

MAHOMETANISM AND CHRISTIANITY

AN ADDRESS BY ELDER PARLEY P. PRATT, DELIVERED IN THE BOWERY,
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Recorded by G. D. Watt

My brother, George A. Smith, has wished us to excuse his Mahometan narration, but I would feel more like giving a vote of thanks to the Almighty and to His servant for so highly entertaining and instructing us.

I am aware it is not without a great deal of prejudice that we, as Europeans, and Americans, and Christians in religion and in our education, so called, have looked upon the history of Mahomet, or even the name; and even now we may think that Mahometanism, compared with Christianity as it exists in the world, is a kind of heathenism, or something dreadful, and the other we look upon as something very pretty, only a little crippled; and for my part, I hardly know which to call the idolatrous side of the question, unless we consider Mahometanism Christianity, in one sense, and that which has been called Christianity, heathenism.

Mahometanism included the doctrine that there was one God—that He was great, even the creator of all things, and that the people by right should worship Him. History abundantly shows the followers of Mahomet did not take the sword, either to enforce their religion or to defend themselves, until compelled to do so by the persecutions of their enemies, and then it was the only alternative that presented itself, to take up the sword and put down idolatry, and establish the worship of the one God; or, on the other hand, be crushed and cease to be, on account of the idolatrous nations around them; they

seemed to act on the defensive, although it might legally be considered aggression.

The Greek and Roman Churches, which have been called Christian, and which take the name of Christians as a cloak, have worshipped innumerable idols. On this account, on the simple subject of the Deity and His worship, if nothing more, I should rather incline, of the two, after all my early traditions, education, and prejudices, to the side of Mahomet, for on this point he is on the side of truth, and the Christian world on the side of idolatry and heathenism.

In the first place, the latter lay it down as a point of theology, and it is a foundation point too, that there is one only true God, consisting of three persons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but without body, parts, or passions. Here is the exact image and likeness of an idol established through the principal creeds of Christendom, that is, if it is an image at all, or if it makes a shadow at all, it is that of an idol: it is a being that never existed in heaven, earth, or hell; it will not make even a shadow. Indeed, it is a thing literally motionless and powerless, as much so as any term that can be used to mean nonentity.

Jesus Christ, whom we worship as the Son of God, and the Savior of the world, has body, parts, and passions, and he is like his Father; he is the express image of his Father's person and the brightness of His glory, whom we also worship. They are individual