

Written by: Muhammad Ali Ad Dabaasi From The Desert Valley Of Makkah To San Francisco



From ***The Desert Valley
Of Makkah***



To San Francisco

Written by: Muhammad Ali Al-dubasi

First Printing: 1437 Hijri - 2016

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Muhammad Ali AL-Dubasi , 2016

King Fahd National Library Cataloging - In- Publication Data

AL-Dubasi , Muhammad Ali

From The Desert Valley Of Makkah To San Francisco

Muhammad Ali AL-Dubasi – Jeddah . 2016

246p : 21 cm

ISBN: 978 – 603 -02 – 2013 – 7

1 – Makkah AL-Mukaramah (Saudi Arabia) – Description

I -Tille

252.5 dc 1437 / 9289

L.D. no. 1437/ 9289

ISBN: 978 – 603 -02 – 2013 – 7

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Dedicated to...

My precious and beloved mother, may God¹ protect her
and care for her..

My dear father ..

My dearest brother and sisters..

To my wife ..

To roadmates ..

To my kids and my brother's kids and my sister's kids ..

To -Engineer: Khalid Najee ..

Every human being .

with my love ..



In The Name of God The Most Merciful The Bestower of Mercy

What is intended by God here is the One and Only Creator and Lord of all creation.
The one who deserves all worship alone without partners, without sons, without spouses,
,
without daughters. Muslims as well as Arab Christians call Him 'Allah

The Story:

From over there..

From California..

From the state located on the western coast of the United States of America, overlooking the Pacific Ocean.

From the state that contains many different geographical features. Containing the highest mountain in the United States, being Mount Whitney, as well as the lowest valley, being Death Valley.

From the state that is mostly covered with forests and border the Mohave Desert to the south.

Mentioning this enables us to visualize and imagine the beautiful image and portrait of the creativity of the Lord and Creator, the one who perfected everything, may He be glorified.

California is commonly known as the ‘Golden State’ solely because of the discovery of gold. This took place in the northern region around the year 1822. Since that time, the state changed economically, many people moved and travelled there, and it became as a wetnurse for them. Within California’s lap sits her daughter-San Francisco- sleeping, while overlooking the Pacific Ocean sprawled out in front of her. Confiding her secrets with this great ocean, while receiving in return the warmth of its ocean water.

San Francisco, an American city with European features and characteristics, this is how visitors usually describe it.

A city of everything. A city of freedom, liberty; and at the same time it is a city that contains one of the most well-known prisons, the Prison of Alcatraz. It lies on one of San Francisco's islands. A prison that contains numerous stories, narratives, criminals as well as prisoners.

And in the heart of San Francisco, on one of the sloping streets, there is Twin Peaks, an area consisting of many beautiful parks, grass covered fields, and trees. And sitting over there is uncle Khalid in his store.

Sitting there as usual, selling his Middle Eastern sweets,

hoping that he could seize the opportunity to return back to the ancient past, which he always longs to live again.

A time in the past that can be seen on the plate of a pastry, allowing him to recall the beautiful memories of Damascus. Recalling the delicious taste of the Egyptian semolina cake when tasting it, as though you are sitting in an imaginary dream with the sweets of Ledue while holding a bouquet from old Hijaz, walking by the popular Moroccan sweets and delicacies.

“So many of these wonderful gatherings in front of your store, Khalid”..

This is what many of his customers say, as they come to sit and gather in front of his store. Just the sight of the beautiful fountain containing the fragrance of Dujlah and Al Farrat is sufficient for them. As well as the hand carved wooden tables surrounded by flowers of jasmine from Yemen, that make one feel as though they are walking the streets of ancient San’aa.

Mark...or Dr. Mark’s residence is not too far from uncle Khalid’s store.

Mark is an academia and professor at the University of Stanford. He’s fifty years old. He’s the head of the History Department there.

He’s a man inclined toward discovering and learning different cultures of the world, as well as the cultures

surrounding him. He spent many of his vacation days in China.

How often and how frequently has he always dreamed about visiting it's great walls that he heard so much about.

Every day Dr. Mark passes by that same street upon which uncle Khalid's store is found every time he returns home from a hard day's work at the university.

One day, while returning home from the university the sign on Uncle Khalid's store enticed him and the name attracted him 'Middle-Eastern Sweets'.

Middle Eastern Sweets led Dr. Mark to think about the Middle East with all its problems and conflicts. It was something that amazed him, while having a small smile on his face.

Mark entered the store and said: 'What do you have?'

Muhammad cordially welcomed him and gave him a piece of semolina cake, in a kindly Eastern manner, that is rarely found in the American environment.

This caused a smile of amazement on Dr. Mark's lips, and he thanked Muhammad for his kindness and generosity.

Dr. Mark was looking around the store, back and forth. His attention was drawn by the old man sitting behind the cash register, more so than it was drawn by the beautiful plates of sweets in the entrance to the store.

He thought: ‘An old man expressing himself.’

“Your store is beautiful!”. Words that Dr. Mark directed towards the old man.

Khalid said: “Thank you, that is from your kindness”.

Mark said: “It appears to me that you have delicious Middle Eastern sweets and pastries.”

Khalid said: “Yes, they are Middle Eastern sweets and pastries. We make them here. You may not know their ingredients, but they will please you greatly and you’ll love them.”

Mark said: “It looks like that just from their beautiful appearance, and from your wonderful welcoming.”

Khalid said: “I am happy to hear this, my dear guest.”

Mark said: “My name is Mark. I live close to your store across the street. I’m from New York but I love San Francisco, so I decided to live here. I currently work as an professor at the University of Stanford. What about you?”

Khalid said: “I’m pleased to meet you. My name is Khalid, and that boy sitting over there is my son Muhammad. He’s still a student, and he comes here to help me after his classes.”

Mark said: "I'm so happy that I'm here. I'll try your semolina cake, if I like it, I will come back again."

The conversation ended, and Dr. Mark left the store.

Mark was a sociable man, who loved to meet and talk with people. He also loves to learn about their cultures and customs. This was perhaps the major reason why his major was History.

Dr. Mark was amazed by uncle Khalid. That calm and peaceful man. He was particularly amazed by his kind Middle Eastern manners that he saw when he visited his store along with his son Muhammad. For that reason he went back again.

Yes, Mark went back again to visit uncle Khalid's store.

Mark: "Good morning Mr. Khalid".

Khalid: "Good morning Dr. Mark, welcome".

Mark: "The semolina cake was delicious".

Khalid: "Thank you, that's from your kindness".

Mark: "You're very kind, and you don't appear to be Mexican, nor European my friend".

Khalid: "Yes, yes. I came to San Francisco ten years ago. I bought this store so that I could sell sweets and pastries here. As this is my profession that I've mastered since I was in Dir Yasin."

Mark: "Dir Yasin!"

Khalid: "Yes, it is my hometown that I left against my will, and came here, in Palistine."

Mark: "Oh..Palistine, you have a problem with the Jews over there. Everyone wants their own land. Haven't you people

ever thought about reconciliation one day so that you can live in peace, and resolve everything?.

Why are you guys murderers, and why do you want everything to be solved with force and violence?

Why don't you listen to others?

Why do you always want to enforce what you want to do?!

You're all extremists and barbarians who want to prove that you are better. You don't want anyone's voice to be louder than your voice, life is never like this!!!

Ahh..pardon me sir if I've exceeded the limit in speaking with you, I'm sorry"

Khalid: 'No problem, I was expecting that you would say something like that. Rather I was expecting more than that. You don't know about us, nor about Islam, except for what the media tells you about us.

You are an academia Dr. Mark, how could you say something like this without researching the subject and becoming certain of it?

Your understanding is wrong about the reality of the situation, about our conflict, about our personalities as Muslims. It's only the biased image perceived in your intellect about us that made you say that.

I've been here for ten years Dr. Mark, and you don't know how much I miss returning to the place that you say 'we are fighting over.'

Our personalities as Muslims are never perceived as those who love power or transgression as you apparently think.

Rather, our personalities are formed by the methodology that our religion has taught us.

A religion that want's good for us and wants us to exert our efforts to convey this goodness to all human beings.

The religion of Islam, Dr. Mark, is the religion that God wants established upon this earth. The earth that He created, so that Islam is the religion of all human beings.

It is the religion that people seek to be shaded under. A religion that is far removed from desires and corruption. A religion that strives to allow people to live in an upright and correct manner with others upon this earth. So that all human beings can be saved from this worldly material life, and experience the pleasure of the eternal after-life.

For this reason God- The Most High and Glorified- has ordered us to strive in spreading and propagating the religion of Islam. While working hard in trying to bring and invite all human beings to enter the religion of Islam.

This is why we are speaking now. Furthermore, if I want to answer your question: 'why don't we live together' as you say.

Then this question necessitates an answer, and I must answer many other questions along with this. This is because

answering this question is related to everything around us, and because our religion is not restricted to a specific place of worship only, rather it encompasses everything in life.”

Mark:!!!

Khalid: “I’m pretty sure you didn’t know that, or maybe it was conveyed to you incorrectly.”

Mark: “I could perhaps agree with you, that there is a religion that the Lord wants; but why do you say that it is Islam only? Why are you bigoted to Islam alone? Why isn’t Christianity like this as well?”

Khalid: “I won’t answer this question, I’ll let you answer it”.

Mark: “How and why is that?”

Khalid: “Do you believe in a divine heavenly religion?”

Mark: “Yes, there are many heavenly religions, not only one.”

Khalid: “Who created with these religions?”

Mark: “The Lord.”

Khalid: “Did God send ‘something’ to aid and propagate the reality and true manifestation of these religions upon His

earth and clarify them and their meanings to the people?”

Mark: “Yes, He sent holy messengers and revealed to them holy books and divine scriptures.”

Khalid: “How many heavenly religions are there?”

Mark: “Many.”

Khalid: “Are all of them correct?”

Mark: “Of course, considering that they’re all from The Lord.”

Khalid: “Ok, so are all these heavenly religions related in regards to the message they teach? Or is every religion’s message independent and separate?”

Mark: “I believe every religion is independent of itself.”

Khalid: “Ok, so this means that the truth is many different forms, correct?”

Mark: “The truth cannot take many different forms in things such as this Khalid, because The Lord is one.”

Khalid: “So, the religions are related and connected to each other.”

Mark: !!!

Khalid: “Yes, Dr. Mark this is the truth. As long as the heavenly religions, as you mentioned are from one Lord, then they possess one goal that God wants to manifest. This goal is to worship God alone without any partners. Similarly, there is only one way that leads someone to God’s path. So based upon that, there are not ‘religions’, rather there is only one religion, from one Lord, who sent many messengers with teachings that were relevant to their time, place and situation.

However, there are some people who have ascribed to every divine prophet a specific and separate religion for each of them.

There are also people who have gone astray from the religion and abandoned the holy laws of their prophets and divine messengers. They have chosen to tread a newly innovated path that is far away from the methodology and goal of the divine prophet or messenger that was sent to them, and even the prophets that came after them.

After some time went by, many of the people ascribed to these prophets, as well as themselves a misguided methodology and system of beliefs that pleased and satisfied their desires and worldly gains.

So even if this wasn’t the case, let me ask you a question Dr. Mark.”

Mark: “Go ahead.”

Khalid: “Why does God -The Most Glorified- want us as human beings to follow His way and His religion, and to establish this way and religion upon His earth?”

Then it would be as you said: ‘God sent to us many different religions, and ways that lead us to Him. Then we see conflict, trials and differences occur between the people, and none of the religions become established upon the earth.’

This is because of the differences these different religions possess which lead to conflict and dispute. As every group and religion views that they are upon the truth, as long as they are following the heavenly orders?

Would God -the Most Glorified- do something like this?

You could say that this is a test, so that the people who are holding firmly unto the truth become known. However, I’ll say to you: “How could there be a test or trial between two truths?”

Mark: “What you are saying is correct. However, to say that every religion is the truth, then why and how do conflict and dispute occur?”

Maybe so that every sect doesn’t bother the other sect, and the Lord will hold them accountable.”

Khalid: “How can all the religions be correct? And in our religion for example, we read that our religion is correct and the Jews and the Christians say the same as well? Would God confuse us in regards to knowing the truth and the true religion?”

Mark:!!

Khalid: “God is too exalted and majestic from doing such a thing. For this reason our religion continues to be the truth and will remain so. We, as Muslims are commanded to convey Islam to all human beings in the way that God ordered us to convey it. Particularly conveying it with mercy, so that everyone can be part and join us in following this truth. However, many have refused this message, and are trying to eliminate, destroy and alter this truth, and this is why conflicts and wars occur.

Our religion of Islam, Dr. Mark, affirms and teaches that God sent divine messengers and prophets to the previous nations of people. Similarly, every messenger was sent with religious laws according to the people’s needs during that time. All of these messengers had one goal, which was inviting the people to single God out in worship and to disbelieve in everything worshipped other than God. They also invited the people to bear witness that Muhammad (May God’s peace and blessings be upon him) was the final divine prophet and messenger sent to mankind.

We are also commanded to teach people that Islam is the predominant religion, that all of the divine messengers came to teach their people. These holy prophets and messengers also taught that a person’s Islam is not correct unless he believes in all of the holy messengers and holy books revealed from God in their original form.

Now let me ask you, did God reveal a holy book to Jesus (May God's peace be upon him)?"

Mark: "Yes of course, the Gospels."

Khalid: "Did the Gospels ever mention that there would be another prophet that would come after Jesus (May God's peace be upon him)?"

Mark: "No, it didn't mention anything like that."

Khalid: "Are you sure?"

Mark: "I think so, I've read more than one version of the Gospels and I didn't come across this."

Khalid: "More than one version of the Gospels'!! How is that?"

Mark: "What do you mean? That's how it is."

Khalid: "This is the result of human influence in the changing of the Gospels meanings, which led to the Gospels appearing in many different versions. Do you think that a book that has been altered and changed by humans, will ever return back to the way it was originally? Do you think that the contents of that book contain the correct path to God and methodology for all human beings to live their lives by? Do you think that God didn't obliged the people to memorize and preserve the holy book because the legislations contained

within it were only temporary for that time and place, and would only be valid until a new messenger was sent with a new message? If this was the case, then the Gospels is not for all times and all places, because it was not the last heavenly book that was revealed by God to His holy prophets. However, this is the case with the Quran, which is the last holy book of revelation sent to mankind from God!

Dr. Mark, if God wanted the religious laws of Jesus or Moses to be continuous up until the Last Hour, then why were many of the holy books lost and misplaced, then rewritten by man?

Also considering the fact that the religious laws were temporary, and were only applicable to their specific times, then it is necessary for a new holy book, appropriate for that specific time to come after it, that would be revealed to a final prophet.

And if God wanted the legislations of one of His previous holy books to continue and remain, then His last prophet Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) would have continued practicing all of those holy book's divine teachings. This is because Muhammad is the last one who conveyed God's message to mankind, and he came with the same message that all the other divine and holy messengers came with before him. Also the prophet Muhammad had no control or choice in selecting or specifying the holy book to teach the people.

Dr. Mark, I want you to know that Islam is the heavenly religion that all the holy prophets taught and invited their

people to follow. It is the religion that God wants for all human beings. Some people don't want Islam as a way of life, so they're involved in wars, conflict, and fighting.

Dr. Mark, you've travelled to many countries throughout the world, and have seen numerous countries and different civilizations. However, you've never thought about visiting the land of the Muslims, or to get to know them? Even though Islam is not waiting for you to come to it, indeed it has come to you right here!"

Mark: "It's come to me!! Here!!"

Khalid: "Yes, it's a complex topic, I don't think we have enough time to talk about it now. However, maybe we can meet on the weekend."

Mark: "Ok, it's going to be a wonderful meeting. I'm so happy meeting you and talking with you."

Khalid: "I am also pleased Dr. Mark."

Mark: "Mr. Khalid, what do you think if we meet at the Golden Gate park?"

Khalid: "Golden Gate, is an excellent place, it will be nice to meet over there."

Mark: "Ok, we have a deal."

This meeting was very important to Dr. Mark, because he heard things today that he's never heard throughout his entire life.

“A religion that God wants established upon this earth.”

“Islam is not how you perceive it to be.”

“The way to the Lord is one path.”

“The Gospels is not the final holy book.”

Words and phrases that Dr. Mark thought about daily.

He kept remembering these words and statements, and was eagerly looking forward to meeting with Khalid in the Golden Gate Park.

Yes, it is the Golden Gate Park..

That beautiful park in the heart of San Francisco, that contains more than one-million trees, in an area of forty-one square meters. Indeed a beautiful image of beauty and wonder.

A park that's beauty lies in its many different and wonderful gardens. The flower garden, the sports fields, and the children's playgrounds.

The small lakes and ponds, like Spreckles Lake and the Tahoe lake, which are the largest lakes in the park, as well as

other beautiful sights and scenery that are unforgettable.

And of course the world renowned Golden Gate Bridge that connects San Francisco in the north, with the city of Sausalito in the southern section of the peninsula in Marin.

It was a beautiful, sunny day, and everyone was looking forward to picnicking and gathering in the park.

It was seven o'clock, and Dr. Mark woke up.

“Where are you going today?”, His wife Emily asked him.

Mark: “I’m going out with a friend named Khalid who I met a couple days ago. He’s the owner of that Middle Eastern sweets and pastries store at the end of the street across from us.

Please excuse me sweetheart that I didn’t tell you about this before. I’m going to meet with him in the Golden Gate Park.”

