeatedly punching him.

In the months after Yaseen's death Ege told her GP she had been told to kill him by Shaitan - an Islamic name for the devil.

She said: 'It is Shaitan - it is the devil which is telling me to do all these bad things.
'I have become so harsh, I even killed my own son.'

Ege told her doctor she felt '100 per cent better' after her seven-year-old son died.
Notes kept by her GP record her as saying: 'It is like something has been released. For three or four months I have not been normal.

'Voices told me to hit Yaseen and then hit him more and more.'

Police and the fire service were called to the family's home in Pontcanna, Cardiff, in July 2010 after a blaze ripped through the top floor.

Yaseen was pulled from the blaze by firefighters who fought to revive the schoolboy.

At first Yaseen's death in the fire was treated as a tragic accident.

But a post mortem examination discovered Yaseen was dead before the blaze began.

Pathologists found multiple injuries on Yaseen's body including broken ribs, a fractured arm and a fractured finger.



Funeral: Cardiff Crown Court has heard Ege grew increasingly frustrated with her seven-year-old son



Tragedy: Ege hit her child with a hammer, a rolling pin and a slipper as well as punching him repeatedly

Barbecue lighter fuel was found on Ege's clothing when she was arrested after the post mortem examination. Ege initially denied murdering Yaseen and burning his body to hide what she had done. Later she said she burned her son's body after discovering he had died in the house and panicked. Her story changed again when she admitted beating little Yaseen in the months leading up to his death and burning his body to hide the injuries.



Ege's husband Yousef Ege pictured outside Cardiff Crown Court. The five-week trial heard Mr Ege would drive Yaseen to mosque for his Koran practice before and after school. He said he had never seen his wife raise a hand against Yaseen

But Ege finally retracted all her previous confessions and told police they had all been lies. She said her husband and his family had threatened to kill her and her family if she didn't take the blame for her son's death.

Her husband denied causing or allowing the death of a child by not stopping his wife's beatings of Yaseen. The five-week trial heard Mr Ege would drive Yaseen to mosque for his Koran practice before and after school. He said he had never seen his wife raise a hand against Yaseen and that she was a 'perfect mother'. He told police: 'The last time I saw my son he looked fine. 'He was very happy and had written out a list of things he was going to do in the summer holidays.'

Ege was found guilty of murder and perverting the course of justice by burning little Yaseen's body. Her husband was cleared of causing or allowing the death of a child by failing to protect him. The jury returned unanimous verdicts after eight hours of deliberation. As the verdict was read out Ege broke down in the dock, holding her head in her hands and crying. Her husband showed no emotion as he walked free from court. Ege's parents, who had travelled from Hyderabad in India, sat in the public gallery quietly as the jury returned. Judge Justice Wyn Williams told Ege she faces a term of life imprisonment

But he said he would determine a minimum sentence in the New Year after a medical report had been completed. Sara Ege remains in medical custody at the Llanarth Court Hospital in Gwent, South Wales.



Scene: Police and firefighters rushed to the family home in Pontcanna, Cardiff, after the blaze broke out in July 2010

Mr Ege's solicitor said outside the court: 'He would like to thank everyone for the support they given him.'

The lawyer was asked if Mr Ege had any thoughts for his wife but he refused to answer before the two men got into a waiting car.

Police and the Crown Prosecution Service paid a tribute to 'bright and friendly' Yaseen.

Speaking outside court Detective Constable Kim Roche said: 'Throughout this investigation we have heard many tributes to Yaseen.

'Quiet, hardworking, bright, well-behaved, obedient, respectful, polite and smiley are just some of the words used to describe him.

'It is a tragedy that such a promising young life was taken and those that loved him most will not be able to see him grow up to be a young man.'

District Crown Prosecutor Deborah Rogers said: "The deeply tragic nature of this case has been all too apparent to anyone that has followed this trial.

'We should not forget that at the heart of the case is the loss of a bright and friendly young boy who had his whole life ahead of him.'