

A Man Who Raised A Nation:

By the grace and permission of Allah (God)



Nearly three decades after President Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves with the Emancipation Proclamation, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad was born on or about Oct. 7, 1897. Mr. Muhammad was born the 7th child of 12 to William (later named Wali) and Marie Poole, in Sandersville, Ga. Due to poor record keeping by government officials, the exact date of his birth remains unknown, according to historians and family members. Nevertheless, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad said his birth took place some time between the first or second week of October 1897 and established Oct. 7 as the anniversary date of his birth. His life's accomplishments and achievements have made a major impact on both Black and white America.

Like few other figures in American history, he quite simply reconstructed society like no one else. The accomplishments of the Muslims, under his direction, achieved dramatic, never before seen results in the areas of religion, politics, social interaction, economic development, and international affairs for the so-called American Negro at that time. The Honorable Elijah Muhammad, in the dawning of the 21st century, remains a pivotal world policy maker and key figure whose program and position will shape the destiny of the new century and millennium, his supporters have determined.

By the end of the 1920s, both black and white America plunged into the bowels of severe economic misery at the hands of the stock market crash of 1929. Hard times would force many people to go on relief. Lynchings, race riots, that is, whites attacking defenseless Blacks, and other forms of terrorism against Blacks at the hands of whites continued unabated, as reported by Ida B. Wells, W.E.B. DuBois and other credible sources.

However, Detroit, with its huge population of 1.5 million people, including 250,000 Blacks, was beginning to see changes in its social scene. On July 4, 1930, the long awaited "Saviour" of the Black man

and woman, Master W. Fard Muhammad, appeared in this city. He announced and preached that God is One, and it was now time for Blacks to return to the religion of their ancestors, Islam.

News spread all over the city of Detroit of the great things taking place on Hastings Street brought about by the benevolence and generosity of this distinguished yet mysterious man from the East. Mr. Muhammad's wife first learned of the Temple of Islam and wanted to attend to see what the commotion was all about, but instead, her husband advised her that he would go and see for himself.

In the autumn of 1931, Elijah Poole attended his first lecture by Master Fard Muhammad and was overwhelmed by the message and immediately accepted it. With the great spiritual inspiration Mr. Muhammad received from his visit to the Temple of Islam, he was able to convince his entire family to embrace his new found religion.

The Founder of the Nation of Islam gave Elijah the surname "Karriem" and made him a minister. Later he was promoted to the position of "Supreme Minister" and his name was changed to Muhammad.

A NEW MAN

"The name 'Poole' was never my name nor was it my father's name," he would later write. "It was the name the white slavemaster of my grandfather after the so-called freedom of my fathers."

Mr. Muhammad, in the early 1930s, along with 25,000 other believers in Detroit, quickly worked to help this great man from the East build the so-called Lost and Found Nation of Islam. Over the course of the next three-and-one-half years, Minister Muhammad was personally taught by his Teacher non-stop.

The Muslim community, in addition to establishing religious centers of worship, began to start businesses. Mr. Muhammad established a newspaper, The Final Call to Islam, in 1934. Much of this newspaper's content contained religious editorials and transcripts of lectures delivered inside the Temple of Islam, as it was known then. This publication would be the first of many publications he would produce.

Meanwhile, Mr. Muhammad and the Muslim parents were so inspired by the message that they had received from Master Fard Muhammad that they worked to establish their own schools for the proper education of their children. Indeed, the Muslim parents felt that the educational system of the State of Michigan was wholly inadequate.

By 1934, the Michigan State Board of Education disagreed with the Muslims' right to pursue their own educational agenda, and the Muslim teachers and temple secretary were jailed on the false charge of contributing to the delinquency of minors. In response to the State's denial of the Muslim's right to self-educate their children, Mr. Muhammad said he committed himself to jail after learning what had happened. Eventually, the charges were dropped and the school officials were freed and Mr. Muhammad received six months' probation. Mr. Muhammad's stance on Islamic education remained firm and the religious community continued to resist placing the Muslim children under white Christian teachers. In September of that same year, he moved to the city of Chicago, where his Teacher had already set up the Islamic settlement.

After several incidents of police harassment against Master W. Fard Muhammad, in both Detroit and Chicago, in 1934, Elijah Muhammad's teacher departed the scene, under the veil of mystery, and left Mr. Muhammad with the mission of resurrecting the Black man and woman

By 1935, Mr. Muhammad faced many new challenges. A death plot arose among a few disgruntled members who wanted the leadership position, and Mr. Muhammad took flight, not in fear, but, as he said, to preserve the peace and carry out his Teacher's instructions to him which was to go to Washington, D.C. to visit the Library of Congress in order to research 104 books on the religion of Islam, among other subjects. He was on the run for the next seven years.