Emily: “Truly a beautiful place, I’ll come along, but I’ll be in the flower garden playing with our son Jimmy.”

Mark: “Sounds good.”

Then Dr. Mark went to meet Khalid.

The park was amazingly beautiful and the weather was perfect and surrounded by trees and various types of flowers and greenery..

And there sitting in the chair, overlooking the Spreckles lake was uncle Khalid sipping a cup of coffee and holding his favorite newspaper, pondering over the current events going on throughout the world.

Mark: “Good morning Mr. Khalid, how are you?”

Khalid: “Good morning to you as well, Dr. Mark. I’m doing very good, all thanks to God.”

Mark: “It looks as though you’ve been here for a long time.”

Khalid: “I’ve been here for about a half-an-hour. I came early to watch the sunrise, what a beautiful sight. Please sit down Dr. Mark.”

Mark: “I was thinking about the conversation that we had a couple days ago in your store.”

Khalid: “What do you think?”

Mark: “I don’t know.”

Khalid: “You’re not the only one who doesn’t know. You’ll be surprised Dr. Mark when I inform you that there are even some Muslims who don’t truly understand Islam in the correct way, and for this reason I’m not surprised by what I’m hearing from you now.”

Mark: “Is Islam so difficult to understand?”

Khalid: “Never, however it’s a conflict.”

Mark: “Conflict.”

Khalid: “Yes, conflict. I want something and you don’t want it. Islam, Dr. Mark is like a mother who wants to care for her children and provide them with what benefits them, however the children always refuse it.”

Mark: “A conflict of desires.”

Khalid: “Exactly.”

Mark: “So what Islam requests or demands from a person is not easy?”

Khalid: “Never, it’s not like that. Islam, as I told you, is the religion that God wants to be practiced upon this earth, and the proper way of life for all of earth’s inhabitants.

God, The Lord is the one who created human beings, and He is the most knowledgeable of what suits them, befits them, and benefits them. For this reason Gods religious laws are the most suitable and easily applicable for the human being. However, the human being doesn’t search for what is most suitable and beneficial, in comparison to and to the extent that he searches for freedom and not being ordered or bossed around.

Dr. Mark, let's start our conversation from the beginning. Do you believe in the existence of The Lord?"

Mark: "What type of question is that! Of course I do. I believe in Christianity and in Jesus."

Khalid: "Please, don't be surprised. I'm also amazed by those that don't believe in the existence of God."

Mark: "Oh..This is Atheism, maybe you mean the atheists. I've heard a lot about them, and sat with some of them. They've never convinced me, nor did I convince them."

Khalid:"So that you know Dr. Mark, the atheists are those that follow their whims and desires."

Mark: "Desires!!"

Khalid: "Yes, they don't want to be restricted or controlled by anything, no system, no God. For this reason they have disbelieved in the existence of God."

Mark: "How is that?"

Khalid: "They ascribe everything to nature, so that they are not restricted by religious commandments. Nature is what brought them into existence as they claim. This is the summary of what they say and believe. If we acknowledged their statements, then we would ask them: What is nature? And how

did nature come about?

And we would ask them: How could a random explosion, result in such an organized and accurately arranged system?

Isn't a cosmic explosion-as they claim-an action that occurred?

Who did this action?

And how does it run and govern the world after this explosion took place?

And we would ask them: How could nature bring about this universe? How could it do all these things and make this magnificent creation with such precision and accuracy and organize the whole universe?

What about its order and organization in the heavens, and in the earth?

If nature possessed this great and preponderant intellect or power, and was able to create the universe, control it, and organize it, then why didn't it do so with justice?

Why didn't it create people equally? Why are there wealthy people and poor people? Why are there strong people and weak people? Why are there healthy people and sick people?

Is nature oppressive? Or is there something else, that many

not be apparent?

Does nature put people through trials and test them to see how they are going to act so that nature can reward them or punish them?

Aslo where and how will human beings and the creation be rewarded, if nature was going to do this?

What is the creations good and evil?

Why are there those who are punished, and there are those who die without receiving punishment?

Did nature compliment and reward the human being on the account of someone else? Did or didn't nature mention for us a specific time to receive this compensation and restitution?

Then we ask them: 'which law of nature organizes the relationships between people?'

Don't tell me that humans are the ones who are responsible for making this law.

Why doesn't nature make this law by itself, considering that it has this great intellect and power that created and brought this universe into existence?

If they can't answer these questions, why don't they admit that nature is not something great, as long as it does not possess

the ability to do these things?

Then ask them Dr. Mark, about the religion that we believe in, and that they don't believe in.

Why has this same belief and methodology existed throughout time and has been established amongst the people upon the earth? If it is the religion that God wants to restrict and control the people with?

Is this a proof that religion is real? Or do they view that it is a failed attempt by the people trying to organize people's lives?"

Mark: "What you're saying is beautiful. But they don't believe in religion. Soley because the one who ordered or commanded the people with the religion, is non-existent amongst us. And he could perhaps not exist altogether, as they claim."

Khalid: "What they say is totally incorrect. If it was correct, then how do they believe in the intellect and they distinguish between it and between the brain, and it is non-existent amongst us?"

Aren't the things around us sufficient enough? From the signs of God's existence are the skies, the earth, the stars, and the creation of everything in existence. Even our five senses, feelings and emotions. Is it not sufficient enough to believe in the existence of an originator and creator, and that the creation

of the universe is not only a random cosmic explosion that occurred?”

Mark: “They could perhaps say, “why have you specified the Lord as the creator? And why isn’t there another being?”

Khalid: “We would say, “Is there someone else, another God or Deity who’s claimed that He is the creator, and in fact proved his claim?”

The creator of the universe, and the one who establishes His control over it, He is the one who most deserving of worship. For this reason the Noble Quran mentioned a story about something that occurred between Abraham (May God’s peace be upon him) and Nimrod. The story mentions that Nimrod challenged God’s Prophet Abraham (May God’s peace be upon him) saying that he had the ability to give life and cause death. So when God’s Prophet Abraham mentioned to Nimrod that God is only the one who gives life and causes death, and brought him decisive proofs about this. He mentioned to Nimrod that God makes the sun rise from the East, is he able to make it rise from the West?

Nimrod was dumbfounded at this statement.

Yes, he was dumbfounded because it was something that he didn’t have the ability to do, nor did he have control over it. If he did have control over it or possession of it, and had control over the rest of the movements within the universe, then he would be deserving of worship. Solely because the one who controls everything in the universe, he is the one that deserves to be worshipped, and there is no one who is able to do this except for the One and only God and Lord of creation.

Surely, nature did not do everything by itself, rather it is a cycle of life, that the Unique -One who is God- moves and controls.

God is the sole creator who sent messengers to clarify to the people on earth how to worship Him, and how to tread upon God's path. If there was another creator, as you mentioned, then He would have come and established that he is more deserving of this right, and everything else is just idle talk and a false claim.

You need to understand Dr. Mark that the Atheists only say this because they don't want to be controlled by the rules and regulations of a religion. Mainly, so that they can live as they want, and this is an incorrect perception of things.

Indeed, we're not in a jungle where we can live how we want to. Furthermore, seeing that we exist in this universe, and this universe has a creator, then it is necessary for us to follow the rules and regulations of that creator. So that we can live in this universe in an organized and orderly manner. So that we can find our livelihood while experiencing safety and security from those who transgress and oppress each other."

Mark: "If we believed that The Lord was the one who created everything in the universe, and that everything is created, then who created The Lord? Who created Him?"

Khalid: "Think for a moment with me Dr. Khalid. Is the

origin of this universe, something that was existent or non-existent?

If we said that the cosmic explosion, which we talked about previously, is an action, and that it is necessary that every action has a ‘doer’ of that action. So where did that ‘doer’ come from at the time of non-existence?

And based upon that, the only logical answer would be that the originator –The Lord–within this universe was existent and not non-existent.

Meaning that the origin of this universe was created by The Unique One, who orders all things to ‘be’ and they come into existence. He did all of that, and started the creation like this, He is God the Most Glorified and High.”

Mark: “What you mentioned is very nice. Let’s move on to another point Khalid. Isn’t it sufficient enough that there exists a law that organizes the creation here in this world only, without the need of mentioning the After-Life? And that there is compensation awaiting us there? Why do we have to speak about punishments in the After-Life, that could possibly occur or not occur?

Also Mr. Khalid, why aren’t these punishments experienced during this lifetime? Generations of people have died hundreds of years ago and nothing has changed, the universe is still the universe and life is still life?”

Khalid: “Where did they go Mark?”

Mark: “To extinction.”

Khalid: “Who told you that it is extinction?”

Mark: “Hundreds of years have passed, and they’ve never returned, this is the fundamental reasoning in relation to this issue.”

Khalid: “As long as we’ve affirmed the existence of The Lord-The Creator of this universe, and that there doesn’t exist anyone else who claimed this and proved this. Then it is necessary for us to believe what this Creator says. This is because the one who is able to create something from non-existence and bring it into existence, is surely capable of repeating its creation again and bringing it back to life. And all the years and time that’s passed by, even though it may be a long time. The length of this time is not proof of inability to recreate, in comparison to the length of time that one will wait for the end of this universe.

Furthermore, Dr. Mark, any law or rule, if it was going to hold you accountable for something, then it would only hold you accountable for that which is apparent, and it would not have knowledge of your unapparent actions or secrets, and what you’ve done in private. Additionally, we cannot reach the highest level of justice and equality that we demand or hope to reach to give all the oppressed people their due rights. For this reason God revealed to us a book, to judge and rule between us in our affairs while we are living upon this earth. And the occurrences and situations from the past that we were not able to give people their due rights, because we didn’t know except

that which was apparent to us, then God will make His judgment in these affairs on the Day of Recompense.”

Mark: “Why isn’t the compensation for mistakes that only God knows, given in this world? By punishing those who committed these mistakes, as what occurred to the previous nations?”

Khalid: “The oppressor could perhaps feel pain, even if he was punished as well. However, the oppressed one may not know that the oppressor is undergoing punishment because of his oppression and transgression. And if this was the case, how would the oppressed person receive his due rights that were taken from him by the oppressor? So where is his reward for his patience and forbearance for the sake of God? Doesn’t he deserve the greatest reward for that? And that would not occur except on the Day of Reckoning in the After-Life, so that a new phase and stage of life can start that contains eternal existence, far away from people oppressing each other.

So be informed Dr. Mark that Atheism and the worship of anything around us-other than God- is an issue that stems from following one’s desires, and because of ignorance. It is not something such as an idea, because every valid idea will lead the person to correct contemplation over it, and will lead one to know that there exists a creator of everything in existence in this universe, and lead one to know God.”

Mark: “Ah. Now I understand.”

Khalid: “I believe it’s time for me to go home to finish up

some business I have to do. The sun is going to set soon, and I must pray close to the time of sunset.”

Mark: “Why don’t we have dinner together?”

Khalid: “Let’s make that our next meeting, I’ll let you choose the restaurant.”

Mark: “It’s my pleasure. Let’s meet in the neighborhood of Fisherman.”

Khalid: “Ok, I’ll be there waiting for you.”

Mark returned back to his house pleased and satisfied, and his happiness was not because of the beautiful views of the Golden Gate Park, as these things he can always return back to and see their beauty and comfort. However, the source of his happiness was because he found a person who possessed reasonably balanced, moderate and logical speech, and he had no difficulty in speaking about life and religion.

He was also happy because he found someone who he knew from the first conversation with him, that was someone who believed in the religion that he ascribed to. This confidence and conviction was not based upon any bigotry of association, nor group partisanship, rather it was because of him knowing the truth and holding firmly unto it.

A religion not like the other religions. Indeed, it wasn’t the Islam that he heard about before.

Yes, he heard a lot about Islam, but he never researched it, and he-as the majority of people did- sufficed himself with what he heard on the tv, internet or other media outlets. So his hostility and disagreement with this religion was a natural result of that.

Today was the weekend and the weather was wonderful. And indeed meeting with uncle Khalid would increase this day in beauty.

Yes, the meeting would continue, but this time it will be as they agreed upon, at the beach in the Fisherman neighborhood, by the fisherman's seaport.

The Fisherman's neighborhood is a beautiful area, facing the ocean, possessing many seafood restaurants, tourist boats, and beautiful museums.

Mark: "Welcome Khalid, how are you?"

Khalid: "I'm good, thanks to God. And how are you doing?"

Mark: "I'm in the best condition, what do you think about the beach today?"

Khalid: "It's so nice. It will be better when our lunch is seafood today."

Mark: "Yes, what do you think if we have some grilled

fish?”

Khalid: “Excellent, grilled fish it is. How much this beach reminds me of the Mediterranean Sea basin when I used to go with my family to my uncle’s house in Gaza. We always used to go fishing and grill the fish when we were young boys, along with my cousins and our friends. Then we would return back home before nightfall.”

Mark: “You’ve gone back in time with your memories Khalid.”

Khalid: “They were beautiful days, and they are going to return someday by the will of God. Mark why are you here?”

Mark: “Hahahah, I’m here to meet with you, have you changed your mind Mr. Khalid?”

Khalid: “No, no, I don’t mean that. Rather I mean why are you here on this earth? How and why was the beginning of your creation?”

Mark: “I’m a developing being, this is what the Darwin Theory says. It states that all living creatures emerged from groups of cells that developed over time. This is called the ‘Theory of Evolution and Development.’ Whatever adapts to the environment survives, and whatever doesn’t adapt becomes extinct.”

Khalid: “Do you believe in this Dr. Mark?”

Mark: “Of course not Khalid. But I wanted to mention some of what they say about it. I know that the Lord created human beings, and brought them into existence. We talked about this previously when we spoke about Atheism.”

Khalid: “Regardless of this false theory and everything related to it, let’s talk about the human being. About that great and magnificent creature that is distinguished from the rest of the creation with its intellect. Why did God create him? And why is he here on this earth?”

Mark: “The human being was placed on this earth to populate it, develop it, and live upon it in peace with everyone and everything in existence.”

Khalid: “Good. But tell me, what if the development and advancement of this earth was interrupted by the oppression of one person to another person, without anyone knowing about it, and without leaving any evidence to prove it? How about if the strong took advantage of or took control of the weak?

Furthermore, why didn’t God create only one generation of people who continuously live for eternity? Why does the human being’s life end with a disappointing and sad ending-death? Why isn’t the human being honored or rewarded for his time on earth? How could he surprisingly leave what he did on the earth all these long years during his life?

Why Dr. Mark does there exist good and bad? Why didn’t God only create goodness alone? And all human beings would be pure throughout the world, like a city of utopia that

Aflatoon contrived, considering that there is no such thing as the last day?

All of those things, and everything that happens to a person, what does this indicate O Dr. Mark?

The conflicts that occur to people, it must come to an end one day. And one day the earth must be filled with peace and tranquility, no matter if it is here or in any other place. Everything must come to an end, and this will not happen until everyone receives their due rights.

Surely, the one who is able to create this world, with such creativity, is not incapable of creating a virtuous city (utopia) that all people are happy in upon this earth.

God, who created me and you made this earth as an introduction and prelude to the better life.

The better life will not be attained except by those who strive for it. For this reason we have the religion that with it, and through it, and following its ways, one will find correct compensation.

Is all of this not sufficient enough for you Dr. Mark to make one believe in Last Day that the divine messengers invited the people to believe in? Also what we finished our previous conversation with the last time we met.”

Mark: “How do we know that they are divine messengers? There are many people who claim that they are messengers. Rather, there are even people who claim they are The Lord?”

Khalid: “Whoever claims that they are the Lord, this issue has been concluded. The Lord is the one who created everything and controls it, and we mentioned previously about

the story of Abraham (May God's peace be upon him) and Nimrod, and how the one who is the Lord, it is necessary that He possesses the power to change nature and alter it as He wills. How is it possible that someone who cannot even protect himself from changes such as sickness, old age, and then death, how can such a person claim Lordship?

As for the one who claims that he's sent from the Lord, or that he has the keys of goodness and happiness for the people, then the likes of these people usually expose themselves and their falsehood. With their false claims, they try to aid their ideas and desires. If these so called messengers were invited to virtuousness one day, or if they tried to rectify something, then they would be overtaken by deficiencies, that do not befit the one that sent them if they were truthful in this aspect.

And from another aspect, the one claiming prophethood would bring with him miracles from God who sent him, if he is truthful. This is what the people used to say to the messengers, that they were lying, crazy, madmen, etc. and God used to aid these messengers with miracles in the same occupations, specializations and profession that those people were creative and innovative in producing and practicing during that time. So that they were certain that this miracle is above their level of creation, specialization and innovation. This is why the magicians in the story of Moses knew that the signs that Moses (May God's peace be upon him) came with were not magic, something far more powerful, and they all believed in him. The disbelievers of Makkah, the poets, and their public speakers all knew that the Quran that was with the Prophet Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) was not the speech of human beings, they knew this deep within

themselves, but they outwardly denied and refused to accept the message out of arrogance and pride.”

Mark: “But the divine messengers were denied, rejected and fought by the people, even though they came with their perfect heavenly messages as you say, then why did this happen? Why weren’t the messengers strong and powerful so that their message would reach those whom they wanted it to reach, and the people would fear them? Why didn’t God aid them with soldiers so that they become victorious and all of mankind would have submitted and believed in them immediately?”

Khalid: “You know well Dr. Mark that this worldly life contains good and bad. There are those who search for the truth and those who are arrogant and full of pride. And for this reason Dr. Mark, if good was always victorious, then there would be no tests, trials, or tribulations to know who the truthful one is from the dishonest one.

