Islam was not well received by most people when it was first revealed to Prophet Mohammad. It was ridiculed, discarded, and unwanted. Prophet Mohammad had to go through so many struggles, battles and pain before finally Islam prevailed and was accepted. In 630, Prophet Mohammad finally re-entered Mecca with ten thousand followers at his side and easily overtook the city while destroying all remains of idols in the Ka‘ba. Two years later the prophet passed away.

There was an early struggle between who would rule the empire after the prophet’s death. Imam Ali who was the rightful heir was turned down because of his age and jealousy towards him and his knowledge and intelligence. While Islam grew and expanded, Europe was at the time in the dark ages, with plagues, unsanitary living conditions and intellectual status significantly inferior to those of the Islamic Empire.

This is where the history books slide over all the contributions of Muslims in pulling the Europeans out of the Dark Ages and into the modern world. The story goes that Europeans finally left their dark ages and gained the wisdom of the Greeks and Romans which the Muslims had merely preserved until the true ancestors of the Greeks (i.e. the Europeans) reclaimed it, only followed by Muslims going back to their tents and camels. Mark Graham, the author of How Islam changed the modern world, sarcastically ridicules these textbook myths, claiming that not only was it impossible for the Europeans to magically pull themselves out of the dark ages when almost everyone was illiterate, but they did not even understand the Grecian language in order to gain the knowledge and wisdom of Aristotle and Plato.

Fortunately for the Europeans, Al-Ma’mun came into power of the throne after killing his half brother. While this king did kill Imam Reza, at the same time, pursuing the Islamic heritage, he cleared a path for Islam’s scientific revolution. He founded a home for radical school of thinkers known as Al-Mutazilah, the seceders. He had translators search for works of the Greeks and translate them into Arabic.

With their plethora of new knowledge, the Muslims “created a scientific evolution in every field known to humans—astronomy, mathematics, geography, philosophy, physics, chemistry, medicine, history, literature, horticulture, music, engineering, navigation.”
By the end of the ninth century, Islam was the greatest intellectual power the world had ever seen. Islam discovered paper from a Chinese paper maker, and created bookstores that published more titles than present day New York per year. Islam was also the first to create sanitary hospitals that were quick, efficient, and comfortable and also air conditioned, while in Europe the people were praying to a Patron Saint in order to survive the night. With this, the Muslim empire created Al-Khwarizmi who invented Algebra and Al-Haytham who invented the first pair of eye glasses.

Islam also cleared the way for modern music by inventing a number of musical instruments, or Ibn Sina “the author of the most influential medical textbook ever written.”

Graham boldly states the great importance of Muslims in creating the modern world by harshly attacking the Europeans in their very strong attempt to cover up all Muslims accomplishments paving the way to the modern world.

He states “With its practical appreciation of the physical world as well as the spiritual one, Islam placed a creative emphasis on nature that medieval Christianity did not.” Graham believes whole heartedly that Muslims should be given credit where they deserve and not labeled as just terrorists, or people who live in tents and are anti-progress. He leaves his readers with a strong thought: “It was because Islam was so successful that our culture made it seem like a failure. It was because we owed Muslims so much that we pretended we owed them nothing.” So what has happened since then so much so that we Muslims have fallen into such lows? This requires very elaborate analysis, and can be attributed to different factors, such as later anti-intellectual movements that developed in the Muslim worlds, antagonism towards deep understanding of the Quran and sufficing with superficial recitations, and many others. With all of such differences and disagreements, the miracle of Islam has been destroyed and broken up into a hundred different forms and sects. Muslims are fighting one another instead of helping each other out. Muslims have ultimately strayed from the true form of Islam and are now paying the price; their once unstoppable empire is now completely forgotten.