

## Eternal Conscious Torment vs Annihilation 002

Daniel 12:2, Matthew 25:46

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All right, if you could locate Daniel 12:2. We completed our last series. Since it is a new year, I was praying about what to talk about next in Sunday School, and the controversy broke out on this subject Annihilationism versus Eternal Torment. I thought this would be a good mini-series to look at.

We are in Part Two. Last week was Part One in a brand new series here in Sunday School called Annihilationism versus Eternal Torment. The last time I was with you, the last Sunday in December, we introduced this controversy. It's a fusion of two ideas. One is called conditional immortality, and the second is called Annihilationism.

I used Arnold Fruchtenbaum—not that he promotes these things—but he explains what they are as a baseline for helping us to understand these two ideas that are now being brought together by many evangelicals. Conditional immortality is the idea that we, with our soul, were never designed to live forever. People are mortal and they do not become immortal until they become believers. Only the believers are immortal and last forever. The rest of the human population was never designed to live forever.

What happens to unbelievers that do not know Christ? Well, what these ideas say is that they go into hell for a season, but at some point they just disappear.

Why would they disappear? Because they were never granted the gift of immortality, which is something that God only gives to the believer.

These ideas have been floating around for quite a long time, actually, but they never really were mainstream within Christianity until December 6th, 2025, when Kirk Cameron—who is a high, visible evangelical, because he's an actor—decided to bring these ideas back into vogue. Here's a newspaper clipping that occurred when this happened.

It says:

'Kirk Cameron Denies "Eternal Conscious Torment," Is Now An Annihilationist?'<sup>1</sup>

If you listen to him recently and what he's doing, he is trying to piece together conditional immortality and Annihilationism to say that people that die without Christ do

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<sup>1</sup> <https://protestia.com/2025/12/06/kirk-cameron-denies-eternal-conscious-torment-is-now-an-annihilationist/>

not go to hell forever. We introduced that idea last time, and here is an outline that we are going to follow as we try to expose this for the false teaching that it is.

The first stop on this bus ride is the Biblical arguments against Annihilationism. I had someone come on my YouTube channel this week and accuse me of not representing the other side fairly and give me all these verses.

I looked at all this stuff and I said, "Did you even read the outline that I put up here? Because we are going to handle all those things under point number four." Every verse the guy put up—I am not going to respond to it right now—but we will be responding to the verses that conditional immortality annihilationists use.

Before we get to that, we are on point number two. 'Biblical Arguments Against Annihilation.'

Why is it that I think hell lasts forever? As well as that people who die without Christ—being unbelievers—stay in hell forever? Do I believe that because it is just a swell idea to believe in? No, if I had my choice, I would not believe this.

But the issue is what saith the Scriptures. Here are the Scriptures that we are going to look at as we show you that hell is forever and unbelievers do go into hell forever. Let's start here with Daniel 12:2.

This is one of the clearest pictures of the afterlife for both the saved and the unsaved.

In the Old Testament it says:

*"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others—" (Daniel 12:2)*

Who are the others? Unbelievers.

*"—but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).*

You will notice that when Daniel describes the afterlife, he uses the Hebrew word 'olam [עולם]' for the believer. That is the word translated as 'everlasting.' In other words, believers will go to eternity with God forever. Then Daniel has a conjunction; here comes the contrast: the others. Who would the others be? The unsaved. They will go into disgrace and everlasting contempt. Here you see 'olam [עולם]' repeated.

The exact same word that is used to describe the fate of the saved in the first part of the verse is the exact same word that is used to describe the fate of the unsaved in the rest of the verse.

Whatever you are doing with 'olam [עולם]' related to 'contempt', you also have to do with 'olam [עולם]' related to 'everlasting life.' All of that to say, if eternal life with God for the Christian is forever, then so is eternal damnation, because an identical word is used to depict both.

In other words, the word 'olam [עולם]' is used twice here, and it is completely inconsistent to say, "Oh, I believe in eternal life for the saved, but I reject eternal life for the damned," when the exact same verse describes both with the exact same language.