God is able to do that, and nothing is impossible for Him. However, having affiliation to the religion and following it’s teachings cannot be realized except with those who follow it having some strengths and weaknesses together.

If the follower of the religion were victorious in all fields, then some people that are not truly convinced of it would follow it’s teachings, and affirm it deep within themselves out of desire to only receive those victories. And the new generations would come up being weak, and perhaps fail and give up in the most simple of trials. Similarly the person wouldn’t be able to protect his religion, and let alone convey

the message to the rest of mankind.

This religion is in need of active and patient followers, so that they can convey the religion to the world and remain. Do you understand that Dr. Mark?”

Mark: “Yes, yes. But why don’t the followers of Jesus believe in Muhammad, or the opposite? And why don’t they leave each other alone, and stop accusing, conflicting with each other and fighting against each other?”

Khalid: “I mentioned previously that belief in Moses necessitates belief in Jesus as well (May God’s peace be upon them both). And belief in Jesus necessitates belief in Muhammad (May God’s peace and blessings be upon him). So whoever believes in Muhammad then it is necessary to believe in Jesus and the remainder of the divine and holy messengers. So based upon that, if a person resided in Makkah and followed Muhammad but he didn’t believe in Jesus, no matter what good deeds he had, God would not accept his actions of worship. This is because not having faith or belief in a holy messenger means that one does not have faith or belief in the one who sent that messenger, as I mentioned before.

God created people, and didn’t distinguish between them in creating them. He created religious legislations that are suitable and applicable for people at all time. While all of the holy messengers and prophets were agreed upon one goal-inviting the people to the worship of God alone and disbelieving in all things worshipped besides God.

God sent messengers in every era to guide the people to the truth. God revealed holy books to them that contained the

teachings that were appropriate for the stage and level of development that the people were living in. If that person from the past lived up until today, then the only religious legislation appropriate for him would be the religion of Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him). This is because the religion of Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) is that which is appropriate for the whole world at this time. If people were to think a little, then they would follow God in everything that He commands them to do. This is because God is the one who specifies what should happen and exist during this time. And as long as a person is satisfied and pleased with God as his Lord from the beginning, and believes in His messenger, no matter if it is Moses, or Jesus, then it is necessary that he completes this belief and believes in Muhammad as well. This is so that he is truly submitting to The Lord, as God ordered the people. Also so that this person knows that the messengers came with one message, not with different messages. And this means that one should not differentiate between believing in them, only believing in some in exclusion of others.

Envy, Dr. Mark, is what made the Jews not believe in Muhammad. For this reason they have continued to tread upon a path of misguidance that they invented for themselves. This occurred because they were waiting for a messenger to emerge from amongst themselves, but he emerged in the Arabian Gulf. So there was conflict, even though there does exist Jews that are certain that Muhammad is the real prophet.

Indeed, it is a test for them and others, so that God The Most Glorified can see their adherence to the truth. Rather, even the Christians have gone astray from the path of guidance,

and invented many newly invented ways in their religion, far from the correct methodology and belief. What was obligatory upon them was to continue upon the correct path after Jesus (May God be pleased with him).”

Mark: “That’s amazing! Submission to the Lord does not occur except with faith in all of the messengers that the Lord sent, because they are carrying the commandments that are appropriate for their times, and all of their goals are one. Indeed, it is a matter of submitting to the Lord of creation, and not a matter of being bigoted to a certain group of people.”

Khalid: “Yes, if we submit ourselves and our affairs to the Lord of creation, then everyone on the earth would be Muslim. Furthermore, Jesus (May God’s peace be upon him) when he comes back to earth at the end of time, he will rule and govern with the religious legislations of Muhammad, with the Noble Quran, and not with any other book. This is because it is the religion that is appropriate for this phase and stage of life. Jesus (May God’s peace be upon him) is the prophet who will never do anything except that it is appropriate for the people, and this is by God’s commandment. This is because he wants to implement God’s commandments and follow them, and establish the worship of God on this earth.”

Mark: “What you’re saying is beautiful, I’ve never heard anything like this before. I used to think that the heavenly religions are just like being associated to certain countries. Everyone ascribing to the religion that he wants to, and it’s sufficient enough that his religion is a heavenly religion so that

he can be upon the truth. A person must respect the other religions, and live with them, and this is the reason why I blame those who do not respect other religions. But why don't all of them come to a middle ground, and come to an agreement ? To unify upon one word and all live together in peace, as long as all of you, in the end, affirm the existence of the Lord, and the conflict will at least ease up a little."

Khalid: "I'm going to ask you a question, Dr. Mark."

Mark: "Please go ahead Mr. Khalid."

Khalid: "Who are these heavenly religions ascribed to as you say?"

Mark: "To the Lord."

Khalid: "Then who specifies what we should follow? Us or the one who created it?"

Mark: "Certainly, the one who created it."

Khalid: "This is how it was. God wanted Islam to be upon this earth. I mentioned earlier that every holy prophet came propagating the message of Islam, even though some of their religious legislations differed in their time. But their goal was one, which was worshipping one God alone, and disbelieving in the things worshipped other than God. The prerequisite for believing in God, that all the messengers agreed upon, was believing in everything that God commanded and said, or

caused to occur, and believing in everything sent to His messengers. Just as we believed in Moses and Jesus (May God's peace be upon them) the day that God sent them to us, we also believe in every messenger that God sent to us after them. And here we say that there shouldn't be, nor is there any benefit from interfaith dialects or unification of the religions, as long as God has determined what is to be and occur. Rather, what is necessary is that there should be an invitation for the unification of people upon the religion of God, which is the religion of Islam.

Furthermore, if you said to me that every religion has its own specific creed and you want to have a debate or an agreement between amongst the heavenly religions. I would say to you: 'that we will debate you with what we have in our religion, so what do you have in your religion?'

Where are your books that you will refer to? Even you yourself have admitted that they have been lost and misplaced for hundreds of years, and that they have been altered. And there are also books that have been re-written and edited. So should we rely upon the Quran that is preserved by God, and the book that it's followers have never mentioned that it has been changed or altered. The book that is agreed upon and is a proven fact that it has never been changed or altered. Or should we rely upon your books, that even you yourselves admit have been altered, changed and re-written? This is if you admit the validity of our religion. But if you do not believe in the validity of our religion, then how can you request a dialect or debate with someone upon falsehood? How can we come together upon a mutual word or agreement while you admit that the

people sitting in front of you are following falsehood, and the concept of truth and falsehood does not accept faulty solutions or resolutions.

In addition, if we abandoned all that with the pretense of establishing peace and tranquility and elimination of conflict, as you say. Then this peace and tranquility would make it easy for falsehood to spread and circulate, and would be enticing to the people, and deceive them into associating or ascribing to it. This is because there is no one to denounce and rebuke that falsehood they are doing and practicing. So they become deceived by it, and this is oppression of them, rather it is oppression in the earth. The earth on which it is necessary that the light of truth shines brightly, and the truth is only one path, as we agreed upon previously.”

Mark: “You’re correct Mr. Khalid, but the Lord told your prophet that if he was in doubt about his religion then he should ask the Jews and the Christians-the people of the book-and this is an affirmation of the other religions by the Lord, and their realities, and the truthfulness of their books, and in addition, to refer back to them in times of need.”

Khalid: “God said in the Quran: ‘So, if you (O Muhammad) are in doubt concerning that which we have revealed to you, then ask those who are reading the Torah and the Gospel before you. Verily, the truth has come to you from your Lord. So be not of those who doubt it.’ (Quran-Yunus:94)

This verse does not mean that the Prophet (May God’s peace and blessings be upon him) was doubtful, he is far removed from such a claim. Rather it means that if he did have

doubt about his prophet hood, then he should ask those who read the Torah and the Gospel, the ones who were the truthful people of knowledge amongst them. Because the question here, or any other place, is directed towards the people of knowledge who are trustworthy, and not for the laymen. Such as is the case with Abdullah ibn Salaam who was a Jew and then accepted Islam, and perfected his Islam. He did so because he knew the truth and believed in the prophet Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him), and this is what we should see from them, that when he was sent, that they followed him, as long as they are truthful in holding onto and adhering the truth. This is how we know who the truthful ones are from amongst them, and that they follow the truth no matter what. We do not denounce or deny the Torah nor the Gospel, nor any other holy book, and it is not permissible for us to do so. The faith and religion of one who does not believe in these books is invalid. However, these books have been altered, and we talked about this earlier. So how can we know what is correct within them, and who amongst the followers of these books follow the truth without any bias? In light of their fighting and trying to destroy the truth, and denying it. Actually, this Quranic verse is a proof against them, and not for them. If you want to use it as a proof without changing your view after that. This verse establishes that the Prophet Muhammad was sent from God with the truth, and your books mentioned this fact. So based upon that, then God's path and way is only one, which is connected, coherent and continuous in all of His holy books. This is why this truth should be followed, so why don't you follow it?

Then there is another verse in the same chapter of the Quran that emphasizes for all the people to be believers, and that the path and way is only one path, which is the easy path of Islamic monotheism as God says in the Quran: ‘Say (O Muhammad)! If you are in doubt as to my religion (Islam), then know that I will never worship those whom you worship besides God. But I worship God who causes you to die, and I am commanded to be one of the believers. And direct your face entirely towards the religion of Hanif (Pure Islamic Monotheism) and never be one of the polytheists’ (Quran-Yunus:104-105)

So why do you debate about the previous verse, and leave off mentioning the verse that comes after it?”

Mark: “Now I understand Mr. Khalid. Indeed, what you said is beautiful.”

Khalid: “It’s not my speech, rather it is the truth that must be. It looks like you want me to starve until all the fish from the market is gone!”

Mark: “No, no, there’s a lot of fish here, don’t worry. Let’s go”

What a wonderful day for Dr.Mark. He understood the reality of religion, and that there is only one proper religion on the face of this earth.

Only one religion, because there is only one God.

A discussion that changed many things for Dr. Mark.

A discussion that made Dr. Mark go to uncle Khalid's shop on Wednesday without waiting until the weekend to meet in the Golden Gate Park.

Mark: "How are you Mr. Khalid?"

Khalid: "Welcome Dr. Mark, I'm doing well, thanks to God. What has brought you here at this time? Shouldn't you be in the university?"

Mark: "Yes, Mr. Khalid. But I was visiting an international exhibit close to here, that is related to the university, and I finished early, so I used this opportunity to pay you a visit."

Khalid: "Here, take this plate of semolina cake, that you love so much."

Mark: "Thank you, but I won't pay for it, hahahah."

Khalid: "No problem, eat it and don't worry."

Mark: "Mr. Khalid, previously we were talking about Islam and other religions. I learned from you that the religion of Islam is the religion that God wants for all people. What is your role as a Muslim in spreading this religion? Your prophet Muhammad was in the Arabian Peninsula in Makkah, and the people who weren't from around there, didn't know about the truthfulness of his message except for a few people. How could Islam be a universal religion and Muhammad be a universal prophet and it was restricted to that area only?"

Khalid: “Dr. Mark, God sent messengers to specific nations, clarifying to them the true religion. Every messenger would go to the land of their people and convey God’s message to them, and invite them to it. When God wanted to send Muhammad (May God’s peace and blessings be upon him) to all of mankind, he made his starting point Makkah.

From the Glorified and Holy House, the religious meeting place for all people.

From the center of the earth.

There was never a divine messenger sent from Makkah in the past.

God prepared Muhammad for prophethood. Even before he became a prophet, he was known to as the truthful and honest one.

After he started his call and invitation to Islam in Makkah, only a few people believed in the message, and they were simple people. Even though this small group was fought, made fun of, tortured, harassed, they still remained firm upon their faith. Do you know why they remained firm Dr. Mark?”

Mark: “Why?”

Khalid: “Because they believed in the Prophet Muhammad and his message out of belief and conviction, and this is why they remained firm upon Islam and adhered to it. We talked

about this earlier when we spoke about the divine messengers and said that their they and their message will encounter tests and trials.

I mentioned that some of the reasons for this is so that only the truthful ones enter the religion. Solely, because they believe in its truthfulness and its reality, and no other reason. So that the followers ascribe to it out of conviction, certainty and true belief. So that it settles within their hearts, and they raise a generation of Muslims that truly love this religion, spending and sacrificing the things they love for the sake of the religion. While taking the responsibility in spreading the religion, and establishing the goal that God wanted them to fulfill, and prepared them for.

Yes, Makkah was the starting point, the city in which this religion emerged and originated. Until it reached the farthest parts of the world, even right here...San Francisco.”

Mark: “San Francisco! Tell me about the universality of this religion, and how it emerged, and reached all the way over here in San Francisco from Makkah?”

Khalid: “Our Prophet Muhammad started propagating his message from Makkah after God ordered him to do so by the way of Gabriel (May God’s peace be upon him). Surely spreading the message and treading upon the path of God was not easy at all.

The path was not covered with roses, even the environment surrounding the Prophet was not prepared to accept something like this, even though they believed that he

was a trustworthy and honest man. The citizens of Makkah at that time believed that it was shameful and disgraceful to change the deities that their forefathers worshipped and abandon the religion of their ancestors. In light of all of this, the Prophet still conveyed the commandments of his Lord.

He started with his family and his closest friends and relatives.

His propagation of the message was secret in the beginning.

Many of the people around him accepted his message, but the majority of them were weak, impoverished and simple people. So the things continued like this for about three years, until God ordered the Prophet to start propagating the message publicly.

So the prophet Muhammad climbed up to the top of Mount Safa announcing to the people to worship God alone and that he is the messenger sent from the Lord of the worlds. And from here the suffering and struggle started.

His struggle started with the disbelievers of Makkah, who didn't believe in him when he started announcing and propagating his message. Rather they harmed him and harmed those who believed in his message as well as anyone who entered Islam.

A difficult struggle and a time of suffering and pain was

experienced by his companions. The disbelievers of Makkah tied the Prophet's companions up and threw them down to the ground on the hot sand in the middle of the day. Some of them were tortured so badly, others were prevented from eating and drinking, even until the point that some were killed.

They were persecuted and tortured in all heinous ways and forms.

The struggles that they experienced and that everyone else will experience, is something that whoever treads upon the path of propagating the religion of truth so that God's word is the most supreme. This is the tax or fee one must pay for this job.

Trials, tribulations and struggles will be met because there are those who are not pleased with this truth, and for this reason they will fight against those who love and propagate the truth, with all means and forms.

Even so, these people were patient and bore the hardship and difficulties, and did not surrender to these difficulties. Because if they didn't experience these difficulties then they would perhaps have doubt about the correctness of the path they were treading upon, and they would have feared and been worried about the destination of the path.

Because it is the path of the righteous predecessors that contains many difficulties and hardships.

It wasn't a matter of blind following or obedience or an association based upon ignorance or, in regards to the first generation of Muslims Dr. Mark. Never was this the case.

Rather it was a matter of believing with certainty that this message was the truth. Not only did the Prophet invite people to have exemplary manners, but he also used to direct their hearts and intellects to the correct guidance. He taught them about all the things around them related to the realities of this worldly life, and enlightened them about the reasons for their existence upon this earth.

They were intellectuals that understood and were patient and forbearing.

Their patience continued until they were commanded by God to migrate to Ethiopia. The Prophet (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) saw that the Muslims in Makkah were being persecuted and that they should migrate there to be protected and safe. He chose Ethiopia for them because the king of Ethiopia never oppressed his citizens. Some of them migrated, and others stayed behind while the Prophet bore the struggles, hardships, harassments and assaults and continued to remain patient.”

Mark: “Why didn't Muhammad migrate with his companions to Ethiopia?”

Khalid: “It was necessary for him to stay even though it was difficult, in order to invite people to Islam and because Makkah was the place that all the caravans and tribes came to visit the Holy Kabah.”

Mark: “So if the tribes used to travel to Makkah before

Muhammad came, this means that they used to believe in The Lord, so why did Muhammad come?”

Khalid: “Yes, there were some of them that believed in the existence of God, but they used to associate partners with Him. They used to make intercessors between themselves and God, thinking that this would get them closer to God, and many other types of polytheistic beliefs. God wanted to purify and cleanse the hearts of the people, and make sure people worshipped Him alone. This was an invitation to establish God’s commandments, in all its forms on the face of the earth.”

Mark: “And what happened to the ones who went to Ethiopia?”

Khalid: “They met with the king of Ethiopia who was following the religion of Jesus. He hosted them generously and gave them wonderful accommodations.”

Mark: “Were the people of Makkah happy with that?”

Khalid: “No, they were not pleased with that at all. A group of them went to the king of Ethiopia bringing many gifts with them. They wanted him to make their cousins and relatives leave Ethiopia and return back to Makkah, but the king refused. So they deceived and lied to the king by saying that their cousins who came from Makkah said bad things about Jesus. Then something important had occurred...”

Mark: “What happened? And how did that king deal with

those new Muslims in relation to what they ‘supposedely’ said about Jesus?”

Khalid: “The king of Ethiopia became very angry from this statement, and how would he not be angry, as he believed in Jesus, and he didn’t want anyone to speak bad about him no matter what it was or who said it. However, he was a wise person, he wanted the Muslims to meet and gather in front of him so that he could hear what they had to say about Jesus.”

Mark: “What happened after that?”

