

'You Are All Gods'

Why Divine Embodiment is the Most Important Religion to Heal the Hood

by Demetric Muhammad
Guest Columnist

*I have said, You are gods; and all of you are children of the most High
Psalms 82:6 (KJV)*

*For you are the temple of the living God; as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
2 Corinthians 6:16 (KJB)*

28 And when thy Lord said to the angels, I am going to create a mortal of sounding clay, of black mud fashioned into shape. 29 So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down making obeisance to him. 30 So the angels made obeisance, all of them together.

Holy Qur'an 15:28-30 (M. M. Ali Translation)

My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him I will hear him, will see him, will be near him, will give him what he wants, and will make of him what I will.
Prophet Muhammad (pbuh/saw) (Hadith Quasi No. 25)

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

Once upon a time, this was a question asked of children and the response was "policeman, fireman, doctor or lawyer." What is interesting about the traditional responses to this question is that each profession involves helping other people. Each of those professions is service oriented. And each of those professions is an honorable vocation for any young child to aspire to. During the days prior to racial integration in America, most Black children grew up in

neighborhoods where their neighbors were actually policemen, firemen, doctors, lawyers, architects and business persons. This was one of the many benefits of living in a Black ethnic enclave in America. And while most intellectuals at that time, and some today, decried the segregationist laws that produced separate Black communities, there were many benefits to that separatism.

PERSPECTIVES

Those times—when the Black community desperately needs today, with respect to what Black children aspired to be when they grew up—were ripe times of noble aspirations.

Today many Black youth aspire to be athletes and entertainers, and many possess an admiration for prison life that borders on actual aspiration. Their aspirations reflect the poverty, blight and crime present in the communities in which they live. These are post-integration communities. The Black community today in America's inner cities has over time witnessed the Black professional class migrate to suburban areas that are racially more diverse and often predominantly White in racial make-up. So even though "the mind can achieve whatever it can

conceive," it is nearly impossible for the mind to conceive what it has never seen as an example of.

In that sense there needs to be a new aspiration in the "hood." Young Black men and women must no longer look to Hollywood for the images that will shape and mold their self-concept. The men and women, boys and girls who live in the impoverished inner cities must have a new model to emulate and embody. The "hood" needs a mental makeover. This mental makeover involves a new and radical change to our understanding of the origins of life and a reappraisal of human potential. The religious teachings of the Nation of Islam can be of great benefit in this regard.

The Honorable Elijah Muhammad once said, "Every time you look at a Black man, you are looking at God." He suffered great criticism for such a bold pronouncement. Even those who credit his ability to reform the downtrodden have disagreed with his revolutionary theology. But the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's teaching and insight into the reality of God are a reaffirmation of the Biblical scripture that describes God in human form visiting and liberating the Hebrew slaves. The Nation of Islam's theology is also an acknowledgement of God's ability to do today

Continued on page 32





Continued from page 24

what he did during the time of the prophets and peoples of yesterday.

Scholars and theologians recognize the Honorable Elijah Muhammad's teaching as a major theme in religious studies known as Divine Embodiment. The subject of Divine Embodiment covers the Bible's human manifestations of God, known as theophanies, as well as the Holy Qur'an's personification of God, known as anthropomorphism. According to Divine Embodiment doctrine, the ultimate goal for human life is to unite with the source of that life, which is God Himself. Man and woman are potentially gods. This is borne witness to by the above quotations from Christian and Islamic sacred texts. Moreover, the Bible teaches that man and woman are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26); David confirms and clarifies this by saying that "you are all gods, children of the most High God. (Psalms 82:6)" The Holy Qur'an teaches that Allah (God) made man out of Black mud and caused the angels to submit to him (H.Q. 15:28-30).

✱ If Black clergy would begin to teach and promote the idea of Divine Embodiment as the goal of human life, it could revitalize their shrinking congregations. The Economist magazine reports on the rise of atheism in America: "...the past seven years have seen a five fold increase in people who call themselves atheists, to five percent of the population, according to WIN-Gallup International, a network of pollsters. Meanwhile the proportion of Americans who say they are religious has fallen from 73% in 2005 to 60% in 2011."

In an article in The Week magazine, the rise of atheism is attributed to the rise of moralistic hypocrisy in religion. The Catholic priest sex scandal and the politicization of faith by the "religious right" are cited as evidence of an increasing unattractive and distasteful moralistic hypocrisy that

governs today's religious experience.

These infamous events of hypocrisy within the religious community are the reason why Divine Embodiment needs to become the new religious emphasis today. People are taught that man is by nature sinful, but he must worship a righteous God in order to be free of the effects of his sinful nature. Colloquialisms like "to err is human" and "nobody's perfect" have been coined to reflect this belief. However, it is easy to see how this belief creates a built-in excuse for hypocrisy and wrongdoing, because, after all, "to err is human."

The message of Divine Embodiment is what is needed to revive religion's attractiveness. Specifically, religion can be revived by a society of men and women who aspire to be like God. This is what Jesus was teaching in the New Testament when he said "I and my Father are one." This is what he was teaching when he chided the people for "loving God whom they had never seen and hating their brothers that they saw daily." The implication being that the essence and potential of God are within the capacity of your brother to manifest, and you can bring out those divine qualities if you show him love and respect.

This is what Minister Farakhan is desirous of producing in the violent streets of Chicago and everywhere his Peace In The

Streets campaign has gone. His goal is to inspire the Black community to aspire to be like God. His message is that the true worship of God is found in human beings striving to submit to Him and give up every artificial character trait, mental attitude and behavior that violates man and woman's innate goodness.

In fact, when the children aspire to be doctors, lawyers, policemen, firemen, scientists, engineers or any other nation-building profession, they are aspiring to professions that demonstrate man's ability to be like God. A good example of this are the 99 Attributes or Names of Allah (God) found in Islam. The 99 characteristics of Allah (God) reflect the noblest of qualities and abilities. They represent the perfect ideal for human beings to aspire to. It is even customary in Islamic culture for Allah's attributes to be used as the personal names of Muslims.

All this points to there being a hidden message in religion—that is, that man and woman can become gods. And since we have proven that we can be devils that destroy our communities, don't you think it is time now to go from n@#!%*s to Gods?

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The Final Call

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