By the way, that word 'olam [עולם]' is used to describe God. Psalm 90:2.

*"Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting—"*

That is 'olam.'

*"—to everlasting, You are God" (Psalm 90:2).*

There the word is used twice to describe God. My point is, if 'olam [עולם]' does not mean 'forever' for the damned, then all of a sudden you are playing games with everlasting life for the saved, and then you are also saying, "Maybe God is not forever because it is the exact same word."

Notice Micah 5:2—not the best timing on this since we just missed Christmas; though I did try to teach on this on Christmas Eve—but there, again, 'olam [עולם]' is used to describe God.

It identifies the birthplace of Jesus Christ, and it says that God is coming forth from the city of Bethlehem, and it defines God as *"from the days of eternity."* That is the same word: 'olam.'

Micah 5:2, written 700 years before the birth of Christ says:

*"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2).*

That is a translation of the word 'olam [עולם]'. And this, of course, is why Jesus had to be born of a virgin. Because if Jesus was not born of a virgin, He would have had a beginning point—the point of conception, which is our beginning point as people.

But Jesus had no beginning point. He is the eternally existent second Member of the Godhead. He is the uncaused Cause. He is the One that has always been and will ever be. There was never a time in which He was not. He is the One born supernaturally into our world.

If it was not supernatural, then you could mark His beginning point at His conception. But He had no natural conception. He was born of a virgin, and He had to be born of a virgin to protect His personality.

Eternity is going to be born in Bethlehem. That's what it says, and that is our same Hebrew word, 'olam [עולם]'. So, if 'olam [עולם]' means 'forever' describing God—Micah 5:2; Psalm 90:2—then you cannot say, "Well, 'olam [עולם]' does not mean 'forever' for the unsaved. Just as God is forever and just as eternal life is forever, so is eternal damnation."

Notice Genesis 21:33. If you were with us in our Genesis study, you will recognize this chart. These are the different names of God as expressed in the Book of Genesis.

Genesis 21:33 says of God:

*"Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he called on the name of the Lord, the Everlasting God" (Genesis 21:33).*

This becomes one of God's names, El—which means 'God' in Hebrew—and 'olam [עולם],' which means 'forever.'

One of the words that is used to describe God in terms of one of His names is 'eternal.' Micah 5:2: God is eternal. Psalm 90:2: God is eternal. Genesis 21:33: God is eternal.

Do you see how out on a limb you have to go to say that the exact same word 'olam [עולם]' does not mean 'forever' in Daniel 12:2? It is just an exercise in people being very selective in how they are interpreting Scripture.

Now, there is at least one example I could find in the Bible where 'olam' does not mean forever. That is over in Exodus 21:6.

Exodus 21:2 says:

*"If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment" (Exodus 21:2).*

It is dealing with a slave, and it is dealing with a slave being set free under the Mosaic Law. We could go on a tirade here about slavery, right? (which we are not going to do). But I find it interesting that the Mosaic Law allowed slaves to go free. The Egyptians, who took Joseph and sold him as a slave into Egypt, had no such provision. Anyway, what if the slave does not want to go free and likes his master? What does he do then? Well, there is provision for that in the Mosaic law.

Exodus 21:5:

*"But if the servant plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,' then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently" (Exodus 21:5-6).*

Some of the translations say 'forever,' and that is the Hebrew word 'olam [עולם]'. People say, "Well, wait a minute. 'Olam [עולם]' does not mean 'forever' there." You're right. It does not, because a slave obviously died after a few years or a few decades. This was not, therefore, a permanent arrangement.

I am completely willing to acknowledge that 'olam [עולם]' does not mean 'forever' everywhere in the Bible. So what do you do with this Hebrew word 'olam [עולם]'? You say it is a non-technical word. A technical word is a word that always means the same thing everywhere it is used.

Sometimes the word 'olam [עולם]' can mean a long period of time that is limited, as is clearly the case here in Exodus 21:6. But just because it means that there does not mean it means that everywhere.

You cannot just read any meaning of a word into a passage unless there is a context that supports it. I am here to tell you that the context of Daniel 12:2 does not allow for that limited meaning, because 'olam [עולם]' is used to describe the afterlife for the saved and for the unsaved.