Khalid: “This news had reached the Muslims, so they gathered together to figure out what they were going to say to the king of Ethiopia, and they were very scared. How could they not be scared, they were placed in a position that their answers as Muslims would either agree with the king of Ethiopia, or the opposite of this would occur, and they would be taken prisoners and be brought back to Makkah. Eventually they decided and all agreed upon saying what Islam truly says about Jesus and what their Prophet Muhammad taught them. So they entered upon Najashi the king of Ethiopia and immediately he asked them: “what do you believe about Jesus?”

Ja’far ibn Abee Talib a noble companion of the Prophet Muhammad responded that they believed what their prophet Muhammad taught them, that Jesus is God’s servant, messenger, spirit and ‘word’ that he blessed and blew into Maryam the chaste virgin.

This was their response.

This response was sufficient, it contained a praise of Jesus' status, nor did they deny that he was a servant of God. They established the fact that he was a Messenger of God as well, they also responded greatly in regards to Maryam and they established her purity and chastity.”

Mark: “So what was the king’s response?”

Khalid: “The king of Ethiopia was extremely amazed by their response. Then he looked at Ja’far ibn Abee Talib and the Muslims who were with them and said: ‘Except for Jesus the Son of Maryam, what you said is true. So he honored them and treated them in a good manner, and gave the gifts back to the people who came from Makkah. Then things became stable, and even better as Najashi eventually accepted Islam, and this was the first incidence of one accepting Islam outside of Makkah.”

Mark: “Did the Christian king really accept Islam!?”

Khalid: “Yes, he accepted Islam. And why the amazement, seeing that he knew the truth and knew about the Prophet Muhammad’s belief in Jesus.

And he knew that the Prophet Muhammad’s message was a continuation of the previous message that the messengers before him came with, and the one who sent them was the one and only God.

He accepted Islam because he didn't want to fall into the mistake that the Jews fell into, when they disbelieved in Jesus, and made bad statements about him. While the Jews were commanded to have faith in Jesus, as they believed in Moses previously. So they chose to follow their desires instead of God's desire, and Najashi preferred to believe in Muhammad.

He believed because he believed in the truth, and the truth is the most deserving thing to be followed.

He believed because he knew that this worldly life is temporary, and his arrogance would not benefit him anything in accepting the truth.

He believed and perfected his belief, may God have mercy upon him.

Ahhh..The time for Thur prayer has come, and I must go and pray. What do you think about coming over my house to eat some lunch together?"

Mark: "Thank you, but I must also return home now."

Let's meet on the weekend in the Golden Gate Park, at our scheduled time."

Khalid: "Good, it's a deal."

The story about the King of Ethiopia accepting Islam was very important to Mark, because it proved to him that as long

as the person worships the Lord who created him, and he believed in His messenger who came to him from his Lord, then it is necessary for him to implement and believe what the Lord commands from him, even if He sends to him another messenger.

It was a story that he pondered over every time he was alone, which increased his eagerness and desire to meet Khalid at the Golden Gate Park.

The weekend came and what beautiful morning it was, like the beauty of the Golden Gate Park.

Khalid: “Mark...Mark I’m over here.”

Mark: “Ahh, Khalid I thought you were going to come from the other direction.”

Khalid: “Let’s sit here, what do you think?”

Mark: “A wonderful place”

Khalid: “Would you like a cup of coffee?”

Mark: “No, rather I would like you to complete the story about the conclusion of the Prophet Muhammad’s story in Makkah.”

Khalid: “Ok quickly! No problem.

The prophet and his companions continued to be harmed,

after the disbelievers of Makkah were rejected and sent back from the King of Ethiopia, as we previously mentioned. Up until the point that the disbelievers detained the Muslims in Makkah in and boycotted them and prevented them from getting food for a period three years. The situation was so bad that they were eating the leaves of some trees, until some of the nobles of Makkah got involved and reconciled the situation.

Even though this was occurring, the number of Muslims was continuously increasing, especially after two of the most courageous people from Makkah had accepted Islam; Hamzah ibn Abdul Muttalib and Umar ibn Al Khattab. This increased the strength of the Muslims.

The Prophet and his companions continued patiently calling the people to Islam. They started inviting the people to Islam publicly now, and the prophet continued to do so for ten years in Makkah and the surrounding towns and villages.

Ten years, in addition to the three years that they were secretly inviting people to Islam.

Thirteen years of pain, struggle, and sacrifices that the Muslims were tested with. The Quran was continuously being revealed to the Prophet, providing patience for them, and keeping them firm, steadfast and making their faith strong. The Quran frequently mentioned stories of the previous nations, and reminding them of the eternal bliss that was waiting for them in the paradise. This was to increase them in faith, steadfastness, and love, while being warned about the

disbelievers.”

Mark: “What happened after that?”

Khalid: “Soon after, a group of people from Madinah came to the Prophet Muhammad. They made an agreement that he would migrate to Madinah along with his companions. The people of Madinah would aid him, protect him and support him so as to make Islam and the Muslims more mighty and powerful. So Mus’ab ibn Umayr was sent from Makkah to Madinah to teach them their religion. Then the Muslims secretly migrated.

They migrated leaving Makkah, leaving their homeland, their place of birth, their memories, and their families.

They migrated with a feeling of extreme grief and sadness, but it was something that had to be done.

It was necessary so that they could build an Islamic state, and bring benefits to all the people on the face of the earth.

Leaving Makkah after true faith and patience had been engrained in their souls and firmly implanted within their hearts.

Indeed it was a great sacrifice, to enable this religion to spread and be conveyed to the people.

The migration continued until the Prophet migrated with his companion Abu Bakr to Madinah and Islamic State began.”

Mark: “Did all the residents of Madinah enter Islam?”

Khalid: “The society in Madinah was made up of a majority of Arabic tribes and some Jewish tribes. The majority of the Arabic tribes entered Islam, and many of the Jews did not enter Islam.”

Mark: “And what did the Muslims do?”

Khalid: “The Prophet didn’t think about making this religion for a specific group or race of people, where they alone were saved from this worldly life and were successful in the hereafter..no, not at all.

The Prophet wanted this message to reach every corner of the earth, all societies and communities throughout the world.

His message was not a local message, rather it was a universal message, as I mentioned previously. This is what I wanted to tell you. He was thinking to establish the religion on the earth that he was living upon. So he started in Makkah, then moved to Al Madinah in order to make this happen. He wanted the Muslim’s lives and communities to be settled with safety and security, before conveying this message to others.

One of his characteristics of leadership in Madinah, is that he didn’t want there to be problems or conflict with the Jews in Madinah. So they made an pact or treaty and also made an agreement with those who didn’t believe in him to protect Madinah and it’s borders.”

Mark: “Didn’t Muhammad say: ‘Kick the Jews out of the Arabian Gulf?’”

Khalid: “Yes he said this, but this occurred before the Prophet obliged the people to abide by this treaty. The Islamic rulings and legislations, Dr. Mark were not all revealed and legislated at one time. Rather they were revealed according to the occurrences and situations that took place over a 23 year period.

For this reason the Prophet did not make the Jews leave Madinah at that time, so that he wouldn’t be oppressing them or transgressing against the.

The Prophet was just in the beginning of building an Islamic State, and had just reached Madinah. He was in need of conveying the message to them, and invite them to it. In addition, he was hoping that they would accept his invitation and enter Islam, because he is a messenger to all of mankind not just to the Arabs. And he was sent to one nation, the nation of Muhammad, because these people lived during the time of Muhammad, as well as the people after them because he is the final prophet whom which no prophet will come after him.

But after the Jews had deceived the Muslims, broken their covenant, and their potential danger towards society had increased, the Prophet told them to leave so as to protect the growing Islamic society and make it strong. So he was able to form a strong Islamic society and community. After the era that was filled with wars, fighting, and conflicts in Madinah.

After the Prophet Muhammad settled in Madinah and built his mosque as the center for inviting people to Islam, and a referential authority for Islam. Quranic verses about religious rulings and teachings of Islam began to be revealed to him. Whereas in the beginning of Islam, the Quranic verses were focused around creed, and preparing and nurturing people's hearts and souls in Makkah, as we mentioned previously.

The prophet continued to clarify the rulings of the religion and invite people to Islam. While the people of falsehood were in the middle of all this, observing everything taking place in this newly formed Islamic state, plotting and planning to do everything to stop it from progressing, flourishing and advancing.

It was also necessary that the Prophet confronted the falsehood from the polytheists of Makkah and some of the tribes surrounding Madinah who were not pleased with this religion spreading and remaining. Even the Jews, that we mentioned before, the ones that broke their covenant and promise with the Prophet. The Prophet fought the polytheists and exiled the Jews from Madinah and detained them in certain areas, and killed the deceptive and treacherous one who were plotting against the Muslims. This was done so that Madinah would be settled and continue to develop and flourish, and there only remained hypocrites in Madinah.”

Mark: “Who are the hypocrites Mr. Khalid?”

Khalid: “They were the ones who were with the Prophet in Al Madinah, they used to appear as if they were Muslims, but hide their disbelief.’

Mark: “Why were they forced to do that? Did Islam take away their freedom to decide if they wanted to accept it or not when it came to Al Madinah? What’s your stance from the statement of your Lord: ‘Whoever wants then let him believe and whoever wants let him disbelieve’ (Surah Kahf: 29)?”

Khalid: “Islam did not force them to accept it Dr. Mark. The Prophet’s invitation to Islam was by teaching them who their lord was, and clarifying the truth for them. If they accepted Islam, as I mentioned to you previously, then this is good, and if they didn’t accept Islam, then they will live under the shade of Islam, receiving their due rights as well being obliged with certain obligations as well.

This is how Islam treats the non-Muslims who live within the Muslim lands. However, these people appeared as though they were Muslims to gain some personal benefits only, and this is their own problem.

That which you mentioned in regards to ‘whoever wants to believe then let him believe and whoever wants to disbelieve then let him disbelieve’, this verse is not an indication meaning that someone is free to choose. If it was an indication of that, then whoever chose disbelief does not deserve a punishment, because God ordered him to make a choice.

But if you complete the verse, you would come to know that it is a warning and threat. If you read the verse completely until the end, you will find that whoever chooses disbelief will find the hellfire as his abode as God mentioned: ‘Whoever chooses then let him believe and whoever chooses then let him disbelieve. Verily we have prepared for the polytheists a fire whose walls will be surrounding them (disbelievers in God).’ (Kahf:29)

Be informed Dr. Mark, that Islam does not prevent nor fight against people’s personal freedoms ever. Rather Islam only came to this world in order to rescue mankind, free them, and liberate them from being subservient and servants to the creation and worshipping the creation, no matter what they are. Islam invites people to single God out in His worship and to not follow anyone except Him, and obey his commandments.

Dr. Mark, if you found a person in the middle of the ocean drowning, then in this situation you are commanded to rescue him and throw him a life jacket so that he can grab onto it. What you did is not considered as interfering with his freedom, and if he refused to take the life jacket, then it is upon you to clarify the dangers of this, and that his choice to not grab the life jacket could perhaps lead him to death. If he further refused to listen to you, and insisted upon dying, then he would bear the responsibility of his actions. As for you, then if you didn’t do something to aid him, then everyone around you would blame you for not trying to get involved and save his life.

The world around us Dr. Mark claims that Islam is a

religion that opposes and conflicts with peoples personal freedoms, males and females. If you were to ponder over every legislation of this religion, or commandment from God, you would come to know that they are all for the welfare and benefit of mankind. If this wisdom is not clear to you, then it is sufficient enough to know that the one who created the human being is more knowledgeable about the human being and what benefits him.”

Mark: “Why didn’t he fight against the hypocrites, seeing that he knew about their true reality?”

Khalid: “Because if he did, then the people would have said that Muhammad kills his companions and the Muslims considered them to be outwardly practicing Islam.

These affairs, Dr. Mark were those that needed a man who had experience in managing many affairs. While being able to protect and preserve his country and furthermore focus on spreading the message.

This is how the Prophet Muhammad was..

He realized that he was on a journey that was obligatory upon him to strive hard in order to convey this message to all the corners of the world. For this reason, along with all of these responsibilities, tasks, burdens and occurrences, he showed the upmost concern and interest in the future of Islam and conveying this religion.

He strove hard and showed complete concern in preparing a generation of companions who would carry the torch in conveying the message of Islam. This is because he knew that

he was going to die. However, the message of Islam must continue to bring life to the people.

He knew this and strove hard in guiding and directing his companions, and finding their talents, and developing them to serve this religion.

This is the Muslim who the Prophet showed concern for, and prepared him correctly to convey his message.

This is the human being, after God's aid and success, is able to stand in opposition of oppressive nations, and be victorious, and manifest that what he wants to. So he manifested what God wanted from him, after battling the disbelievers of Makkah and the conquest of Makkah. Then by Allah's command and decree, making it the direction of prayer for the Muslims and the world, and cleansing the world from polytheism.

Yes, God made this a reality. After that the Prophet focused his attention on inviting the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula area to Islam. Henceforth, the different tribes started to visit him in Madinah. They started announcing and proclaiming their acceptance of Islam, and eventually the Arabian Peninsula became pure and cleansed from all forms of polytheism.

At that time, the Prophet's plan to spread Islam outside the Arabian Gulf emerged, and a start of a new phase in conveying the message and religion to others emerged. So he prepared an army with the leadership of one of his companions to fight against the Romans. This great companion was Usamah ibn Zaid. Unfortunately, the Prophet became ill and died soon after

in Madinah.

Yes, the prophet passed away after his success in conveying the message of Islam, clarifying it, and explaining it to the people. He fulfilled his responsibility completely, and advised the Muslims, struggled and fought for the sake of God in the best of ways, and he left his nation upon the clear straight path. Its night as clear as its day, no one deters from it except that he is destroyed. However, the journey did not finish yet.”

Mark: “It wasn’t over with his death!”

Khalid: “Yes, Dr. Mark, the journey was not over. As I mentioned to you, the prophet prepared a generation of companions who would carry this message and continue to convey it to all parts of the world, even after his death. Then there was another generation who succeeded them from amongst the truthful ones, they were scholars and soldiers, and even individuals. It was necessary that people revive this message to revive and guide the people and bring life to them throughout the world. So his successor Abu Bakr continued upon the path of Muhammad. Then after Abu Bakr came Umar, then Uthmaan, then Ali. Islam had reached all the way to Asia, and many parts of Africa in such a small period of time. After them, Islam continued to spread by the way of conquests from the Islamic armies as well as by the way of the Muslim business men and merchants who would travel to the different places throughout the world. They were from the best agents to convey the message of this religion. For this reason

they amazed the citizens of the towns and cities they visited with their exemplary manners, fine etiquettes, and their fair and just ways of dealing with them. Islam even reached Europe after it had reached China, and many big parts of Africa.”

Mark: “All of these places!”

Khalid: “Yes, and so that you know that God took the responsibility to convey this religion and spread it to all the people of the earth. Surely, this religion reached the farthest parts of the world, by God’s virtue and grace. I’m not standing in front of you here and having a conversation with you except to convey this religion by the way of my presence here, either out of choice or being forced to be here.

Indeed, it is wisdom from God, and what God wants Dr. Mark.”

Mark: “What you’ve mentioned is amazing Mr. Khalid. But you all used harshness and killing in conveying this religion, so that it reached all these places.”

Khalid: “How have you determined that?”

I want you to know something important O Dr. Mark, and it is that this religion did not come except as a mercy for humankind, no matter what one’s nationality or race is.

We spoke previously about how a person wants to follow his desires, and how one’s desires lead one to not respond to God’s commandments. This mercy, Dr. Mark that Islam has brought is to rescue people from the punishment of the

hereafter, and enter them into the eternal paradise.

Perhaps a person's desires may not agree with God's teachings, and he may not respond to these commandments. This religion of Islam that has come as a mercy for mankind, if it wasn't strong in preparing the surrounding environment to convey the message, and to believe in it, and abandon one's desires, then indeed one's desires would lead to his destruction in this worldly life as well as on the day of resurrection. If we were to ponder over the biography of the Prophet Muhammad we would find that he and his message had many enemies. They were lying in wait to harm him, and they did not want his message to succeed since he was in Makkah, and even after he settled in Al Madinah. The Jews started to plot against him, deceive him, even though he had covenants and agreements with them, as we mentioned before. Even though the hypocrites used to secretly harm him and plot against him. All of these things were encompassing Islam and lying in wait to try to destroy it, while Islam only wanted to uplift them and elevate them.

They never responded to the message.

They fought and harmed the prophet Muhammad and his companions.

Desire, bigotry and following Satan overcame them, so they were not able to realize or feel the mercy that Islam wanted for them.

They tried to eliminate Islam.

For this reason the Prophet tried to clarify this religion when inviting them to Islam. Explaining to them that he is a messenger for them from the Lord of the worlds to rescue them from a severe punishment. However, he didn't find them willing to accept this message, rather they wanted to eliminate it. They tried to destroy this message of mercy, so that it wouldn't spread to the rest of the people on the earth. When this occurred, it was necessary to use strength to convey this religion and defend it, because there is no place for weaklings and you're not able to change as long as you are weak.

This strength or power was not for boasting, or flexing one's muscles, or for revenge, never. It was never like this Dr. Mark. And now you will know that the understanding of power or strength that I'm talking to you about, is not assault and violence...no not at all.

This strength and power here, is mercy.”

Mark: “Merciful power!!”

Khalid: “Yes, the prophet didn't fight with them, except for their own sake.

Our prophet Muhammad used to fight for the sake of God. He used to hope within himself that God blesses him with victory, not out of revenge for those who harmed him, rather out of his desire for Islam to be superior, and that God guides the polytheists, so that he could rescue them from a severe

punishment of the hellfire.

