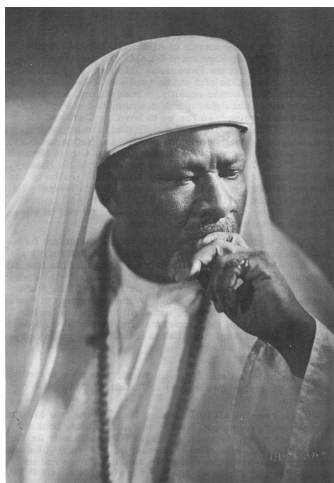


A Tribute to Shaikh Daoud Faisal

PART ONE - By Daoud A. Haroon

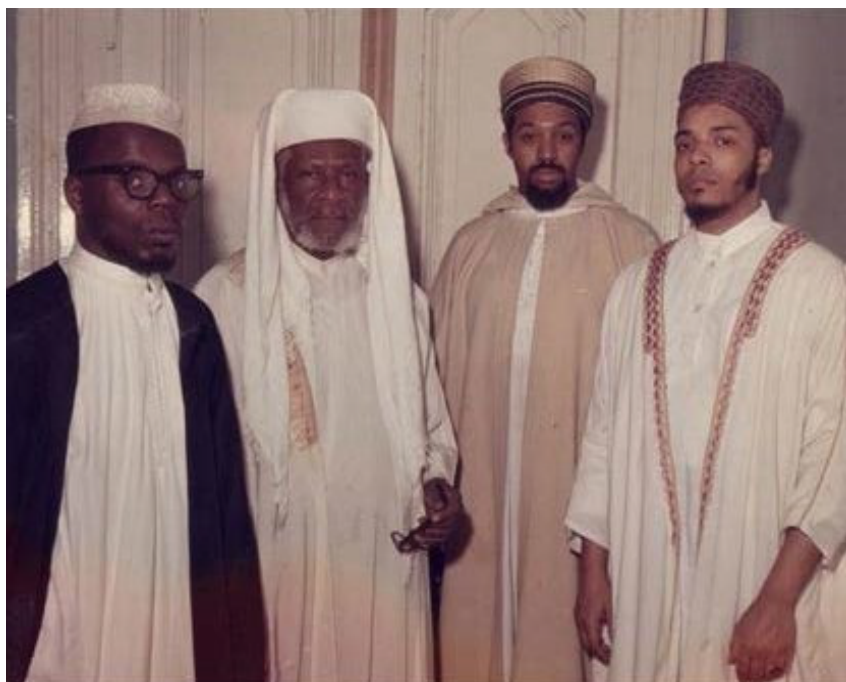
In Memory of SHAIKH DAUD AHMAD FAISAL (RA) 1891 - 1980



The Islamic Mission of America, 143 State Street, Brooklyn, NY

I cannot in good conscience proceed without asking forgiveness from the soul of the great Shaikh (ra), who acted as my spiritual mentor, father and faithful friend for many years. I also beg forgiveness from the many people I have promised over these many long years to present to the general public a tribute to the late great, now legendary Shaikh Al Hajj Daoud Ahmad Faisal (ra). On this note I ask all who read these pages to recite Surah Al Fatiha for this wonderful man who gave so much and asked so little in return.

We will attempt to present as well-rounded a picture as possible via the aid of photographs and anecdotes, - and of these I will use sparingly in hopes that a larger more complete history of The Shaikh and The Islamic Mission of America may occur in the very near future. I do hope that this introduction will clarify some misconceptions many may have held about the “reality” of this legendary figure and also dispel many myths that have built up around him in the past.



Jafar Abdallah - Shaikh Daoud - Abdul Hassan - Daoud A. Haroon

Taken in the vestibule of The Islamic Mission of America 1964/1965

How to approach writing about such an important and charismatic person as Shaikh Daoud (ra) is an awesome task but I will begin by quoting one of the oldest and well respected of his friends from the early days, Ghalib Muhammad, a former Merchant Seaman and restaurateur from Yemen now deceased. According to Ghalib:

'Shaikh Daoud was like a small match that was lit in a very dark room.'

The dark room that Ghalib referred to is America, which was and still is enveloped in a spiritual darkness (ignorance) as concerns Islam, The Quran and the role of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Shaikh Daoud was born in the year 1891 on the Island of Grenada, which is located at the southern end of The Grenadines in the South East Caribbean Sea. At that time and until the year 1974 Granada served initially as a colony and then an affiliate of the British Empire. France had occupied Grenada earlier, and as a result French and English were both spoken side by side on the Island.

Shaikh Daoud had been educated in English and French schools and had excelled in the literature and arts of both cultures but particularly in music. He had studied piano and voice but attained a high proficiency on the violin, which would later earn him a music scholarship in New York City.

I might add that my living experience with the Shaikh at The Mission on State St. left me with the distinct impression that the Shaikh was also gifted with perfect pitch. This will be an important find for those readers who are familiar with the theory and practice of music. In addition to his early exposure to European Classical music and Caribbean Folklore he was also apprenticed at an early age to a professional tailor in the seaport city of Georgetown where he learned the trades of both tailor and costumer. I have written several anecdotal accounts of this period as an apprentice that will be found in the larger version of this tribute. The Shaikh was reared in the old school tradition of having to learn multiple trades in addition to whatever professions he may have embarked upon - to balance one against the other.

