

## The Fisibilillah Discount

Why is it just because it's a Muslim product, it's more expensive?

Uhhh I don't know.

Example: When was the last time you saw halal meat cheaper than non-halal meat?

Uhhhhhhhh.

Hey, skip that. When was the last time you saw halal meat at a competitive price?

Ummmmmmmm.

At a decent price?

Umm-ummm.

Okay, skip the meat. What about the Islamic products you see at the conferences? Why are they so expensive? You would think that because dawah related it would be sold at a good price with good quality. But sometimes brothers would sell it to you at a high price and a cheap quality. What's up with that?

"Oh brother, it's from back home."

You know where all the major corporations make their products: "BACK HOME."

So save your excuses bro. The prices of some of these Islamic products, it's like comparing a supermarket to a convenient store. JOKE!!!

"Excuse me how much is this book?"

"Fifty dollars."

laughingly: "No,no, Seriously."

"Fifty dollars."

"For a book?"

"Fifty dollars."

"For a book? Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me?"

You know what's worse than buying a fifty dollar book? Having a guy walk up next to you and buy the same book for half the price. You know what I'm saying? No seriously, do you know what I'm saying?

"Excuse me, how much is the book?"

"Fifty dollars."

"For me habibi, how much is this book for me?"

"Alright, twenty-five dollars."

"Shukran habibi, shukran."

Wait, wait, wait, wait. What just happened here? I just bought the same book for fifty dollars! What happened to "Fifty dollars?" Hello (I WAS NOT ABLE TO CLEARLY UNDERSTAND BRO ALI'S WORDS AT 1:42)

Is the fifty dollar price a starting negotiating price? How about putting two different price tags on the products? One for those who have ten minutes to practice all their negotiating skills with each vendor and one for the rest of us who have like five minutes to get to the next lecture.

Do you know what I'm saying?

Yea, I know what you're saying.

You know what I'm saying?

Yea, I know what you're saying.

Right before I started these video blogs, I invented a game called "Mecca to Medina," but it hasn't always been easy selling the game. Sometimes it feels like I'm in a mid-century bazaar where everyone thinks everything's negotiable. I'm selling games here not used

cars! Unfortunately, sometimes it's easier selling it to non-Muslims than to Muslims.

That's because when a non-Muslim wants to buy the game they say "Hey, I like the game, I want to buy it." But when Muslims want to buy the game, it's like, "I like the game, let's play, let's make a deal."

"What is this game?"

"It's called "Mecca to Medina."

"Hmmp. What is game about?"

"It's a game about collecting resources and building trading routes between cities."

"What type of game?"

"It's actually really fun. It's a negotiating game."

"I take special discount."

"I believe you misunderstood. This is not the negotiating game. This is the negotiating game" (holding actual game in hand).

"How much is game? How much is game"

"It's normally twenty-five dollars, but at this conference we're giving it for twenty dollars."

"Okay. I buy half price."

"Sorry bro, but you know..."

"I am Muslim."

People have this idea that since they're Muslim, they're entitled to some type of special discount like a senior citizen at a lunch buffet.

"Okay, okay. Fisibilillah brother Fisibilillah."

Now he's throwing the Fisibilillah card at me. Fisibilillah means for the sake of Allah, but

in this situation this guy's trying to get free stuff. Free stuff! Now, if you're poor and you don't have the means of buying the game and you really like the game, I'll give you the game for free, but some Muslims take advantage of the generosity of their brothers and they try to get free stuff out of it. JOKE!!! But Bro, you got two big bags of gifts in your hands and your swinging brand new BMW keys on your keychain. Come on man!

"So let me think about it. NO!"

:::looks at vendor brother in a concentrating way:::

This is the part he walks away and slowly turns around to make eye contact with me.

I guess he's expecting me to say, "Oh no brother. Come back! Come back! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! No, no, no, no!" But, I don't. Instead, I just smile and wave. Usually when I end up dealing with people like this, they end up coming back and buying the game later anyways.

As a Muslim business man, I try to sell good quality products and at a fair price. You have a good product and a fair price, people will buy it. Both, Muslims and non-Muslims buy the game and they enjoy it. Alhumdulilah!

You see the whole, "Oh brother, please give me a discount" thing is nothing new. The thing that really gets to me is when they try to take advantage of you just because you're the Muslim brother and I've seen it happen so many times. Especially when it comes down to a service which requires labor. The brother that normally charges a thousand dollars for that service, you ask him to do it for five hundred bucks. Then you tell him you don't have enough money so you have to pay in payments. So you give him the first months payment of a hundred dollars. Unfortunately for him, your first month is also your last month of payments. Because you don't stick with your agreement to pay him back monthly. "Oh I have bills." The guy has bills too! Months go by and he's completed

all the work for you and he only got a hundred bucks. Other things come up in your life and you're like "Oh he's my Muslim brother, he'll understand. I'll pay him back later." Helloo, the poor guy has bills too. A thousand bucks, you cut it down to five hundred, five hundred you cut it down to a hundred, the hundred dollars is the first payment of the last payment. He doesn't receive more money. "Oh, come do business with me!" He ain't going to do business with you nomore man! This doesn't happen only once, it happens all the time. The funny things is that they don't pull the same stunts with non-Muslims. They wouldn't negotiate the price, they would just pay the thousand dollars up front. And it's a done deal. Don't think you get off the hook just because you ask Allah (SWT)'s forgiveness. Because if you do someone wrong, you have to ask for their forgiveness too. Otherwise, they can hold you accountable on the day of judgement. Honestly, when I buy products from Muslims, I shy away from negotiating because I want to support the people who are trying to do things the right way. Be that a good service or a good product.

You see, we can't sit here and complain about the lack of Islamic products out there, if we don't support the ones who are making them for us. We don't negotiate with the cashier at the supermarket so why do we think we could negotiate with our brothers and sisters in Islam?

Finally, since we're talking about business, let me throw this one out: In Islam, you're supposed to pay your worker before his sweat dries which basically means pay them ASAP. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! Some people don't get it though.

"Ali just finished his job here. Should I pay him?"

"Yea, yea. Hold on. Hold on.(On phone) No, no, no. He's a good practicing brother, we

pay him later." (Continues on phone) "Yeah. Go ahead. What?" :::laughs:::

JOKE!!!

We're supposed to be examples here. Why is it that we throw Islam out the window when it comes to business? Is it the fitnah of money? Money's nothing more than a trial. A test. Business is something that causes interaction with people from different backgrounds no matter what religion they come from. And an honest businessman is someone who stands out. As Muslims, we want to stand out by being the best of character. By being the best of business people. The Prophet SAW's character really stood out especially when He dealt with business. Let me remind you the way he dealt with Khadija's business transactions made Him stand out. She asked Him to marry her. Islam teaches us to be the best of business people by dealing honestly and justly by following Qur'an and Sunnah and everything we do including business.

As a reminder to everyone, our rizk is set so you won't gain one more penny from doing things un-Islamically.

Like all the Reminder videos, I speak to myself before I speak to anyone else.

This is Ali reminding you just in case you forgot.

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