This is why whenever God guided a group to have belief and faith in him and follow Islam, we find that the prophet was extremely happy and pleased with that.

He used to be pleased with them accepting Islam, even though they harmed him in many different ways. They were slandering him, cursing him, and going out to battle him and fight with him.

He was pleased and happy all people accepting Islam, solely because he was sent for their sake, not for his own personal benefit. And even so, using strength and power was not the first resort for him. If you were to think with me Dr. Mark about this story then you will surely know the level and amount of mercy in Islam. The fighting that you claim is harshness and extremeness, it was only for the sake of mankind, so that the religion that revives the people and gives them true life in the hereafter would remain upon the earth.

The story mentions that when the prophet wanted to invite the Ghasaasinah to Islam, he sent a letter to their leader with a messenger named Harith ibn Umayr, as he normally did when inviting the different tribes to Islam. However, they killed Harith ibn Umayr. So in turn, the prophet sent some of his companions to follow up this incident in a battle called the Battle of Mu'tah. Zaid ibn Al Harithah was their leader and advised them to go to the one who killed Harith ibn Umayr and invite the Ghasaasinah to Islam. If they refused to accept Islam, then fight them. At that point the prophet said: 'Fight in the

name of God, for the sake of God whoever disbelieves in God, do not cheat, nor go to extremes, and do not kill children, nor women, nor the elderly, nor someone secluded in a place of worship, do not cut down trees, nor destroy buildings’.

So let us ponder over these recommendations and advices that the prophet commanded them with when he sent them to fight.

Let us ponder how he initially sent a messenger to them inviting them to accept Islam, and when they killed him, he sent an army, and advised them.

He advised them with some words..

Those words that the prophet would never forget as he sent his army to the ones who killed his messenger. They were the ones who went to extremes and exceeded the limits.

Those words that were kind and gentle with children, women, the worshipper, the elderly, even trees and buildings.

Indeed they are words of one who is not seeking to be a ruler, nor seeking leadership, nor seeking to be king, or to have power.

Indeed they are words from Muhammad the chief warrior who only went to battle except for the sake of mercy.

Indeed his words are those of guidance and advice, that

were followed and implemented generation after generation, and leader after leader to spread Islam and rescue humankind.

Indeed there are situations that continuously occur and have occurred since the day the leader of the Muslims Umar ibn Abdul Aziz sent his army to East Asia to conquer some of their lands and to spread Islam there. They conquered territory after territory, until they reached Samarqund and decided to reside there. They surprised the residents of Samarqund, and the people were afraid so they entered their houses, and the priests fled into the woods and mountains. However, the residents of Samarqund did not remain in their houses, they continued to come outside and live their normal lives because they never experienced any harm from the Muslims. Especially during one situation when a Muslim and a resident of Samarqund were involved in an argument. So the Muslim judge ruled in favor of the resident of Samarqund. However, the priests were not pleased by the way the Muslims conquered their lands. So they sent a messenger to the caliphate of the Muslims in Damascus informing him what occurred from the leader of the Muslims Qutaybah ibn Muslim. How he entered their lands in a way they were not familiar with, not like the other Muslim conquests in which they first request from the citizens one of three things: either accept Islam, pay taxes, or war. However, Qutaybah the leader of the Muslims entered their lands immediately without giving the residents of Samarqund a choice. So Umar ibn Abdul Aziz sent a small piece of paper with this messenger to the Muslim judge in Samarqund. When it reached him, he took the paper and went to Samarqund, and he asked himself: ‘what is this small piece

of paper going to do in front of the strength, might and power of Qutaybah ibn Muslim? When the judge read the paper, he saw that the caliphate of the Muslims ordered him to judge between Qutaybah ibn Muslim and the priests of Samarqund. So the judge summoned all of them in front of him and declared that Qutaybah entered their lands without giving them a choice, and the judge ordered all the Muslims to leave Samarqund, just as they entered it, without taking anything with them, and give the people of Samarqund their rights to choose first.

Yes, this is what the judge decided. So the Muslim soldiers left and the people of Samarqund were surprised from this amazing act that is impossible to occur from any big powerful empire in the world. This only occurred because the Muslims were people of truth and justice, so the people of Samarqund eventually entered Islam.

Yes, they all entered Islam, because they knew of Islam's justice and mercy.

They entered Islam, so that all people know, the mercy of Islam. So that you know that what is being said now-a-days that Islam is a religion of destruction, and barbarism, and killing. These are only names and words that they use in their fight against Islam and it's followers, to repel the people from Islam. They use these words and portray these false images so that non-Muslims hate this religion, and try to extinguish it's light. But surely God will complete and perfect it's light no matter what the enemies try to do to extinguish it.

Indeed it is the message of truth and mercy. It is not a Marxist strife or struggle, nor an ethnic or racial movement. It

is not a revolutionary movement to bring about worldly gains, or personal status, nor is it a project of colonization to put the people in servitude.

Muslims are commanded to invite all people to Islam and present it to them, while trying to remove and rescue them from the misguidance that they are in. If non-Muslims refuse every request to enter Islam, and every solution that is presented to them, then freeing oneself from them and confrontation is then necessary.

This is necessary so that Islam becomes superior in all corners of the world.

This is necessary so that falsehood does not continue to spread in this generation. Rather it is important that there emerges generations that live under the shade of Islam, and they are enlightened by its light, by believing in it, with peace and tranquility, and without the slightest hesitations or distractions. So that one can be successful in the eternal afterlife and with God's pleasure. More importantly so that one is not under a rule and law of falsehood, that imposes and pressures one which leads one to remain upon its ignorance.

This is necessary because if it wasn't like this, then disbelief would overcome the truth. The reality today is that the disbelievers lie in wait for the Muslims to give up and abandon the means of power and strength that they use to establish the religion and spread it and to frighten the enemies of God.

The true crime is fighting against that light and truth, and describing it as something that it's not with false accusations. While trying to extinguish it's light so that it does not shine on this earth, while people remain upon their misguidance.

Islam today faces much persecution and torture from the different types of disbelief and hypocrisy throughout the world. The enemies of Islam feel as though it is controlling the hearts of the people as the religion of truth and justice. The enemies have found that people have found a place for this religion in their souls and they have felt it's highly beneficial humanitarian and social aspects. The different sects of disbelief and hypocrisy can only falsely accuse Islam and its followers with false accusations, by describing Islam with names and descriptions that repel the people away from learning about it and accepting it, and repel people away from Muslims propagating it. The enemies are fighting against the Muslims, and inciting the people around them in every place, to try to eliminate Islam with the false claim of establishing peace. So if this is the case, then it is necessary to use force and strength as I mentioned earlier.

Yes, it is necessary to use power, strength and confrontation with every means that we own without being frightened, weak or humiliated by the enemies. Solely for the sake of protecting this religion and protecting the land of the Muslims, and sacrificing for these purposes, then moving forth once again to spread this light so that humankind can be enlightened.

Dr. Mark, I hope that you don't listen to those people or even others who falsely speak about Islam. Because if you were right minded, balanced and just, and wanted to know the true methodology of the Muslims, then it is upon you to learn their religion from the Muslims themselves, from their own mouths, and from their own principles, not from their enemies,

have you understood this now, O Dr. Mark?"

Mark: "Yes, but why do the Muslims sometimes conquer a place and suffice with taking taxes? Why don't they force them to accept Islam, if they truly want goodness for them?"

Khalid: "When the Muslims conquered a land, they governed these lands with God's legislation and laws. It is obligatory upon the Muslims to implement God's laws upon this earth so that God's religion is superior, and that all judgments are referred back to God for the Muslim as well as the disbeliever. So that all human beings live under the shade of Islam. If a person was living under the rule of the Roman government, or any other religion from amongst the disbelieving religions, would he be able to decide or declare what he wanted to do or not to do, with freedom of choice? The answer is of course, no. This is because he would experience harm and hardships in establishing the apparent and outward signs of the religion, and he could perhaps be killed because of that. However, when the person is under the rule of Islam, and he experiences and sees the munificence and kindness of this religion and its comprehensiveness, and he has the desire to enter it, then at that time he will be able to enter the religion without fear or anything preventing or hindering him.

Don't say that a person living in the lands of the disbelievers is able to freely enter Islam, and then openly practice his religion without disturbances and hardships. If we agreed to this, then the external influences that are around him, all the temptations, openness, and adultery do not aid and assist

him in remaining firm upon his religion. Nor do they have the ability to control the raising of his children, in an Islamic way, who are the future of Islam and the Muslims.

Indeed this religion, Dr. Mark, it is necessary that it settles and finds a place in one's heart. This will not occur if there are disturbances or confusion. Rather the person will decide to enter Islam after the land is conquered, and is under the shade of Islam, and he learns more about the religion of Islam and its meanings without fear.

Furthermore Dr. Mark, the tax is not an imposed or forced tax, rather it is a smooth and flexible system. In addition, whoever is unemployed, elderly, weak, or even a woman or child, then indeed Islam doesn't take anything at all from them, rather Islam aids them. Islam cares for and shows concern for everyone under its government and rule, even if they are non-Muslims.

Indeed it is a religion that pleases one's soul, and that all intellectuals yearn to be associated with."

Mark: "But Khalid, the Muslims could perhaps be late in conveying the message of Islam to a certain place, and because of that they would be the cause of many people entering the hellfire."

Khalid: "So that you know Dr. Mark that God is the Most Merciful, and don't think that He is going to punish someone without the message reaching him. He created them and He protects them, and He is the Most Kind with them, and He is most knowledgeable of their circumstances.

Yes, I'm very sad to say, that in our times today, there are

some Muslims who are neglectful in conveying this religion to others. However, we don't deny that there are numerous efforts taking place at the same time to convey the religion from many Muslims, whether they are organizations or individuals.

This neglect is something that God-The Most Glorified-is going to ask us about, and what would happen if it wasn't for our laziness and neglect. But you should know that God is the one who preserves His religion, and has designated men who convey the religion to others. People who work for Gods cause, they spend their time, money, and efforts striving for His sake, even if they experience difficulties in doing so, because it is the light of truth and Islam that God wants to perfect and remain.”

Mark: “Khalid, you told me before that there are some Muslims who convey this religion by their dealings and interactions with people. You mentioned an example of the Muslim merchants and businessmen. Isn't this enough to convey Islam, and sufficient enough for us instead of using all these armies that could cause many conflicts between the people?”

Khalid: “Mark, these conflicts are something that God has decreed within His earth. If we mentioned what you said, then I agree with you that there are people who will enter this religion because of that, but what should happen after that?

How will God's religion and laws be manifested upon the earth?

Islam, as I mentioned to you before, is not restricted to

certain people accepting it, but it is for establishing God's legislation upon the earth. With the goal of enlightening people on earth with its truth, so that all people will know about it. This is not possible without strength and power, along with conveying the message as we talked about previously.

In addition, so that you know Dr. Mark, good manners may be found within a Muslim or non-Muslim. Rather, good manners are required to be from a Muslim's character at all times. A Muslim would never please his lord as long as he doesn't have good manners. However, not every person will ask about your manners and be effected by them. In addition, you would be prevented from conveying this religion and teaching it to others. For this reason, as I mentioned to you, it is extremely necessary that God's religion and methodology are superior upon the earth to realize the goal.

Indeed, Islam is a religion to rescue mankind, it is not a club looking for members to associate with it only."

Mark: "That's correct, but let's go back to what you mentioned about the Muslim merchants, in relation to conveying this religion. You said they did so with their special approaches and manners, which played a major part in many people entering Islam. However, I could perhaps disagree with you regarding some Muslims specifically, as you live here with us, and you see many Muslims who are doing contrary to what you are saying, and they present a bad image of Islam."

Khalid: "You're right about this point, this is also what

makes me very sad, that some Muslims portray a bad image of Islam. But I want you to understand something very important Dr. Mark.”

Mark: “What is it?”

Khalid: “I want you to understand that when someone enters Islam, or is raised in Islam, it doesn’t mean that one changes from a human being into an angel. No, it’s not like this. He is a human who is affected by faults, deficiencies, and mistakes. His desires could perhaps overwhelm and overtake him one day. For this reason God has opened the doors of repentance and forgiveness for him. So based upon that, it is incorrect to judge any methodology or system based upon the behavior of individuals who are negligent or have shortcomings in practicing and implementing its legislations within themselves.

I frequently hear many non-Muslims say that they want to enter Islam but are hesitant because they see the behavior of many Muslims. This is a big mistake when one makes a judgment upon Islam by the behavior and acts of some of the individuals who ascribe to Islam. While they are not upon the true methodology and teachings of Islam alone. He is oppressing himself when he prevents himself from entering Islam, and ascribing to this religion. He’s preventing himself from entering the paradise in the after-life, and he’s exposing himself to enter the hellfire.

Dr. Mark, God- the Most Magnificent and High- will hold everyone accountable individually for what they did, and not for what others did. Besides that, there are many people who put forth good in service of this religion, and they are good

examples of Muslims, calling and propagating his religion.

A young Muslim should not go to the lands of the disbelievers, as long as he doesn't possess strong faith and belief that will protect him from falling into the trials and tribulations in those lands. This will lead him to slowly losing and abandoning his religion. A Muslim's religion is the most valuable thing that a he or she possesses. If one's religion goes, then no worldly thing that he earns can suffice him or be exchanged for it, no matter what it is. Similarly, from another aspect, so that his bad behavior and manners do not affect others, and so their incorrect understanding of the religion does not affect others. Which in turn leads others to view Islam incorrectly. This is a cause for them turning away from Islam, as I mentioned to you.

Yes, it is necessary that there are Muslims who invite people to Islam and spread it. But on the contrary to this, we shouldn't lose a Muslim who is engrossed in western culture, and negatively influenced by it, who eventually loses his religion. Based upon that, we place the right people in the appropriate places so that the things are correct."

Mark: "And what do we call the Muslim who is negligent in practicing his religion Khalid? Is it because the religion cannot entice someone to become Muslim, or is it because the religion with all its numerous and difficult commandments is not able to satisfy the Muslim?"

Khalid: "No, it's not like that ever.

It's correct that the person's problem sometimes is

because he rushes or is hasty, and he doesn't think about the Last Day and the hereafter, and this makes him negligent in some religious affairs. However, the religion compensates for that with large amounts of reward for the believers patience in this worldly life and his adherence to the religion. Rather, our religion, Dr. Mark is the religion of encouragement to do righteous actions, and God has prepared great rewards for every Muslim that does good deeds that the religion propagates. The person who does good deeds, his rewards are multiplied many times. There are special seasons and times when their rewards are multiplied, and there are deeds which a Muslim can perform that will wipe away his sins and mistakes. Contrary to that, when he does an act that the religion of Islam is not pleased with bad deeds, but then it is only written as one bad deed, even if there was adversities that leads to one's sins being forgiven, if a sinner repents from his sins.

However, if the Muslim does not realize this, or doesn't feel the blessings of Islam, or he thinks that the rules and laws of this religion are just an expression of restrictions that confine one, then the problem here is within the person himself and his intellect that led him to thinking that way."

Mark: "You're correct Khalid, but Islam is not in harmony with the human beings natural instinct. Islam tries to suppress one's desires, and the human being has wants and desires he needs and wants to fulfill, and he loves this worldly life. Islam is against development and advancement within the earth, then how could there be harmony between Islam and between the human being?"

Khalid: “Who told you this?”

I mentioned to you before Dr. Mark that Islam came to organize people’s lives, and to organize the relationships between people. These desires that we’re speaking about will destroy and corrupt the relationships between people, and will cause instability and deficiencies in the systems that were created to bring forth stability upon the earth.

Surely, the desires that Islam fights against and aims to prevent people from committing them or following them, they are the origin of every crime and corrupt deed, they also demobilize the development of the earth, which are the things that you said are from humans desires and wants.

Development and advancement of the earth will not be realized Dr. Mark in the shade of people following their desires. If you said to me, that the western world fulfills their desires, and they are the more advanced, developed and civilized then the eastern world, then I will tell you that you are wrong.

Yes, you’re wrong Dr. Mark. Yes, it is correct that one may imagine or perceive that the west is more developed and civilized, but don’t you think that the west is disunited and disjointed socially, and there are large numbers of crimes, and acts of suicide. So where is this developing and advancing of the earth that you’re talking about?

This development that you’re talking about Dr. Mark, it must serve, care for, and be concerned for the human being. However, if you were to ponder over the western world, you would see that it is only the human being that serves the

development of the west.

Yes, you have seen the great technology in the western culture, and that which the western people have established, this is a clear sign of great advancement and progress, however what has it done for the people??

Yes, the human being has become an industrious person and highly organized with his time, his life; which is very enticing by its appearance. However, this routine and apparent organization is for the sake of development alone, not for the sake of the people. For this reason a person pressures himself, and bears the hardships of things that he cannot handle, so that he can be a model citizen, and be productive. If you were to come close to a normal western citizen, you would find that the majority of them are unhappy with what they're doing and their professions. This unhappiness is inside them, they're not relaxed, they're uneasy deep down inside themselves, and so many days and years pass by like this.

The development that we are talking about here aims to put forth concessions for the sake of manifesting development, even if it is at the expense of his comfort or even his honor.

Yes, Dr. Mark, even at the expense of his own honor that God has granted him. How many women have lost their honor because the society or so called 'development' of the community or society demands that from her.

