

TABLE TALKS WITH MUHAMMAD

(Unless otherwise specified all answers listed as answers are made by The Honorable Elijah Muhammad, The Messenger of Allah)

QUESTION: What should a muslim name his child? I'm sure you get many letters every day asking you "what name should I give my newborn child?"

Answer: Give them a Muslim name if you want but the fact about it is you should have one too. You shouldn't apply an independent name of God to an "X". No, because this means any name that I would take that is an attribute of God should have nothing else attached to it such as X which is an unknown quantity or an unknown name because this (the attribute of God) is known. Say for instance that I would name myself Abdul X Johnson. I'm qualifying Abdul by X and Johnson.

QUESTION: Is it acceptable for one to decide to take a full name? For example Malik Muhammad?

ANSWER: It is not given for you to choose names of Allah according to your wishes. You were dead and out of his names and under the names of enemies of God and yourself and didn't know it. Therefore you don't know the attribute of God to choose for yourself. You could also make mock of His name the way you would choose and try to link them up according to your wishes. The meaning of these names for example; one name could have several meanings. It doesn't just stop at the one meaning, several meanings may be there and you may be choosing a name that nothing in your qualifications demand that you should be given such a name. Then you may choose one in which you should have chosen a different one because of your better qualifications or future life. He (Allah) named me first Karriem. Then later He changed my name to Muhammad. He told me He wanted me to have a bigger name. He referred to a more honorable name as a "bigger" name. He wanted me to take Abdul Muhammad. He wouldn't force it on me after I was too dumb to know what Abdul meant (smile). So I rejected Abdul and held on to Elijah but I didn't reject Muhammad because I liked that name. Then, at that time I didn't know the meaning of these names. That was when I was first being taught. Since I learned the meanings of Abdul, I wish I had taken it. Karriem is a lesser name in its meaning than Muhammad. Muhammad has the highest honor of any of them.

QUESTION: Isn't there a sequence in which these names should fall? For example Karriem isn't a first name is it? Could someone be named Karriem Abdullah? Would that be correct?

ANSWER: Yes. You could also be named Karriem Allah

QUESTION: How about Allah Karriem? Are the first and last names interchangeable?

ANSWER: No. You don't put anything behind Allah. You can say Karriem Allah, not Allah Karriem.

QUESTION: That's important to know because some times you find persons have chosen themselves a name and they stick them together any old way in any direction

ANSWER: Yes, that's like a man trying to put his head down on his feet (smile). The name has too much meaning to it. Karriem for example we could say is merciful or for a person with saintly qualities. When it comes to Allah that means the