During this period, he was known under many names: "Mr. Evans" (his wife's maiden name), "Ghulam Bogans," "Muhammad Rassoull," "Elijah Karriem" and "Mohammed of U Street." He also personally founded and established the mosque in Washington, D.C.

America's war with Japan and Germany gave rise to the draft. On May 8, 1942, Mr. Muhammad was arrested in Washington, D.C., allegedly for draft evasion. "When the call was made for all males between 18 and 44, I refused (NOT EVADED) on the grounds that, first, I was a Muslim and would not take part in war and especially not on the side with the infidels," he wrote in "Message To The Blackman."

"Second, I was 45 years of age and was NOT, according to the law, required to register." Many other male members of the Nation of Islam at that time were imprisoned for being conscientious objectors to World War II.

NATION GROWS DISPIE PERCECUTION

After World War II ended, Mr. Muhammad gained his release from prison and returned to Chicago. From Chicago, the central point of the Nation of Islam, Mr. Muhammad worked hard to expand the Nation of Islam's membership. Among the many new members to enroll in the ranks of Islam, during this time, were Brother Malcolm X and his family.

During the 1950s, Mr. Muhammad promoted Minister Malcolm X to the post of national spokesman, and began to syndicate his weekly newspaper column, "Mr. Muhammad Speaks," in Black newspapers across the country. As the membership continued to increase, by 1955, Minister Louis Farrakhan, then

known as Louis Walcott, an entertainer, enrolled in the Nation of Islam after hearing Mr. Muhammad deliver a speech in Chicago.

Persecution of the Muslims continued. Members and mosques continued to be attacked by whites in Monroe, La., Los Angeles, Calif., and Flint, Mich., among others. Publicity in the white-owned-and-operated media began to circulate anti-Nation of Islam propaganda on a massive scale. By the early 1960s, the Readers Digest magazine described Mr. Muhammad as the most powerful Black man in America.

In Washington, D.C., Mr. Muhammad delivered his historic Uline Arena address in 1959 and was afforded presidential treatment, receiving a personal police escort.

Subsequently, television commentator Mike Wallace, in conjunction with Louis Lomax, a Black journalist, aired the documentary, "The Hate That Hate Produced," on a local New York City station. The documentary misrepresented the message of the Nation of Islam, calling it a hate teaching. James Baldwin, a famous Black author, released the book, "The Fire Next Time," based largely upon his interview with Mr. Muhammad. At the same time, white political leaders began to denounce the Nation of Islam and held hearings on alleged "un-American" activities. Minister Louis Farrakhan and the believers of Islam defended the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and the Nation of Islam against these attacks.

Meanwhile, by 1964, Minister Malcolm X decided to separate from the Nation of Islam and formed his own religious and political organization. His very public defection from the Nation of Islam was based on his misinterpretation of the domestic life of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and counterintelligence efforts by the U.S. Government.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere of rancor on both sides made ripe the environment for the secret police to meddle in the affairs of the Nation of Islam and Black America, according to late attorney, William Kuntzler. Mr. Kuntzler cited a declassified memo obtained under the auspices of the Freedom of Information Act that revealed that the U.S. Government played a role in the 1965 assassination of Brother Malcolm X.

After the assassination, the New York mosque was fire bombed and the Muslim community was reeling. Mr. Muhammad then dispatched Minister Louis Farrakhan to New York City to take over the mosque there and begin the rebuilding effort. In 1965, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad promoted Minister Louis Farrakhan to the post of national representative.

By the mid-sixties, Mr. Muhammad's ever-growing Islamic movement extended itself to more than 60 cities and settlements abroad in Ghana, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America among other places, according to the Muhammad Speaks newspaper, the religion's chief information apparatus.

A host of Islamic and African governments all over the world received the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and donated generously to his mission. Mr. Muhammad made Hajj to Mecca (the holy pilgrimage and a pillar of Islam) on more than one occasion and advocated universal brotherhood and sisterhood.

Every February 26, he brought together the faithful for Saviors' Day conventions in Chicago to celebrate his Teacher's birthday. In addition to re-emphasizing his message of moral and spiritual renewal that also featured his future plans and agenda for the upcoming year, Mr. Muhammad also announced his economic development programs.

