152526 - Beliefs of Farrakhanism or the Nation of Islam

the question

My question has to do with a group that calls itself the Nation of Islam, which is led by a man whose name is Louis Farrakhan. This group has misled many people with its ideas and beliefs which it propagates and spreads in their midst, especially those who embrace Islam. There are many Christians here in America who have left Christianity, and even people from other religions, who have embraced Islam, but unfortunately the ideas of this group are the first that they encounter. Among the main activities and ideas of this group is that they venerate racism and deny the Prophethood of Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). In fact there is a group among them who claim to be divine, and they apply to themselves names and attributes that are only befitting for Allah, may He be glorified and exalted. They strive to spread these toxic ideas among their followers by means of what they possess of eloquent language and powers of persuasion. I have some people I know who believe in the ideas of this group, and I want to convince them that what they are following is the essence of misguidance, but I am not one of those who can argue and debate well. All I want to do is to show them the correct path, supported by evidence from the Qur’an and saheeh Sunnah. I hope that you can help me to do that.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Nation of Islam was founded by Wallace D Fard who appeared suddenly in Detroit in 1930 CE, calling black people to his beliefs. He disappeared mysteriously in June 1934 CE.

He was succeeded by Elijah Poole or Elijah Muhammad (1898-1975 CE). The movement passed through distinct ideological stages, one of which was the Farrakhan stage, as we shall see below.

In al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Muyassarah fi’l-Madhaahib wa’l-Adyaan al-Mu‘aasirah (1/360), it says:

It should be noted that the ideas of this movement developed gradually, under the influence of the

leader who ran its affairs. Hence the development of the movement may be divided into three periods:

1. The era of Wallace D Fard:

From the beginning the movement was known as the Nation of Islam, and was also known by another name, the Lost and Found Nation of Islam. Its most important aims were as follows:

· Calling for freedom, equality, and justice, and striving to elevate and develop the group.

· Focusing on the superiority of the black race, which they claimed was the original race; they emphasised their African roots, and showed hostility towards whites, whom they described as devils.

· Striving to divert their followers from the Torah and Gospel (the Bible) to the Qur'an, whilst continuing to take some ideas from the Bible.

2. The era of Elijah Muhammad

· Elijah Muhammad declared that God is not something unseen; rather He must be embodied in an individual, and that individual is Wallace D Fard in whom God is incarnated, and he is worthy of supplication and worship. Thus esoteric concepts entered the thought of the group.

· He claimed to be a Prophet, and gave himself the title of Messenger of Allah.

· He forbade to his followers gambling, drinking alcohol, smoking, overeating, and adultery. He banned mixing of women with men to whom they are not related, and he encouraged his followers to only marry people within the movement. He banned them from frequenting places of entertainment and cafes.

· He persisted in the belief that the black race was superior, and regarded it as the source of all that is good, and continued to demean the white race and describe it as base and inferior. Undoubtedly only Blacks were allowed to join the movement; whites were definitely not allowed to join at all.

· Elijah Muhammad only believed in that which is tangible. Therefore he did not believe in the angels or in the physical resurrection. In his view the resurrection was no more than the intellectual revival of black Americans.

· He did not believe that Prophethood ended with the Prophet Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), and he declared that he was the final messenger, because no messenger came but he spoke the language of his people, and he – namely Elijah Muhammad – had come as a Prophet to whom revelation came from Wallace D Fard in the language of his people, the blacks.

· He believed in the divinely revealed Books, but he believed that a special book would be revealed to his people, the blacks, and this would be the final Book to be divinely revealed to mankind.

· Prayer at his time consisted of reciting al-Faatihah or some other verses or supplications whilst facing towards Makkah and keeping in mind the image of Wallace D Fard. This was done five times a day.

· They fasted the month of December every year, instead of fasting Ramadan.

· Each member had to give one tenth of his income to the movement.

3. The era of Warith Deen Muhammad

On November 24, 1975 CE, Warith Deen chose a new name for the organisation, which was the Bilalians, after Bilaal al-Habashi, the mu’adhdhin of the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him).

On June 19, 1975 CE Warith Deen repealed the rule banning whites from joining the movement, and on February 25, 1976 CE, a number of whites who had joined them appeared side-by-side with blacks in the convention hall.

On August 29, 1975 CE, he issued a statement that it was required to fast Ramadan and celebrate Eid al-Fitr.

On November 14, 1975 CE, the name of the newspaper was changed from Muhammad Speaks to

The Bilalian News, then it became The Muslim Journal.

He announced that his title would be Chief Imam instead of Supreme Minister, and he changed the title “minister of the temples” to “imam”. He focused his attention on religious matters, and delegated other matters to the leaders of the movement.

