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# FAITH SUPPORTS LIFE

### By Imam W. Deen Mohammed

Speaker 1: Imam W. D. Mohammed, Muslim American spokesman for Human Salvation and son of the honorable Elijah Muhammad as he speaks on issues regarding Islam, properly know as El Islam. Today's topic is "Faith Supports Life" and now we bring you Imam W. D. Mohammed.

Imam Mohammed: Thank you, peace be on, As-salāmu ʿalaykum. We are going to be speaking with you on world peace and how religion promotes peace for the individual and peace for the family and peace for the community of men. This peace begin when one accepts to worship G-d and to have G-d as the authority in their life. As the authority in their life for all decisions that they will make. Muslims believe that G-d is ever present, all the time, wherever we are G-d is there and G-d is knowing and seeing everything. G-d knows what we say with our mouths and what we don't say with our mouths, G-d knows what we say in our hearts, what we say in our minds, what we say inside our souls. G-d knows all things.

When a Muslim accepts that G-d is G-d and this is G-d not only for Muslims this is G-d for Christians and other religions. When a Muslim accepts G-d and he accepts to worship that G-d, worship G-d means that we give our obedience to G-d. We worship G-d with our obedience, we obey what we believe G-d wants of us. The Muslims have a book called the Quran and the Quran is read by about better than 1 billion people on earth today. All Muslims know the Quran, they know that book, they know what we're talking about when we give the name of that book the Quran, in the West they call it Koran, Koran, but this is the Quran.

Some say, "Oh the Quran is the Muslim's bible." Well that is correct if we are saying that it is the book from G-d to the world, to all people revealed to Muhammad the prophet and Muslims accept that every word in the Quran is the word of G-d, so in that sense it is similar to the bible or say as the word of G-d it is our bible as it is a bible as the Christian bible, this bible for Christians. However there was great difference between the Quran and the bible, although there is a great likeness for the bible and the Quran.

The likeness is that our Holy Book carries the names of most of the prophets that we find in the bible beginning with the creation of man our Holy Book gives the first man's name as Adam the same as it is in the bible. The prophets: Abraham, Moses, and Jesus and many of the other prophets that are mentioned in the bible are all mentioned in the Quran. We believe that these prophets came from the one G-d so this is the likeness that we have or the sameness that we have, the similarities that exist for the Quran, the Muslim's Holy Book and the bible, the Holy Book of the Christians.

These similarities also include belief in G-d's angels, a belief in G-d, a belief in G-d's angels and a belief in G-d's prophets or messengers, the prophets are messengers from among men that G-d sent. We also believe that G-d revealed 2 special women, one of them being the mother of Christ Jesus, peace be upon the mother of Jesus and Her son. The other being the mother of Moses. We believe that G-d also revealed to the mother of Moses.

We also believe the same as Christians believe in the judgment day. We believe that there is a judgment day that all of us are accountable for our life, how we live it. If we live a good life then we expect to have a good end before G-d, our journey on this earth will end and we will one day have to face G-d. G-d the creator, the maker, the giver of all things and we will have to have a good record if we expect, pardon me, we have to have a good record if we expect to have a good decision on our behalf from G-d.

G-d's decision will be a decision that will give us way pleasure, if we have had a good life, and if we have had a bad life then G-d knows, G-d is the only one who knows, maybe he will forgive us for our sins and grant us mercy and maybe we'll escape punishment or hell as we say in English, hell. Maybe we'll escape it but who knows. Good deeds as it is given in our religion Islam, good deeds erase bad deeds. So the good deeds cancel out the bad deeds, so we can have plenty of bad deeds but if we have much more good deeds than bad deeds in our record then we don't expect to go to hell, we expect to be saved from that punishment, from that torment.

The point is, to always try to have a good life, avoid bad deeds, avoid sin, avoid bad behavior, be the best person that our good parents wanted us to be and we are on the safe side. If we get weak and thought following the weak ... the temptations that are in the world, the temptations that invite us to do wrong, invite us to hurt each other, invite us to make a bad life for ourselves, once we get into a groove like that then we are certainly not going towards the Heaven. We are not going in that direction that's for sure.

Muslims believe very much the same basic or fundamental things that Christians believe, but however that said, we do have some differences. One of those differences is that we believe that Muhammad who was on this earth preaching about 1,415 years or so ago, he received by revelation from G-d the book called the Quran. We believe that that wonderful man who lived the life among the people of the peninsula called Arabia in the Far East or in the Middle East pardon me, in the Middle East. He lived there among them, and they knew him as a child, they knew him as a young man until he was 40. They knew him to be an honest man, they themselves called him "The Honest One" that was one of his names that they gave him and they called him "The Truthful One" that was another name that they gave him. Al-Amin and [Al-Sadiq 00:07:58], they gave him these 2 names.

