# 1984

# IWDM Study Library

# MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### By Imam W. Deen Mohammed

IWDM:

President Joshua Smith, student body leader. For many, many of the students, this university, this College, Elijah Etheridge Muhammad and those who have assisted him and all who have been involved in making this visit here possible, we appreciate you very much. I have also to express to you my feeling concerning the content of the staff and the students that I have met, and I am impressed.

I have looked into faces and eyes, pure reflection of the soul of students in different states and representatives of student bodies, different states and the staff members. I haven't seen any more sincerity and any more honesty in the people that I've met in the various states and on the campuses where I have gone, I haven't met more sincerity than I have met here. That's what's going to help all of us and enable all of us to improve our state, change our bad situation, it's sincerity.

We'll differ with each other. The congressman Rangel, a man that I respect a lot, very much, admired him for years. We are so far apart when it comes to political content, but I had to stand and join those who applauded him and welcome him and applauded his speech because he says so many true and wonderful things. I would like to right away, mention a concern that our leader; the leader of about one billion Muslims; the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be on him, I would like to mention a concern that he pointed out or pointed to after he had been blessed by G-d to establish community and a strong group of people that would help work and preserve that community in Medina.

After being boycotted by his own people of his own City, his own native city, Mecca, and exiled or rejected, actually, he migrated but that was in response to persecution. In Medina, he said to his followers, the Muslims, "No more fleeing. From here on, it is Taqwa and Jihad."

[applause]

Now, I think if we can quote men like Adam Smith, George Washington and others, I think we can quote Muhammad the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him. And what he has said should be respected too and taken for the value that we find in it and accept it. He said, "Taqwa and jihad." Taqwa means the purity of the spirit, the purity of the spirit, respect for superior authority, a sense of responsibility, a sense of responsibility to a superior authority and a moral commitment to do the right thing, taqwa. And he said, "Jihad." Jihad means struggle, constant effort, constant effort in the way of righteousness, excellence, community service under G-d.

When I think of the need that is in moral leadership right now, that is in leadership now, I can't help but agree with the theme that has been chosen, that need is moral. Moral need, moral need, moral strength, moral perception. If you are not attracted or motivated morally and attracted to moral obligation, even your moral perception will be lost, you won't be able to see what is correct morally.

Our society is so confused as Elijah Etheridge Muhammad said, it's so confused and has been so mixed up and troubled by corruption, petty crimes that most of us have a hard time having patience, having patience with moral responsibility. Most of us don't have the patience to listen to, address on moral responsibility. But that's the very thing that's going to change the state of our life for the better, it is an interest and moral responsibility.

A desire to know what is right, not right in my limited scope, not right in my race, not right just in America but what is right everywhere. That's what has really liberated man, the strength, the moral strength to accept what is right to move from his narrow vision, narrow interest, into a greater responsibility upon the belief that what he is doing, what he's perceiving, what he's pursuing is morally right.

I've read where the present administration, - is not to condemn the present administration. I'm not here in the interest of any party, I think you've been told that already. Not to condemn the administration, but I read where the administration is trying out the leverage of material might, economic assistance, trying to use that as a leverage to bring about compliance in the international world, the third world and the whole world. To bring about compliance, to use economic pressure, the offer of economic assistance as a pressure mechanism to pressure other nations in to conforming to the wishes of our nation.

Now, you may say, "Well, if a man is using material pressure to get people to conform to what is right, to get them to reform their bad system, so that is more acceptable to the freedom-loving world, then that's good." You may say that and I can sympathize with you, but as a Muslim that’s bad. The incentive for moral reform, the incentive for moral action should be moral and not material. It should be moral.

Our religion tells us, teaches us, that the reward for good is good. The reward for good shouldn't be money, it should be good. And if the money is good then it’s okay [laughs]. See, money is good too--

[laughter]

--when it comes in the right way. Now, I see those countries that are being pressured into compliance with our nation's wishes, or this administration's wishes, in the same way that I see myself as the leader of this community being offered bribes for the purpose of pressuring me into conforming to the wishes of Muslim nations far across the waters. Now I'm a Muslim, I don't feel that any Muslim should use pressure tactics on me. I don't feel it’s necessary.

I think I pray as much as the average one does. I think my allegiance to this religion, my allegiance to the Prophet, is as good as the average one in the leadership of Muslims. I don't see why they would use the bribe and offer of material help or economic help to pressure me into conforming to their wishes. But they do, they have, and they continue to do that. Not all of them, some of them.

And I recall the verses moral, the need for moral leadership in ['80s?]. I recall the verses of our Holy Book that says, "And the devil, Satan, threatens you with poverty." He threatens you with poverty. Now, if we have a nation and its leadership is using the offer of economic assistance to nations to get them to confirm, reform their system or reform their society so that they will form to what we would like to see them be, then I see that as a threat of poverty.

