

Don't Pray in Orthodox Way

By Abdul Basit Naeem
(Continued from last week)

Although cognizant of the fact, in due time, they must adhere to the "Five Pillars" of Islam as divinely prescribed, the U.S. Muslims do not at present observe the daily prayers and other religious rituals in strict conformity to "Eastern" or (so-called) "orthodox" tradition.

WHEN THE hour of prayer arrives, they turn their faces in the direction of the Holy Ka'abah in Mecca, lower their gaze and, with palms raised, utter the appropriate words. However, they do so in English



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— the only language they know. With a few exceptions, members of the "Nation of Islam" are unable to recite the ritual verses in the original Arabic.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad enlightens us on the subject thusly:

"My followers here in the wilderness of North America do not speak a language of their own. They lost their original tongue when the devil (European) slave-master had made their foreparents his slaves and brought them here from their native homeland (Africa) against their will and consent.

"TODAY WE are forced to worship our own God, Allah, in an alien language . . . But the All-Wise and Most Merciful Allah, to Whom all praises are due forever, does not demand of us that we pray to Him in a language we no longer can use or have mastery of. He promises to hear and grant our prayers no matter how we beseech His help and guidance."

"Moreover," adds the ven-

erable American Muslim leader, "many of our followers are not yet qualified to learn and recite the daily prayers in their own language. . . . Before they go after that, they have to prepare and prove themselves to be deserving and worthy of it. . . ."

This, then, is precisely what preoccupies most "Nation of Islam" members, especially those newly admitted to its ranks: Preparing themselves for the Final Day when they would return to their own—heart, body and soul — and regain everything that was once rightfully and legitimately theirs (language, civilization, arts and crafts, etc.).

NOW, JUST what does the process of "preparation" entail? In my opinion, it is essentially a progressive course of healing. That is to say, it resembles a patient's persistent effort at recovering his health.

There is, of course, an unusual disparity at play: The patient under reference here — the American black man or so-called Negro — suffers not only from a variety of physical afflictions but also from severe mental disorder.

In fact, as far as his mental condition is concerned, our "patient" is a veritable "dry bone" — a DEAD man.

True, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad possesses a life-giving formula (Islam) which, when properly administered, can completely revive the "mentally-dead" man's brain. However, treating the brain, as any neurosurgeon or specialist in mental therapy can tell you, is an extremely delicate matter — a task that simply cannot be concluded in an instant or overnight.

BESIDES, a "live," fully-restored "thinking mechanism" will not be able to survive or operate normally if housed in an ailing, dilapidated super-structure (body). Consequently, to insure the brain against possible future damage, the patient's physical well-being also must be restored. His "skeleton" must be cleansed of the odors as well as accumulated poisons of his obnoxious pre-conversion (Christian) indulgences — smoking, drinking, eating pork products, drug-addiction, etc. This, too, is a time-consuming procedure.

(To be concluded next week)

U.S. Starts Nationwide Survey on Cigaret Smoking

Smoking data was collected in the Chicago area from 850 to 900 households as part of a nationwide sampling for the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

QUESTIONS about cigaret smoking was directed to persons 17 years and older. Theodore F. Olson, director of the regional office of the Census Bureau, said some of the questions asked were:

How many cigarets do you

smoke a day? Have you smoked for three years? Do you smoke now? Have you ever quit cigarets for two weeks or longer during the last years? How many times have you stopped? What was the longest period of abstinence from cigarets in the last three years?

Men were asked about their cigar and pipe smoking habits. Results of the survey are expected to be made public within 30 to 45 days, Olson said.

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Once they fathom the fact that they are the mighty people of Allah (God) and realize how three or four hundred years ago the "devils" had duped them into serfdom and Christ-worship and compelled them to live contrary to their very nature (righteousness), the followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad lose no time in telling their relatives, friends and neighbors about their "discovery" and about their original, long-lost faith—Islam.

THEY express this appreciation and love of Allah and Islam in a variety of ways: They go out into the streets distributing Muhammad's Mosque of Islam handbills, inviting the "dead" (so-called Negroes to come salvage and their souls as well as their minds and bodies.

They vend MUHAMMAD SPEAKS newspapers at busy thoroughfares and in front of department store and transportation terminal entrances.

They ring doorbells in predominantly black neighborhoods to introduce housewives and unfortunate shut-ins to the Honorable Messenger's stirring, best-selling book, "A Message to the Blackman."

Many a Muslim assumes a missionary's role at work: Whether he is an employee or the employer, discreetly he passes on the glad tidings of our Saviour (Allah) to

those who come in contact with him. The Muslim baker, grocer, barber, salesman—each professional becomes an "unofficial" (i.e., voluntary) laborer of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad.

WHILE A good proportion take to "spreading the word," numerous followers of the venerable Muslim leader aid the cause by resorting to other possible means: Quite a few, for instance, obtain additional work in order to increase their regular financial contributions to the movement.

Still others busy themselves with learning new and better skills with a view to rendering greater service to the "Nation of Islam" at some future date. The Muslim women, too, play a significant role in the drama—by striving to be the gracious "Queens" that they are.

Yet the U.S. Muslims derive their drive in behalf of Islam not from "official directives," as it is sometimes presumed, but from a powerful propulsive force deep inside of them: The desire to help their people and community.

After all, why shouldn't they want to help those of their own race? Being Muslims, it naturally grieves them to see others of their kind "just carrying on" and behaving foolishly.

MOREOVER, grateful for the good life Islam has provided them, they want to "share" their blessings from

Russians to Japan
YOKOHAMA, Japan — A three-man delegation of the Soviet Peace Committee arrived here by sea for ban-the-bomb talks with Japanese pacifists.

Allah with their neighbors and acquaintances — by encouraging and urging them to get off the hideous death-bed (white man's Christianity) while there is still time and live once more!

That is why the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's followers cannot help pitying the black man (so-called Negro) whose wife is not faithful to him—or who himself betrays her. That is why they cannot help feeling compassion for the black child who has never known the love of a father.

That is why they feel sorry for black young girls who, they justly fear, might grow up only to be defiled by a devil's passions or to become a Christian's mistress. That is why, again, the U.S. Muslims cannot help sympathizing with poor old "gram-maw" who, at the twilight of her life, finds herself altogether helpless, deserted and forsaken by all.

CONSEQUENTLY, day in and day out — almost every single hour of the day—followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad remain preoccupied with endeavors aimed at solving the black man's problems. And they go about performing this task without seeking approval or aid of the white man who, they know, will never help them anyhow.

Yes, they pray, too—as all must do, to obtain courage, guidance and spiritual strength which the Almighty God (Allah) alone can provide.

However, just now when there is so much work to be done — so many suffering souls to be saved from damnation; so many ailing hearts to be healed; so many

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U.S. Muslims' Good Deeds are Prayers in Action

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decaying bodies to be cleansed of filth and foreign matter (Christianity); so many eyes to be opened to reality of the "devil" and his nature; so many knotted tongues (scared of the white man) to be untied, and so many virtuous black women to be defended from the devil's glances, prances and advances — the prayer, espe-

cially that form of it which reduces our direct link with the Supreme Being (allah) to a mere ritual, seems a luxury the U.S. Muslims need not afford.

AT THE same time, I am convinced their actions of devotion are the mark of Allah's true believers and each of their good deeds the equivalent (in merit) of a thousand heartfelt prayers.