Under his leadership, the Nation of Islam began to show signs of progress with the establishment of farms, livestock and vegetable cultivation, rental housing units, private home construction and acquisitions, other real estate purchases, food processing centers, restaurants, bakeries, lamb packing and cold storage facilities, clothing factories, banking, business league formations, import and export businesses, aviation, health care, administrative offices, shipping on land, sea and air, plans for modern university and campus in Chicago in addition to men's and women's development and leadership training units.

MUHAMMADS GREATEST HELPER

By 1972, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad opened a \$2 million mosque and school in Chicago. During this important grand opening of Temple No. 2, as it was known then, he praised and let it be known who his top helper was in his work.

He asked Minister Farrakhan to come before the religious community and then made the following announcement while digressing from his previously stated remarks: "I want you to remember, today, I have one of my greatest preachers here. ... What are you hiding behind the sycamore tree for brother? (He chuckled.) C'mon around here where they can see you! (A rousing round of applause ensued).

"We have with us today," Mr. Muhammad continued, "our great national preacher. The preacher who don't mind going into Harlem, New York, one of the most worst towns in our nation or cities. It is our brother in Detroit and Chicago or New York. But, I want you to remember every week he's on the air helping me to reach those people that I can't get out of my house and go reach them like he.

"I want you to pay good attention to his preaching. His preaching is a bearing of witness to me and what God has given to me," he declared. "This is one of the strongest national preachers that I have in the bounds of North America. Everywhere you hear him, listen to him. Everywhere you see him, look at him. Everywhere he advises you to go, go. Everywhere he advises you to stay from, stay from. For we are thankful to Allah for this great helper of mine, Minister Farrakhan." (Another rousing round of applause ensued). "He's not a proud man," he said. "He's a very humble man. If he can carry you across the lake without dropping you in; he don't say when you get on the other side, 'You see what I have done?' He

tells you, 'You see what Allah has done.' He doesn't take it upon himself. He's a mighty fine preacher. We hear him every week, and I say continue to hear our Minister Farrakhan. ..."

In watching Minister Louis Farrakhan and the followers of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, the legacy of the Nation of Islam continues to make unlimited progress as witnessed by the "miracle" of the "Two Million Man March" among other truly amazing accomplishments.

Mother Clara Muhammad: An Example of Black Womanhood

By Nisa Islam Muhammad

Staff Writer, Final Call News

In the 1930s and '40s, few Black women ventured off the path dictated by their slave master's children. The behavior, conduct and demeanor of Black women was more than predictable.

And then out of the wilderness of North American came Mother Clara Muhammad, the late wife of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, and together they established the Nation of Islam in America.

Mother Clara, born Nov. 2, 1899, in Georgia, was a deeply religious and devoted Black woman. She married then-Elijah Poole in Georgia in 1917. From Macon, Ga., the Muhammad family moved to Detroit in April 1923 in search of better economic and social circumstances as many Blacks migrated north for many of the same reasons.

Between 1917 and 1939, the Honorable Elijah Muhammad and Mother Clara had eight children—six boys and two girls. Their names are Ayeman (Emmanuel), Nathaniel, Ethel, Lottie, Jabir (Herbert), Elijah Jr., W. Deen (Wallace), Akbar.

Black Detroit was electrified at the mysterious appearance in July 1930 of Master Fard Muhammad, the founder of the Nation of Islam. News of this great teacher and humanitarian spread like wildfire throughout the Black community.

Mrs. Muhammad got news of Master Fard from a neighbor and wanted to see for herself what the commotion was all about, but her husband said he would go first.

Hence, in September 1931, Mr. Muhammad first heard Master Fard Muhammad and embraced the teachings of the Nation of Islam. Mr. Muhammad, subsequently, was able to bring his entire family into this "new religion."

The Hon. Elijah Muhammad was a star student in Islam. Master Fard Muhammad often visited their home and according to family members, He would also teach Mother Clara and the children.

Often, Mother Clara demonstrated strength and courage in the face of virulent opposition to the Nation of Islam. They took their children out of the public school system and became pioneers for home schooling. But then home schooling was illegal.

She relentlessly continued to maintain her household and raise her children while her husband went to jail for the right to self-educate their children and as a conscientious objector to World War II and all wars entered into by white America.

Also, internal disputes over the leadership of the Nation of Islam in the 1930s would cause her husband to leave his home in Chicago to preserve the peace and avoid the evil planning of would be rivals.

Those times were tough but not too tough for Mother Clara Muhammad. She carried on her husband's work while he was away. Her leadership and courage proved essential to the preservation of the newly formed Nation of Islam.

