

SYLVIA'S CORNER

THE MORMON IDEA OF HEAVEN vs. THE BIBLE VERSION

In Mormonism, there are three kingdoms.

According to their church teaching, there is a Telestial Kingdom. That is where they say that the dishonest, the liars, the sorcerers, the adulterers, and the whoremongers go. Next, is the Terrestrial Kingdom where their theology states that good and honorable people go that according to them, have been blinded by the craftiness of men. I take this to mean that they did not accept the doctrines of Mormonism. Then, there is the kingdom where all the seriously practicing Mormons plan to go. This kingdom is called the Celestial Kingdom and this one takes work! They believe that they have to earn their way there. These are the things that they must do to get there from their perspective:

1. Have faith in their religion.
2. Repent.
3. Be baptized into Mormonism.
4. Receive their gift of the Holy Ghost,(a different one).
5. Live a moral life.
6. Live a life loyal to their church.
7. Tithe 10% of their income.
8. Do whatever duties that the church calls on them to do, such as leading Relief Society, teaching Sunday School, holding an *office in the Mormon Priesthood*, etc.

In this last kingdom, the Celestial one, there are three different areas to go. If all the previous criteria have been met, they believe that they can get to the first part of that kingdom. If they are unmarried Priesthood members, going on a mission, or singles that wish to go through the temple ceremonies, they can get to the second level. BUT, the only way to get to the highest level of the Celestial kingdom, is to be married in the temple.

they believe is going to happen to them. To substantiate this, they use the scripture in 1 Corinthians 15:41. It reads; "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory."

BUT.....What does the Bible say about these three kingdoms?

In Amos 9:6, it says, referring to God, that, "It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven." There are stories! There are different realms. In fact, God defines some of this in Isaiah 66:1 &2. He states, "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool."

There are three heavens mentioned in the Bible. First, in Genesis 1:8, God called the firmament, (atmosphere), heaven.

Then in Psalm 33:6, it says that "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." So from this we see that God made the space where the sun, the moon, and the stars dwell. You might call this the steller heaven. This would also be called the second heaven.

Then, the third heaven is the place where God dwells. This is paradise. Paul actually saw it. In Chapter 12:2 of 2nd Corinthians he says, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven." The Bible says that there is such a place! How exciting!!! In Deuteronomy this is referred to as the heaven and the heaven of heavens. It speaks of it as the Lord's. In 1 Kings 8:27, the heaven and the heaven of heavens are referred to again.

The third heaven is the place where those that have accepted Christ will be when they die. It is also called paradise. This is where God abides. Remember the words of Jesus to the thief on the cross in Luke 23:43? He told the thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

So, you might ask, what's the difference? Well, there's a HUGE difference. One set of beliefs requires strict

There you go, that's a thumbnail sketch of what

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obedience to laws and ordinances in order to get there. Let's think for a moment. Would we want to take a chance on our works getting us to heaven? The things that we do? In that case, what would we need God for? What would we have needed Jesus to die for?

All a Christian needs to do is to accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior. They just need to repent of their sins and tell Jesus that they know and accept that his death on the cross was for them, and some day they will get to dwell with him in the third heaven. THAT'S IT! It is a free gift. No works, no strings attached.

Can you see that without Jesus and what he did for us, none of us would be going to heaven? I certainly do!