By earliest accounts from the Shaikh and some of his intimate friends he arrived in America as a young music student at around the time of the First World War –this time period has an immediate relevance to what was soon to become the Harlem Renaissance in New York City (1920's -1930's) where a cultural and spiritual revolution was taking place within the confines of one of the worlds largest Black enclaves. A revolution that would ignite the creative imagination of some of the world's great 'third world' thinkers and artists the world had ever witnessed. New York City with its sprawling Harlem became a huge 'Colored' Think Tank that would spawn schools of revolutionary activity in all fields of the arts and the social sciences that have endured to this day. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlem_Renaissance)

Shaikh Daoud could be found plying his trades among such contemporaries such as Noble Drew Ali and Fard Muhammad as well as among his West Indian counterpart Marcus Garvey. Although deeply entrenched in The Harlem Renaissance he cannot be thought of solely as a 'race man' – Shaikh Daoud was by no means limited to any one sphere of social or racial activity. He was a true international man - universal might be a better word to describe him. Similar in many ways to his French and Patois speaking counterpart from Martinique, psychiatrist and humanist Frantz Fanon, Shaikh Daoud was on a mission to help heal an ailing humanity.

Where Fanon used Psychoanalysis and Political Activism in an attempt to restore equilibrium, Shaikh Daoud used these as well but sparingly, in combination with the wisdom of The Qur'an and the model of the perfect man inherent in the example of The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

During the decades that followed, from the late 1920's to the time of his death in 1980 found him championing the causes of social justice amongst the most diverse communities imaginable - in the smoldering melting pot of New York City.

From left to right: Shaikh Daoud, his friend and his aide de-camp Hajj Muqtar against the curtains, Malcolm X, & unidentified man probably an aid of Malcolm X. Taken at The UN Summer 1963 (Picture by Robert L. Haggins)



Prior to establishing The Islamic Mission of America at his home on 143 State St. in Brooklyn, Shaikh Daoud was one of the founding fathers of The International Muslim Society which made its home on the upper floors of the building that occupied 303 125th St. just two blocks West of the Apollo Theatre. The International Muslim Society or '303' as it was often referred to was the meeting place of the most diverse group of Muslims I have ever encountered in my life. Africans from every conceivable area of the continent could be found praying and studying there alongside Chinese Muslims, Malays, and West Indians from many different Islands in the Caribbean.

African Americans were often in the minority and on occasion you would also find Indian Muslims (this is before partition and the creation of Pakistan) from the length and breadth of India and on special occasions a few Arabs (Syrians as they were then called prior to World War Two) which would have hailed from a number of different countries in the Middle East. Once The Islamic Mission of America was born in Brooklyn during the late 1930's, members of the large culturally diverse Arab community were drawn to the Mission as well as the tiny Tatar and Albanian communities that grew in The Lower east Side of Manhattan and in the outer reaches of Brooklyn.

The Islamic Mission of America was legally registered as a Religious Organization, a place of Worship and as an Educational Institution according to the Religious Incorporation laws of The State Of New York, Borough of Brooklyn in 1944 – so reads the official raised stamp that you will find on most of the documents in this paper. Hopefully a trip to City Hall in Brooklyn in the near future will clarify many official details concerning the Missions legal incorporation.

The Shaikh had the legal authority to perform all religious duties accorded all legally registered 'places of worship' in The State of New York, and as such issued Muslim Birth Certificates [see images below], which were also issued when a person took his/her Shahada (acceptance of Islam), Muslim Certificates of Reclamation of Islamic Culture and Religion, Death Certificates, Muslim Identity Cards, - all of these would be witnessed, signed and stamped by a Notary Public thus becoming a legal document that could be used in a court of law.

Shaikh Daoud was a man way ahead of his time anticipating at every turn the problems that Muslims from every conceivable ethnic back ground would encounter from day to day in America.

Shaikh Daoud was a keen analyst and a brilliant counselor. In my particular case he earnestly pointed out that the Muslim must be free to practice his religion with the least amount of social and psychological pressure and that the first undertaking after having mastered the ritual of prayer was to embark upon the 'Jihad al Akbar' – the eradication of ones personal complexes and 'hang-ups.' He maintained that a man or woman could not function properly as a Muslim while entertaining a variety of mental complexes. It was then in 1966 at the age of thirty two and with a seventh grade education behind me that I embarked upon the conscious eradication of my own 'hang-ups', a pursuit which has continued to this day thanks to the strong encouragement of this wonderfully gifted spiritual counselor.

Within weeks of his counsel I registered in a GED program and have continued to develop both in and out of Academia until this day. The phrase I often use: “Attempting to Make sense out of Nonsense” although borrowed from an old friend, Dr. Jerome Long Professor of Religion, during my undergraduate studies at Wesleyan University - is the code name for my personal Jihad Al Akbar.

The Shaikh could often be heard saying: ‘Beards, costumes, exotic names and affectations were insufficient to the task at hand.’ He would remind us that being a Muslim had nothing to do with the Hollywood depiction of Muslims. As Hollywood was responsible for creating negative caricatures of the Black Community it had also contributed to the creation of negative caricatures vis-à-vis Islam and Muslims. I cannot begin to convey to the reader how devastatingly honest he was at all times – like a true parent he demanded the very best from his students and his audience.

Shaikh Daouds presence on the world stage was antecedent to Frantz Fanon’s arrival but both came with experiential knowledge of the devastating effects that Colonialism had on the African, both in the Diaspora but also in his native land. They both shared first hand experience in dealing with the psychological damage that cultural and spiritual dispossession leaves in its wake. Both tended to the sicknesses of the mind and the soul that pervaded within the so-called First World (Europe and America) & The Third World (Africa, Asia, Middle East) with its Muslim component still reeling under foreign domination in the wake of WWII and staggering to its feet from a deep amnesiacs slumber.