They want her to beautify and adorn herself while

exposing herself and mix with the non-related men. So that the image of ‘development’ and ‘civilization’ is complete. You won’t find any tall tower or luxurious hotel or night club except that you find a woman exposing herself behind the reception desk, or posing half-naked on a billboard.

How much freedom has been eliminated under the name of ‘development’. The father has lost his authority, he is one who doesn’t have any influence upon his family members. Families have fallen apart, manners and ethics have been lost, because ‘development’ and ‘civilization’ encourages this under the name of ‘freedom’, so that their beautiful image and so called concept of ‘freedom’ and ‘liberty’ is complete.

Yes, freedom Dr. Mark. What you claimed earlier that Islam combats freedom, and that you want to manifest freedom for people. You didn’t realize or know that the ‘development’ or ‘civilization’ that you claim, is another type of freedom, with another way, upon another path.

To liberate the person, under the slogan of ‘freedom’ from the so called ‘restrictions’ that were placed upon him, that have prevented him from creativity and ingenuity. Which lead him to be thrown in the prison of ‘development’ as a slave of it, and formed by his desires.

Yes, it is important that we develop and seek to progress in the earth. It’s important that we make advancements, and compete with the other nations, and be in the forefront in all fields of life.

It is also important that we are a productive and leading nation, but this should not be away from what God wants from us, because briefly speaking, it will not happen.

It will not happen, because the development of civilization is not intended so as to have superiority in building or inventing or discoveries alone...no not at all

Development within the earth is the spreading of life within it.

This is done by developing, advancing and progressing the people who inhabit it, in all aspects of life, their beliefs, their morals, their ethics, so that the earth and its inhabitants can progress and advance.

Yes, development is realized by the building of the human beings, and for the sake of human beings, this is the essence of life, and with human beings life is established.

By building and establishing safety, peace and security.

By sketching plans for human beings happiness, and manifesting peace and calmness within themselves, and to realize the reason for being within this world. The great western civilization has failed in manifesting this and making the people realize this.

The ancient Islamic civilization in the era of the Islamic State of Spain, Dr. Mark; was even better and greater than these western civilizations we see today. This is because it was established upon the understanding of Islam and built for human beings, making the earth and that within it subservient to them, it was a new world.

It was a society that planted tranquility in people's hearts, while they were granted peace and safety in every aspect of their lives. They developed and populated the earth in many different fields and aspects, and many progressions and advancements were realized as well. But the progress and advancements that you're speaking about in the western civilization, did not realize or manifest benefits for the betterment of human beings, rather it broke down and collapsed the human being even if the place is filled with skyscrapers.”

Mark: “But the ancient Islamic civilization that you mentioned to me Khalid, why didn't it continue on? Was it affected by failure? Or was it only short lived?”

Khalid: “No, it's not like that Dr. Mark.

Civilization, population and development is only worldly glory and power which aids in the building of nations and populating them. Here, Dr. Mark, as I mentioned to you, if the building of a society is in agreement with God's commandments then it will flourish, and any development other than that is like a cliff waiting to collapse off the side of the mountain. When God finds the Muslims holding firmly unto their religion, only then will God make the means of building civilizations and development easy for them. Whenever God finds his people far away from the religion, then He will remove their civilizations from them. The ancient Islamic civilization did not flourish except by the practicing of their religion correctly. They used to own the world, and they established the best civilizations in all aspects of life, in

medicine, engineering and many other fields and sciences. Even the remaining traces of these civilizations still exist in many of the most prestigious universities and museums in the world up until today. Remnants and traces which many scientific discoveries, and new developments are derived and taken from. This is proof that the Islamic civilization wasn't short lived as you mentioned in your question Dr. Mark.

However, this civilization was taken away from them because of their straying away from God and His path. For this reason you look at it today, and many Muslims look at themselves as if they are a backwards, undeveloped, and third world countries according to the way they they live.”

Mark: “Khalid you mentioned that the Lord, whenever he finds the Muslims holding firmly unto their religion and practicing it, then He will make the means of development and civilization easy for them. Is the Lord pleased with us, while we are far away, as you say, from His religion and way?”

Khalid: “Does that civilization have a positive aspect for you all? And enables you to change into something better? Especially in regards to doing the proper things to get closer to God, and understanding the reality of this worldly life?

So that you know Dr. Mark, that if God -the Most High- loves a nation, then He will grant them real success in the future. Yes, civilization came to us, and we populated and developed the earth, and were once superior as Muslims. Our civilization increased us in glory and made us stronger in our adherence to Islamic principles, and increased the social ties between us. Every individual realized the fruits, benefits, and

effects of this civilization, and the development within the earth, while they all lived in peace. Civilization has come to you all, and what has it done to or for you all?

It is how you mentioned Dr. Mark, a false civilization, that has enticed you and made blinded you. The person is a servant of it, and it has kept him busy constantly, and he's wasted his life as a slave for it, living depressed and distressed.”

Mark: !!

Khalid: “Ahh, Dr. Mark, we've been talking for a while, and now it's time to pray. What do you think I go pray, then we have lunch together before we go to the park?”

Mark: “Sounds great, it will be wonderful if we ate lunch by the lake.”

It was a captivating meeting, they spoke about many different things. Then they ate lunch together. Mark returned back to his house, but this time he was completely confused.

He was completely confused because he heard many things that made him change his previous ideas and views, in relation to the current situation they lived in today.

Yes, even though the civilization that Dr. Mark lives in...was very much how Khalid described..., but not everything is how you perceive it to be.

Surely, he never feels relaxed, nor did he ever feel that this

civilization has provided happiness and a better life for him.

Yes, he has money.

Yes, he has a very luxurious car, and he thinks he owns his time, rather the time owns him. If he were to slow down or stop a little, then the realization of development, progression, and advancement that is demanded from him would cease, and he wouldn't realize the things he wants to do.

He started to think and he was very happy.

Yes, happy because he was thinking!

Because something came from Makkah, and made him think.

“Has something changed in your life Mark?”

A statement that his wife Emily said to him, while she saw him distracted with his thoughts, and his behavior had changed for a couple days now.

Mark: “Nothing is wrong sweetheart just Mr. Khalid has led me to thinking and rethinking many things.”

Emily: “Yes, you've spoken to me a lot about this subject.”

Mark: “And what do you think?”

Emily: “I've been affected with exactly the same feeling sweetheart. I was searching the internet about the religion of

Islam and I found a translation of the meanings of the Quran in English. I started to read it, and I felt so peaceful as I read more and more.”

Mark: “What did you read in this book?”

Emily: “Beautiful words, propagating virtues, respect, and honor of the human being. I found many statements that make you feel as though the Quran is speaking to you directly about everything, as if you’re in the university touring the different departments in search of knowledge. Sometimes it talks about the relationship of the human being with his lord and being obedient to Him. Other times it talks about the relationship of people between one another. It’s as though it’s a ministry of human development regarding social affairs. It mentions the relationship between a person and his parents, between children and parents, as well as the rights of all of them. It mentions the relationships between spouses from the time of engagement up until marriage, and even if it leads up to divorce. It also mentions the relations between siblings and inheritance. It mentions the rights of neighbors and friends, as well as the rights of commuters on the street. It mentions circumstances related to travelling, and how to behave and deal with crimes, and how to deal with the problems of everyday life, and many other beautiful and comprehensive approaches. I don’t think that you’ll ever find a book similar to it in all the written constitutions throughout the world.”

Mark: “Are you serious, it mentions all those things?”

Emily: “Yes, it even talks about the miracles in the universe as well as the oceans. It’s as if you’re attending a chemistry, biology, or physics lesson. It talks about the previous nations, about the creation of human beings. Then it moves on to talk about the Day of Resurrection and the future life. I don’t think there is anyone who is able to speak about these issues, so what’s your opinion about that?”

Mark: “Excellent.”

Emily: “Let’s think a little, and don’t forget Mark that our neighbor Aadil is also Muslim, and before you mentioned to be about your friend Khalid, I’ve been observing Aadil’s behavior, and I haven’t found anything that attracts me to his religion. I’m worried that there may be some secrets about Islam, that if we knew about them, it would be clear to us and we would decide not to accept Islam.”

Mark: “What you’re saying is completely logical. What do you think if I talk with Aadil and ask him to come with me to the Golden Gate park at the end of the week to meet Khalid?”

Emily: “That would be great, call him and let him know.”

Aadil is Dr. Mark’s neighbor who’s lived in San Francisco for fifteen years, he is the owner of a few of clothing stores.

Aadil is a Muslim, but he doesn’t want the religion to interfere with his life, because he believes that the role of religion is just for worship alone.

Dr. Mark informed him that he's going to go with his friend Khalid for a picnic, and he would be delighted if he joined them.

Aadil was very pleased with Dr. Mark's idea, especially because he hasn't met with Dr. Mark for over two months, as both of them have been very busy with their jobs and families.

Dr. Mark was extremely happy about this meeting, and he was patiently awaiting the morning of this upcoming weekend to come. He even woke up early and went to his neighbor Aadil so that they wouldn't be late to meet Khalid who was going to be waiting for them in the Golden Gate park, in the flower garden reading the newspaper, sipping a cup of coffee.

Mark: "Good morning Khalid."

Khalid: "Good morning Mark, it looks as though we have a guest this morning."

Mark: "Yes, he's my neighbor Aadil, he is an Arab Muslim, he works here and has a chain of clothing stores."

Khalid: "Welcome Aadil, it's a pleasure to meet you. I think we may have met on another occasion but I can't remember where."

Aadil: "Thank you, I'm also pleased to meet you again as well. I think we met at the masjid for the 'Holiday prayer' last

year, and we were discussing some things.”

Khalid: “Ahh..I remember now, you were a little quarrelsome.”

Aadil: “I wasn’t quarrelsome. Engineer Iyaad and I had an opinion that you didn’t agree with, and you were not convinced with what we were saying.”

Mark: “It seems that there was a heated conversation between both of you.”

Aadil: “No, not really, we were just discussing some religious affairs and differed in regards to their ruling.”

Mark: “Are the laws and legislations of your religion unknown, to the point that you are differing over them?”

Aadil: “No, of course not. However, there are some people who want to be in the forefront speaking about the religion, and want to include the religion in everything. So they issue religious rulings that repel people away from the religion.”

Mark: “Does your religion have a relationship with other things besides only acts of worship?”

Aadil: “Our religion is easy and simple. God created the human being with freedom of choice, it’s sufficient for me to pray, and when Ramadan comes I fast the days of Ramadan, then I’m free to do whatever I want. But unfortunately there are

those who try to include and involve the religion in everything.”

Khalid: “Everything, like what for example.”

Aadil: “Everything. My behavior, the way I live my life, even the clothing I wear, the food I eat. Is it conceivable that the religion restricts me even in these affairs? Where is the freedom that it has given individuals?”

Khalid: “And who told you that the religion restricts you? Your problem Aadil, is that you don’t read about Islam, nor its rulings and legislations, except general information. Then you want to debate. Even though you, like all the other people who debate and argue, only allow specialists in other fields to speak about what they specialize in, but for religious affairs in which none of you specialize in, you all speak about it as you like.

Your problem Aadil, as well as many others, is that you don’t ponder and think while you’re going through life and behaving in your everyday affairs. How is it that the religion has made numerous things permissible for you, and you become angry when the religion says to you ‘don’t do this or that’.

Aadil, every day you wear what you like, and eat what you deem delicious and tasty from all the various types of foods. You listen to what you like, and behave as you like throughout your life. But if the religion says ‘stop here’, then you start attacking the religion, and you think that the religion restricts your freedoms and confines you.

No, Islam is not like that. If you were to think as to ‘why’

the religion stops or prohibits you from doing some things, then you would know that there is a reason behind it.

The command to stop doing something is because of some harm that could affect you by doing so, or the action that you want to do could involve interfering with the freedom and liberties of others, or preventing them their freedoms or rights.”

Aadil: “Why should I stop listening to music? I’m not harming anyone by listening to music, and it does not distract me from performing my prayers? And why should I stop smoking cigarettes, seeing that I smoke them while I’m alone, and I don’t harm anyone else? And why do you sometimes say things are impermissible using the proof of ‘blocking the means to harm or shutting the doors that lead to evil?’”

Khalid: “Aadil, God is the one who created everything, and He is the most knowledgeable about His creation as well as what harms them and what benefits them. If you were to ponder over everything that God has prohibited, as I informed you, then you would find that all of these things cause harm either to the individual or the society. No matter if this harm was physical or abstract, or if you knew the reason or not.

It’s sufficient enough to know that the one who created you and brought you into existence, that He’s the one who prohibited you from this thing, and He knows more about you than you know about yourself. Don’t you want to please the one who created you? If you do, then be obedient to him.

Furthermore, the issue of ‘blocking the means of harm’ is to preserve and protect the society from falling into more

serious sins that will harm the society and cause it to decline.

The prophet did this when he made a door for the women to enter the masjid. He did so as to prevent the mixing of males and females together, which leads to other forbidden acts. Even though that entering by the same door with men is not impermissible. In addition to that, the prophet was living amongst the best generations of people in the history of mankind, and this still didn't prevent him from using this principle. If we were to think about the different affairs that the principle 'block the means of harm' are used for, we would find that by practicing this principle our lives are not interrupted, and these things that we want to prevent or prohibit are not necessities for us to live our lives as long as there is some type of harm or danger that could occur because of it. And if you said that, 'I haven't done any of these things', there could perhaps come someone after you, and practice this act even while not intending to do so.

It is a principle, as we mentioned to preserve and protect societies. It is not as some may say, 'that it is to hinder or destroy life'. If this was the case, then the distribution of loans between people would be prohibited, to close the door of usury and interest.

However, Islam did not prohibit or prevent this so that the people's attainment of benefits and things which lead to self-progression, and their needs are interrupted. Islam has permitted giving a loan to someone despite the dangers of usury.

The system of punishment used for speeding, was not put in place because speeding is impermissible. Rather it is

something that leads to car accidents. For this reason the system was put in place to protect people's lives. The system put in place makes no exception for the professional driver even if he says that he wasn't the cause of the accident. This system is one that serves the community and society, and reduces and decreases the amount of car accidents. So in this situation, why don't we request to not 'block the means of harm' and let people take care of themselves and take their own precautions?

The constitutions throughout the world, despite them being false and unjust, use this principle in their laws because those who wrote them deem it necessary to protect and preserve the society, and no one has criticized or rebuked this issue. Rather the citizens have supported this, as long as it protects and preserves that society in their personal views. But because it is Islam, there is all this dispute and disapproval."

Aadil: "Khalid, the issue of 'blocking the means of harm' contains a bit of bad assumptions of the society."

Khalid: "No Aadil, because you're gauging what was said by a worldly aspect only. If we were to gauge this issue by the after-life aspect, and by the desire of one who loves to protect the worldly path for the people so that they reach the hereafter safely, then your view would be different and change from 'bad assumptions' to 'loving to reach that path'. Don't ever assume that we could perhaps have bad assumptions, and base religious rulings upon that assumption."

Aadil: “But Khalid, you guys sometimes prohibit things, and we abstain from them out of trust in your knowledge. Then there are some scholars who come along and say that it’s not prohibited. How are we supposed to trust you after that?”

Khalid: “Aadil, the problem is that there are some people who follow their desires, and are attracted to the scholar that agrees with his inclinations and desires without verifying the correctness of that scholars speech.

Yes, there are issues in which some people have said that something is permissible and it is prohibited, and they use the statement of this person or that person as proof. Rather, sometimes he could mention a narration from the prophet Muhammad.”

Aadil: “Then you admit that you are wrong?”

Khalid: “No... it’s not like that. Using the statement of so and so with the presence of the religious proof, or an interpretation of that proof in a specific way, is something completely rejected in our religion. The person’s personal views are not accepted as long as there exists religious proofs. This is because the scholar is a man who conveys the religious rulings, and he is not someone who ‘makes’ the religious rulings himself. So if that scholar mentions a Quranic verse or hadeeth from the Prophet Muhammad as a proof for a ruling, or for a story that took place in the time of the Prophet Muhammad, then there are different situations. The evidence that the scholar used could be authentic, and there exists no other proofs that oppose that proof, and in this case the proof

must be followed. Or it could be a weak or fabricated hadeeth, or it could be a Quranic verse that has been abrogated by another verse after it prohibiting that thing.”

Mark: “How is that?”

Khalid: “For example alcohol. The prohibition of it was revealed progressively. In the beginning, it was impermissible to come to the prayer while being intoxicated. This means that alcohol was still permissible and God didn’t prohibit it yet, as God says in the Quran: ‘O you who believe, do not pray while you are intoxicated, until after you know what you are saying’ (Nisa:43). So whoever used this verse as a proof indicating that alcohol is permissible, do we say that what he said is correct?”

The answer of course is no... Solely because there are other verses that prohibit alcohol that were revealed after that verse, such as God’s statement: ‘O you who believe, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters [to other than God], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful’ (Ma’idah:90).

So this verse indicates the prohibition of alcohol. So similarly gauge other issues in the Quran and Sunnah based upon this. Do you see now how the issue is not how you perceived it to be?”

Aadil: “I don’t don’t really like to use hadeeth of the Prophet Muhammad as proofs, because it’s not Quran, and is susceptible to being altered.”

Khalid: “Aadil didn’t I say that you all sometimes take the initiative in speaking about the religion and you don’t understand anything, except general information about Islamic culture and customs.