If you are going to play this game of 'olam [עולם]' meaning something limited with damnation, then you also have to say 'olam [עולם]' in this context means something limited for the saved as well. But the context does not support that.

I do not know of anybody in their right mind that would say God is not forever. Psalm 90:2; Micah 5:2. In fact, 'El Olam [אֵל עוֹלָם]' is one of the names for God Himself.

Does 'olam [עולם]' mean a limited period of time? Sometimes, yes. Is that what it means in Daniel 12:2? Absolutely not. I am not free to take the meaning of a word as used in a limited sense somewhere, and then beam that to everywhere in the Bible. That is what Annihilationists do.

All right, let us go to the teachings of Christ. What did Jesus think about eternal hell? Did Jesus ever comment on eternal hell? You know—sweet, sweet Jesus that we love so much.

The truth of the matter is that Jesus talked more about hell than He even did heaven. I think that is divine design, because I probably would not believe such a place existed if it came from the mouth of somebody else. But the eternally existent second Member of

the Godhead clearly talked about this place. Jesus, of course, being the highest authority in the sense that He is God incarnate.

When Jesus talks about something, it's like the E.F. Hutton commercial. If you're old enough to remember that when E.F. Hutton talks, people listen, right? When Jesus talks, you have to listen. He is the ultimate authority.

What did He believe about this issue of hell? What did He believe about the eternity of hell? Well, over in Matthew 25:46—this is the Sheep and Goat Judgment; almost the same issue as we just saw in Daniel 12:2. Daniel 12:2, written in Hebrew, uses the word 'olam [עולם]' to describe hell. Matthew 25:46, written in Greek, quoting Jesus, uses the word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'.  
It says:

*"These will go away into eternal—"*

That's the Greek word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]',

*"—eternal punishment—"*

Just like in Daniel, we have a contrast there.

*"but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46).*

See how the word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' is repeated in 'to eternal life'? If you are going to say 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'—which basically means 'forever'—does not mean 'forever' in Matthew 25:46 concerning the unsaved, then you cannot say, "Well, 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' means eternity for the saved."

That is a completely and totally inconsistent reading of the Bible. I mean, if heaven is forever, then hell has to be forever as well—regardless of your personal beliefs about hell, regardless of your personal theology about hell.

Forget all that stuff and just look at the text at face value—exegetically. There is an obvious case for the eternity of hell, because the exact same word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' is used to describe the fate of the righteous. 'Aionios [αἰώνιος]'—just like the word 'olam [עולם]'—is repeated two times. If heaven is forever, then hell is forever as well.

The thing to understand about heaven is that it is conscious. There are a lot of groups that teach soul sleep: meaning that when you die as a Christian you just go to sleep and then you awaken at the Final Resurrection.

I am here to tell you that that is not what the Bible says. The Bible describes the afterlife for the saved. In the same vivid terms that it uses to describe what you would experience in daily life. Just like your experience right now is a very real experience (I mean, you are really here, even though some of you might be a little sleepy, you're really here), so the afterlife—the moment you take your next breath on the other side of eternity—is just as vivid and just as real and just as experiential, if not more so than this life. There is no Biblical case for soul sleep.

Paul the Apostle talked about this a lot. He says:

*"We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8).*

Absent from the body is to be what? At home with the Lord. I mean, what does at home mean? Is it nice to go home? You know, you were on a trip, and you go home, and the dishwasher is emptied and the house is vacuumed and there is a fire going in the fireplace, and you just say, "It is just good to be home."

When you go home, you do not stop feeling things, right? That is how Paul describes the fate of the righteous. You go into an experience that is just as pleasant and just as real as being at home. It's just that in this case, you are at home with the Lord. The fact that heaven is conscious is what I am trying to get at.

Paul said in Philippians 1:21-24:

*"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake." (Philippians 1:21-24)*

Basically, Paul says, "I know that God is using me to write the New Testament, to accomplish the missionary journeys, to plant churches, to win people to Christ, etc., while I am here. That is a good thing, because while I am here, I am being fruitful. But if I really had a choice in the matter, I would rather just depart and—not go into some kind of void or some kind of black hole somewhere—go to be with the Lord, to be with Christ, for that is very much better."