It would be prudent to remember that the Third World also had its European components as well – and many of them found their way to both Fanon and Shaikh Daoud. You could in many ways liken The Islamic Mission of America to a Sanitarium – ‘where one would come to regain his sanity and equilibrium.’

Another amazing fact that will come as a surprise to many is the fact that Shaikh Daoud was a Muqadim (representative) of the Algerian Sufi Shaikh Ahmad al-Alawi. (See image below right)

This came about as a result of the steady arrival in the Port of Brooklyn of Merchant Seamen - many from North Africa, Yemen, Sudan and Somalia who had recently been under the spiritual influence and tutelage of Shaikh Ahmad Al Alawi in the Mediterranean Port of Mostaganem (please see: A Sufi Saint of The Twentieth Century / Martin Lings, George Allen and Unwin, UK, 1961.)

Oddly enough many of the docks in the port of New York in Brooklyn can be found at the feet of both Atlantic Avenue and State Street. Atlantic Avenue was the hub of Arab and Middle Eastern culture. And running parallel to Atlantic Avenue is State St. with its imposing Brownstones and cobbled stone streets, the pride of Brooklyn Heights. 143 State was the residence of Shaikh Daoud, out of which The Shaikh and his wife Khadijah had operated a School of Elocution prior to the buildings eventual conversion to The Islamic Mission of America. According to descriptions given by The Shaikh and his wife, the school was in many ways a turn of the century styled finishing school – whose clientele were the children of the wealthy residents of Brooklyn Heights. The Shaikh was a true Renaissance man.



As Fanon was and still is misunderstood by many Africans on the continent, so was Shaikh Daoud during his tenure as a spiritual counselor to: - To quote The Honorable Elijah Muhammad: ‘The lost-found ... wandering in the wilderness of North America.’

One of the most pernicious of all of the effects of colonialism lies in Denial. Shaikh Daoud was quick to spell out the dangerous effects of wrongly identifying ones self – taking into consideration that most within the Diaspora were the final product of a protracted and carefully calculated spiritual and psychological holocaust - methodically carried out to render a once proud and independent people into automatons, who had no historical identity and no memory beyond their recent servitude and an emancipation of mythic proportions.

The fact remains that there was a sizeable percentage of Muslims who were brought to the ‘New World’ as captives from Africa, some of them may have been slaves before their arrival but history reveals that many (if not most) of them became slaves after their arrival in North and South America. These Muslims should be of great concern to Muslims everywhere, but interestingly enough they are not. One must ask the question Why?

As I mentioned earlier, It is to Shaikh Daoud’s credit that he attempted to remedy many of the ills that beset an ailing humanity: “A small flame lit in a very dark room.”

To be Continued...



Shaikh Daoud taken outside the Islamic Mission of America on the street (basement) level in front of the entrance to *The Institute of Islam*, which held several large classrooms, a kitchen, dining room and access to a rear patio and back yard used, as a playground and lounge area.

Please see; Frantz Fanon’s: *Black Skin, White Masks, and The Wretched of The Earth*. And Carter G. Woodson’s: *The Mis-Education of The Negro*

Please see my paper: ‘[African Muslims in America, Free, Slave & Amnesiac](#)’ – particularly the bibliography

Muslim Legal Certificates

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا إِسْلَامُ
رَبِّنَا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا
لِنَهْتَدِيَ لَوْلَا إِسْلَامُ رَبِّنَا



Islamic Mission of America

Islamic Mission of America Incorporated for The Worship of God And For The Propagation Of Al-Islam, The Revelation Of Our Lord, Containing His Laws and Command; And Guidance For Mankind As The Religion of Humanity, Defender Of The Faith And The Faithful.

MUSLIM BIRTH CERTIFICATE and CERTIFICATE OF

Reclamation of birthright of Muslim people of African-Asian origin of American birth and of slave ancestry, residing in the United States of America, the West Indies, Canada, South and Central America; members of the world community of Muslims and of (Islamic Faith): Whose ancestors were unlawfully and forcefully brought to the shores of the Americas against their will, and were enslaved; and were eventually freed through the Emancipation proclamation act of (1863); as set forth that all men were created free and equal and are entitled to liberty, freedom, justice and the pursuit of happiness.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Dear Muslim:

Assalam alaikum wa rah-matullah wa-baraka-tuh.

Welcome to the family of the world community of Muslims. Your petition for the reclamation of the names of YOUR slave ancestors, prior to their enslavement has been granted. Your name henceforth shall be known as **Abdur Rahman Haroon** and it is so registered in the registration ledger at the office of the Institute of the Islamic Mission of America Incorporated for the worship of God and for the propagation of Al-Islam. May Allah grant you good health, success, peace and happiness.

Name of Wife _____

Children's names _____

Be It Known To All Men That

according to the Emancipation proclamation act of (1863) by the government of the United States of America, relative to the freeing of the slaves, the petitioner has reclaimed the name of **Abdur Rahman Haroon** which he claimed to be the name of his ancestors preceding their enslavement. Place of birth of the petitioner. **U.S.A.**

Date of Birth. **5/13/34** Sex **MALE** Father's Name **Arron Lewis**

Place of birth of Father **U.S.A.** Mother's Name **Veda Thomas**

Place of birth of Mother **U.S.A.** Date of Birth **3/2/1901**

Therefore, In Witness Whereof and in conformity with the laws of "Islam" and the Religious corporation laws of the State of New York, United States of America vested in me through the Islamic Mission of America incorporated for the worship of God and for the propagation of Al-Islam, I have placed the seal of the Islamic Mission of America incorporated and have affixed my signature this **27th** day of **July** 19 **63** and have caused this certificate to be issued.