When he was 40 he received revelation from G-d and he became the messenger of G-d, the prophet. This is what we believe, we also believe that our prophet is mentioned in the bible by the name Ahmed, but the name Ahmed has been changed slightly and the whole Hebrew language is slightly changed but we do believe that our prophet his name is the bible. But whether his name is in the bible or not he is accepted by over 1 billion people as the last prophet of G-d to mankind to all people on this earth and as G-d's messenger, G-d's servant and his messenger.

What we see in the life of Muhammad that makes him stand out from other prophets I think is that he is also in history. History records him, not just scripture but history records the life of Muhammad the prophet. He is not that far away from us in time for his life and his history not to be recorded. His life is recorded in history ... we know of Muhammad, born in Mecca, the city Mecca, on the peninsula called Arabia now, and we know of his birthday, 572 AD. We know of his life from the time he was born and before, we know of his family before that time. All of these is not only scriptural reporting but this is also history, it is history.

By him being the more recent of the prophet, the more recent of the messengers of G-d, I think that is why we have so much living history, or world history on the life, teachings and the works of Muhammad the prophet. Our religion begins with a declaration of faith or belief, that we say, "I believe that G-d is one G-d and I believe that Muhammad is the messenger of G-d." That's how our religion begins, when one accepts to be a Muslim they accept first to say, "G-d I believe or I accept or I witness that G-d is one G-d and I witness that Muhammad is the messenger of G-d."

That is also to say that Muhammad received from G-d the Quran, the Holy Book, a book having exactly 114 chapters in it. A book revealed by G-d to a man to a servant of his, man named Muhammad, and we say that he is the messenger of G-d and that also says that we do not accept that he is the son of G-d or that he is G-d. He's not G-d, he's not the son of G-d, he's not G-d, he is the creation of G-d. That's what we are taught as Muslims to say that Muhammad is the creation of G-d and that no different than all other men, all men are the creation of G-d.

This is what we believe that may perhaps be different, in fact it is different and may perhaps not be acceptable by many Christians although there are some Christians, small denominations of Christians, of Christianity that do accept that prophet Muhammad, that inspired man, a messenger of G-d. There were some denominations of Christianity that differ from the mainstream of Christianity, our mainstream Christians, Christian people. We have also a belief that is fundamental for us, or basic for us, and that is that we should pray to that G-d. If there was a G-d we believe that we should pray to that G-d, just as Christians believe and others believe.

We pray to G-d 5 times daily, our life is really regulated by prayer, when we wake up in the morning, if we wake before dawn we say the dawn prayer. If we don't wake up before dawn then something is wrong, we are not really observing all the prayers as we should. We should wake up before sunrise that is, I said dawn but actually in the time of dawn we should be awake and we pray during the time of dawn before sunrise the prayer that is called, the Dawn Prayer, in the language of the Quran or in the Arabic, classical Arabic language is called [Fajr 00:12:43] we pray the Fajr prayer, 2 sections, only takes about 5 minutes, we pray that prayer all this.

We pray that prayer to begin our day, and then we pray another prayer just the noontime passes, immediately the noontime passes, a few minutes afternoon we pray what we call the noon prayers, called the Zuhr prayer, Zuhr prayer. That's 2 prayers, we pray 5. In the afternoon it's Asr, is when the sun has gone from being above our heads, directly above our heads and has started to be in a angle, like a 45 degree angle from the Zenith point, directly above our heads. Where we can look at it at a glance and we can see the sun in the sky at a glance, looking up toward it. That is called the Asr prayer, the afternoon prayer.

The next prayer we pray is when the sun has set, the sun has gone down, it has set, there is no more sun to be seen in the sky. The sky but the sky is still glowing with the light of the sun, we call it the reddish glow or the reddish glow of the sun. That beautiful glow of the sun, reddish looking glow of the sun after the sun has set that's time for what we call the after sunset prayer or the sunset prayer. It is called Maghhrib prayer in the classical Arabic language of the Quran, Quranic Arabic, Maghhrib Prayer. It's 4 prayers, we pray one more when there is no sun or the sun is ore ... the sky is black, it's very dark outside. The sun, all sign of the sun being in the West, it's gone away from the sky, it is night time, we pray the prayer called Isha, Isha, we pray Isha prayer. 5 prayers, Muslims are supposed to pray 5 times daily.