When he describes 'gain' and 'very much better,' there is no possible way he could be talking about going into some kind of unconsciousness, awaiting the final resurrection. My point is, the Scripture defines the afterlife for the believer as something very conscious.

If Jesus back in Matthew 25:46 uses the exact same Greek word to describe hell as He does heaven, then the afterlife for the unsaved must be just like the afterlife for the

saved, in the sense that it goes on forever—because 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' is repeated twice. It is a very real conscious existence.

Whatever you are doing with hell, you have to do the exact same thing with heaven. The Biblical text will not allow you this game of, "Well, it's the saved that have eternity with God, and the unsaved disappear." There is no exegetical way you can defend that. To defend that means you have to take your own belief system and completely impose it upon Scripture, which is not what we are supposed to do.

Interestingly, 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' is also used to describe God. Notice Romans 16:26.

Paul writes:

*"but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God—"*

There is our word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' again, describing God.

*"—has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;" (Romans 16:26).*

'Aionios [αἰώνιος]' is used there to describe the eternality of God. When the exact same Greek word is used to describe the fate of the saved and the fate of the unsaved, then the fate of the saved and the unsaved must go on forever, just like God does. It is a very real, literal, conscious existence.

Take a look at Hebrews 9:14, if you could. This is describing the Holy Spirit, who is the eternal third Member of the Godhead.

Paul writes:

*"how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit—"*  
*(Hebrews 9:14)*

That is 'aionios [αἰώνιος]' again.

*"—who through the eternal spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works, and to serve the living God?"*  
*(Hebrews 9:14).*

The Holy Spirit is God, because in Acts 5:3-4, Peter accuses Ananias of lying to the Holy Spirit. Then in the same context he says, "You have lied to God." The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is a lot of things. He's a person. He has feelings. We can grieve the spirit, quench the spirit, etc. We know that He is the eternally existent third Member of

the Godhead—as is the Son, the eternally existent second Member of the Godhead; and as is the Father, the eternally existent first Member of the Godhead—in our Trinitarian understanding.

If the Holy Spirit is forever and God is forever—and word used to describe Their eternity is the word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'—and Jesus uses that identical word to describe hell, just like He uses that identical word to describe heaven, then if you start playing this game that hell is not forever, heaven is not forever, and God is not forever. You reach these crazy, absurd interpretations by not being consistent in your approach to Scripture.

Notice Matthew 25:41, if you could. We already looked at verse 46. As Jesus is speaking of hell for the unsaved, He makes a very interesting statement.

He says:

*"He will say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire—"*

There is 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'.

*"—which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;" (Matthew 25:41).*

Here is where you get the idea that hell itself, which is a conscious state that lasts forever, was actually never something that God brought into existence for human beings. It was a place originally created for Satan after the Luciferian rebellion.

Yet, if human beings will align themselves with Satan, then they will still share in his fate. However, the first thought that God had when He brought hell itself into existence was that it was not created for people. Think about this for a minute, because this actually forms a very powerful argument for the eternity of hell.

Who is Satan? He's an angel, right? A fallen angel. 2 Corinthians 11:14 says that Satan masquerades as an angel of light. We only have two verses in the Old Testament that describe his fall.

Isaiah 14:12-15, which describes him as a star:

*"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning—" (Isaiah 14:12)*

It's translated 'star,' son of the dawn. Well, the angels are called stars, are they not? When Satan's tail sweeps a third of the angels out of the sky in Revelation 12, it talks about how that looked to John, as he was describing it, as falling stars.

When Isaiah 14:12-15 describes Satan as the morning star that fell, that is more evidence that he originally was an angel. Then you throw in the Ezekiel passage: Ezekiel 28:12-17. There, Ezekiel is more explicit and calls Satan in his original state a cherub. (In Hebrew, it would be plural: 'cherubim,' which is like adding the letter 's' onto a noun in English.) There were cherubim, a special kind of angel, and Satan was among them.

