**Numan Ali Khan - The Story of Robert Davila**

The story of Robert Davila! Do you know who that is? No you don't, because I do.

Three months ago I gave a khutba (Friday sermon at the mosque) in Fort Worth, I haven't been to that masjid (mosque) in four or five years, they invited me for some reason and I went, I gave a khutba (Friday sermon at the mosque) there. My khutba was about du'a (supplication in Islam). And at the end of ir, An Egyptian fellow comes up to me, a young man came up to me afterwards, he goes "Allah fulfilled my du'a (supplication) today". And I said "What's your du'a (supplication)?". He said "My du'a was that Nouman Ali Khan should meet Robert Davila". I was like... (laughter in the audience) "Are you Robert Davila?". He goes "No, I am not Robert Davila, Robert Davila is my friend, but I think Allah is fulfilling my du'a". I was like "Fire away, I wanna know".

Robert Davila is a young man who lives in a town forty minutes passed Fort Worth, he was a farmer... young guy. And he was hit with some sort of genetic disorder that kicked in later on in his life, and he became paralysed from the neck down. An he actually lives in a nursing home. Most people in that nursing home are 90 years, 100 years, they're really, really, old people and there's, you know, his room where he is paralysed neck down, he is the only thirty-something year old that is in the nursing home, okay. And he's been in that nursing home for the last ten years.

His family got a computer for him that's voice -activated so he can give voice commands, put a headphone on and google stuff and search stuff so he can surf the web and find information. In his  his room... in his room, and by the way staunch Christian family, the minister comes and prays for him every, every, you know, every week, and things like that, and his best friend was in the bed next to him. One of his best friends, he became best friends because he met him at the nursing home, this person was also paralysed and he needed a new liver, okay, a liver transplant, he was waiting for a liver transplant. And they used to talk about, you know, God and things like that all the time, they were good friends. Finally his best friend got a call that there's a donor available for the liver, so he's so excited, he goes "Robert, I'm gonna miss you, but I'm going, I've got a donor". So they take his friend and they go into the operation and his friend died at the operating table. Now his friend was also a Christian. The deceased friend, his sister took one of the amulets of his friend, a crucifix, and she gave it as a gift to Robert, "This is a reminder of your old buddy". So he hung it on the side of his hospital bed.

Robert Davila lives a pretty decent life, and the nurses take care of him, he's a happy guy. And one day he goes to sleep, and he sees a man in his dream, and the man says his name is Muhammad. And he says, pointing at the crucifix, "God did not send messengers so that they would worship the messengers. God sent messengers so that you could worship God. And Jesus was just a man, he walked in the markets and ate food", and the dream stopped. He only knows that Jesus was just a man. He knows that there's a man named Muhammad that said that to him. He said that the messengers came so people could worship God and not the messengers. This is all he knows. So he starts googling Muhammad...

He finds Islam... He takes shahadah (the statement of faith: "I bear witness that there is no God worthy of worship except Allah, and that Muhammad is His last messenger"). When he takes shahadah, he wants to know about the Qur'an, so he goes on these chat sessions and finds somebody needs to teach me Qur'an. He finds a brother in Egypt that he gets together with on Skype to try and learn Arabic... Learned the Arabic alphabet... Once he learned the Arabic alphabet he learned how to recite the Qur'an... He memorised ten surahs from his hospital bed. Then he says I'm beginning to memorise the Qur'an, and I'm beginning to learn about this Prophet, but I need to understand the Qur'an... So he starts googling "how to understand the Qur'an". And for some reason he ends up on my videos. And he starts watching my stuff. And he watched almost everything. And then he told, and then... here's the kicker, in the nursing home there was an Egyptian fellow that used to do some repair work. The Egyptian fellow has his own awesome story: the guy had basically lost faith, he wasn't religious, the nearest masjid (mosque) was 50 miles away, so he didn't really go to Jumaah (Friday prayer) much anymore, but he felt a spiritual void, so he started going to the church just to feel closer to Allah. He was raised Muslim, he goes to the church to feel closer to Allah.

He's passing by Robert's room one day and hears [Qur'an being recited]. So he walks into his room and says "Robert, what are you listening to?". Robert says "Nothing, that was me". And the guy goes "You're Muslim?" He goes "Yeah I became Muslim" And now his friend is in shock. How does Allah guide someone in the middle of Church town USA, in a nursing home, with a crucifix on the side of his bed that he hasn't got the physical strength to move? And the guy himself says "I wanna come back to Allah". So he tells him about, you know, the friend he found online Numan Ali Khan. So the Egyptian fellow starts watching my videos, and then he says "I wish I could meet him one day". And he says OK, I'll pray for you...And after five years, that Egyptian friend shows up at the same masjid (mosque) that I haven't been to in four years, and after Jumaah (Friday prayer), he says "I think Allah wants to fulfil my friend's du'a (supplication) and my du'a". So I said "I think He does. Let's go." So I took a few of us and we went...

