

HOW SOME DEFINE LIVING

Gary McDade

Jesus Christ said, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). The false religions of the world have a distorted and deranged view of life here and hereafter. Jesus Christ the Son of God is “the resurrection, and the life” (John 11:25). The religion of Islam, for instance, holds some very strange ideas about life. The Koran says, “And certainly We create man of an extract of clay, Then We make him a small life-germ in a firm resting-place, Then We make the life-germ a clot, then We make the clot a lump of flesh, then We make (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothe the bones with flesh, then We cause it to grow into another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators! Then after that you certainly die” (Surah 23:12-15). Sounds so intimate, endearing, and personal and breathes of dignity, honor, and hope, does it not? Furthermore, a footnote in the Koran says, “The Muslims do not accept that man was created six thousand years ago. The Imamiyyah [one who is an ‘Imam’ is a recognized Muslim leader] accept the tradition that Allah created thirty Adams before our father Adam, and one Shi’ah Imam has gone so far as to say that hundreds of thousands of Adams were created before our Adam (RM). Nor do the Muslims accept that our world is the only world in this universe; one Imam is reported as saying that in God’s universe there are twelve thousand systems each bigger than our solar system (RM).”¹

The Muslim view of heaven, which they call paradise, places heaven right next to hell with only a door separating the two so that even the sounds of voices from hell can be heard in heaven! The word “paradise” occurs only twice in all the Koran. Surah 18:107-108 has the first reference to paradise: “As for those who believe and do good deeds, for them are Gardens of Paradise, an entertainment, To abide therein; they will not desire removal therefrom.” And, the last reference is in Surah 23:10-11: “These are the heirs, Who inherit Paradise. Therein they will abide.” All that separates heaven and hell is a wall with a door in it: “On the day when the hypocrites, men and women, will say to those who believe: Wait for us, that we may borrow from your light. It will be said: Turn back and seek a light. Then a wall, with a door in it, will be raised between them. Within it shall be mercy, and outside of it chastisement. They will cry out to them: Were we not with you? They will say: Yea, but you caused yourselves to fall into temptation, and you waited and doubted, and vain desires deceived you, till the threatened punishment of Allah came, and the arch-deceiver deceived you about Allah. So this day no ransom will

be accepted from you, nor from those who disbelieved. Your abode is the Fire; it is your patron and evil is the resort" (Surah 57:13-15; cf. also 7:40-51 where the "door" is called a "veil" and conversations continue to go back and forth from the denizens of hell and the "inmates" of heaven).²

The religion of Joseph Smith, the Mormons, in *Doctrines and Covenants* chapter 76 describes four future "kingdoms" or worlds which are presumably other planets. One for the "Sons of Perdition," the Devil and lost human beings. A second place called the "Celestial Kingdom" is for the righteous including couples married for eternity who shall continue to procreate, whose offspring will not be human but "spirit children" (cf., however, Matt. 22:29-30). (Those who are in the next two kingdoms are denied the power of procreation and do not live in family groups). The so-called "Celestial Kingdom" is the highest heaven for the Mormons and exists on the burnt up and remodeled earth (cf., however, II Pet. 3:10-12). A third place is called the "Terrestrial Kingdom." It is composed of morally clean people who died without law or did not keep the law of God. It also houses the lukewarm Mormons. Notice, please, that those in this kingdom "receive the presence of the Son, but not of the fulness of the Father" (v. 77)! The fourth place is the "Telestial Kingdom" on yet another planet where the immoral and those who would not receive Joseph Smith's doctrines go (v. 101). This group is the largest in number (v. 109). Now again observe that they "receive not of his [God's] fulness in the eternal world, but of the Holy Spirit" (v. 86), and thereby they divide the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit between the various kingdoms. Again, *Doctrines and Covenants* says, "They shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end" (v. 112). So, the Mormon view of eternal life has the Godhead divided up and stationed on different planets. Did you notice that the ones who were immoral and rebellious are supposed to dwell with the Holy Spirit eternally, "worlds without end"? Clearly, Joseph Smith did not think much of the Holy Spirit!³

A fallacy common to both the Muslims and the Mormons is in the seventh century AD Mohammed rejected the Bible and its teaching on life here and hereafter and in the nineteenth century AD Joseph Smith rejected the Bible and its teaching on life here and hereafter. Bible believers know that the God of heaven desired close communion and fellowship with man whom he created, but due to sin that close fellowship was interrupted, the Redeemer was introduced to the world, and those saved by him are ultimately ushered into the very presence of God as heirs of eternal life. John wrote of the abode of the soul, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).

ENDNOTES

¹*The Holy Qur'an, Arabic Text, English Translation and Commentary*, Maulana Muhammad Ali, ed. (Columbus, OH: Ahmadiyyah Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, Inc., 1995), p. 186. The initials "RM" stand for "Ruh alMa'ani (Commentary), by AbulFadl Shahab alDin alSayyid Mahmud alAlusi" (p. li).

²*Ibid.*, p. 1030. The interpretation that this passage refers to heaven (paradise) and hell belongs to Maulana Muhammad Ali, a Muslim Imam (cf. pp. xviii-xx).

³See Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Four Major Cults* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1963, sixth printing 1978), pp. 71-74.