Indeed God-The Most Glorified- is responsible for protecting and preserving the Quran as He says: ‘Indeed We have revealed the Quran, and We will protect and preserve it’ (Al Hijr:9). It is well known amongst us, that the speech of the Prophet is also revelation from God as it indicates in this Quranic verse: ‘He does not speak from his own desires, rather it is revelation revealed to him’ (Najm:3-4). The Prophet’s statements explain the Quran, and it is actually called the ‘wisdom’ that he teaches the people along with the Quran, as God says: ‘Certainly God conferred a[great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error. (Ali Imran:164).

In addition, God- The Most Glorified- preserved the Sunnah because it is an explanation of the Quran. It is the correct way and methodology for the people on the face of this earth to follow the Quran. So God designated certain people who would preserve and protect this sunnah, so then we see the emergence of Hadeeth sciences.

It is a science that establishes which narrations are authentically attributed to the Prophet, and their scholars are trustworthy and honest. For this reason, no hadeeth are mentioned except that it is either established or not, it is either authentic or inauthentic by way of the sciences of hadeeth. The sunnah has been preserved over many years, and has been

transmitted by large groups, generation after generation, up until today by God's preservation of it.

Aadil, we have been ordered in the Quran to pray, but the Quran has not described how we should pray. We were also commanded with many other things. The Sunnah has taught us how to pray correctly, as well as many other issues we've learned by authentic hadeeth that the scholars have proved are correct using hadeeth sciences.

Also, it is not permissible for a Muslim to reject prophetic narrations under any circumstances, by using his intellect. If there was any goodness in his intellect, then he would learn this knowledge so that he could verify and make sure of these things, not just sit in his house on his couch rejecting what he wants from the Sunnah, while the scholars of hadeeth travelled everywhere in the world in order to verify them and check their authenticity.”

Aadil: “Now I know. But perhaps the one who said it is permissible, may have reached this view by researching. So why do you close the door in his face and reject his opinion? And whoever wants your opinion acts upon it, and whoever wants the other opinion acts upon that? Didn't the companions differ in the time of the Prophet, and he approved all of them in what they differed in. In the hadeeth: ‘No one pray Asr until they reach Bani Quraythah’. Doesn't this indicate that our religion is one of ease and moderation, and that differing is mercy amongst the Muslims?”

Khalid: “The hadeeth you mentioned talks about when the Prophet ordered the companions to go forth hastily to Bani Quraythah and said to them: ‘Do not pray Asr except in Bani Quraythah’. So the companions went forth quickly, and when the time for Asr came they were split into two groups. Some of them understood and interpreted the prophets statement upon it’s apparent literal meaning. So that group didn’t pray until they reached Bani Quraythah. Other companions understood it conceptually so they prayed on the way when the time for Asr came in. This doesn’t mean that a person does what he wants, and uses the difference of opinions as a proof for that. Because if we observe the hadeeth, we will find that the differing of the companions here was not due to them following their desires, or their personal views, and for this reason the Prophet didn’t rebuke them.

This was never the case, rather it was exactly as we mentioned. Either they implemented the literal meaning and prayed in Bani Quraythah when they arrived, or they understood the intention of the Prophet’s command, which was to go forth hastily and quickly to reach there, so they prayed Asr when the time for prayer came in. Their understanding here was not based upon desires. Their understanding was as such because of other evidences that indicate that prayer is obligatory to pray in its designated time. So they followed those proofs and what they thought the prophet intended by his command because of the possibility of that being his intention. Also because of that, they joined two matters together. If we were to ponder over the way some people understand nowadays, and their intellectual weighing of things, what

would we find?

We would find that their understandings are not in accordance with the religious tools of measurement, rather they are intellectual alone. And based upon that, then the scholar is only one who conveys and is not a legislator, and if he exerts his research efforts and opinion in an issue, then his final opinion is based upon principles, not upon desires.

Yes, I could possibly give my opinion in an issue, but as regards to religious issues, then we should all submit to the texts from the Quran and Sunnah, and refer our issues back to God. Because God is the one who created everyone and everything, and is more knowledgeable about what benefits His creation. So based upon that, if someone comes to me, and debates an issue with us, and I express my opinion in the issue and he expresses his opinion in the issue. In this situation we refer the differing back to God's judgement and we take the opinion that is in agreement with the proofs, as God says in the Quran: 'If you differ in anything, then refer it back to God and His Messenger' (Nisa:59).

Then after that we should submit our opinions to God's commandments as He said in the Quran: 'It is not for a believer, male or female, that if God and His messenger order with something, that they should have a choice in the affair' (Al Ahzab:36).

We should not be bigoted to our personal opinions or a particular group that we associate with, nor to a certain scholar. This issue is something that is very sad and depressing, when we see these types of things everywhere throughout the

Muslim lands. This is what causes dissension and separation amongst the Muslims. Rather it is important to hold firmly onto the religion of God, in accordance to what God intends in all affairs of life.

Yes, I could perhaps follow a particular scholar because of my lack of knowledge and information about something. However, I should also work hard in following the scholar who knows and follows the evidences, not the one who follows concessions all the time. This is because I'm responsible in front of God about this action that I want to do. And we should also know that the scholar, no matter what his status or size is, that he is a human being, and he's not infallible. And he could perhaps make a mistake in clarifying an issue, and if this occurs from him, then our reference is the Quran and the Sunnah.

That which is very sad, is that we call some of the different opinions and views 'religious differences' and we deal with those who have religious proofs as if they are one of two groups whom we command others to accept the views of those who look at the issue from an intellectual perspective alone, leaving off the religious proofs. This is total oppression from them, and even oppression of the proofs.

Aadil, as for your statement that: 'differing is mercy', do you want us to call the opinions that oppose the evidences and are not restricted by them as something accepted and that it is good and mercy?

Do you view that if I take a certain opinion in an issue that the prophet Muhammad didn't come with, and I want the people to accept it, that I am merciful with them here, because I've made life easier for them? And if and when I do that, would I be more merciful than the Prophet, the one whom God sent as a mercy to mankind?

And if the opinion that opposes that, and is a cause for abandoning guidance and the correct path, is it considered mercy with those people treading the path?

Islam has warned from differing and dissension, and no type of differing brings about good. Except the differing based upon the religion, or is in agreement with the proofs and legal measurements in the issue. The people of knowledge look into the issues according to scientific principles, not in accordance to their personal opinions or views, and for this reason God has said: 'And do not differ, if you do you will fail, and lose strength and moral' (Al Anfal:46).

Furthermore, the matter of 'ease' in the religion, Aadil is referred back to God. No scholar or I can eliminate or remove the person's acts of worship using the proof of 'ease', only except with a religious proof. The Zuhr prayer, for example is prayed in four units, and no one can shorten it except when on a journey. This is because God has given the travelling person a concession, and this is proof that the one who created the human being is most knowledgeable of his situation while travelling. And for this reason, it is permissible to shorten the prayer while travelling. This is because the person travelling is

in a rush to reach his destination, and is in need of moving quickly to complete his journey. So the shortening here was for the time of the prayer, whereas if someone was sick and was not able to stand, then the religion grants him a concession and ease by making prayer easier in the way that it is performed. Allowing the person to perform it, even if he is laying down on the bed, all according to his situation. This is because God knows the situation of his body and the pain that he is suffering, whereas if he was to perform it like he normally does by standing he would experience hardship. So gauge many other issues that God has made concessions and made things easy for His servants. Such as the travelling person breaking his fast, and allowing the woman who is worried about her child during the period of breastfeeding to break her fast as well. There are many other actions of worship, and even many issues related to people's lives.

If we were to talk about moderation, then what is your understanding of moderation Aadil?"

Aadil: "Moderation is to not go to extremes in the religion, and at the same time not to be negligent or have shortcomings in practicing the religion."

Khalid: "How can I not be strict?"

Aadil: "Meaning, not to go overboard in adhering to the religion."

Khalid: "How is that?"

Aadil: “By having moderation in your religion. Meaning not prohibiting everything, and overlooking some things, as long as it’s harm isn’t great. Live your life, and accept other people’s lives as you want them to accept yours, accept concessions and easements in the religion. We shouldn’t associate every single affair with the religion.”

Khalid: “What is the type of moderation that you are looking for Aadil? Do you want the type of moderation, in which I am moderate in implementing the religion and performing acts of worship and choose the things that suit me?”

Did our prophet bring rulings and commandments so that I can choose that which I want to implement, making me moderate, while leaving off that which does not suit the time I live in and the place I live in?

Aadil, are we in a supermarket, where we can choose what we want and leave what we don’t want?

This is nonsense Aadil. God sent his prophet with commandments and legislations that are suitable for the human being, because He is the one who created the human being so that they can implement His commandments on the face of this earth that God created. If the human being implements them, then he will attain the paradise that God created for him. If he abandons them, then he will enter the hellfire that was created for him. So based upon that, God is more knowledgeable about what suits the human beings. So for that reason, the commandments are weighed, if they are increased then it will

be overweight, and if they are decreased then they will be underweight.

This is what true moderation is.

Aadil, do you think that moderation is measured by someone other than the one who created all of these things and made everything suitable in all situations?

Aadil, do you think that the Prophet wasn't correct in his actions while he was conveying the religion to us? In addition to that, when we adhere to or 'restrict ourselves to the religion' as you claim, then we are considered or called 'strict' in your view, and it is necessary for us to change some of the things that the Prophet did so that we can realize the true moderation that you want?"

Aadil: "But the times have changed and advanced. New things have introduced themselves into the world that never existed one-thousand four-hundred years ago. And I don't think the Islamic laws can adapt to these times and changes."

Khalid: "Aadil, God sent messengers to the previous nations, and every messenger was sent with laws that were suitable for that nation of people at their certain times, situations, and places. However, their goal was one; which was establishing the worship of God alone and disbelieving in the things worshipped other than God.

God completed the sending of messengers by sending His last messenger Muhammad, as a seal of the prophets and messengers. If God- The Most Glorified- knew that the times

would change, and it is in need of other religious laws, then why did he complete Prophethood with the sending of Muhammad? Why didn't he send another prophet during this time with laws that suit this time period?

Yes, Aadil the means could perhaps change. A donkey has been exchanged for a car, and tents have been exchanged with luxurious houses, and the means used for communication are not like how they used to be. Many things have changed, but the supplication you make for riding a donkey is the same one you say for riding in a car. And international exchange laws of currency now have the same rulings as the caravan of merchants coming to do business in Yemen or Sham heading towards Makkah.

If you were to think Aadil about the church and the role of worship amongst the non-Muslims, you would find that they fought against education in the past. Have you or Dr. Mark ever asked yourselves this question before?

In short, it's because education will reveal the church, and the church has nothing to counteract it.

Their priests and pastors view that knowledge and the development and advancement of knowledge is dangerous and threatens the church and the acts of worship that they call the people to perform. Because they, in short, have strayed away from God's path and have followed a newly invented way which they invented for themselves, which is in agreement with their limited ideas and ways of thinking. So they themselves are stagnant and fixed, while the world around them is advancing, developing, and progressing.

By the way Dr. Mark, knowledge is what will expose their methodology and their false creed and beliefs, and will remove the covering that is blinding the people around them. However, Islam encourages and aids knowledge, because it is the religion of truth. Every time knowledge progresses or advances, it establishes the truth and reality of Islam. For this reason the secular scholars of the world today conceal many things that are in agreement with knowledge contained in the Quran, and things that the Quran mentioned over fourteen hundred years ago.

Islam is a religion that invites and propagates development, progress, advancement and building of human beings and societies. If it's laws were not in agreement with advancement and progression, then it would not have propagated knowledge in the first place.

Islam is a religion, that every time knowledge advances, it finds its rightful place within the Islamic laws, without a need for changing those laws.”

Aadil: “Excellent, but Khalid our complete submission to the proofs, eliminates the use of our intellects. While the Quran encourages us to use our intellects, and to think, as it has been mentioned in numerous verses, and we shouldn't forget that the Prophet said: ‘A sin is whatever disturbs you within yourself’ (Sahih Muslim). Meaning that the Prophet referred determining if something is a sin or not back to one's inner-self and intellect, and if it wasn't like this then why did God create intellects for us? And Khalid, you want to disable the use of our intellects and prevent us from thinking.”

Khalid: “I asked you before, do you want me to practice some religious teachings and leave other ones based upon the intellect? Of course not, because we are not given a choice in regards to implementing the commandments of the religion based upon what we want. And for this reason the intellects role here is in selecting the suitable thing, not creating that which is suitable.

In selecting the path of God, not another path based upon the intellect’s mood or inclinations, so that it can try to reach God’s path. And for this reason we find many verses that mention the intellect in the Quran, if you were to read and ponder over them, then you would have known that the Quran invites us to use our intellects. It invites us to think about the creation of the heavens and earth, while learning and taking lessons from the previous nations. This leads one to knowing God, and knowing the true religion and adhering to it. The intellect never played a role in creating a religious ruling that was previously determined by God and by the way of God’s Messenger.

Then intellect does not determine, fix or legislate the religious laws. This is because the one who creates, He’s the one who determines and legislates. And specifying if something is a sin or not, goes back to the legislator (God). As for one’s inner self being disturbed or confused about sins, or asking one’s heart about it, then this is related to something in which the proof is not clear to someone, or there’s a difference of opinion in the issue. The issue that is intended here has an internal effect as well as an external effect. So the internal effect is that a person finds within himself and his heart

confusion or worry from doing the act, so he leaves it off. And the external effect is that he dislikes people seeing him doing it, so he abandons it. However, if he has an established proof or learns about it later on, then the issue is settled.

Aadil, the disbelievers of Quraish in Makkah knew God, but because of their intellects, they viewed to take an intercessor between them and God, and they viewed that this was correct based upon their intellects. Similarly, it was considered disgraceful to abandon the deities of one's forefathers, even though they knew God and glorified the Holy Kabah. So did their intellects benefit them here?"

Aadil: "Of course not. Khalid, I believe that our conversation has distracted us and we haven't been considering the time."

Khalid: "Yes, do you guys want to eat something?"

Mark: "Let's eat some mixed grill today."

Khalid: "Sounds good. Then we'll go back to our houses, as I have some things that I must finish before the nightfall."

Mark: "However, it's necessary that we meet here next week at the same time."

Khalid: "Ok, deal."

The gathering ended as well as the heated conversation. Lunch was over and everyone returned back to their homes,

after they agreed to meet next week.

They all returned back home, but the things mentioned in their gathering were still ringing in Dr. Mark's head.

“Islam is a religion that invites and propagates development and advancement, and if it's laws and rulings did not agree with development and advancement then it would never have encouraged the seeking of knowledge.”

“The church and the role of worship amongst the non-Muslims view that knowledge and advancement is dangerous and threatens them, because they want to be unchangeable and fixed while the world around them is developing.”

Words that never left Dr. Mark's imagination.

It was the truth, that's what Mark said to Emily.

Emily: “Mark, the laws of this religion are suitable for every time and place. Also Islam is the marvel of history, and I feel very relaxed and amazed whenever I read about this religion.”

Mark: “Emily, do you know that I've been completely convinced about what Khalid has been saying. The total opposite of Aadil, whom I've never been attracted by his speech.”

Emily: “Because Khalid is adhering to the teachings of

Islam when speaking to you, and he never wants to veer away from its rulings and legislations, and this is where he gets his strength in speaking with you, from the methodology of the religion.”

Mark: “Now, I know. But tell me Emily, if you accepted Islam, would you feel that this religion is restricting you because you are a woman?”

Emily: “Let’s not deceive ourselves Mark. Has the life were living now granted me rights that make me feel as though I’m a woman?”

Me, as a woman feel as though I’m a tool being used and moved by civilization as it wills. Nor does society or civilization take into consideration that I’m a woman and situations and circumstances change with me.

Society considers me similar to a man, even though my physical make-up is different than a man. And when we say that Islam oppresses women, then indeed we are only laughing and fooling ourselves.

When I read about these things that non-Muslims say, that Islam oppresses women, I found that what the western society’s claims are incorrect.

Yes Mark, I’m a woman, and I understand when Islam distinguishes between a man and a woman. As you mentioned, a woman’s nature and physical make-up are different than men. And for this reason Islam has legislated some acts of worship and responsibilities that are a little different than the men. Rather we find that some of these responsibilities are less than what is requested from men. This is a clear sign that Islam

takes into consideration the woman and her nature and physical make-up. So how can we claim that Islam oppresses her? Here we see how the man is held responsible for more things than the woman, and Islam has treated her kindly and gently.

How can we say that Islam oppresses her, and here we see that it cares for and has concern for her?

If it is difficult for the men and the women to be equal in actions of worship- which the Muslims view is the reason for their existence on this earth- then how can we impose equality upon them, between the male and female, in the affairs of the after- life.

Our liberal and open society is mistaken when it doesn't differentiate between women and men. The parameters that we see the Muslims gauging affairs with in regards to women's issues in religious affairs and life, are completely logical gauges and are in agreement with the nature and physical make-up of the woman. If Islam and Muslim men were oppressors of women, then we would have found them overburdening her and making things difficult for her in the most important affairs, the affairs related to the religion.

Even the issue of mixing between the opposite sexes, that I used to think was a result of a woman being rejected from the men in the Muslim societies. I used to think that based upon this, they do not want her to participate with them in the workplace. Just as we used to hear, read, and see in the media. But now I know that all that propaganda was a bunch of foolishness.

Yes foolishness, this is because Islam only wants to protect and preserve the woman and guarantee her complete safety, just as a queen on her throne. Islam wants to protect her chastity, and maintain her from the external effects that she is exposed to and cause women problems in their lives. Islam also aims to protect her from the glances of licentious men. Doing this so that she can designate herself for raising generations, and rectifying the societies that we all live in today.

