

MOORISH LEADER'S HISTORICAL Message To America

In connection with the aims, objections, rules and regulations of the Moorish Science Temple of America. I deem it proper to submit to you a brief statement of our organization. Covering its inception, rise and progress and of the Mohammedan religion, which I hope will be satisfactory to you and be the means of causing you at all times to adhere to the principles of Love, Truth, Peace, Freedom, and Justice in your relations with mankind in general. I further, most anxiously hope this brief statement will help you to more clearly see the duty and wisdom of all times upholding those fundamental principles which are desired for our civilization for our posterity, such as obedience to law, respect and loyalty to government, tolerance, and unity.

We organized as the Moorish Temple of Science in the year of 1925, and were legally incorporated as a civic organization under the laws of the State of Illinois on November 29th, 1926. The name Moorish Temple of Science was changed to the Moorish Science Temple of America, May 1928, in accordance with the legal requirements of the Secretary of the State of Illinois.

The object of our Organization is to help in the great program of uplifting fallen humanity and teach those things necessary to make our members better citizens.

A National organization with a Rotarian complexion as it relates to branch Temples became obvious with the increasing number of inquiries from men and women in different sections of the country concerning the purpose of the organization. There are branch Temples in fifteen (15) different states at this time.

Since the work of the Moorish Science Temple of America was largely religious, the organization has been legally changed to a religious corporation and an affidavit to this effect has been properly filed in the Cook County Recorder's office of Illinois.

Inspired by the lofty teachings of the Koran, we have it as the revealed word of God Allah. We shall foster the principles of its teachings among our members. This is our religious privilege as American citizens, under the laws of one of the greatest documents of all time—the American Constitution.

The Mohammedan religion is the least appreciated and probably the most misunderstood of the world's great religions. This is especially true in our western world. Try to understand what Mohammedanism stands for, and some of the things it has contributed to the world.

Mohammed was the founder of the Mohammedan religion. It originated thirteen centuries ago. On Arabian Peninsula, where the streams of commerce and culture met and mingled in the middle ages, where the markets of exchange were stationed for treasures of India and the products of the Mediterranean coasts. There, this religion was established in the unprecedented short period of twenty years, and unlike many other religions, without the aid of any royal patronage and support. Buddhism had its Asoka; Judaism its Joshua; Christianity its Constantine; but Mohammedanism had no person of royal rank and power to assist in its establishment and spread.

Today this religion is acknowledged by nearly two hundred and fifty million souls and extends over an area equal to one-third of the globe. From Arabia it spread eastward over Persia, Turkestan, Afghanistan; westward across Syria, Asia Minor, Turkey; southward to Africa, covering more than half of that continent. It found its way to India and beyond, to the Islands of Sumatra, Java and Borneo.

To the early representatives of this faith the world's debt is incalculably great. For it was they who transmitted the treasures of Greek literature from the middle ages to the Renaissance; they who originated the graceful forms of which the Taj Mahal and the Alhambra are the most famous examples. It was they who contributed to the sciences of algebra and chemistry, astronomy, and medicine; they who dotted the Saracen Empire with the universities and who built at Baghdad and Cairo the most renowned universities of the world. During those centuries of ecclesiastical despotism when the Christian church suppressed all intellectual activities save those that were theological, causing the talent that reproduces to supplant the generation that creates. Mohammedans did all in their power to encourage and stimulate research in every branch of human inquiry.

The Moors or Mohammedans added to the beauty and grandeur of Spain. For centuries art, science, literature, and chivalry flourished among them, while the rest of Europe was still in the gloom of the Dark Ages. The Moors were the most ingenious and industrious of the subjects of Spain. Their expulsion from Spain in 1610, was one of the chief causes of decadence of that country, for both agriculture and industry fell into decay after their departure.

Mohammedanism makes no distinction between high and low, rich and poor; it is like the sky, it has room for all.

The Koran should be of interest to all readers. It is the Bible of the Mohammedans, ruling over the customs and actions of over 200 millions of people. It is a work of importance whether considered from a religious philosophical, or literary viewpoint.

In the promotion of plans for the betterment of mankind, there has ever been some kind of opposition. And strange as it may seem, such opposition has come from sources where there were no ideas or the lack of courage to force attention to ideas. Whether in church, state or the social community, any attempt to do anything out of the usual way, seldom fails to receive criticism.

Not because the course cannot be pursued legally or that it is unreasonable, but because it has been considered in terms as new.

The Moorish Science Temple of America has received some opposition and criticism. The main opposition has come from certain Christian ministers. They have expressed themselves as being opposed to our propagation of the Mohammedan religion. Possibly because the promotion of the Mohammedan faith among our people in the United States is considered by them in terms as something new. Whatever the reasons may be for their opposition, the legal right to oppose citizens, individuals and organizations alike for their religious belief does not exist in the United States. The door of religious freedom made by the American Constitution swings open to all, and people may enter through it and worship as they desire. Without religious freedom, no search for truth would be possible; without religious freedom, no discovery of truth would be useful; without religious freedom, religious progress would be checked and we would no longer march forward toward the nobler life which the future holds for the races of men; without religious freedom, there would be no inspiration to lift our heads and gaze with fearlessness into the vast beyond, seeking a hope eternal.

It is a sad weakness in us after all, to oppose our fellowmen for their religious beliefs and if there are angels who record the sorrows of men as well as their sins, they certainly know how many and deep are the useless sorrows that spring forth from such opposition. Possibly, love and time will cancel our ancient hatreds in this regard and prove that in mankind, tolerance is better than unwarranted opposition.

In connection with our religious aims and beliefs, we must promote economic security. The preaching of economic security among us is by no means as widespread and intensive as the circumstances demand. No other one thing is more needed among us at this time than greater economic power. Better positions for our men and women, more business employment for our boys and girls and bigger incomes will follow our economic security. We shall be secure in nothing until we have economic power. A beggar people cannot develop the highest in them, nor can they attain to a genuine enjoyment of the spiritualities of life.

Our men, women and children should be taught to believe in the capacity of our group to succeed in business, in spite of the trials and failures of some of them.

Trials and failures in business are by no means connected to any particular group of people. Some business ventures of all people fail. We have many men and women among our people who are qualified, both by training and experience, who are shining lights in the business world of all the people. It is a sad weakness in us as a people that we have withheld the very encouragement, support and patronage that would have made some of our worthy business ventures a grand success. And worst of all have joined in the condemnations of them when they failed. Except in cases of actual dishonesty, discourtesy, lack of service and actual unreliability, our business enterprises in every field of endeavor should have fullest of confidence cooperation and patronage whenever and wherever they can be given.

Read carefully the doctrines of The Moorish Science Temple of America. It contains our hopes, aims, rules and articles of religion. Every member should have a copy.

In conclusion, I urge you to remember there is work enough for all to do in helping to build a better world. The problems of life are largely social and economic. In a profound sense, they are moral and spiritual. Have lofty conceptions of your duties to your country and fellowman in general and especially those with whom you deal. This includes such honesty and righteousness as will cause you to put yourself in the other fellow's place. Look for the best in others and give them the best that is in you. Have a deeper appreciation for womanhood. Brighten the hopes of our youth in order that their courage be increased to dare and do wondrous things. Adhere at all times to the principles of love, truth, peace, freedom, and justice.

I am your affectionate leader. I shall continue to labor day and night, both in public and private, for your good, thereby contributing to the welfare of our country and its people as a whole.