

## Eternal Conscious Torment vs Annihilation 007

Psalms 37:20

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Let us take our Bibles today and locate Psalm 37:20.

Here we are talking about the whole issue of annihilation versus eternal conscious torment. We introduced the controversy: it is a fusion of two ideas: conditional immortality, meaning that not all people are immortal, only believers are immortal and they do not get the gift of immortality until they receive Christ as Savior. If that is true, what happens to unsaved people that are not immortal?

Well, at some point they get annihilated. They go into hell for a season, but they are not there forever. They just cease to exist. That is called Annihilationism. So, those two concepts run together.

Though I have been aware of those views for a long time, I am really starting to dig down on them, as you can see, partly because now they are becoming mainstream. What used to be, twenty years ago, looked at as extreme views outside the realm of orthodoxy are now being brought into Christianity.

The latest convert to these perspectives being actor Kirk Cameron, who has millions and millions and millions of people that follow him. Once I saw him going that direction, I said, "Uh-oh."

What you are watching is something that used to be considered heretical now becoming mainstream. I thought it was time to deal with these issues, so we gave you the Biblical arguments against Annihilationism. Those are the strongest Bible passages there that say people that are unsaved are not annihilated: they exist forever in hell.

Beyond that, we moved into Point Number Three, where we gave you four theological arguments against Annihilationism.

Part of being a good theologian is also understanding what the other side is saying, because they have verses that they use. Some of the biggest heretics in the world today use the Bible.

All you have to do is flip on so-called Christian television, and you see people that are basically heretics. Man, do they use the Bible. They use the Bible more than most churches use the Bible.

Just because someone is using the Bible does not mean they are using it rightly. The devil himself, as you know, quotes the Bible.

What are some arguments that the Annihilationist uses? There are several. The 'second death' argument, the 'destroy' argument, the 'destruction' argument, the 'burning up'

argument, the fact that only smoke goes up and not fire in Revelation 14, the 'perdition' argument, and then the one we ended with last time: what Jesus says concerning Judas, that it would have been better for him if he had never been born.

The Annihilationists take that as it would be better for Judas if he never existed. So therefore, the fate of the unsaved is non-existence. We interacted with all of that, and we are going to pick it up right here with the 'perishing' argument.

That is why I had you open up to Psalm 37:20. Psalm 37:20.

I was listening to Kirk Cameron's podcast, and lo and behold, this is one of the arguments that he was using. I do not have time to listen to a lot of things, but I gave it a brief listen. This was one of the arguments that he was using promoting Annihilationism: the idea that the wicked just perish.

They do not last forever; exist forever in hell. They just perish, meaning they disappear.

Notice what he is doing here with Psalm 37:20.

It says:

*"But the wicked will perish; And the enemies of the Lord will be like the glory of the pastures, They vanish—like smoke they vanish away" (Psalm 37:20).*

"Aha!" says the Annihilationist. "It is in the Bible, right? Unsaved people, they do not last forever in hell. They just disappear, like smoke eventually disappears."

If you go a few chapters to the right, to Psalm 68:2, here is another verse that they use. By the way, these are all using the Hebrew word 'abad' (אָבַד) for 'vanish.'

Psalm 68:2; it says:

*"As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish before God" (Psalm 68:2).*

So, they disappear just like wax disappears. By the way, wax really does not disappear, right? It just changes form. But the Annihilationists want it to mean 'disappear.'

"That is what happens to unsaved people. They go into hell. They are in there for a season, and then eventually, they cease to exist."

If you go over to Psalm 112:10, you will see the Hebrew word 'abad' (אָבַד) again in use.

Psalm 112:10; it says:

*"The wicked will see it and be vexed, He will gnash his teeth and..." (Psalm 112:10).*

Look at this.

*"...melt away; The desire of the wicked will perish" (Psalm 112:10).*

These are all texts that Annihilationists use. How would I, as a non-Annihilationist, respond to that? Well, one way of responding to it is that these same passages also use the Hebrew word *abad* (אָבַד), or 'perishing.' Notice, if you will, Isaiah 57:1. This is the same word used of the saved.

They are holding to an inconsistent use of '*abad*' (אָבַד), or 'perishing.' Notice, if you will, Isaiah 57:1. This is the same word used of the saved.

*"The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart; And devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from evil," (Isaiah 57:1).*

There is 'perishing' for the saved. Obviously, it cannot mean to disappear forever, because the Annihilationist does not believe saved people disappear forever.

