

CHRISTIANITY vs. THE NATION OF ISLAM

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ORIGIN OF THE NATION OF ISLAM

1. In 1930, a man named Wallace Fard Muhammad, believed to have been an orthodox Muslim from Mecca, appeared in Detroit, MI & sought to be a black-supremacy savior to African Americans with the intent to liberate his people from the whites-“blue-eyed devils”-and restore their position of dignity and primacy in the world. He established a mosque in Detroit; and within a few years he had amassed a following of about 8,000 people.
2. One of Fard’s early converts was a Baptist preacher’s son from Sandersville, GA named Robert Poole. He soon became Fard’s chief minister; and Poole later changed his name to Elijah Muhammad. When Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934, Muhammad was named the leader of the Nation of Islam. During his approximately 41 years of leadership, mosques were erected in cities across America because the movement grew substantially.
3. The Nation of Islam skyrocketed again when another son of a Baptist preacher, a former prison inmate, converted to the Nation of Islam and rose to prominence as a dynamic national speaker for the movement. His name was Malcolm X. In time, Malcolm X discovered the moral failures and doctrinal differences of Elijah Muhammad. He eventually distanced himself from the Nation of Islam and committed himself to more traditional Islam prior to his assassination in 1965.
4. After Elijah Muhammad died in 1975, his son Wallace Deen Muhammad became its new leader. Under his leadership, the Nation went back to traditional Islam, transitioned from radical racism to racial harmony, & denounced the deification of Wallace Fard Muhammad. Thus the organization was renamed the American Muslim Mission.
5. Many were not happy about Wallace’s changes; among them was one of Malcolm X’s recruits named Louis Farrakhan. He and other members split from Wallace’s group and re-founded the Nation of Islam, maintaining allegiance to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad. Farrakhan assumed leadership of the group.

BELIEFS/PRACTICES OF THE NATION OF ISLAM

1. Unlike traditional Islam, the Nation of Islam recognizes many gods of varying degrees. In Islam, Allah is recognized as the only true god, but in the Nation of Islam, a council of 24 scientist-gods write human history.
2. Wallace Fard, the founder of the Nation of Islam, was supposedly the Supreme God or Supreme Allah, who came from Mecca in 1930. As a Supreme God,

Fard has “*appeared among us with the same infinite wisdom to bring about a complete change.*” The reason he is called “supreme” is that he is wiser than all.

3. One of these 24 gods named Yakub rebelled against Allah and the council, and committed the horrible crime of creating the white race—a race of devils—through a perverse breeding experiment that removed not only their color but also their moral virtues. At some point, the whites tried to reverse-breed themselves back into the black race, but this effort only succeeded in producing gorillas.
4. In Nation of Islam theology, white people are devils and only black people are gods. In speaking to his black readers, Elijah Muhammad once said: “*you are walking around looking for a god to bow to and worship. Allah is all of us; he is rooted in all of us. Every righteous person is a god; we are all god.*”
5. Jesus Christ was not God in flesh, not the Son of God, nor was he virgin-born, crucified and resurrected. He was a mere man who was stabbed in the heart by a police officer in Jerusalem who wanted a reward from Jewish authorities. Thus salvation is not through Jesus, but through a man born in 1877 named Wallace Fard Muhammad. In him is salvation from oppression, but not in the sweet by&by. Therefore there is no afterlife.
6. In Nation of Islam theology, no gods are eternal. The black god who made the universe does not exist today; at some point he died.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TO THE NATION OF ISLAM

1. **Polytheism vs. Monotheism** (*Dead gods vs. A Eternal God*)

1. **Ethnicity vs. Human Life**

The Nation of Islam was birthed as a rebuttal to the conditions of oppression imposed upon black people by white people on American soil. It intended to bring dignity and worth to an oppressed people; but its methods and means of doing so was by *theologizing* racism. Christianity and the Nation of Islam agree that justice is apart of our religions’ rhetoric and should be advocated since God is the god of justice. Racism and justice are areas of impact for religion but not a religion itself. **Thus to make racism a religion is to legitimize it and not eradicate it.** [Jn 4:1-9/Acts 1:8, 2:1-21/Eph 2:11-22]