

The Theology Of Time The Secret Of Time

By Elijah Muhammad

Introduction

Time is one of the greatest mysteries of human existence. Philosophers, scientists, and theologians have long debated its nature—whether it is linear, cyclical, or an illusion. Yet within the rich landscape of African American religious thought, few figures have offered a more radical and provocative reinterpretation of time than the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam from 1934 to 1975. His theology, often referred to as **The Theology Of Time**, and his exposition of **The Secret Of Time By Elijah Muhammad**, present a worldview that challenges conventional historical narratives, redefines the origins of humanity, and provides a blueprint for the liberation of Black people worldwide. This article explores the depths of that theology, examining how time became not merely a measure of seconds and years, but a divine weapon, a hidden code, and a key to understanding the ultimate destiny of the human race.

Who Was Elijah Muhammad?

Born Elijah Robert Poole in 1897 in Sandersville, Georgia, Elijah Muhammad would go on to become the most influential leader of the Nation of Islam (NOI). He taught that Black people were the original human beings, that white people were a genetically engineered race created by a scientist named Yakub, and that the end of the white world was imminent. Central to his message was the claim that he had been divinely taught by Allah in the person of Master Fard Muhammad, who appeared in Detroit in the 1930s. Elijah Muhammad's teachings synthesized elements of Black nationalism, esoteric interpretations of the Bible and the Qur'an, and a distinctive cosmology in which **time** played a pivotal role. His book *Message to the Blackman in America* and his lectures on the secret of time remain foundational texts for understanding his theology.

The Centrality of Time in Elijah Muhammad's Teachings

Time Beyond Chronology - Divine and Historical

For Elijah Muhammad, time was not simply a neutral backdrop to events. Rather, time was a created, measurable, and purposeful dimension that God used to unfold a divine plan. He taught that the universe operates on a fixed timeline of 25,000 years, divided into cycles, each with its own rulers and spiritual conditions. This grand timeline is the framework within which the history of the Black man (the Original Man) is written, lost, and ultimately reclaimed. In this system, the "secret" lies in understanding which cycle we are in, and how the cycles correspond to the rise and fall of civilizations.

Elijah Muhammad often stated that “time is the essence of life.” He insisted that the Black man had been “tricked out of his knowledge of time,” and that recovering that knowledge was essential to breaking the mental slavery imposed by the white world. The secret of time, therefore, is not a trivial puzzle but a liberating truth that restores the Black man to his rightful place as ruler of the earth.

The Secret of Time: Unlocking the Cycle of Creation

What exactly is **The Secret Of Time By Elijah Muhammad**? In his lectures, he revealed that the entire history of human civilization—from the original Black civilization 66 trillion years ago (a number he used symbolically to denote infinity) to the present—follows a precise, repeatable pattern. The secret is that the time of the white race is limited. He taught that the Yakub-made white race was given a period of 6,000 years to rule, which began approximately 4,000 years ago with the birth of the white world through the work of Yakub. That 6,000-year period ends, he claimed, with a final 100-year period of punishment and chaos, after which the original Black people would regain their sovereignty. The “secret” is essentially the knowledge of this timeline: knowing when the white man’s time will expire and how the Black man can prepare for the arrival of the new age.

The Theology of Time: Key Doctrines

The Original Man and the Fall

According to Elijah Muhammad, the Original Man (the Black man) existed in a paradise-like state on the moon (or another celestial realm) before being placed on earth. This primeval time was one of peace, knowledge, and divine unity. However, a rebellion by a scientist named Yakub led to the creation of the white race—a process that took hundreds of years and ended with the exile of those white people to the caves of Europe. This event marked the beginning of a new time period: the time of the white age, or the “Devil’s time.” The fall of the Black man into ignorance and slavery is thus tied to a specific historical moment—a breach in the divine timeline.

The Yakub Cycle and 6,600 Years

One of the most intricate parts of **The Theology Of Time The Secret Of Time By Elijah Muhammad** is the exact calculation of the Yakub cycle. Elijah Muhammad taught that Yakub began his genetic experiment 6,600 years ago, and that the birth of the first white child happened 6,000 years ago. The remaining 600 years were a transitional period. The total period of the white race’s rule is therefore 6,000 years, ending around the year 2000. During this time, the white race would develop science, industry, and oppression, but would also sow the seeds of its own destruction. Elijah Muhammad often pointed to 1914 as the beginning of the end, citing biblical prophecy (the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled) as confirmation.