That is saying to those nations who say no to that offer. All right then, suffer in your poverty. Okay, no assistance, suffer in your poverty. Then I say to myself, "Well, I can understand why Imam Khomeini called America the big Satan." He's over there and he is upset and he’s hurt, and he has been hurt because of our support, America support for the Shah who had no respect for their religious sensitivities, for their cultural sensitivity, for their life and their aspirations for the will of that nation. He’s hurt, every time he sees behavior in America that resembles the behavior of Satan in the Qur’an, I guess he say, "Hey, that's the Satan--.

[laughter]

--that's the Satan." And I can't blame them although I disagree.

America is not the Satan but America is just as vulnerable as any other desperate nation when it comes to the influences of Satan. It is just as vulnerable as any other desperate nation. In fact, when any people get desperate, when you become desperate, you're vulnerable. Economic strain in this country, changing global order, changing global interest, shifting of attention from old principles and old commitments to new ones, the shift away from national patriotism to a concern for all of the people of the world is the force that's forcing man and forcing Nations to behave more morally.

Now, I would like to come here and satisfy everybody. I like to come here and make friends and be loved by everybody. But look at here, those political leaders that come in here and sell their product to you, are selling you a bill of shit.

[applause]

Feel the language. Forgive me for that word, I would like to say boo boo but I don't know why I said it that way, I regret that. Now, we have to recognize real circumstances. I can -- If I look at something I see that's not real, though it’s in my circumstance I say that's not real, I'm not going to respect that, I don't have to respect it because it's not real. But if it is a real, it's a real issue, if it's something that I have to deal with, no reason for me to run around and try to escape that, run all out the back door and out the side window, I have to face it. Sooner or later, let’s face it.

And here is the fact, the fact is that America was turned into one big circus, one big playground by irresponsible leadership of the past and I'm agreeing with what Muhammad said, Elijah Ethridge Muhammad said, he's correct. The country is in the state it’s in, it's in the bad state it’s in, not because America is bad, not because politics is bad, but because we have allowed bad people to come into responsibility and control all our lives.

[applause]

It’s not going to change if we are going to follow people who dangle money, and anybody that says he's going to work, "If we get an office, we're going to see that you have 10,000 more jobs in this local area." They are dangling money. 10,000 more jobs for who? The niggas don't want to work. You're given the job, and you sit down on the job. We have been destroyed morally, by irresponsible leadership of the past. We need a moral reform movement so we can get in shape for work.

[applause]

A force is at work, for our own good. But we have ventured off the traditional course that the good people trod. We have been distracted by all the foolishness, the quick pleasure etc., etc.. We can't see that there is a wonderful thing working in spite of the bad economic conditions and all these other things. To be truthful with you, there are no bad economic conditions in America. There is a situation of too much greed in America.

[applause]

The people who are out of work have more money than most of the people in the Third World have who are working 16 hours a day, and are wasting more than can be justified by any moral standards, the people who don't have jobs. How do I know? Because the burden on the sanitation department in Chicago is felt more in the community of the poor than in the community of the so-called well to do people. In the community of the poor, there are about four or five big garbage cans for every home for the community of the poor. And they find a way to fill up every can every week. Now see, I can't come here with this brother love and skin pigmentation allegiance and all of that, with this problem burdening my mind. I say, "What the hell's wrong with Americans? What are they doing? Trying to see how much money they can throw away?" You go and see the poor people eat, you say, "Are these people poor?"

They take a few bites out of a chicken leg and throw it down. "What's going on here?" "We're poor." Then you see people they call bag ladies, do we have them here too? Bag ladies, they're going around digging in the garbage and just a fad. Bag lady just as fad digging down into the garbage looking for something I don't know.

[laughter]

It ain't nothing but a fad. That bag lady ain't hungry. That bag lady doesn't have to go out there and dig into those garbage cans, that's a fad. She has found a role for herself. She gets attention because people say, "Look what she doing?"

It's a new thing for her. She used to sit home and suck on barbeque pork bones and get her hands and face and body all greasy eating barbeque, and then she said, "I'm lonely in this house." Then she found out that doing something unusual or something out of the ordinary, she could get attention. So she calls herself the bag lady. They didn't use to carry no bag until they called them bag ladies. They used to just go, I saw them, empty hands. And they’d fish down in their, picking through stuff, maybe I had a purse. But now they carry a bag. They want you to know this is the bag lady, you see.

[laughter]

Desperation. Desperation can drive you crazy and we have so many desperation, so many different kinds of desperation, until really if someone tried to treat each one of us in our separate situation they'll go crazy within a couple of weeks. There is one idea that can bring change, improvement, strength and progress to us, these poor citizens of this country. That idea is community loyalty. Community loyalty. That's the idea that has made people strong, has put people upon the face of this earth and given them prominence and supremacy. It has been community loyalty.

