

Islamic Missionary's Response to "Al-Islam"

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while praying. He himself made Umra and encouraged his followers to make Hajj.

We have some religious differences with Master Elijah Muhammad as members of one sect of Islam have with the followers of the other sect. Since his followers call themselves Muslims we have no authority or jurisdiction to condemn them as non-believers.

Master Elijah Muhammad was a great thinker. He knew that after his death his community would no longer continue to be in a baby stage. To lead the coming generations to Islam, he had encouraged his two sons to study Arabic and Islam. One was sent to Al-Azhar University of Cairo, Egypt and the other was taught Arabic and Islamic practices by a well qualified Arab Muslim scholar. While in Philadelphia as a minister, Mr. Wallace D. Muhammad published a magazine. In one of its issues, he wrote inter alia: Muhammad Ibn Abdullah was the Last Prophet of God in the spiritual and religious order. From this statement it is clear in what order Master Elijah Muhammad was accepted by him and others as Messenger of Allah.

Mr. Wallace Muhammad went to Mecca for Hajj twice. I noticed him making prayers according to orthodox Islamic way. A few years ago when I visited him in Chicago during the month of Ramadan, I found him observing fast. He studies the Holy Quran and other Islamic literatures. You should be glad that the leadership of thousands of Black Muslims or members of the Nation of Islam, has fallen on the shoulders of Mr. Wallace Muhammad. You have already acknowledged in your esteemed journal that his group is fast approaching towards orthodox Islam. We should not consider this approach as fake or hypocritical.

Before concluding my letter, I would like to draw your kind attention to one historical incident which took place during the life of the Kind Prophet Muhammad. In one of the battles the Holy Prophet was engaged, Umar overcame any enemy and knocked him down. As Hazrat Umar drew his sword to kill his vanquished enemy, he (enemy) recited the article of faith. Umar, knowing that it was for his opponent's fear of death, he killed him without any consideration that he had accepted Islam. When this incident was reported to the Kind Prophet, he cautioned Umar

stating: "Did you operate his heart to find out if he uttered the 'kalima' simply to save his life?"

Dear Brother! In one of the traditions, the Holy Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said: "If you walk towards God one yard, He will approach towards you running." God does not waste the labor of any individual. According to the Holy Quran if you do one atom of good you will get the result, and if you do an atom of mischief you see the result. We should help each other in a worthy cause. The followers of Mr. Wallace Muhammad are not decreasing our membership. They get their membership from the Christians. If so, why we should be worried. There is a very wide field for the propagation of Islam in this country. Let us present to the non-Muslims a more attractive and effective program than the Black Muslims. We are sure to get better results.

Excuse me for writing to you a lengthy letter. It is written in a friendly spirit. I shall be pleased to hear from you and to know of your activities in the field of Islam.

With best wishes and kindest regards,

Yours in Islam,

BILALIAN

Because of the great dissatisfaction and confusion among our people concerning a proper and dignified name for themselves, we are very happy to make the following announcement to all so-called Black communities in the West:

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, I CHOOSE TO CALL MYSELF A "BILALIAN," AND I INVITE ALL OF YOU TO TAKE ON THE SAME NAME

THE DOUBLE CONNECTION

Bilal was a Black Ethiopian slave who was an outstanding man in the history of Islam. He was the first

muezzin (Minister) of Prophet Muhammad (may peace be upon him). He was so sincere and his heart was so pure that Prophet Muhammad and the other leaders of Islam under him addressed this man as "Master Bilal."

The chanting of the Holy Quran and the call to prayer by Bilal were praised and recognized as the best by anyone during his lifetime or since. Because of his sincerity and his purity, he became an outstanding figure in the history of Islam. Bilal is loved by all Muslims all over the world, regardless of color or nationality.

Bilal was a beautiful and well-known man who was an ancestor of our people here in America. He represents the old so-called African people. We have a double connection with Bilal because he was a Muslim and he was also a so-called African.

There is no more reason to have doubt or confusion when you are asked to identify your race or your nationality. We are "Bilalians" from this day forward.

Your Brother,
W.D. Muhammad