

Emam Muhammad: 'We've forgotten what's important'

By Salim Muwakkil

Don't use a physical scale to gauge the effectiveness of the mission of Al-Islam, Emam Wallace D. Muhammad advised a masjid audience in Chicago.

Emam Muhammad, leader of the World Community of Al-Islam in the West (WCIW), noted that Al-Islam is not concerned with physical salvation, but with moral salvation.

Answering critics who have charged he is dismantling the so-called "Black Muslim material empire," Emam Muhammad pointed out convincingly that the building of a material empire is not now, and

"And because a program to run a newspaper plant or a program to run a farm is not as successful as it's said to be, is that any reason to give up your way of life—to turn away from Allah? It shows that you were a lying hypocrite in the beginning.

"Isn't it better that you are able to see better how you should live and make progress in this world? Isn't it better (for religion) to train a mind how to live for itself than to merely give a body what it needs physically?"

The W.C.I.W. leader said modern man's preoccupation with the physical life also causes him to become idolatrous, associating other

"And I grew as a little germ in the belly of Sister Clara Muhammad, and thank Allah, I passed my nine months and came out here whole. And I didn't know anything.

"I didn't have a language, I had no divine knowledge or power. I had to wait for the milk. I had to wait for somebody to clean me up. Now after coming through all that just like any other creature, you're going to stand me up here and make me an associate with God. No indeed! Not as long as I live and can correct it. All I am is a human being.

"I don't have the power to do anything that you can't do. Whatever I have the power to do, you have the power to do. You just haven't used the power you have like I used the power I have. If you were to give your complete self to Almighty God—give your complete mind, flesh, soul, your total being to following truth whether it makes you happy, hurts you, makes you poor or sends you to the grave—if you stay with it like I did and give God all the



Emam Wallace D. Muhammad

credit, I guarantee you'll get what I've got. And you might get more.

"And that's the beautiful thing about Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The revelations in the Quran say: 'Say; I am only a mortal being like you. The only difference, he said, is I have received the revelation from God.'

"God chose him for revelation because he had cleaned himself up. He resisted filth. His nature, his mind wouldn't allow him to give himself to lies and filth. God chose that kind of man to give guidance to the people.

"He became the universal messenger, the messenger for all the world. I'm not prophet Muhammad. God has only blessed me because I have tried to live the life as its been exemplified by Prophet Muhammad." Emam Muhammad told his listeners.

The primary and most important thing, the Emam said, "is a belief in Allah, the one God, and a willing spirit to follow truth and grow in righteousness."

never has been the main object of religion.

"Moses never told the people: 'I'm converting you to gold or silver and diamonds.' Moses told them: 'I'm converting you back to your God. You have lost contact with your God,' Emam Muhammad explained.

But, he said, "We have forgotten what is important," noting that material wealth is often equated with worth by contemporary society.

"What do you think of a child that is with you only when they are getting material benefits?" he asked. "Hey Momma, yesterday we had lamb chops and today you givin' me some beans. I don't like you anymore," the Emam quipped, mimicking the conversation of a hypothetical child.

He said our children act in that way, because "we're crazy.

"We've forgotten where to place importance and we've led our children into a crazy kind of mind," he asserted.

"God hasn't put into us that kind of nature where we judge the human being by the material benefit that we get. So why have that kind of nature in religion?" the Emam asked.

Stressing the superiority of the changeless nature of the spiritual over the perishable, temporary nature of physical life, Emam Muhammad said we ignorantly "cry over the inferior things and forget to appreciate the superior things."

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things with God.

"We want somebody between us and God. We fear a direct relationship with God. But what's wrong with going directly to God?" he asked.

"We're told in ancient religion and we're told in Al-Islam that the believer goes directly to God. We do not erect from among ourselves, lords or patrons other than God. But, the Emam noted, "some of us can't have a leader unless we raise him up into divinity with some kind of special gift.

"You're not listening to his guidance that guides you toward truth as much as you are admiring him and worshipping him as a false deity, as a false god.

"Al-Islam has come to get rid of this primitive trouble in our spiritual make-up and set us on the right path so that we recognize truth as our salvation.

"Any Muslim who regards another person among them—it can be his Emam or his professor—as being superhuman or supernatural or as having powers associated with the divine rule, has left Islam."

Continuing the subject Emam Muhammad told his followers to refrain from ascribing divine qualities to his physical person.

"At one time I was nothing and God had to bring some elements from this environment and eventually bring them into living matter and eventually bring them into Elijah Muhammad and Sister Clara Muhammad and then bring them together and have them mate at a certain time and they produced me.

Native Americans seek OPEC aid

BOSTON—Native Americans are demanding a better return on their vast reserves of uranium, coal, oil, and natural gas. To help get what they want, some recently met with representatives of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in Washington, amid speculation that they may soon host an Arab visit to Arizona.

Tired of meager royalty payments which the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) alleges sometimes go uncollected by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Native Americans instead hope to mine and market their own minerals.

The BIA denies that \$1 million went uncollected as charged by the FTC. But BIA energy and minerals officer Richard Wilson says due to overlapping responsibilities between the BIA and the U.S. Geological Survey, methods for collecting royalty payments "were found to be inadequate."

The Council of Energy Resources Tribes (C.E.R.T.), the group which met with OPEC representatives, was formed two years ago by 22 western tribes to get better deals on their numerous natural deposits.

After many frustrations, C.E.R.T.'s first victory has just come with the preliminary signing of a \$100,000 government grant from the Economic

Development Administration and a further \$100,000 to come in October from the BIA.

C.E.R.T. can now begin to inventory energy resources beneath their lands, and begin to plan for the best ways to use the resources.

Before winning the government contract, C.E.R.T. representatives opened direct negotiations with Arab members of OPEC to obtain expert advice on resource exploitation and marketing, and to throw a scare into the United States Government, a source for the U.S. department of Interior has indicated.

Native Americans have reasoned that the government would not welcome moves giving Arabs information or any degree of control over one of this country's main concentration of energy reserves.

Contacting OPEC was not blackmail, C.E.R.T. representatives contend, "because if anyone has been blackmailed it is us." According to a spokesman for the Interior Department, using the OPEC ploy was something "we didn't like."

But says a C.E.R.T. official, "We have made every effort to sit down with Carter and the various government departments. We would prefer to get our help at home, but if that isn't possible, we will work on something with OPEC or others."