If any Muslim misses any of these prayers he feels that he has come up short. Not that he's a great sinner, maybe there is pressure on him at home, pressure of the job, maybe these things have prevented him from praying these prayers especially when he's living in a un-Islammic or at society. If he was living in Saudi Arabia he would have no excuse because the society there, the business, the businesses and everything accommodates, make room for all of these prayers. In fact making room for these prayers are more important than anything else in a true Muslim society and Saudi Arabia is one that observe these prayers.

If you're not praying at the prayer time and you're in the streets people will look at you and they wonder what's wrong with you, why are you not praying to G-d at this time, it's time for prayer. Especially if they know you to be a Muslim, if they know you not to be a Muslim then it's different, but if they know you to be a Muslim they will look at you strangely, and say why are you not that prayer, and they themselves will be moving and rushing too on the prayer. Or either they'll be praying and Muslims believe that we can pray on the ground too, we don't have to pray inside of a house, or mosque, a building, or church, or temple. We call these places of worship mosque in English Masjid in the classical Arabic or Quranic Arabic language is Masjid.

We don't have to pray in a building like that, we can pray on any clean ground, we can pray on a clean floor. It's best to have nice accommodation, the most beautiful environment, the most spiritually pleasing environment for ourselves when we pray, but it's not a must. If we can't find this place we can pray in any clean place or make any place clean and suitable for our prayer and there we pray. Muslims usually pray with others, we don't pray all by ourselves except after we have done the most important prayer. The most important prayer is done in a group.

If we are at home we pray with our family, we do a group prayer with our family, but if we are outside the house we look for others to pray with them and we join others and we do the group prayer, we prayer together, a collective prayer. The most important prayer for us perhaps is the prayer we call Jumu'ah prayer, it comes every Friday. For us Friday is like Sundays as for the Christians I would say. We pray on Friday the Jumu'ah prayer, instead of the 4 sections of the noon prayer on Fridays the sections are cut only ... they're cut in half, only 2.

2 sections of prayer at noontime on Friday afternoon, for the Friday prayer or the Jumu'ah prayer and after ... pardon me, before the prayer the Imam will give what we call the speech Khutba, Khutba the speech. He gives the lecture or the speech. After his speech, then we say the 2 sections of prayer and G-d says in our Holy Book that whether we engage in business, if we engage in business, when we hear the call to prayer we are to leave off business. You have to leave off the business, close up the shop quickly or close down, shut down and go answer the call to prayer the Jumu'ah prayer on Friday.

God says in our Holy Book, after we have done that and prayer is over, return back to the avenues of business or whatever, commerce, whatever we were doing before. If it's going back to job, go back to our job. If it's going back to the business that we run, we the proprietor there, we go back to the business we continue our business. So we do work on a Friday, Muslims work on Friday but they're not supposed to work during the time of prayer or the time of service Jumu'ah, Friday service. So we shut down.

We have our office here in [inaudible 00:18:47] city South side Chicago about 20 minutes drive from Chicago, South side. On Fridays we shut down, no one is supposed to be working in this office during the prayer time. We shut down and we are to go and join others in the Friday prayer and to hear the Imam, the Imam is like a minister or a preacher, to hear the Imam give the lecture on the religion, helping us to know our religion better and helping us to know each other better and to have a good life with each other as Muslims, and to have a good life with non-muslims too. Muslims believe that we are to have a good life also with non-Muslims, especially those non-Muslims believe in decency, they believe in G-d and they believe in decency and they believe in fairness, by fairness. They believe in being just by people, they believe in being kind to their fellow men.

These Christians or Jews or whatever, they represent the best of G-d's creation, the best of people on earth, whether they are Jews or Christians or some other name or muslim, if they believe in G-d and they believe in having a decent life, they believe in being fair and honest, they believe in being just by people. They believe in goodness, they believe in doing good by people. Pretty soon we have ... In fact we are in it right now, we're in the Christmas season and the Christians will be giving gifts to each other. I'm sure many of us Muslims we have Christian relatives and many of us will be giving them some gifts. Not that we believe, we don't believe that like as Christians believe that's known, but we believe in goodness and we believe in sharing the spirits of goodness.

We will not worship the way Christians worship but we will give and show kindness, give gifts and show kindness towards our relatives and our friends in a special way during the season of cheer and giving in kindness that we are coming into right now. I wish all the Christians good season and I wish all of the Muslims the best always and I wish that you will remember your good Christian relatives especially your mothers and your fathers and your grandfathers and your grandmother. Remember them in this season, show them kindness and give them ... be charitable to them in this time of charity and goodness.