The End of the White World and the Rise of the Black Nation

Elijah Muhammad’s theology of time is also eschatological. He taught that the end times would involve a cataclysmic event: the coming of the “Mother Plane,” a giant

wheel-shaped spacecraft that would destroy the white world and usher in the Kingdom of Allah. This event is not a matter of faith alone; it is a matter of timing. He insisted that “the time is near” and that Black people must prepare by learning their true history, separating from the white society, and building a self-sufficient nation. The secret of time, therefore, is both a warning and a promise: the oppressors have an expiration date, and the oppressed must awaken to their own timetable of liberation.

The Secret of Time as a Tool for Liberation

Knowledge of Time Equals Knowledge of Self

For Elijah Muhammad, knowing the secret of time was inseparable from knowing oneself. He argued that the Black man’s lack of history—his ignorance of his own time—was the primary cause of his subjugation. In a famous lecture, he said, “If you don’t know where you came from, you don’t know where you are going.” By teaching the timeline of the Black man’s original glory, the fall, and the projected restoration, he gave his followers a historical and temporal identity. This knowledge empowered them to reject the white man’s chronology (e.g., the dating of ancient civilizations) and embrace a timeline that restored Black agency and divinity.

Time and the Messianic Return

Another vital aspect of this theology is the return of the Messianic figure. Elijah Muhammad taught that Master Fard Muhammad had appeared in the 1930s as the Mahdi (the guided one) and that Elijah himself was his messenger. This appearance marked a pivotal moment in the divine timeline—the beginning of the end of the white world. The secret of time, therefore, also involves recognition of the present moment as the fulfillment of prophecy. Those who understand the times are those who accept the message. The theological implication is that time is not only cosmic but also personal: each individual must respond to the call of the hour.

Criticisms and Controversies

The Theology Of Time as taught by Elijah Muhammad has been subject to numerous criticisms, both from orthodox Muslim scholars and from secular historians. Mainstream Islam rejects the concept of a human-made white race and the idea of a 6,000-year cycle of rule. Critics argue that Elijah Muhammad’s calculations are arbitrary and lack scriptural support. Moreover, his eschatology, with the Mother Plane and the destruction of white civilizations, has been called science fiction rather than theology. However, it is important to understand that his teachings were intended as a radical corrective to the spiritual and psychological damage of racism. The secret of time, even if historically questionable, provided a powerful narrative of hope and agency for millions of Black Americans during the civil rights era.

Modern Relevance and Legacy

Today, Elijah Muhammad's ideas continue to influence movements such as the Nation of Islam under Minister Louis Farrakhan, as well as various Afrocentric and Pan-Africanist groups. The theology of time remains a fascinating lens through which to view the intersection of religion, race, and identity. In a world where debates about historical revisionism, cultural memory, and the meaning of progress are ever-present, Elijah Muhammad's insistence on a hidden, divine timeline reminds us that how we understand time shapes how we understand ourselves. Whether one accepts the secret of time as literal truth or as a metaphorical call to awaken, its impact on Black religious thought is undeniable.

Contemporary scholars and readers interested in African American religious history often revisit Elijah Muhammad's lectures on time to explore how marginalized communities construct counter-narratives of history. The theology of time is not just about chronology—it is about justice, restoration, and the ultimate triumph of truth over falsehood. In that sense, the secret of time endures as a powerful symbol of hope.

Conclusion

The Theology Of Time The Secret Of Time By Elijah Muhammad invites us to look beyond the ticking clock and consider time as a divine fabric woven with purpose, judgment, and redemption. Elijah Muhammad's unique synthesis of history, esotericism, and Black nationalism created a temporal framework in which the oppressed were no longer victims of time but masters of it. While his specific claims may be controversial, the underlying message—that understanding time is essential to understanding destiny—resonates across cultures and faiths. Ultimately, the secret he revealed was not merely a date or a number; it was a call to remember, to reclaim, and to prepare for a new dawn in the eternal cycle of human civilization.