And we met with Robert. We had a beautiful conversation with him and, in sha Allah (God willing), for Eid (celebration at the end of the month of Ramadan), we're going to his nursing home again. They were actually, the nursing home were pretty shocked "You're all here to meet Robert?"... (laughter in the audience) "Yup... yup..."... "Err, why do you want to meet him?"... "Err, he's an inspiration.."..."Let me check if we can". And we had to call the hospice administrator and all the stuff and eventually they let us in... And Robert is in shock, and I meet with Robert, we're talking and I was like "Hey Robert, I heard you memorised some surahs (chapters of the Qur’an)?". he says "Yeah". "Can you recite one for me?". So he recited Surat-Al Asr... Not one of us was not crying... We were just in tears. When somebody turns to Allah, don't worry about the means, guidance will come, balance will come.

 I want to tell you some more about Robert, because young guys are here; young guys that play basketball, young guys that are healthy, young guys that have ambition... I told you what's his paralysis from where to where: neck down. He had a special wheelchair that has to hold pretty much every part of his body. He can't just sit in the wheelchair, it holds his neck and holds every other part of his body in place because he has no control over his limbs. And he has to have a special van where the wheelchair locks in, so that if it goes through a bump or something he doesn't receive the shock. So he made a request: he wants to go to the Friday prayer. They didn't have the special van, so they put him in a regular van. And so he went in the regular van and a few bumps and his spine got even more hurt. He went to Jumaah, he came back in excruciating pain, and they said "I'm sorry Robert, you are no longer able to sit in your wheelchair. You're going to have to stay in your bed for the next six months at least. If we see recovery, then you can get back up again. I met him in that span, he'd already been in that bed for three months already, and the reason he was in that bed is that he went to the Jumaah prayer, and he told me about the Jumaah prayer, he said that "I've never felt more peace in my life than when I was in that masjid (mosque). And you know what I'm gonna do brother Numan, when I can sit in my chair again, I'm gonna go to Jumaah. I'm gonna go to the masjid because I've never felt like that before". Here's someone who has nothing but control over his mouth and his eyes, and he says "I only find peace in the masjid".

And here we are, these masaajid (mosques), I don't care what ideology, what school of thought, what they're talking about in the masjid, what fitnah (temptation, trial) there is, I don't care, it's still Allah's house... Just go to pray, don't go there to talk to people, go there to talk to Allah. Just go to talk to Allah. You're just going for you and Allah, that's it. That's it. Other things will come, but you're not going for them. You're just going there to find peace... You'll become different people. If Allah can guide Robert Davila, Allah can guide everybody. And he says "Sometimes I wonder why Allah put me in this position, and then I say to myself... What I am kidding? Allah has given me so much. I'm so grateful for what He gave me, and if this was the way He was gonna bring me to Islam, it is all worth it, so worth it". You have Muslims that lose a little bit of health, and they say "Why is Allah doing this to me?". And this man, I mean if you were thinking... nowadays Atheists argue that because of suffering there is no God. If one man is in a position to say "I don't believe in God. If there was a God, why would I be in this position?" It would be Robert Davila. That guy would say "I don't believe in God, if there was one, why would I be in this mess?" And yet he is in this position and I've never seen a face with more nur (light), never. I've never seen a face that has more contentment on it. He is so satisfied with life, he is so happy... he's just happy. The last seven or eight khutbas (Friday sermon at the mosque) I've given are actually based on one sentence each, on one sentence that he said in his conversation. He is that profound. He's a teacher to me... I consider him a teacher; he's my Sheikh. Someone says "Who's your Sheikh?", I say "Robert Davila" (laughter in the audience). "Really? Is that a pizza place or...", "No" (laughter in the audience) you know... The guidance is all around us. You don't have to be worried about what's not there... There's plenty there. You know what Allah did for the people of the cave, you know He even guided them on where to sleep, you know He even guided them on where to turn, as the sun was coming, they'd turn away from it, as the sun came from the other side, they'd turn the other way. Allah will guide you in your sleep... when you make du'a to Him. He'll even guide you in your sleep... Every toss and turn will be guided by Allah, can you imagine? We shouldn't be sceptical in Allah's guidance. We shouldn't worry about how am I gonna find balance. No that's Allah's job to guide you, your job is to talk to Him, your job is to get sincere. That is the message I have for you. That is how we're going to find balance, honestly. Once you do that, once you become sincere to Allah, Allah will open doors, Allah will give you friends, Allah will give you teachers, Allah will give you access to resources. All of which are going to bring you closer and closer and closer to Him and to the truth, and make life better  for the people around you.   
This is really the gist of what I wanted to share with you.

Numan Ali Khan