Signature **Dr. Ahmad Ahmad Faisal**



© 1963 J.M.
Islam Certificate of Adoption
ISLAMIC MISSION OF AMERICA

MOSQUE AND



INSTITUTION

In the name of "Allah", the "Beneficent", the "Merciful"

Peace be unto you and the Mercy of Allah and His Blessings

Petition of adoption of the "Faith of Islam", the Holy Revealed Laws and Commandments of "Allah", the Lord of the worlds, Creator and Preserver of the universe, the "Faith" of our father Ibrahim and the Prophets, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammad (peace and the Mercy of Allah be with them.

I, Abdur Rahman Haroon..... the undersigned having fully understood the teachings of "Islam", its Precepts, its Principles and its Culture, the Pillars of Faith and such laws as inscribed in the Holy Quran for the government, guidance and protection of humanity and being convinced of their truth, I recant my former life and belief and I hereby declare on my own free will and desire to accept "Islam" as my Religion in which to worship ALLAH, my Lord and hereto surrender my entire self, my will and my life to the (Will) of "Allah", in obedience to His Holy Laws and Command, and in obedience to the teachings of His Prophet.

I affirm my Faith in the belief of the oneness of God to which I bear witness that there is no god but "Allah", the one and only, and I bear witness that Mohammad is the Apostle and Messenger of "Allah" and I further affirm my Faith and my belief in all of the teachings of the Prophets and Messengers of "Allah" equally.

I vow to keep the five following principles of Faith of "Islam". I vow to make five daily prayers, to pay the poor due, to fast during the Holy month of Ramadan, to make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in a life time, when and if I can. I accept the following Pillars of Faith as a part of my Religion. I believe in "Allah" the one God, I believe in the angels of Allah, I believe in the Books Revealed by "Allah" I believe in the Prophets of "Allah", I believe in the premeasurement of all things by "Allah", good and evil, I believe in Heaven and hell, I believe in the chastisement of the grave, I believe in the resurrection of the dead and judgement day.

I vow to take the Holy Quran as my guide and the Holy Prophet Mohammad (peace be with him) as my model in all the affairs of my life.

My Name is..... Abdur Rahman Haroon

I was born in..... Boston Massachusetts

United States America

on the..... 13th day of..... May/54 My former religion was..... None

My nationality is..... American I am a naturalized citizen of..... United States

1st Witness..... 2nd Witness..... Omara Walton Fox

Therefore, by the authority vested in me through the religious corporation law of the State of New York and by the laws of the Al-Quran I have placed this seal and have caused this certificate to be issued. this 27th day of July..... 19 63

Seal

Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Jaisal

I am grateful for the constant reminders that I have been given by the former students of Shaikh Daoud

AFTERTHOUGHTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the constant reminders that I have been given by the former students of Shaikh Daoud and his wife Khadijah (ra) and members of The Community of The Islamic Mission of America 143 State Street, Brooklyn NY, many are now deceased but I laude them posthumously.

The late Bilal Abdurahman (Educator & Musician) and his widow Rakhia and their daughters who still reside in Brooklyn, NY. All of whom were students of Shaikh Daoud and Mother Khadijah and who are among the staunchest of Islamic Mission of America Supporters.

The late Jamil (Green) Karimudin former Secretary and Treasurer of The International Islamic Society, 303 125th St. NYC and his widow Lois (Balquis) Green who left NYC in the 1960's and made St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands their home.

Jafar Muhammad Abdellah, former Secretary and Treaurer of The Islamic Mission of America. A great friend and ally to many who poured through the doors.

The late Ahmed Abdul-Malik, Musician & Educator (Bassis & Oudist) and his family, strong supporters of The Islamic Mission. Now deceased.

Rajab and Lailah Abdul-Wahab and their family, Among the supporters and reminders. Now living in Atlanta, Georgia.

Ayyub Abdullah (Musician & Educator) and his wife who recently came back into my life and filled me in on many details of the fate of the Mission after the demise of Shaikh Daoud. He was amongst the group (may Allah bless them all) that finally had a tombstone placed on Shaikh Daouds grave In 1989. An account of this event will follow in due time (Insha-Allah) They now live in Orangeburg, SC.

A special thanks go out to the spiritual contributions and the memories of the following people: Malay Sufi: Hajji Babarik, Hafiz of Quran: Maqbul Ilahi (Pakistan), Ibrahim Ghuled (Somalia), Luiij-Hassan Dhrepaulez (Ethiopia/Somalia), Sister Doriah (303), Hajj Muqtar (143 State St.) Hajj Yusef the Somali Coffee seller who was killed on 125th during a robbery. Legal Expert: Hanifi (303 125th St.) Ghalib Mohammad and his wife Afifah, the many Sudanese and Yemeni merchant seamen who streamed through our lives and shared the Diwans of Shaikh Ahmed al Alawi, The Tatar Community, The Moorish Science Temple Community of Staten Island, Newark and Philadelphia, brother Hamdi Bey, brother Ameen Nuraldeen, The Malay/Polish contingent of 143 State St., – the list is endless.... To all of these generous heroes I owe a great debt.

Please forgive me if you do not see your name listed here – It is my intent to remedy that situation by mentioning as many people as I can in the near future. I hope and pray that I will be able to obtain a grant or financial aid from interested parties to travel to New York City to complete a more complete work on this subject. Time is running out and many of the survivors of the Community of The Islamic Mission of America and The International Muslim Society of 303 125th St have left us, may Allah bless them all.

