

They believe in numerous resurrections

Pope Shenouda III

Their belief:

They believe that there is no general resurrection, but there is a heavenly resurrection and an earthly resurrection, as well as a resurrection for the wicked in which they are given a chance for repentance extending for one thousand years (their book: The rich man, p. 370)

a) The heavenly resurrection for "the little flock":

They quote this name from (Lk12: 32). This resurrection – in their belief—is for the elect, where only 144 thousand will rise. It started in 1914 and continued till 1918. The Jehovah Witnesses who are now alive join those who have risen. From them the heavenly government will be formed in heaven. They will be kings and priests under the leadership of Jesus. They will be His companions (Ibid., p. 315), and they alone will have a spiritual life.

According to them, the resurrection will be in new bodies. "Even the Lord Christ," they say, "arose in a new body which He acquired and with which He appeared"! Also as Christ was re-formed in the person of Angel Michael, those will likewise be re-formed!!

b) The earthly resurrection for "the other sheep":

This name is taken from (Jn10: 16). This resurrection—according to them—is for the majority. Those will not be transformed by the Lord into spiritual people. They will rise in material bodies to live on the earth, and will be governed from heaven by Christ and the 144 thousand.

Among those who will have this earthly resurrection are: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the men of faith mentioned in (Heb11). They will be chiefs and rulers on earth, as legal representatives of Christ. Through them a righteous government will be established on earth (their book: The Harp of God, p.400)

They will get married and beget children under this government. They will build houses for dwelling, plant vines for drinking, and

subjugate the earth.

Among them will be David, Daniel, and the prophets, as well as John the Baptist (their book: *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, p.79, 80)

In explanation of their view they say:

God has not created the earth to no avail, but He cleanses it and prepares it for dwelling, to fulfill His promise to Abraham of dwelling it forever. It is the purpose of God from the beginning, and He is going to fulfill it.

The earth will not continue in its present state nor with its present inhabitants. The fire of the Last day which will consume the wicked, will cleanse the earth from the stains of sin. Jerusalem will be the capital of the universe; its streets of gold, its gates of precious stones, and its area 130665 square miles, each side 375 miles. Thus it will be the greatest capital in the world. It will contain brooks, trees; lowlands, attractive mountains, calm plains, and the Tree of Life.

God will make of this earth a glorious paradise, and soon Jehovah will put an end to every malicious human system. The earth will be paradisiacal (their books: *"Truth that leads to eternal life"*, p.102—113; *"Second Advent"*, p. 76—82; *"Signs of Times"*, p.14—46...)

The third group that will rise:

Those are not of the Jehovah Witnesses, but of but of the good people. They will rise in the second resurrection, i.e., in the second millennium.

Therefore, they believe that those who will enter heaven are only few. Even the Jehovah Witnesses, nor all of them will enter. David the Prophet, John the Baptist, the greatest of those born of women (Mt11: 11), our great fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the prophets, and the heroes of faith in the old Testament, all of them will not enter heaven but will live in an earthly paradise. It is God's intent since the beginning and He is fulfilling it.

Refutation:

1.The Scripture did not mention those resurrection, nor their kinds. It is only stated, "the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done

good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.” (Jn5: 28, 29)

2.The term “little flock” in the Scripture does not have the meaning intended by the Jehovah Witnesses.

It says, “Do not fear, little flock, for it your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms.....” (Lk12: 32—40)

What has this to do with their talk about the 144 thousand who alone will dwell heaven?

As for those, they are mentioned in (Rev14: 3, 4); as having not been defiled with women; in their mouth no deceit was found, and being without fault before the throne. It is not said that they are of the Jehovah Witnesses, nor was the talk about the resurrection.

The 144 thousand sealed on their foreheads (Rev7: 4—8), they are of the tribes of the children of Israel; 12 thousand of each tribe. This has no relation to the Jehovah Witnesses. Probably also, the tribes and the numbers are symbolic as usual in the Scripture.

Furthermore, it is stated in the same chapter, “After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes....standing before the throne and before the Lamb.....All the angels stood around throne....” (Rev7: 9—11)

Certainly all this innumerable multitude was in heaven, because they were before God’s throne with the angels. Hence, their belief about the spiritual resurrection of the 144 thousand who will enter heaven and they all are of Jehovah Witnesses, contradicts the teaching of the Scripture.

3.It is not reasonable that Jehovah Witnesses alone enter heaven while great fathers and prophets be deprive of it!!

It is not self-conceit of Jehovah Witnesses when anyone of them thinks he will be better in the resurrection than Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom the Lord said, “I am the God of Abraham...Isaac, and...Jacob” (Mt22: 32; Ex3: 6)?! Is it not self-conceit of them to think that they will dwell in heaven while the fathers and prophets will dwell on earth, and that they will enjoy things which when David the prophet, Daniel the prophet, and John the Baptist will be deprive of?!

4. The term "other sheep" in (Jn10: 16) cannot apply to the fathers and the prophets, nor to the heroes of faith mentioned in (Heb11). Those had been chosen by God thousands of years before Jehovah Witnesses and the like. Is it then logical that Jehovah Witnesses be that little sheep who will have such a spiritual resurrection, while the great prophets be the other sheep who are not of that fold?! Is it possible that these great prophets rise in material bodies and not enter the kingdom of heavens, and live in an earthly paradise, build houses, and dwell in them?!

5. The Scripture says that Paradise is the third heaven (2Cor12: 24). It is never mentioned that the Paradise is on the earth or that the people may live on earth a paradisiacal life. Such material, sensual, and earthly enjoyment mentioned by Jehovah Witnesses related to life after death, contradicts the Scripture's teaching that says, "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." (1Cor2: 9).

6. It is never mentioned in the Scripture that there will be procreation after the resurrection from the dead. It is an allegation of Jehovah Witnesses about those other sheep who will have an earthly resurrection! The Lord, on the contrary, in his answer to the Sadducees, said clearly, "in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven." (Mt22: 30)

7. It is not true that the earth will be cleansed by fire and inhabited by people. Actually it will pass away as the Lord says in (Mt5: 18). And St. Peter, describing the day of the Lord, says that the heavens will pass away with a great noise, the elements will melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works will be burned up (2Pet3: 10). It is also mentioned in (Rev21: 1) that there will be a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth will have passed, as well as the sea.

8.The claim that the day of resurrection will be a thousand years is an invention of Jehovah Witnesses solely.

God the Almighty does not need a thousand years to raise the people in order to judge them, for, "with God all things are possible." (Mk10: 27) It is also said, "all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth." (Jn5: 28, 29)

9.Also it is not mentioned that those who have done evil will spend a thousand years of repentance !

It is said that they will rise to the resurrection of condemnation (Jn5: 29), and we learn that it is appointed for me to die once and after this the judgment (Heb9: 27)

Further more we have the words of our father Abraham to the rich man: "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us." (Lk16: 26)

The Lord Christ, likewise, said to the Jews, "you will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come." (Jn8: 21) Therefore, repentance is not possible after the resurrection, and those who want to repent will not need a thousand years for this.

10.Another unacceptable view of Jehovah Witnesses is that some, including Adam, will not rise at all! On the contrary, the Scripture teaches us that everybody will rise.

Not only those who will be on the Lord's right hand, but also those on the left will rise (Mt25: 31—33).

And the Scripture says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (2Cor5: 10) No one is expected. "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Mt13: 43)