Mark, I feel constricted in the way I live, and the difficult struggles here in this liberal and open society in which I've never felt as though I'm a mother or a wife, even though I'm very eager and concerned about the relationship of our family.

I only wake up from sleep to find a list of important things, errands, chores and assignments that need to be done. Then I find the rest of these important errands that need to be done outside the house at my job.

Sometimes I resort to putting forth concessions and making exceptions when I'm outside the house, even if they are simple, so that I'm not harmed by putting forth greater concessions that harm my honor and dignity.

Mark, I've read about women in Islam, and I've found the Muslim woman as a queen. Islam has shown concern for her since she was a child, by obliging the parents with the rights of nurturing, raising and caring for her. Islam has also cared for the young woman by protecting her with a headscarf, to protect her and cover her, while safeguarding her modesty. Islam has

also cared for the wife by granting and protecting her rights. By obliging the husband to have utmost concern for her, showing his love for her, as well as physical, mental, financial, and spiritual maintenance of her. Islam has showed concern for the woman even when she becomes a mother, by obliging upon her children the respect of her and the honor of her, even when she is elderly. Rather it exceeds that, even while she's dying and even after her death. Her children are advised to make supplication for her, and to give charity on her behalf. I read some statements from their prophet that suffice a woman and give her complete rights: 'And indeed I order you to be good to women, for they are but captives with you. You have rights over them and they have rights over you.' (Tirmidhi). As for our society, what have they given us of rights?"

Mark: "That is truly excellent. It is an amazing religion in its magnificence, and it's very sad that we haven't understood this a long time ago."

Mark was awaiting the upcoming meeting .

He was waiting for it with enthusiasm and passion, so much so that he rushed Aadil to leave with him so that they could arrive early at the park.

Mark: "Good morning, you're very organized Khalid, you're sitting the same way as last week, with the same newspaper and the same cup of coffee."

Khalid: "Because you chose the same place Dr. Mark, hahahah. How are you Aadil, how are your children?"

Aadil: “They’re doing good, thanks to God.”

Khalid: “What’s the matter, sit down.”

Aadil: “Good, I want to discuss something with you Khalid.”

Khalid: “Go ahead”.

Aadil: “Why do we always say that the Muslims are one nation, when in reality they are disputing amongst each other, where is the Islamic unity that we are proclaiming and calling to?”

Mark: “Yes, this is correct, we always hear about the Muslims killing each other.”

Khalid: “God has invited us to be unified as He says in the Quran: ‘And all of you hold on to the religion of God together, and do not split into sects’ (Ali Imran:103).

Our prophet Muhammad has also emphasized this in numerous hadith. Even if they did differ as Muslims one day, and nothing could gather them back together except the religion of Islam, for this reason the Prophet said: ‘God is pleased with three things for you, and dislikes for you three things. He likes that you worship him and do not associate partners with him, and that you all hold onto the religion of God together and do not split up into groups. And He dislikes for you gossiping (he said she said), and asking unnecessary

questions, and wasting money.’(Muslim).

For this reason, if there are any differences that occur between the Muslims, then this does not mean that there are deficiencies within the teachings of Islam, or that Islam didn’t show concern to these affairs...No, never.

The problem is not within the teachings or methodology of Islam, because the Islamic legislation is responsible for nurturing and raising the believers upon mutual love and affection between each other, and solving the problems that occur between them in all aspects of life. From these affairs are those related to creed. Differing occurs when one group strays from God’s methodology, and does not desire to return back to it, or they don’t want to seek judgment in their affairs with it. So this causes differences between them, that would not have occurred if the group that went astray returned back to God’s way. For this reason, the sect that went astray from God’s path and God’s religion is the one that is mistaken.

Yes, this group is mistaken and should return back to God’s methodology as I mentioned earlier in God’s statement: ‘If you differ in anything then refer it back to God and his messenger’ (Nisa:59).

And we should not request from the sect that is still holding firm unto God’s religion to put forward concessions so that they can be unified with the other opposing groups, sects and those that went astray. Or say that it is necessary for us to excuse, overlook, and pardon each other’s differences even if they are upon falsehood and an incorrect methodology and belief. Because the basis in this affair is returning and referring one’s affairs back to the Quran and Sunnah. The Muslims should not show partisanship to certain groups, and should not

introduce certain systems, laws, or principles which they view and consider to be laws and rules for those who affiliate with that sect or group. Rather it is obligatory upon them to unify upon God's religion, upon one mutual goal, upon the singling of God out in worship and the following of the Prophet Muhammad. This is because the path of truth is one, and if they all unified upon one path then there would never be differences between them.

There are those who make minor mistakes as well. So this issue is not as severe, but however there are those whose mistakes are major, such as mistakes in creed, and methodology, so one goes far away from Islam, and this person's danger is more severe. And you Dr. Mark will believe they are Muslims, but the reality is other than that. Especially when they attack the principles and fundamentals of the religion, that should never be attacked. Such as those who seek blessings from graves, and invite people to worship righteous men, or transgress against others and cause others harm. Some even slander and curse the companions of God's Messenger, and curse the Prophet's wives. They also deny and negate some of the different degrees and levels of the religion, while disabling and interpreting some of the religious rulings and legislations. They try to eliminate and eradicate the true Islamic creed, while talking badly about those who have the correct creed. They fight against them and spread many doubts and misconceptions about the people of truth. They only intend to try to eliminate the Islamic creed.

There are some of them that want to demolish the pure

image of Islam. They're not able to do it openly, so they started slandering and defaming some of Islam's symbols, principles, and beliefs, so that perhaps they can reach their goal by this route.

Aadil, when we leave people like them to invite people to Islam, and they paint the picture of Islam according to their desires, with the slogan of 'unity or togetherness', then Dr. Mark and others like him will think that they are the living examples of Islam and the true Muslims. This indeed will destroy the reputation of the Muslims because, and Islam is free from these types of people."

Aadil: "But there are those who agree with you in methodology, but you describe them as 'liberalists and secularists.'"

Khalid: "What do the ones who we described them with these names want Aadil?"

Aadil: "They want an easy and flexible religion, that can conform and be in harmony with the changes. A religion that doesn't interfere with all aspects of life."

Khalid: "We talked about this Aadil, and we said that religion is a way of life, and it's not just related to actions of worship alone."

Aadil: "But..."

Khalid: “When the Prophet made migration to Al Madinah Aadil, what were the people of Madinah getting prepared to do?”

Aadil: “They wanted to make Abdullah ibn Salool their leader.”

Khalid: “And why did the Prophet approve them in their decision, when they decided to put him in charge? The Prophet was the one who was managing the affairs in Madinah. They didn’t allow Abdullah ibn Salool to be the leader who would determine and dictate their worldly affairs, and the prophet could designate his time and efforts for just focusing on the religious affairs. There was an agreement amongst the people before the migration of the Prophet to Madinah about making Abdullah ibn Salool the leader in Madinah. This would have made things easier for the Prophet Muhammad and enable him to have more time and focus on inviting people to Islam.”

Aadil: “I don’t know.”

Khalid: “This occurred to establish the fact that religion is not separate from daily life. To prove that the everyday affairs of life are in the hands of the religion, and that the religion is that which controls the affairs of life.

The ones who propagate the separation of religion from everyday life, and invite people to this belief, are attempting to destroy this religion. They’re trying to make Islam a piece of clay in the hands of life, letting life mold and shape the religion as it wills. If that happens then the religion will never be

practiced correctly upon the face of the earth. And the attainment of correct guidance would be difficult for the person in this life, leading him to be successful with the eternal bliss of the hereafter, rather he will be drowned in his desires, and he will lose everything.”

Aadil: “But practicing the religion in everyday life, will bring about people who hate the religion. And it will be considered a religion that destroys and hinders life. It propagates the implementation of prescribed punishments such as killing, cutting off hands, and these techniques have passed away with time. All the world organizations fight and oppose these systems that call to implementing these techniques of punishment. Even if some of them did believe in these punishments, they are still going to dislike it and hate it within themselves, which will lead people to hypocrisy and being hypocrites. And don’t let us forget what the prophet said: ‘You are more knowledgeable in your worldly affairs. (Muslim)’”

Khalid: “You know that the murderer, the thief, and other criminals who commit crimes are in need of a system in place that frightens them and deters them from their crimes. As I mentioned to you previously, God created and put a system in place for those that He created because He is the most knowledgeable of them and their needs. So based upon this, there is no system that can frighten them, except the system created by the one who created those people. If you were to think about all the laws throughout the world, that claim that they ‘respect and honor the human being’, and you view that they are strict laws put in place for the realization of safety and

security. Then how would they be able to manifest the goal of safety and security that they were created for in the first place and which they were intended for, and these laws are that which grant a person tranquility and peace that he's seeking? Rather, we would find these laws changing from time to time, because they will discover that they are not suitable or sufficient in light of the increased percentage of crimes and the changing of times. So they put in place laws which they assume will be beneficial, applicable, and useful; but unfortunately the crime filled societies never change. So what is the solution that they view will manifest and bring about the realization of safety and justice that they are calling for?

The answer is that it will only be found in returning back to the system of Islam, which is rooted and taken from the Noble Quran and authentic Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. This is because the one who revealed it, is the one who created the human beings, and nothing else.

We never talk about the amazing creation of the creator, and how He created a most precise, accurate, and beautiful system, and how it is managed by Him. So why don't we affirm and approve of this innovative creator who created the earth, and contrived it by organizing our lives upon the earth? As long as we realize His greatness by observing the things around us within the heavens and the earths.

Believe me, the majority of the problems that societies suffer from and are effecting the development and progress of these societies will never be solved except from the Islamic perspective. If you were to ponder over the most important

thing amongst the people, they are the economic problems for example. Then you would have known that Islam has solved them centuries ago.

You could perhaps say that God created these problems the day that He divided human beings into wealthy and poor. The poor person suffers because he was created with poverty. However, if we were to ponder over the reality of the issue, then we would find that the Islamic system of Zakat, that resembles the cycle of life has solved this problem. And from this aspect, the wealthy person has purified and caused his wealth to grow, and recognizes the poor and unfortunate people around him. From another aspect, he has aided the poor, and has guaranteed for him his food and nutrition, which he already possesses. This is what the Islamic system of Zakat has told him to give away.

In addition, the system of Zakat if practiced can solve the biggest problem that society is suffering from, and people can live a luxurious, safe and secure life, and we could gauge the rest of life's affairs based upon that.

Also the hadeeth you mentioned: 'You are more knowledgeable about your worldly affairs' was mentioned about farming and the rulings related to it. This is because the Prophet was a man from Quraish, from Makkah, who doesn't possess enough experience about issues related to farming. So he left those affairs related to pollination, fertilization and harvesting up to them, because they were more knowledgeable of their profession.

However, he did this without exceeding the limits of the religion. For example, harvesting cannot be completed with

things that oppose the religion. So surely, the affair is not as you assume, i.e. he didn't leave the affair completely to the people as they like, and similarly in the rest of their worldly affairs.

Furthermore, weren't there hypocrites in the time of the prophet Muhammad Aadil?"

Aadil: "Of course."

Khalid: "Is the presence of hypocrites during the Prophet's generation an indication that the Prophet was not successful in propagating his message, and his management of affairs?"

Aadil: "Absolutely, not."

Khalid: "Every system has its enemies, and this is God's way within the earth as He says in the Quran: 'And if God had not repelled some men by others the earth would have been corrupted' (Baqarah:251). And the presence of hypocrites is an indication of the strength of Islam. And those hypocrites that you're speaking about weren't able to oppose Islam openly because of Islam's strength and success. So they hid their opposition and enmity towards it secretly, and if Islam was weak then its enemies would openly oppose it, and they would slander and curse its rulings and legislations, as we see nowadays amongst some people. In addition to that, the presence of hypocrites is something normal in every successful and leading system and organization."

Aadil: “Wouldn’t you agree with me Khalid, that there are those who desire to do acts of obedience, but they could perhaps not do them, not out of dislike for the religion, but because of the stubbornness of some of the people who enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and their being concerned with other people’s personal affairs?”

Khalid: “The human being naturally does not like to be ordered to do something by someone, and we do not like someone butting into our personal business. For this reason you’ll find him not accepting the one who does that to him, even if that person was trying to take him away from following his desires that the soul and body incline towards.

People should know that the ones who enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and those who advise others, only do so out of their love for the person- who has disobeyed God-and they only want good for this person. If he were to think about himself, he would know the benefit of responding to that person’s advice, which is God’s being pleased with him.

Furthermore, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil is not considered interfering with other people’s privacy or personal affairs, because the one who ordered us to do this is the one who created the human being, as God says: ‘Let there be a group from amongst you who invite the people to goodness, and who enjoin the good, and forbid the evil, and those are the successful ones’ (Ali Imran:104).

Also, think with me, the one who abandons accepting advice out of stubbornness, what will he benefit except sins, mistakes, and bad deeds; and he will only harm himself?

Yes, for example, as you say that those who work for enjoining the good and forbidding the evil could be mistaken in advising someone, but does my stubbornness and me continuously committing a sin, act as a punishment for him?

On the contrary, the it's not like that. I will be the only loser in this situation, because there is a divine punishment that is awaiting for me if I continue upon this sin, as I mentioned to you.

Now, I want to point something important out, that we should fear God in regards to the ones working in the profession to enjoin the good and forbid the evil. We should not accuse them or blame them unjustly, nor should we slander them or talk bad about them or try to destroy their reputations. This angers God, and their rights over us will not be lost or abandoned. Just as they are commanded to invite people to Islam using the best of ways, we are also commanded to respond in the best of ways. We shouldn't forget that the abominable acts should first be changed with the hand, and if that is not possible then one should change it with one's tongue (words), then if he's not able with the tongue then he should try to change it with his heart by disliking it. These are the levels that God has specified, and they are not authoritative means from those working in the field of enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, as the Prophet said: 'Whoever sees something abominable then let him change it with his hand, if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue, and if he is not able, then with his heart, and this is the weakest from of faith (Muslim).'

Mark: “What do you think about Islam now, Khalid? What is the future of your Islam in light of the developments and negative views of those who oppose Islam?”

Khalid: “Islam is a religion that is not affected by the views of its opponents. It is lofty and mighty. God will protect his religion, but it is related to how much the followers of Islam adhere to their religion.

It is a religion that increases people in prestige, honor and respect, and the people do not increase Islam anything. For this reason, when the followers of Islam start adhering to their religion, then they will become leaders in this world, and you should know that these days are coming. The truth is present, and will never disappear, even if the followers are few one day. For indeed God will increase their numbers and will aid them, because He is in control of their affairs, and because Islam is the truth that is necessary to prevail and win. For this reason the enemies of Islam always try to keep the Muslims busy with trivial things, amusements, and the distracting pleasures of this worldly life, so they go away from their religion. As well as trying to plant worry and fear within their hearts and souls. Trying to teach them that they are under-developed and backwards, while spreading the feeling of defeat amongst them in order to manifest their glory and them becoming mighty once again.

Umar ibn Al Khatttab was truthful when he said: ‘We are people that God has made mighty with Islam, and if we seek might or strength in other than Islam, then God will humiliate us.’”

Mark: “You’re right Khalid, I thank you from my heart, you’ve changed me so much.”

Khalid: “Rather, thanks is to God alone, that has made it easy for you to hear all of this.”

Mark: “I don’t know what to say, but now I would like you guys to excuse me as I need to go home now.”

Mark returned back home, but this time he returned home and made a decision that he did not want to delay in implementing.

“Yes, Emily I’ve decided to accept Islam, what about you?”

Emily: “I have decided to accept Islam as well sweetheart.”

Mark was extremely happy with the decision of his wife Emily. He felt extremely content and relaxed after his family’s decision to accept Islam. This happiness was felt and experienced in a way that they never felt before throughout their entire life.

It was happiness of associating with this religion of Islam.

Happiness of embracing the truth that had enlightened their house and made the path of life clear.

Mark and his family quickly went to Khalid's family's house to announce their Islam and their acceptance of the religion.

They said: "We bare witness that there is not deity worthy of worship except God and that Muhammad is His messenger."

Is it true!???

Yes, they both accepted Islam, and the sounds of happiness and joy filled Khalid' house.

Yes, Dr. Mark and his wife Emily accepted Islam and came to know the true religion.

The religion that reached them from the desert valley of Makkah all the way here...

To San Francisco.

Yes, God made this religion reach them, because it is a universal religion.

It is a religion that is not specific or particular for a certain group or sect, nor a distinguished or special culture.

It is a religion that improves the individual and that is for the benefit of the individual.

This is because it is the religion of the inhabitants of the

earth, because the one who created it, He (God) is the one who created this earth.

They both entered this religion and promised that they would continue the journey.

The journey of conveying this religion's message to the world.

Yes, this is what they decided to do, and how truthful the Prophet was when he said: 'This religion will reach as far as the places that the day and the night reach.'

In This Book ...

Our personalities as Muslims are not those that love power and enmity, as many people think. Indeed the personalities of Muslims are formed by the methodology that the religion has drawn for us, which wants goodness and benefit for us. The religion of Islam wants us as Muslims to convey this goodness to all of mankind, and because of this we are being fought against. When I want to answer your question, 'Why don't we just all live together' as you claim, then I must answer many of your questions, because the response here is related to many other things happening around us, and because our religion is not only restricted to places of worship, rather it is related to everything in life.

Muhammad Ali Al-dubasi

