

First official interview with the Supreme Minister of the Nation of Islam, The Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad

Editor's note: The following interview was conducted for Muhammad Speaks newspaper and the general press by Herbert Muhammad, brother of the Supreme Minister of the Nation of Islam, Wallace D. Muhammad. Copies of the interview have been made available to the major U.S. media and are available upon written request.

Muhammad Speaks now prints the complete transcript to introduce the Supreme Minister to Black America and the world.

M.S.: What is the significance of the physical death of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad? Will this create a split in the Nation?

SUPREME MIN.: To answer the first part of the question would take a sermon because the significance of my father's physical death is tied up or revealed in the Scriptures. But for us, the real significance here is not the physical death, but a transition that is brought about by the physical death.

As to the second part of the question, the answer is just 'no'. Simply no.

M.S.: Why did your Father never teach the Muslims concerning His passing, nor openly tell them that they are to look to His family for spiritual direction, and to you especially?

SUPREME MIN.: The first part of the question, the answer is this:

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad was a wise leader. And a wise leader does not make death a question in the minds of the people, or put this question constantly on the minds of the people. He did, however, mention His passing, but as hints to the wise. He also said that He would not die, that He would live and be with His God in the end.

To understand this answer, we have to refer to the Holy Qur'an where it says: "Speak not of my servants as dead. They are alive. They are alive but you perceive not."

The second part of the question shows an unawareness of what the Honorable Elijah Muhammad actually taught His family as to their significance and responsibilities, and what kind of leadership the general body of Muslim followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad expected and looked up to them for.

I, myself, have heard Him mention many times the spiritual worth and duties of all those who are from His loins and remind each and every one of us of our responsibilities as such.

M.S.: This is still a question in some of the Believers' minds: "Is the Messenger really dead?" They did not see the body.

SUPREME MIN.: All of this was decided by Almighty God, and those who believe and follow the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, they understand why this was done in



The Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad
Supreme Minister of the Nation of Islam.

this way. The members of the immediate family and other helpers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad in the official and national leadership saw the Body of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, and they are sufficient to represent the membership.

M.S.: Will you publish His death certificate in the paper?

SUPREME MIN.: We will do what is proper.

M.S.: How many children did your Father have by your mother, Sister Clara Muhammad?

SUPREME MIN.: There are eight of us — six boys and two girls.

M.S.: How many older brothers do you have?

SUPREME MIN.: Four — older brothers, one younger.

M.S.: Why were you chosen to succeed your Father, rather than one

of the elder brothers?

SUPREME MIN.: My personal answer would be it was God's intention. It was God's plan. But I have also heard my Father, Himself, say that when I was born or I was conceived in my mother, He had been born as the Servant, the Messenger of God, who manifested Himself with W.F. Muhammad; and by me being born at the time when He was in contact with His Saviour, the God in Person, helped to form me, not only as a child of His loins, but a child for the Mission.

M.S.: You said you have been "groomed" by your Father for this position. Why and for how long?

SUPREME MIN.: I have been groomed because it was necessary. Just being born of a body quickened by Divine Word was not enough. All

the other spiritual leaders who had been chosen for a great spiritual role and responsibility did not only have a Divine birth, but they also had the best qualified people to watch over their development — their religious development.

My Father watched over my religious development and He has done that for as far back as I can remember.

M.S.: What is your true function in relationship to your Father and His teachings?

SUPREME MIN.: My true function is told in the Mission of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and in the duties and responsibilities that were His before my coming into this office.

My function is no different. My relationship to Him is, in fact, no relationship now. But in this role and in this office as a mind and heart, directed by Almighty God, I am the same as He.

M.S.: Did your Father ever prepare or teach anyone else, just in case you wouldn't be available for leadership?

SUPREME MIN.: He prepared and taught many. He prepared and taught each member of His immediate family and many outside of the immediate family who are also members of the family. And He regarded all of His followers as members of a broad family, and He prepared and did teach them also. But there was never any doubt in His mind that I would be the one who would come to this office.

M.S.: If something should happen to you, do you feel that the Nation of Islam will survive?

SUPREME MIN.: I answer those who have this question with the Divine Manifestation seen in our Saviour's Day success and successes — the Nation of Islam is a Divine Work. It is not subject to physical weaknesses or deaths.

M.S.: Do you claim Divine inspiration or knowledge of speaking with God?

SUPREME MIN.: I do not claim anything, but I honor the Great gift of God in favoring me to come into this office. God watches over me and God guides me in those areas wherein His Personal Guidance is needed.

M.S.: Will you discipline the Muslims like your Father, the Messenger of Allah, did?

SUPREME MIN.: The discipline that the world has taken note of, that they see in the membership of the Nation of Islam, was not the work of