The need now is not to stop at the our borders with the hypocritical patriotism, moral patriotism and stop at our borders, but go beyond our borders to the global community and identify in the whole situation of the whole circumstance of man. That's what G-d has been marshaling the spirit of the human being toward, accepting responsibility for the whole community, accepting to share in the responsibility for the whole community. We have nations now who have been preaching for a long time but now they are forced to accept their share in the responsibility for the international community.

Refugees, people who are persecuted in one country, mistreated in one country, denied their rights, denied equality in that country. Other countries who claim to be democratic, claim to be lovers of humanity, they have to respond to the needs of those refugees. So we find that refugees from the East, refugees from West, refugees from the Third World, refugees from all over; Afghanistan, everywhere, they're pouring into the nations that will accept them. It's not only our nation, Japan is one of the greatest leaders in the support for refugees. Japan.

And not only Japan, there are many other nations, many other nations. In fact, weak nations in economic terms when we compare them and their situation to what we are to ours as a superpower and a great nation, then they're poor. But they too are opening their doors, they're receiving refugees. Now, nations are demonstrating, nations are demonstrating their concern for the community of man. We need that same principle to grow in America where you on your block will assist responsibility for person in a worse situation on your block.

Not only on your block, out of your neighborhood. Not only out of your neighborhood, in another city, in another state. We have to sense the responsibility to each other that we all live together and G-d is forcing man by increasing population, by the advance in technology, by television, by Telstar, all this great communication mechanism that we have. G-d is forcing man to live together, to see each other, to speak to each other daily. Don't you know now, you can now speak to each other all across the ocean daily?

Man is in communication for the first time in history perhaps. He is in daily communication with his fellow men all around the globe. G-d is forcing man to accept his responsibility to the total human community. And we have to practice that principle that the United Nations and the freedom loving nations of the world, the humanitarian nations of the world are exercising and serving the needs of refugees, helping the refugees, extending a hand to them, accepting them into their quarters, into their nation, giving them a home.

We have to practice that same thing here in America. We have to get rid of this sensitivity as a race. This over sensitivity as a race. The hate. Is he black? I've had people ask me is Muhammad black? And I wanted to tell them I'm not a racist. I wanted to tell them, "Look, if my thought, if my perception was as short as yours, I would hope that he wasn't black because just being black doesn't mean a thing but a long ways to go." Now, I don't think I'm talking about everybody, some of us are far advanced. Some of us are so far advanced we don't even identify anymore with blacks. I'm talking about the majority. [laughs], the majority of us common black folks, common African-Americans. The majority of us, yes. Our insight and our perception is so small. If we were able to really see and understand, we wouldn't want to follow somebody because they're black. We want to follow somebody because they're right. Follow somebody because they are informed, properly informed.

[applause]

Follow them because they're committed. Follow them because they have the moral tenacity, the moral strength to do what is right even when it means a threat to their own person. And if that person is white, I'm ready to follow that person. If that person is yellow, I'm ready to follow that person. And believe me, as long as we have this negative approach to solutions in our lives, anytime you allow emotionalism to direct your approach to a problem, you're in trouble, that's a negative approach. I heard the candidate for vice presidency Ferraro, I heard her say on the news that she doesn't approach problem from an emotional situation, she approaches problem analytically. Now, I said, "I wonder how many good. loyal democrat blacks, are listening to that wise woman?" I was praying that they heard her, that I would wake up and find that we had a new African-American. Believe me, once we stand up on that principle, that you don't approach problems from an emotional situation, but you approach them with your intellect, with the tools of reasoning, with your rational faculties, with an intent and a purpose to find the objective truth, approach them analytically and be willing to cut off your damn rotten leg if the fact finding say, that's the problem.

[applause]

Yes, that's what we have to do. Yes, the day we get more political preachers and preacher politicians to come in to that kind of approach to the problem of African-Americans, we are going to have a better America, because the burden of America is the black man. Hispanics are in a bad situation, but Hispanics have more social conscience. They have more family conscience, they have more social commitment, they have more family commitment. They can demonstrate more support for their families than for their community than we can. We have nothing but spiritual unity that we can't even define.

[applause]

We have to have a birth of new sensitivity than the African-American man. We have been tricked, programmed and conditioned to be emotionally sensitive, racially sensitive, Washington directed, White House directed, assistance directed. We have been programmed and conditioned to be that way and we should stop and just say, "Hell, we've been struggling and reaching and fumbling and stumbling for three centuries in this country. Something is wrong. We're still the last. We're still the most down. We're still the economically worse off. Something must be wrong. Hell, let's reject everything that's been coming our ways and let's start from day zero--

[applause]

--and solve the problem not as one who's under a spell of a church or the mosque." I don't care if you're under of the spell mosque, if you're under a spell, you're in trouble. Start from day zero and say, "Hey let's get rid of this spookism. Let's get rid of all this superstition. Let's get rid of this tribal way of charting our course by throwing bones and see how they fall, let's start being scientific-minded calculators.

[00:34:08] [END OF AUDIO]