They are using a word one way for the unsaved and a totally different way for the saved. Once you start seeing inconsistencies like this, you start figuring out that they are misusing the Word of God.

Notice Micah 7:2.

Micah 7:2. Here is the Hebrew word '*abad*' (אָבַד) again.

It says:

*"The godly person has perished from the land, And there is no upright person among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed; Each of them hunts the other with a net" (Micah 7:2).*

So, if conditionalists and Annihilationists believe that saved people never disappear permanently, and yet '*abad*' (אָבַד) describes them, why would they take that same Hebrew word '*abad*' (אָבַד), apply it to the wicked and say that the unbelievers do disappear forever?

Obviously what is being spoken of here does not mean we disappear forever. We disappear from the earth, but absent from the body is to be what? Present with the Lord.

From the perspective of the unsaved, it looks like we are gone, but once we die, we are more alive after death than ever before.

The Annihilationists are doing something with the word 'perish' that they would never do with the saved. My response to what they are doing here with this Hebrew word '*abad*' (אָבַד) is that I think a better use of '*abad*' (אָבַד) is found in Deuteronomy 22:3. Take a look at that, if you could.

Here it is used for things that are later found. So it is not talking about something going out of existence. It is talking about something in a lost state. In this context, it is later retrieved.

Do you guys ever leave your iPhone or things like that at restaurants? I have made a career out of doing stuff like that. You know, you embarrassingly go back, and you feel stupid, and you ask, "Was there like a wallet and credit card and an iPhone on this table?"

Usually the people are really nice, and they want to make sure it is you, so, "Can you show some identification?"—which is hard to do when it is your wallet, you know.

I have had to talk my way out of a lot of different things. But just because the wallet or the iPhone or whatever got lost, does not mean it disappeared.

That is what this word 'perishing' means. It does not mean 'disappearance.' It means that when you die as an unsaved person, your soul is in a lost state, but not a nonexistent state.

The Annihilationist does not want you to believe that. They want you to believe that you as an unsaved person just cease to exist.

So, here is an example where 'abad' (אָבַד), or 'perish,' is used to communicate something lost.

It says:

*"Thus you shall do with his donkey, and you shall do the same with his garment, and you shall do likewise with anything lost..." (Deuteronomy 22:3).*

Do you see the word 'lost'? That is the Hebrew word translated 'lost'; in Hebrew it is 'abad' (אָבַד),

*"...anything lost by your countryman, which he has lost..." (Deuteronomy 22:3).*

It is repeated: 'abad' (אָבַד),

*"...and you have found. You are not allowed to neglect them" (Deuteronomy 22:3).*

Here 'abad' (אָבַד) is used of something that is lost, and then is recovered. You cannot recover something that does not exist anymore.

The Annihilationist does not want you to see that verse because they want the word to mean 'cease to exist.' Very clearly right there, it does not mean 'cease to exist.' It means 'in a lost state.' Then once you find it, you are not to neglect it anymore.

How would you neglect something that does not exist? That does not make any sense.

Hey, what if you are neglecting your wife? Well, that means you have to have a wife to neglect, right? If you neglect your wife—neglect your spouse—do they just disappear?

They do not just disappear. They are in a state of lostness. They are in a state of neglect.

That is what happens to unsaved people. They are in a ruined or lost state, not in a nonexistent state. The Annihilationist is completely hijacking this word 'abad' (אָבַד). Now, when you move to the New Testament—the Hebrew for 'perish' is 'abad' (אָבַד)—the Greek is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι). 'Apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι).

Notice how they use Matthew 10:28, which is using 'perish.' Translated 'perish' from the Greek word 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι).

Matthew 10:28. This is one of their favorite passages. Matthew 10:28 is Jesus speaking.

*"Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).*

Now, that is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι), sometimes translated as 'destruction,' depending on what English translation you are using—you could see the word 'perish.' What the Annihilationist wants that to mean is, "Okay, your soul goes into hell, but it perishes, it does not exist anymore. Your soul goes into hell, but it is destroyed. It does not exist anymore."

That is how they are using this word 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι). It shows up in John 3:16, which you guys know very well.

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).*

That is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι): 'perish.'

They want that to mean kind of like the English word sounds: you go into hell and you cease to exist. They say that is the true meaning of 'perish.'

Over in 2 Peter 3:9, it says this:

*"The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient towards you, not wishing for any to perish..." (2 Peter 3:9).*

There is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι).

*"...but for all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).*

Well, what if you do not come to repentance? Then you perish.