For those readers who are interested in Shaikh Daoud and The Islamic Mission of America I suggest you consult my articles and short stories which can be found on <http://archives.nuradeen.com/HajjHaroon.htm>

Forgive me for anything I may have said or alluded to that may have been offensive to anyone. I meant no harm.. I am solely responsible for the contents of this paper.

A Tribute to Shaikh Daoud Faisal

PART TWO - By Daoud A. Haroon



**Shaikh Daoud in his office at The Islamic Mission of America
143 State Street, Brooklyn, NY (circa 1960)
photo courtesy of ARAMCO news**

As I mentioned in part one, that this is not an easy undertaking even though I have had the opportunity to have spent time in the past with the venerable Shaikh and his wife Khadijah (RA) and have quite a bit of memorabilia collected over the years, plus the additional information gleaned first hand by several of my surviving colleagues from those early days - but also the memories and biographies of many of the early members of the Islamic Mission of America (IMOA) and Muslims and non Muslims who had benefited from an association with the IMOA over the years. Insha-Allah many segments of this phenomenal story will be will be re-assembled and pieced together to form a reasonable reference to a truly meaningful piece of American history that transcends in many ways more conventional historic events that are not as far reaching in breadth and scope as this early attempt at Islamic propagation in the West spanning a time frame that extends from the turn of the 20th Century to the 1970's.

The vast contribution made by Shaikh Daoud, his wife Khadijah and The Islamic Mission of America will never ever really be known in its entirety. This small series will I hope encourage many young Historians and Sociologists to take on the task of delving deeper into the Life and Times of Shaikh Daoud.

Proper investigations must be undertaken in various sections of this country (USA) but also in the Caribbean and in North Africa and The Middle East. Many of the clues that I provide should hold the avid researcher in good stead. Alas I would attempt more but time and resources are not available to me at this time, so I look forward to those brave individuals who will surely come later to carry on this work.

Much of the material that is provided in this series will speak for itself – some articles and legal documents had been shaped by the Shaikh, are his own words and reflect his state of mind and the seriousness of the times in which they were written. We must also remember that he was very much a creature and a product of his time – a time that most of us living today have no reasonable index into. In order to appreciate much of the history he made we must understand at what time in history he was active and the challenges and opposition he faced in attempting to propagate Islam in America.

Having thought long and hard about Ghalib Muhammad’s statement (see part 1) I began to visualize lighting a match, - witnessing the initial brilliant explosion and then the burning flame that began to diminish as it reached the end of the match stick –Puff– its gone, just leaving a tiny trail of smoke in its wake. I thought how appropriate this visualization was to establishing a metaphor for The Life and Times of Shaikh Daoud (ra). However the essential light is still burning.

I also began to recognize that everyone has a Shaikh Daoud story and that the myriad throngs of people who brushed his shoulders and passed his way all have treasured memories that they hold on to as one wears a precious gemstone.

HE HAS KEPT HIS WORD

The illustrious, and one of the most beloved and learned Muslim leader of our time, the Rev. Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal of Morocco; Spiritual Head and National Director of the Islamic Mission of America, for the propagation of "Islam", the true "Faith", recent delegate to San Francisco tenth anniversary of the United Nations, is returning to California on a limited lecture tour. Accompanying His Eminence, the Sheikh is his beautiful and charming wife, Sayedah Khadijah, president of the Muslim Ladies Cultural Society of the Islamic Mission of America.

His Eminence, the Reverend Sheikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal is a member of the NCO of the United Nations, and an advisor of the Moroccan Delegation to the United Nations. His Eminence, the Sheikh is coming to California on a goodwill lecture tour in response to the many requests he has received from the kind and generous people of California.

The Sheikh is one of the courageous, profound and dynamic Muslim leader, author, writer and lecturer of the Muslim world. He will speak on "Islam", the revelation of the Almighty God, its laws, its principles, its culture, ethics and its philosophy as related to the Almighty God, His Laws, His Command, mankind and the peace of the world.

His Eminence the Sheikh is a profound advocate and propagator of human rights, human freedom, human dignity and the rights to self-determination, of all mankind. He believes that all peoples and nations should bow in submission to the Will, the Guidance, the Command and the Laws of their Lord Who created them in order that peace and love might prevail upon the earth. For Religion is (Obedience) to the Almighty God.



HIS EMINENCE SHEIKH DAUD AHMED FAISAL



SAYEDAH KHADIJAH, President of the Muslim Ladies Cultural Society of the Islamic Mission of America.

The Lady Khadijah will speak to the Ladies of California on Islamic Culture and Ethics.

The Sheikh believes that peace and the security of ones home can be achieved, but only when man who is but a messenger of his Lord surrender his will in submission to the Will, the Guidance, the Laws and the Command of His Lord can such achievement be attained; because peace is the attribute of righteousness, and righteousness is obedience to "Islam," which is the Laws and the Command of (Allah) the Almighty God. The Sheikh says that above all, next to obedience to (Allah) the Almighty God, the respect for human rights, human freedom and human dignity, and the rights to self determination of the individual are the most important of all, and such if implemented peace and security, love and goodwill amongst mankind can become a reality.

Flyer containing information of Shaikh Daoud and Mother Khadijah’s activities during the late1950’s.