While her husband was incarcerated she led the Nation of Islam, under his direction. In Illinois, according to family members, Mother Clara continued to resist placing her school-age children in the public school system, and when the white authorities came to her door to take her children away, she reportedly said, "I will die as dead as this doorknob before I allow my children to attend public school!"

"As the tenderly beloved help-meet," the late Muhammad Speaks editor, Leon Forrest, would write in 1972, Mrs. Muhammad, "in her deeply moving, quiet way set a sterling, ringing national standard for all Black women to follow."

Photo caption: The love, courage and faithful determination of Mother Clara Muhammad (pictured along with her husband the Most Honorable Elijah Muhammad) helped to establish the Nation of Islam in America.

ISLAM DIGNIFIES

by The Honorable Elijah Muhammad

Why do I stress the religion of Islam for my people, the so-called American Negroes.

First, and most important, Islam is actually our religion by nature. It is the religion of Allah (God), not a European organized white man's religion.

Second, it is the original, the only religion of Allah (God) and His prophets. It is the only religion that will save the lives of my people and give them divine protection against our enemies.

Third, it dignifies the black man and gives us the desire to be clean internally and externally and for the first time to have a sense of dignity.

Fourth, it removes fear and makes one fearless. It educates us to the knowledge of God and the devil, which is so necessary for my people.

Fifth, it makes us to know and love one another as never before.

Sixth, it destroys superstition and removes the veil of falsehood. It heals both physical and spiritual ills by teaching what to eat, when to eat, what to think, and how to act.

Seventh, it is the only religion that has the divine power to unite us and save us from the destruction of the War of Armageddon, which is now. It is also the only religion in which the believer is really divinely protected. It is the only religion that will survive the Great Holy war, or the final war between Allah (God) and the devil.

Islam will put the black man of America on top of the civilization. So, why not Islam? Some people say, "Why so much religion?" It is very necessary for me to teach the knowledge of that which is the only key to the hereafter for his brother. I will say here that this alone is salvation to you and me, just learning to love each other as brothers. Islam, unlike Christianity, is doing this right in your midst.

Regardless as to how long and how hard you try to be a good Christian, you never have a sincere true love for your own black brother and sister as you should. Islam will give you true brothers and sisters the world over. This is what you need.

A people subjected to all kinds of injustice need to join Islam. You are sure of Allah's (God) help in Islam. Why don't the preachers of my people preach Islam? If they would, overnight they would be on top.

Are you too proud to submit to Allah and sit in heaven while you live and have His protection against your open enemy? Take it or leave it. You will soon wish you had taken Islam. God is drying America up by degrees. This time is at hand, and hell is kindling up. Islam is the right way.

A Few Testimonials....

New York Times magazine

"Alone of all the Negro leaders, Elijah Muhammad has a vivid awareness of the vital need of a new birth in any drastic human transformation, and he alone mastered the technique of staging a new identity.... It is worth remembering that what Elijah Muhammad is doing to the Negro is, in a sense, what America has done to the immigrant from Europe."

Jet magazine

"Muhammad, a master psychologist, offers identification, definition and belonging to all those who seek it, and in return gets a loyalty, obedience and discipline which staggers the imagination."

James Baldwin, author, "The Fire Next Time"

"Elijah Muhammad has been able to do what generations of welfare workers and committees and resolutions and reports and housing projects and playgrounds have failed to do.... He has done all of these things, which our Christian church has spectacularly failed to do."

Readers Digest magazine (reported in early 1960s)

"This mild-looking man is the most powerful Black man in America. He offers a new way of life. Muhammad prompts even his severest critics to agree when he says he attacks 'traditional reasons the Negro race is weak.'"

Newsweek magazine

"They (the Muslims) manage to do something that is beyond the grasp of most public schools in urban ghettos. Muslims schools have little trouble with drugs, truancy, or unruly behavior."

The Washington Star News

"The Black Muslim Mosque has been called by high police officials a stabilizing influence in the community."

Abdul Basit Naeem, former editor and publisher of Moslem World & The U.S.A. "Despite Mr. Elijah Muhammad's blunt techniques and a few controversial teachings about certain aspects of Islam, I have nothing but the utmost respect for the Moslem leader. I do indeed appreciate his efforts to bring the Black people of America back into the fold of Islam, which, in his opinion, as in mine, is the only solution to their basic problems. ... Americans of African descent, I believe, should be grateful that the Message of Allah has, at last, been brought to them, through the person (of) ... Mr. Elijah Muhammad."