He prepared the temples to become suited to holding regular prayers (salaah).

On October 3, 1975 CE, he issued instructions that prayer should be offered in the correct manner as known to Muslims, five times daily.

He addressed the Islamic concepts that had been wrongly embraced by the movement since the days of Wallace D Fard and Elijah Muhammad, and tried to correct them.

The things that we have mentioned above do not indicate that the movement has taken a completely correct Islamic direction, but they do indicate that there has been an improvement in the thinking of the movement compared to how it was under previous leaders. It still needs corrections in ideological and practical terms in order to be Islamically sound. End quote.

These are the stages through which this group has passed. Undoubtedly in the second stage – the stage of Elijah Muhammad – it was a disbelieving group that was outside of the framework of Islam, because of the beliefs mentioned above.

Unfortunately Louis Farrakhan has adopted the deviant ideas of the group as they were at the time of Elijah Muhammad.

In the source quoted above – al-Mawsoo‘ah al-Muyassarah (1/368) – it says: Farrakhanism is one of the esoteric groups in the USA that still follows the way of Elijah Muhammad.

Foundation and prominent figures:

Its founder was born Louis Wolcott to a family that worked in acting and music and had roots in the Caribbean islands.

In 1956 CE he joined the group of Elijah Muhammad, who claimed to be a prophet and said that his teacher Wallace D Fard was God incarnate. When Malcolm X opened Temple Number 11 in Boston, Louis X was appointed to help him as a preacher and administrator.

When Elijah Muhammad expelled Malcolm X, he appointed Louis as the primary spokesman of the group, and gave him the title Farrakhan. Then he made him a preacher in one of the biggest and most important temples, Temple Number 7, which had been run by Malcolm X before he was expelled from the group.

The beliefs of Farrakhanism:

Farrakhan affirmed all the teachings of Elijah Muhammad, apart from a few simple changes. On the last page of every copy of the group's newspaper, The Final Call, there is a statement under the twin titles of What Do The Muslims Want? and What Do The Muslims Believe?, which includes the aims and beliefs of Elijah's group, exactly as they were stated in every single copy of the Muhammad Speaks newspaper at the time of Elijah, and as they are mentioned in every copy of the Statements of Elijah which are quoted from old copies of Muhammad Speaks.

Some of the basic beliefs of Elijah's group that were revived by Farrakhan include the following:

· That Allah created Himself.

· That all black people are gods and among them a real god is born every 25,000 years.

· One of the black gods, who was called Yakub, created the white man as a result of some genetic experiments.

· That Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) was sent to the Arabs only, and Allah sent Elijah to the blacks of America, and he is the last of the messengers.

· Farrakhan believes that he is the person meant by the disciple Peter who is known in Christianity, and he believes that he does not possess the power to give life, but through the voice of Elijah Muhammad, he will revive the Nation of Islam in its entirety.

· That the white man is a devil.

· That the black man is the one who composed all the divinely revealed books.

· Most of the teachings of the Qur'an are addressed to the messenger Elijah Muhammad and the blacks in America.

· There will be no bodily resurrection after death; resurrection refers to the spiritual awakening of the blacks who are asleep in illusory graves, and that awakening can only come about by learning of Elijah and his god, and believing in them.

· They say that if the Arabs really believed that Muhammad was the final Prophet, then we can meet and debate the evidence until we reach an agreement. But, you Arabs are racists and can never overcome this aspect of your nature which is similar to the nature of the white man, who is a devil. You and the Jews and the white men are all devils.

Additions of Farrakhan:

With regard to the new beliefs of Farrakhan about Elijah, he regards Elijah as God, just as the Christians regard Jesus as God. In fact Farrakhan believes that Elijah is Jesus Christ.

He claims that Elijah did not die; rather He was resurrected and is alive, even though Elijah emphatically and absolutely denied the physical resurrection.

End quote from al-Mawsoo'ah al-Muyassarah.

From these beliefs it is clear that these notions constitute disbelief and have nothing to do with Islam.

What must be done is to call these people to affirm Allah's oneness and believe in Him, and that must be done by scholars and seekers of knowledge. Not everyone can expose himself to specious arguments and listening to falsehoods, when he is unable to refute them and highlight their falseness. Hence in calling these people, you must seek the help of those who can debate and argue with them, or give them books and material that explain true Islam, without indulging in

argument with them when you are not skilled in arguing, for your failure to prove your point and refute their arguments could make them cling more firmly to their ideas and beliefs.

We are happy to remain in touch with you through this website, and we hope that you will pay attention to the times when you could send your questions, so that we will be able to answer them.

We ask Allah, may He be exalted, to help you and take care of you, and to bless your efforts.

And Allah knows best.