Such is the reward for those of us who walk that ‘different’ special path. There is a saying that I first heard from another great spiritual light: Shaikh Fadhllallah Haeri (may Allah protect his secret) some years ago, and it goes something like this: “If you want to meet a man, meet his children first”. Unfortunately Shaikh Daoud (ra) and his wife Khadijah (ra) never had any children but I am aware of the fact that the Shaikh and his wife adopted a few young men and women informally, and later before his death I understand that he did adopt a son legally and that son was responsible for many of the changes that have occurred at the property at 143 State Street.

To my benefit during the time I spent with them, Shaikh Daoud And Mother Kadijah (ra) adopted me as their own and on many occasions they let me know that they considered me as their ‘own’ son. I think I mentioned earlier about being asked by the Shaikh to take his name (Daoud) - that was during the time I was having my name changed legally in the courts. - There are several other people that I know that were blessed with having been known as children of the Shaikh and his wife.

Sister Rakhiah Abdurahman the widow of the late Educator and Musician Bilal Abdurahman, who also served as The Secretary of IMOAA at various times as well.

Sister Lailah Abdul-Wahab, wife of Rajab Abdul Wahab – these two families and their children were raised for the most part of their early life at the IMOAA under the influence of Shaikh Daoud and his wife (ra). Of course there are many more I could name but these two families stand out in stark relief during my close association with IMOAA from 1960 to 1970. There is also a Sister Balquis who lived in Staten Island at that time – but I have little information on she and her children.

In the same light I would suggest that the greatness of a teacher, and his effectiveness can best be discerned by taking a close look at his students and what they went on to achieve in the light of their teacher.

Several names come immediately to mind, and if we follow these students lives carefully we will find in each one of them a particular quality that was passed on to them from their mentor.

As I mentioned earlier, Shaikh Daoud had a phenomenal ability to assess a persons capabilities and their latent talents. He also had the ability to suggest projects and enterprises that would lead the person to fulfillment. Wilayah (leadership) is special gift, particularly spiritual Wilayah – given to of those mature human beings that are chosen by the Creator to open the doors of the human heart.

Wilayah is not a gift that is presupposed by the bearer, nor is it the fulfillment of an ambition - it is a special gift from God.

Leadership as well inspiration that leads to the transformation of the human heart can only come from God. One need only spend a few moments with a true Wali of Allah to be affected – the Barakah (spiritual power) that emanates from these people is truly unique.

No matter what negative things people may say about a Wali of Allah (A Friend of God) it will only act as a stumbling block in the path of their own spiritual development – in a very strange way these negative thoughts and words are transformed into blessings for the Wali – and he or she goes on about their business transforming every one they meet - and everything they touch becomes a weapon in the defense of truth (Haq).

I will not attempt to belabor the point, but I wish to share aspects of this great mans being that may have not been readily understood by those who passed his way.

It is only recently and after many experiences of a particularly subtle spiritual nature that I have been able to understand some of the ways of a Wali. Another older saying I used to hear as a young man was: ‘If you wish to be a great man study the lives of great men’, and then later: ‘If you wish to know, be in the company of those who know.’

I feel doubly blessed to have found my way to State Street and to gain a close proximity to The Shaikh (ra) and his beloved wife Khadija (ra). The Islamic Mission of America was to become for me a crucible of gigantic proportions, in which the alchemical process of turning lesser (baser) metals into gold was begun.

It may be useful to look at the lives of a few of Shaikh Daoud’s students and close members of the community of The Islamic Mission to determine the effectiveness of Shaikh Daoud (ra) the teacher and spiritual guide.

The apples not falling far from the tree would apply here – as I have mentioned earlier it doesn’t take much for a Wali of Allah to set the wheels of change in motion. Something as simple as an inspirational sermon, a casual talk – a walk around the block or a pat on the back may serve as the motivational factor that will ‘initiate’ great change in a person.

Jafar Muhammad Abdallah for one, was inspired enough from his relationship with Shaikh Daoud to travel to Egypt and enroll in Al-Azhar University during the latter part of the 1950's. He is one of the earliest amongst the African American community in America that I am aware of that made that move. After spending several years in Egypt he was forced to return to the States because he began to have thyroid problems and developed a goiter as a result of the water in Cairo. Jafar became one in a select group of Arabic Language speakers and teachers in the New York area, and was based primarily out of The Islamic Mission and served in many capacities as Secretary, Treasurer, Instructor, etc.

Jafar was also responsible for organizing sessions of Dhikr at various mosques and at the homes of Muslims and spiritual seekers. He conducted innovative classes that led to a better understanding of the inner dimensions of the Din, and it was through Jafar that I learned of the connection between Shaikh Ahmed Al-Alawi (ra) and Shaikh Daoud (ra). It was at the request of Jafar that Shaikh Daoud (ra) eventually opened and shared many aspects of Tariqa and Sufism with me – but more importantly, the imperative of performing and mastering the ritual Prayer(s).



Jafar reading wedding contract for Abdul & Alyah Hassan in the Mosque at State St. [1962]



Passport photo of Jafar returning from Egypt

It was through Jafar that I learned about a few other exceptional African American students of the time who eventually made the move to African and Middle Eastern countries to study Islam and The Arabic Language. Eventually I met Dhafar Ahmed who would stay at State Street during his school breaks while he was attending the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia.

There were several other brothers whose names escape me who had studied abroad that I had brushed shoulders with at State St, I remember distinctly that two of them worked aboard the tug boats that plied their trades in and around the harbor of New York and had also worked as Merchant Seamen alongside many of the Somali, Sudanese and Yemeni seamen who could be seen coming and going through the doors of the Mission on any day of the week.