We have a few minutes left so I would like to talk a little bit about family. Muslims believe in having organized families. We believe that the man in the household is responsible for bringing in the money, paying the bills et cetera. If he gets some help from his wife, that has to be volunteered, it cannot be demanded of her, she cannot be forced to give part of her money for the maintenance of the household. We believe that the young men, his son, once they're strong enough to help him that they should assist him, they should love assisting the father. They should love doing something that brings good to the family, good to the family.

They should all be industrious, they should all want to have jobs, they should all want to have good education. So they should love to go to school, they should love to work. Muslims are never to dislike work, the only work we dislike is work that is unlawful. If we're working for criminals then that's the work that we would hate and we will not have that kind of work. If we are true believers in G-d we will break free of that kind of work but any lawful work is a dignity, like Christians we believe in the work-ethic, work-ethic. We believe that the work and have an honest living is something that dignifies the person.

Also then the families, the girls are supposed to assist their mothers, they're supposed to help the mother in the kitchen, they're supposed to help the mother with the house chores. They're supposed to be training behind their mother, training, working behind her and watching how she manages things, how she manages the kitchen and how she manages the household, working behind her to learn her steps so they will be good mothers and good wives and good mothers in the future.

Muslims believe in family organization. The father if he's not there, the head of the household, the man if he's not there to lead them in prayer then the oldest son, the oldest son, the next male close to the family in relationship who's an adult responsible person should lead them in prayer. If no one is there, adult male, then the mother, she is to see that she either leads them in prayer, the children in prayer or she is to see that they are led in prayer. This responsibility falls on the family.

The male in the family also, one who recognizes that the mother she knows the kitchen best, she should and she knows the children best. So he doesn't take authority from her. He accepts that she is the boss in the kitchen and she is the boss with the children. He just sits behind and observes and if she does something that he thinks is not in the best interest of the house, or in the best interest of the household, pardon me, or in the best interest of the family, he will have to come to her with authority from the Holy Book, from the Quran or from the life example of our prophet Muhammad and he will tell her, "Darling" or "Dear, I think we should do, should do this this way," and he won't correct her in front of the children, he will only correct her when the children are not present because he's at more trouble from her and he don't want to pass on his problems to the children.

He will take her aside when the children are not around and he will remind her that she's doing something perhaps that's not correct for a Muslim to do regarding the management of her household or her responsibilities at home. We've heard a lot of talk about men dominating the Muslim woman, that's something that is part of backward cultures, that has been blamed on Islam. There are Muslim countries that are having problems with their culture and they're going to have to correct their cultures by bringing their cultures in line with the word of G-d, or the teachings of our Holy Book the Quran.

Now, so much for the family, there is much more to say about the family but I want to say a word about humanity just before closing this live address today. The humanity itself, we believe like Christians believe that actually all people come from one ... descended from one parent called Adam, the man Adam. We may say the woman Eve, the woman Eve, two, a pair, that is what is given to us in our Holy Book. It says, "We descended from ... made from one ... we descended from one pair and the pair were mates of each other. They were one, and the one was called Adam and they became two and then it became Adam and Eve and then all of us descended from that too. From the two of them."

That means that all people, really belong to one family. We have one common parent, we have one common parent Adam or we have common parents, Adam and Eve that makes all of us relatives. This also means that we cannot have ugly racism, we cannot reject the person because of their color or because of their features, or because of the texture of their hair, or because of the language, he different language that they have, they speak. These are ignorance things, ignorant ideas that have put a lot of unnecessary burden and misery on men, on humanity and it is time in this modern day and age, it is time for us to give up all of these backward ideas about inferiority of one race or the inferiority of another race. Or the superiority of a black over white, or the superiority of whites over black.

It is time that we give up all of these nonsense and accept that G-d made us all and we descended from the same parent or from the same origins, same origins. We came and this world is created by G-d for all of us and we have to accept that all of us have a share in it. If we can do these things, we can have world peace. This is how Islam promotes world peace, it promotes world peace by bringing us to recognize that there is one authority over all of us. There is one that deserves credit for everything that we can benefit from and that is the G-d that made it all possible and it also says to us that: mankind, though he exists in tribes and different nationalities now, he came from one parent created by the same G-d and he should accept that humanity is one and humanity is one big family.

We should accept that this earth was made by G-d and this world was made by G-d for all of his creatures to share and have benefits from it and have a good life here. So we should want peace for all people. Christmas season is here now and we're going to hear these songs and many songs and the bells ringing, "Peace, peace, peace and goodwill to all people." Muslims we share that. Thank you very much, we wish you peace always. As-salāmu ʿalaykum, warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.