Satan himself was not just a cherub, but he was a 'covering cherub.' He was an 'anointed cherub.' This is Satan in his original state, in which he could worship and serve as perhaps the highest of the angels. He lost his position in the heavenlies, but we know from the Book of Job that he can still go into heaven—not to worship and serve as he once did as a high ranking angel, but rather to communicate and accuse.

He moved from being a glorious angel—his beauty is described all the way throughout this passage; it's almost like the colors of the rainbow, like a prism or a diamond or something like that, which, if you hold it up to the light it will refract and reflect multicolored beauty. Satan made sense when he was operating under the authority of God. That's when you could see his beauty, because the Shekinah glory of God is the light source that made Satan attractive and beautiful.

Of course, then his name was not Satan, his name was Lucifer. What does Lucifer mean? It means 'light bearer.' That's who Satan originally was. All this stuff about him having a pitchfork and a red cape and horns—throw that out. He is one of the most attractive things that God made, and he exercised his purpose beautifully when he was under God's authority.

But you know the story: he became lifted up with pride. Isaiah 14 says that he wanted to lift his own throne above the stars of God—above the stars, above the rest of the angels. He wasn't happy governing the angels for God. He wanted to govern them on his own behalf.

We know that he was a heavy hitter, because in Jude 1:9 he would not argue with Michael. That verse describes Michael and Satan getting into an argument about the body of Moses. That is weird. Why would they talk about—of all the things to talk about—why talk about that?

I think the answer is in Revelation 11, where Moses is going to need his body again—because there is a case to be made that one of the two witnesses is Moses. Anyway, they got into this argument and Jude 1:9 says Michael would not even dispute Satan. He just said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

Basically, Michael would not get into an interfaith dialogue with the devil. He would not get into a shouting match with the devil. Now, Michael is no slouch. He's an archangel, and that shows you the power that was originally vested in Satan.

What happened to Lucifer, who became Satan, who is clearly an anointed cherub, as we learn from Ezekiel 28? A lot of people take this passage and say, "Well, this is just talking about the king of Tyre." In context, it is talking about the king of Tyre. But it goes way beyond the king of Tyre when it starts describing the king of Tyre as a cherub, that is, an angel.

What Ezekiel is seeing is not merely a prophecy concerning the king of Tyre. He's looking at the power source motivating the king of Tyre. This is like Jesus talking to Peter, when Peter took Jesus aside and started to rebuke Him. (Can you imagine that?) Jesus says to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan." For an instant, Jesus went beyond a conversation with Peter and saw what was motivating Peter. He saw the devil behind it. It has always been Satan's ambition to keep the Son of God away from accomplishing His purpose.

Ezekiel is seeing the exact same thing while he's seeing the King of Tyre, but he is seeing the fallen angelic presence behind the king of Tyre. As Ezekiel sees this, he gives you a major hint in the Bible concerning why Lucifer fell and became Satan.

This passage and the Isaiah passage—those are the only two you have in the Old Testament. You have to have something that describes this because Paul in 1 Timothy 3:6 says that when you appoint leaders in a church—elders—do not put a novice into a position of authority in the church, lest he fall into the condemnation of Satan: lifted up with pride and then they fall.

I have to have somewhere to go to in the Old Testament for Paul's statement to make any sense, and I only have two places. I have Isaiah 14:12-15, and I have Ezekiel 28:12-17. Both passages describe not just the king of Babylon—which Isaiah is doing—and not just the King of Tyre, which Ezekiel is doing. In both cases, Ezekiel and Isaiah are seeing what is motivating those wicked kings. Just like when Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan."

In the process, Ezekiel and Isaiah give you two glimpses into Satan's fall. First comes pride, then comes the fall. We have to have those somewhere in our Bible for Paul's statement in 1 Timothy 3 to make any sense. Paul has to be referring to something: "the condemnation of Satan." What is that? If Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are not Satan passages, then Paul's statement just hangs suspended in space there with no explanation.

