

The Non-Believing World

There is yet another class of people that is neither the little flock nor the great multitude. This class of people consists of those who have not had enough exposure to Jehovah to understand what is required of them.¹ These would be referred to as ‘the lost’ by most evangelicals. They are considered unrighteous, but when they die, the ransom removes the curse of original sin, and their own death pays for their personal sin. At the resurrection, they will be raised with physical bodies on the new earth.² Russell taught that even Adam was included in this redemption. Those resurrected will learn of Jehovah and come to follow him. In the end, those who learn to be obedient to Jehovah will be adopted to eternal life. Those who rebel will be destroyed.³ Russell understood that only a very small number known only to God would not be resurrected. Later teaching by Rutherford restricted those who would benefit from the ransom. Those who have committed especially heinous sins such as Adam, the residents of Sodom, Judas Iscariot, and those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit will not be resurrected.⁴ Current Jehovah’s Witness doctrine teaches that in addition to the number of people deemed incorrigible, billions

¹ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Resurrection—for Whom, and Where?,” *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1982), 171, accessed May 21, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1982%20You%20can%20live%20forever%20in%20paradise%20on%20earth%20\(pe-E\)+Stern%20Magazine.pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1982%20You%20can%20live%20forever%20in%20paradise%20on%20earth%20(pe-E)+Stern%20Magazine.pdf). “It is true that this man did bad things. He was ‘unrighteous’. Also, he was ignorant of God’s will. But would he have been a criminal if he had known about God’s purposes? To find out, Jesus will resurrect this unrighteous man, as well as thousands of millions of others who died in ignorance.”

² Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Resurrection,” *Insight*, Vol. 2 (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1988), 790, accessed May 21, 2018, <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1200003709>. “The heavenly ones receive a spiritual body, for it pleases God for them to have bodies suitable for their heavenly environment. But those whom Jehovah pleases to raise to an earthly resurrection, what body does he give them? It could not be the same body, of exactly the same atoms. . . . Rather, he would be given a body as it pleases God. Since God’s will and pleasure are that the resurrected person must obey the “things written in the scrolls,” it would have to be a sound body, possessing all its faculties. . . . In this way the individual could properly and justly be held responsible for his deeds during the judgment period. Yet the individual would not be perfect when brought back, for he must exercise faith in Christ’s ransom and must have the priestly ministrations of Christ and his “royal priesthood.”

³ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Judgment Day and Afterward,” *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1982), 178-179, accessed June 4, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1982%20You%20can%20live%20forever%20in%20paradise%20on%20earth%20\(pe-E\)+Stern%20Magazine.pdf](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Books/Teachings/1982%20You%20can%20live%20forever%20in%20paradise%20on%20earth%20(pe-E)+Stern%20Magazine.pdf). “So after being given full opportunity to change their ways and to learn righteousness, such wicked ones will be destroyed. Some will be put to death even before Judgment Day ends. (Isaiah 65:20) They will not be permitted to remain to corrupt or spoil the paradise earth.”

⁴ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Armageddon—A Happy Beginning,” *Watchtower*, December 1, 2005, 6, accessed May 21, 2018, <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/2005881>. “What, then, is to be done with those who threaten the peace and security of their fellow humans? God must eliminate such ‘pests’—the incorrigibly wicked—for the sake of the righteous ones.—2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9; Revelation 21:8.” So...at this happy beginning 7.7 billion pest must be eliminated. Then the 8 million or so Jehovah’s Witnesses can inherit the new world where they will work towards perfection for 1000 years.

alive on earth will perish without hope of resurrection at Armageddon unless they have a relationship with Jehovah and the Watchtower Society.

Interestingly, there is very little difference between the fate of those in the great multitude and those who have not known or followed Christ. The exception to this would be if Armageddon occurred during their lifetime since the Jehovah's Witnesses not in good standing and the lost would all perish with no hope of resurrection. However, with that one exception, according to current Watchtower theology, both the lost and the great multitude are saved from the effects of original sin by the ransom, both have had their individual sins forgiven through their own death, and both will be resurrected with a clean slate. Both groups will live during the millennium and will learn to follow Jesus. After proving themselves faithful and dedicated, there will be a great final test. If the test is passed, members of both groups will have earned the right to adoption by God and eternal life.⁵ Some, however, will be obstinate and continue to reject God's love. They will perish.⁶ They will be annihilated, but they will not experience torment.⁷

⁵ Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The Millennial Hope Triumphs," *Watchtower*, April 15, 1981, 19-23, accessed May 21, 2018, <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1981%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>. "What is more, the millennium will be just a beginning. After a final test, when the 1,000 years have ended, those men and women who remain faithful to God's universal sovereignty will be ushered into an eternity of life on a paradise earth."

⁶ Russell, "The Divine Plan of the Ages," 1886, 127. "Many have imbibed the erroneous idea that God placed our race on trial for life with the alternative of eternal torture, whereas nothing of the kind is even hinted at in the penalty."

⁷ *Ibid.*, 144. "They enter into everlasting life, and the others are remanded to death, extinction ('second death'), the same sentence as in the first judgment, from which they had been reckonedly released by Christ who secured the right to release them by the payment of their ransom—by his death. This will be their second death. No ransom will be given for them, and there will be no release or resurrection for them, their sin being a willful, individual sin against full light and opportunity, under a most favorable, individual trial."