Then there was Nasir-udin Mahmud, who hailed from my hometown in Boston and who had spent time with Shaikh Daoud during the mid 1950's while he was also a nominal affiliate of The Nation of Islam in NYC - he had worked closely with Malcolm X and the development of the Nation's Mosque in Harlem.

I remember distinctly the night he came to visit me in 1959 at my sisters apt. in Boston to announce that he was leaving for Egypt that week, he was perhaps one of the first "formal" graduates of The Azhar, who later went on to obtain degrees from the University of Cairo and taught there for many years – he raised a family in Egypt and remained in North Africa to this day.

I remember Shaikh Daoud (ra) informing me that when he stopped in Egypt on his way home from Hajj in the early 1960's – he got a knock at his hotel room door – and lo and behold it was Nasir-udin Mahmud – who had come to visit the Shaikh and offer his services as a guide and aide during the Shaikh's visit. Shaikh Daoud (ra) was fond of telling this story because he was so proud of his young friend who had spent quality time at the Mission in New York – and was always so courteous.

Another fine example is Bilal Abdurahman (May Allah send light to his grave and preserve his memory), now deceased, and his family, who became one of the foremost African/Islamic Cultural Representatives in New York City, particularly in Brooklyn. He was an instructor of music and art in the Brooklyn Public Schools and for a long time during the 60's and the 70's was the Co-Director of "Ethno-Modes"- a Cultural Community Center in Brooklyn. He like a few other adventurous artists delved into the music and traditions of many Afro-Centric and Islamic cultures during the early periods of 'Ethnic Music' which later developed into what is now known as: Ethno-Musicology.

His affiliation with The brilliant String Bassist and Oudist: Ahmed Abdul-Malik, are well documented in both the Smithsonian Institute, The Library of Congress and Music Encyclopedias. Together they created many inroads in the amalgamation of music of Africa, the Middle East - but also the music of The African Diaspora in South and Central America as well as the Caribbean. Shaikh Daoud continually encouraged and supported these two men in their musical adventures and often attended their performances. A proclamation was issued by The Office of the President, Borough of Brooklyn, City of New York in 1994, lauding the contributions made by Ethno-Modes Folkloric Workshops and their Founders.



I remember listening to these fine musicians during the Eid Celebrations and at other festive celebrations that were held in the basement of the Mosque at 142 State Street. It was also my greatest pleasure to have played and performed with both men on many professional engagements, including concerts, nightclub appearances and recordings.

Recognition of these great documented achievements are long overdue. And I encourage further research into the uncovering and sharing the magnificent body of work that these two men, with the assistance and encouragement of their families, and the spiritual motivation supplied by Shaikh Daoud and The Islamic Mission of America be recognized and made known to a world that is largely in the dark as far as the influence that Islam and particular Muslims have had on the development of many aspects of American life particularly in the area of the Arts.*

* "Life In The Key Of Me"/ The Bedford/Stuyvesant Renaissance 1940-1960, by Bilal & Rakhia Publications, - Wikipedia Encyclopedia, etc.

In order to do justice to the life and times of Ahmed Abdul-Malik would take a volume of considerable size. Suffice it to say that there is quite a bit of information one can find online and from Wikipedia Encyclopedia. I can personally attest to the great influence he has had on several traditions of music and musicians, Western, Middle-Eastern and African. I was honored to have performed and recorded with this brilliant musician. A boyhood dream come true.



L-R: John Coltrane, Shadow Wilson, Thelonious Monk, and Ahmed Abdul-Malik at the Five Spot Cafe (Photo Don Chlitten)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN
CITY OF NEW YORK

Proclamation

WHEREAS, THOSE OF OUR CITIZENS WHO HELP BUILD AND INSPIRE COMMUNITY GROWTH AND THE ENHANCEMENT OF LOCAL CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN OUR BOROUGH ARE WORTHY OF OUR CONSIDERATION AND RESPECT; AND

WHEREAS, THE ETHIOPIAN FOLKLORE WORKSHOP, INC., BASED IN EAST NEW YORK, WILL OFFICIALLY INITIATE "JAZZ RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION WEEK IN BROOKLYN" FROM NOVEMBER 19 - 21, 1994, AND THIS HEREAFTER SPECIAL EVENT WILL CELEBRATE THE HERITAGE AND SOFT CULTURAL HERITAGE OF BROOKLYN; AND

WHEREAS, DURING THIS WEEK, THE BROOKLYN-GOVVEYANT RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION WEEK WILL RECEIVE RECOGNITION AND RESPECTING A PERIOD OF TIME WHEN MUSIC TRAVEL TO BROOKLYN-GOVVEYANT AND A PLACE WHICH PLAYED A PIVOTAL ROLE AS A CENTER FOR MUSIC AND THE ARTS; AND

WHEREAS, BELAL AND AHMED ABU-MALIK, DIRECTOR OF ETHIOPIAN FOLKLORE WORKSHOP, AND THEIR FAMILY HAVE PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PROMOTING AND PRESERVING THE AFRICAN AND TRADITIONS AND IN DOCUMENTING THE IMPORTANT HISTORY OF BROOKLYN-GOVVEYANT ARTISTS AND THEIR MUSIC; AND

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RICHARD GOLDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN, DO HEREBY PROCLAIM NOVEMBER 19 - 21, 1994,

JAZZ RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION WEEK

CELEBRATING THE BROOKLYN-GOVVEYANT HERITAGE

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I HAVE SIGNED MY SET BY HAND AND CAUSED THE SEAL OF THE BOROUGH OF BROOKLYN TO BE AFFIXED THIS 19TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 1994.