But as Ezekiel is describing this fall of Satan, looking at the King of Tyre and seeing Satan and Satan's fall, he describes Satan for what he is: a cherub, an angel, a guardian cherub.

He says:

*"You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire..." (Ezekiel 28:14)*

When you track that phrase "stones of fire" through, it is heaven. It is not to be confused with the Garden of Eden. It is another Eden which is a heavenly existence.

*"By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence—"  
" (Ezekiel 28:16)*

Boy, maybe that is the reason our world is so filled with violence. That is what Satan was like in his fallen state.

*"And you sinned; Therefore, I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire" (Ezekiel 28:16).*

Satan, in his original state when he was Lucifer, is described as a cherub twice. Not once, but twice. The king of Tyre was not a cherub. The king of Tyre is a human being. Ezekiel is seeing more here than the king of Tyre. He is seeing the angelic force motivating the king of Tyre.

Satan was originally created as an angel. What is he today? He is a fallen angel. Not as beautiful as he once was, but still incredibly beautiful and incredibly attractive. Revelation 12:9 says that he deceives the whole world. This is how he gets away with it: what he presents to people seems right, given his beauty. Satan was an angel and is an angel.

Here is the thing to understand about angels. Look at Luke 20:35-36. Here the Sadducees are trying to stump Jesus, which is not wise. Who are the Sadducees? They are very sad, you see, because they did not believe in miracles and they did not believe in resurrection.

They posit this hypothetical to Jesus, trying to make Him look dumb: if a guy marries a woman and then he dies, and the next of kin man comes along—which has to be according to levirate marriage—

There are seven marriages. Each of these husbands dies. Now, if you were like the third or fourth person, would you marry that individual? I would say, "No, thank you." That's what you call a black widow or something like that.

The Sadducees' question for this scenario was, "Who are they going to be married to in the resurrection? Answer that, Jesus. Because we do not believe in resurrection."

So Jesus makes this statement in Luke 20:34-35.

He says:

*"The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;" (Luke 20:34-35).*

He is saying, "You do not know the power of God. You do not know the Scripture. There is no marriage in the life to come. They are just like the angels."

As He is speaking of the angels, He says in Luke 20:36:

*"for they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:36).*

The Sadducees are in error because they do not know the power of God. They do not know the Scriptures. In the next life, there is no marriage. So their whole hypothetical is silly. That's what He is saying.

In the process of describing the afterlife, Jesus draws an analogy with the angels. He says that the angels do not die—the angels exist forever. Now, they have not been around forever, like God has, because they had a beginning point. We also have a beginning point: the point of conception. However, from the beginning point on, angels last forever.

Now think about this for a minute. If Satan is an angel—a fallen angel—and hell was created for him (as an angel, he lives forever), doesn't hell have to go on forever?

That is what Jesus is saying in Matthew 25:41—that hell was created for the devil and his angels. Then He says elsewhere, "And they do not die." In other words, they do not disappear, they do not get annihilated.

If Satan is going to last forever and hell was created for him, there is no scenario where hell goes out of existence. Satan will be in there forever.

Then He says in Matthew 25:46 that human beings that cooperate with Satan will be in there forever as well. That is why He uses the Greek word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'.

Daniel 12:2 by itself refutes Annihilationism. Matthew 25:46 by itself refutes Annihilationism. Now go to Mark 9:47-48. As you are going there, keep your Bible open to Isaiah 66.

Notice what Jesus says there in Mark 9:47-48.

He says:

*"If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out—" (Mark 9:47)*

Wow. In other words, if you reject the transferred righteousness of Christ, you have to live a perfect life. I do not know about you guys, but I am not going that route. I am a path of least resistance guy. I will take the transferred righteousness of Christ rather than my own. But if you want to go, get in on your own merits.

Here's the standard:

*"If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out—" (Mark 9:47)*

Now, there have been those in church history that have literally cut out their eyes, but that does not really fix the problem, does it? Because I can still fantasize about a lot of sins in the dark, and Jesus is going to point out that it is the heart that is the problem.

He says in Mark 9:47-48:

*"If your eye causes you to stumble, throw it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be cast into hell—" (Mark 9:47)*

This idea of hell is not from a theologian. This is the Son of God talking about this. Then He starts describing hell.

Mark 9:48:

*"—where THEIR WORM DOES NOT DIE, AND THE FIRE IS NOT QUENCHED" (Mark 9:48).*

So, what is hell like? It is that the fire goes on forever, and the objects in hell, which apparently in this case He's talking about worms (I am not sure exactly how that works), do not disappear. It just goes on and on and on.

Now, where is He quoting from? He is quoting from Isaiah 66:24, the very last verse in the book, where Isaiah talked about this. This is quite a way to end a book, quite a way to end a sermon series: Isaiah 66:24.

*"Then they—" (Isaiah 66:24)*

Those are the unsaved.

*"—will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not*

*be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind" (Isaiah 66:24).*

The fire never goes out, and the objects in the fire—apparently worms, in this case—do not die either. Do you realize the amount of gymnastics you have to do to make that fit annihilation, as much as annihilation is a more comfortable topic?

Go over to Matthew 8:12 for just a minute. If Jesus Himself did not keep talking about this place, I probably would have a hard time believing that it is true. I mean, if Isaiah just talked about it and Paul just talked about it, maybe I could say it is not a real place; but the eternally existent God-Man talked about it more than those other guys did.

Matthew 8:12 says:

*"but the sons of the kingdom—" (Matt 8:12)*

Now those would be, in this case, religious people: maybe Jews that happen to be unbelievers, or any unbeliever, for that matter.

*"—the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness—" (Matt 8:12)*

You might say, "Well, wait a minute, I thought you just said it was fire. Now you are talking about darkness. Can you explain that?" I cannot explain it. There are lots of images used to describe hell: fire, place of torment, darkness. What does that darkness mean? It means separated from God, because God is clothed in unapproachable light. There are many images that the Bible uses to describe this place, and none of them portray it as a fun or happy place, and they all describe it as going on forever.

Matthew 8:12:

*"But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 8:12).*

Now, does that look conscious to you? They are weeping and gnashing teeth in this terrible place, and it does not say, "Hang in there for five more years and you will be done." The Biblical images do not fit this whole conditional immortality Annihilationist model.

Notice Luke 16:19-31. This is probably, of the teachings of Christ, the most graphic description that I know of describing the eternal conscious torment of hell. Again, if it came from someone else, I might dismiss it, but this comes right from the teachings of Jesus.

It says:

*"Now there was a rich man, and he habitually dressed in purple and fine linen, joyously living in splendor every day. And a poor man named—" (Luke 16:19)*

There is a name here. In fact, by the time you finish this paragraph, there are three names. Jesus never uses personal names in any parable. You've got three here because this is not a parable. Everybody's trying to take this, and I understand why they do it—it's so horrific—and turn it into a parable. Certainly in the surrounding context, He's teaching in parables, but He gives here a vivid, explicit, graphic presentation of what the afterlife is like for the saved and the unsaved.

*"—a poor man named Lazarus was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were falling from the rich man's table; besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores. Now the poor man died, and was carried away by the angels to Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades—" (Luke 16:20-23)*

'Hades' is a big argument for the Annihilationist, because they want 'Hades' to mean just a common grave. That is not how the Bible uses the word 'Hades.' There is a lot more here than just a common grave. Although the word does mean 'death,' it does not mean 'death' the way they think of it: as a temporary situation. This is not temporary.

*"In Hades he lifted up his eyes—" (Luke 16:23)*

That looks physical to me.

*"—being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger—" (Luke 16:23-24)*

What does it say? 'Finger.' That looks bodily to me.

*"—in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your life you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus bad things; but now he is being comforted here, and you are in agony. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great chasm fixed, so that those who wish to come over from here to you will not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.' And he said, "Then I beg you, father, that you send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—in order that he may warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment—" (Luke 16:24-28)*

So the man in torment can remember. He's aware of his family connections, he remembers his kin. This is conscious.