Richard Golden
President of the Borough of Brooklyn

thelonious monk quartet with john coltrane at carnegie hall



the discovery

The Library has been systematically processing, cataloging, and preserving the Voice of America Collection for many years. In February of 2005, while thumbing through some VOA acetate tapes awaiting digitization, I noticed several reels labeled "Carnegie Hall Jazz 1957." One of the tape boxes had a handwritten note on the back that said "T. Monk" with song titles. When we played it, I recognized both Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane and my heart started racing. I confirmed with Lewis that these tapes had never surfaced or been released in any form. They were indeed the tapes he'd been searching for all these years.

We've discovered many rare recordings here over the years, but this one is special. It reminds us once again why it's so important to preserve these unique materials. It's why we do what we do, and why we love this work.

There's always more.

— LARRY APPELBAUM
Recording Lab Supervisor, Library of Congress

The Library of Congress holds the nation's largest public collection of sound recordings and radio broadcasts, with some 2.5 million recordings representing nearly every sound recording format.

A grant from the Carnegie Corporation in 1940 helped create the Library's Recording Laboratory, which now works to preserve and provide access to endangered and historically significant audio collections held by the Library of Congress.

In 1963 the Library acquired the Voice of America Collection, which includes more than 50,000 tapes and discs of musical and other cultural events. Of further interest to jazz researchers, LC has the collections of Ella Fitzgerald, Charles Mingus, Mill Hinton, Gerry Mulligan, Carmen McRae, Billy Taylor, Charlie Barnet, and Louis Bellson, as well as the famous 1938 Jelly Roll Morton oral histories.

For more information about the Library's Recorded Sound collections, contact the Recorded Sound Reference Center: <http://www.loc.gov/rs/record/>.

The original tapes of this Thelonious Monk recording were found in the Archives of the Library of Congress in 2005 as can be seen in the clip. This is a fine example of Ahmed Abdul-Malik at a major peak of creativity as both an accompanist and as a soloist.

Another shining example of the cooperation between the Islamic Mission of America (143 State St.) and The International Islamic Society (303 125th St.) can be seen in the life and times of Jamil Karimudeen, aka John H. Green (Peace be Upon him) and his wife Balquis (Lois Green).

Jamil was a long time member of the community at 303 125th St. and had served as Treasurer there and at 143 State Street as well. Jamil was also a student of the Malay (Naqshbandi) Sufi: Hajji Babarik (Barbary) who lived in a rooming house in Harlem – a Charter Member of 303, 125th St. and was also a close friend of Shaikh Daoud.

Jamil was a confidante of Shaikh Daoud and a good friend to both Jafar Abdallah and myself. He was a Court Stenographer by trade and he worked for many years in Night Court in Brooklyn and in Manhattan. It was at his invitation that I used to sit and attend night court to become familiar with the legal process and to listen to the varieties of charges brought against those who were arrested on the streets of New York City. It was during the early part of the 1960's that Jamil was given the opportunity to accompany a Judge who was rotating between the New York City Courts and the Courts on the Island of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The trip was supposed to be just for a short while but Jamil and his wife were so taken with life in the Islands that they decided to stay. Jamil lived the remainder of his life in St. Croix - acquiring great distinction there and abroad.

There are very few people on the Island of St. Croix that are not familiar with Mr. Green, as the Islanders are so fond of calling him. He rendered a service to the overall community that went far beyond the call of duty. He was instrumental in helping in the development of the small Muslim Community there, and was instrumental as well in assisting in building a Mosque on the Island. He later became involved in working with the greater Muslim Community in the Caribbean, Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, etc and became a well-known and influential figure in Caribbean Muslim Activities. His talents were not confined in any way to stenography – he had many talents including photography, business and land development – all of which he cultivated and served him well in the Virgin Islands. All who passed his way benefited by his great love and compassion.

He passed away on the Island of St. Croix on September 27, 2005 and is buried there. “May Allah fill his grave with light and may his memory live on in the hearts of countless generations as well as all of those mentioned in this Memorial who are no longer with us.” Ameen.



Jamil Karimudeen/John Green, Student and friend of Shaikh Daoud Ahmed Faisal.

Court Recorder, Teacher, Community Activist, Photographer, Building Developer, Family Man, Friend and Big Brother to many here and abroad. A true Spiritual Warrior beloved and missed by many.



This is a rare photo that many around the world will be delighted to see [early 1960's]

A rare meeting of Muslim Leaders and Community members of The Islamic Mission of America from the greater New York Area – including leaders and scholars from Washington, D.C, It was held in the basement of 143 State St., Brooklyn NY. The author can be seen seated beside Shaikh Daoud (ra) as his Aide-de-Camp at the right end of the table.

Dr. Sharwabe, former Director of the Islamic Center #1 Riverside Drive NYC, is at the direct center. To his left is Dr. Rauf, Director of the Islamic Center in Washington DC. Legal expert Brother Hanafi from The International Muslim Society, 303 125th St. is seated to his right. Hajj Hassan and his wife can be seen to his left, as well as Mother Khadijah Faisal standing directly in the center in the rear. – Her assistants Rakhia Abdurahman is to her left and sister Masuda is to her right.

Malcolm X had been invited and was scheduled to be there – unfortunately he had an emergency, but sent his representative Brother (?) X, standing in the rear with his hand on his chin, standing behind Rajab Abdul-Wahab (musician) who now lives in Georgia. Bilal Abdurahman, husband of Sister Rakhia Abdurahman is standing at the far right behind Hajj D.A. Haroon.

With the assistance of Almighty Allah, this series will be continued.