*"But Abraham said, 'They have Moses—' (Luke 16:29)*

That's personal name number two. 'Abraham' is personal name number one. 'Moses' is personal name number two. 'Lazarus' is personal name number three.

*"—and the Prophets—" (Luke 16:29)*

Are the prophets historical characters? Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel? They are historical characters.

*"But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' But he said, 'No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent—'" (Luke 16:29-30)*

Really? Well, why is it that when Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead, the Jews from that moment on set out to kill him? If seeing someone come back from the dead is enough, then the whole situation in John 11 and John 12, for the unbelieving Jews, would have turned out differently.

Why did the unbelieving Jews keep persecuting the early church wherever it went, when their main message is 'Jesus rose from the dead'? Abraham is saying that even somebody coming back from the dead is not going to help these people if they have made a decision that they are not going to believe.

*"But he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent!' But he said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead'" (Luke 16:30-31).*

You will notice here that the whole paragraph does not begin with, "Learn the parable of...", which is very common in the teachings of Christ.

For example, in Matthew 13:3:

"And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'Behold, the sower went out to sow;" (Matthew 13:3).

Here comes a parable, guys, the Parable of the Sower. You know that it is a parable because He is telling you, "It is a parable."

Matthew 13:18:

*"Hear then the parable of the sower" (Matthew 13:18).*

Matthew 24:32, about the fig tree:

*"Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near;" (Matthew 24:32).*

When Jesus wants to talk in parables, He will say, "I am going to give you a parable." He does not do that in Luke 16. There is no parabolic introductory formula whatsoever. Beyond that, there are three personal names used here—proper names, proper nouns: Abraham, Lazarus, and Moses. Jesus never uses that in parables.

When this rich man died in unbelief—and the problem with this guy is not that he had money; the problem is that his money clouded his understanding that he needed God, that's the issue. He died without the righteousness of God.

If you reject Jesus, you get Moses. Meaning that your life has to be held up to the standard in the Mosaic Law, which is an impossible standard.

So when this rich man went into this place, it was conscious suffering, and there is absolutely nothing here about him being annihilated. There is nothing here about a word of comfort to him: "Just hang in there for 15 years, because pretty soon you are going to explode and disappear." So you can start to see that this whole idea of Annihilationism is just crazy. It's just crazy what these people are teaching about this.

Notice 2 Thessalonians 1:9...leaving the teachings of Christ, looking now at the teachings of the Apostle Paul. 2 Thessalonians 1:9, which is talking about the fate of the unsaved when Jesus comes back.

*"These will pay the penalty of—" (2 Thess 1:9)*

What kind of destruction?

*"—eternal destruction—" (2 Thess 1:9)*

It doesn't just say 'destruction.' It says 'eternal destruction,' which is the Greek word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'.  
[αἰώνιος]

*"—away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:9).*

"Well, what this really means," The Annihilationist says, "Is that you are destroyed in the sense that you just do not exist anymore."

Okay, then why does the Bible not say that? Why does it use the word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'? Why does it use the word 'aionios' to describe 'destruction,' which is the same word used to describe heaven, as well the same word used to describe God?

It is not just 'destruction.' It is 'eternal destruction.'

One more quote from Alan Gomes, one of my teachers.

He says:

"A punishment [such as torment] that is not felt is not a punishment. It is an odd use of language to speak of an insensate state (i.e., unfeeling), an inanimate object receiving punishment. To say, 'I punish my car for not starting by slowly plucking out its spark plug wires, one by one,' would invoke laughter, not serious consideration."<sup>2</sup>

Let me show you one more verse. Hebrews 6:2.

*"of instructions about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment" (Hebrews 6:2).*

Look at this! 'Eternal judgment,' not just 'judgment.' It is eternal. It is the Greek word 'aionios [αἰώνιος]'.

So, 2 Thessalonians 1:9: not just punishment, but eternal punishment. Hebrews 6:2: not just judgment, but eternal judgment. We will pick up with those last three verses of Anti-Annihilationist Texts in the Book of Revelation next time.

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<sup>2</sup> Gomes, Alan W. (1991) *Evangelicals and the Annihilation of Hell, Part 2*, p.11