Well, what does that mean? The annihilationist says that you stop existing at some point. That is what they want 'perish' to mean, which is the translation of the Greek word *'apollymi'* (ἀπόλλυμι).

Is that a proper use of the word? Well, when you look at John 3:16, you will notice that John 3:36 comes after John 3:16. You just have to be patient with the Bible, because if you are patient with the Bible, it will tell you what is meant by what is referenced earlier.

What does that mean: to 'perish'? Does that mean you just cease to exist? No. You keep reading the chapter and it will tell you what 'perish' means.

When you look at John 3:36, it tells you exactly what was meant by the 'perish' spoken of earlier in the chapter.

This is John the Baptist speaking:

*"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God..." (John 3:36).*

What is the next word?

*"...abides..." (John 3:36).*

'Remains,' 'hovers.'

*"...on him" (John 3:36).*

The wrath of God is portrayed over the unsaved person almost as the sword of Damocles. Do you remember it? Ready to fall at any minute.

The lost are already in a perishing state. Do you see that? It is not like they die, go to hell, and stop existing.

That is what is meant by 'perish.' They are already perishing because they are careening for the judgment of God. It just has not hit yet. That is what is meant by 'perish'—nothing about non-existence.

It is about the wrath of God presently abiding or hovering over a person. That is a much better understanding of 'perish' than just to look at the English word and say, "Well, in English it means you do not exist anymore."

The Bible was not originally written in English. That is why I am giving you these Greek words. This was written in a Greco-Roman culture. This was written in Koine Greek—the New Testament. The Old Testament was written principally in Hebrew. There are a few Aramaic sections, but principally Hebrew is used.

The problem I am seeing with Kirk Cameron and all these types of people is that they are developing meanings of words from the English and reading it backwards into the Bible. That is not how you handle the Bible. If you want to figure out what 'perish'—*'apollymi'* (ἀπόλλυμι)—means, you have to look at it in context and you have to look at it in the Koine Greek language, and it never means 'disintegrate' or 'disappear.' What it is

talking about (perishing) is an eternal separation from God; shut out forever from the presence of God.

Notice, if you will, 2 Thessalonians 2:10.

We see this word 'perish' or '*apollymi*' (ἀπόλλυμι) again. 2 Thessalonians 2:10.

2 Thessalonians 2:10. It says:

*"and with all the deception of wickedness for those who..." (2 Thessalonians 2:10).*

What is the next word?

*"...perish..." (2 Thessalonians 2:10).*

Why are they perishing?

*"...because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2:10).*

So, unsaved people perish. The Annihilationist says, "Well, that means they stop existing."

But that is not how Paul defines 'perishing' in the book, because one chapter earlier he tells you exactly what 'perishing' means.

Look backwards at the prior chapter, 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

*"These will pay..." (2 Thessalonians 1:9).*

Speaking of the fate of the unsaved.

"These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction..." (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

Notice that word 'eternal.' What does that even mean? It is defined right there in 2 Thessalonians 1:9:

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

That is what 'perishing' means. It means—not 'ceasing to exist'—but eternally 'shut out of' anything that is of God, whatever that looks like.

I do not want to go there, because God is light and God is good, and I want to be where God is. You can imagine an eternity cut off from that.

There is nothing here about ceasing to exist. It is talking about being eternally shut off from God. It is the imagery that you see in the Book of Revelation, in the last two chapters where it talks about the city whose gates are always open. All these kinds of things: the eternal city, the new heavens and the new earth.

But then it says that outside are the dogs. Now the dogs there are not barking dogs. They are not Fido or Snoopy or whatever. Paul uses the analogy of dogs in Philipians 3 to describe false teachers.

"Outside are the dogs." What does that mean: 'outside'? Away from God; away from the things of God; away from everything that is good. That is why there are these terrible, horrific metaphors to describe the reality of hell.

What is it, exactly? It is being forever separated from anything that is of God. You see these illustrations being used in the Bible: darkness, separation, gnashing of teeth, punishment, weeping, fire, death, destruction. It just goes on forever, and whatever it is, I do not want to go there. I want to be where God is.

Rather than viewing perishing as just ceasing to exist, let the Bible define itself. Perishing means to be forever shut off from the presence of the Lord. Perishing could be a process. It is not necessarily something that ends. It is just an ongoing process.

Notice 2 Corinthians 4:3. I am still on this use of 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι).

Paul says:

*"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing" (2 Corinthians 4:3).*

He is not describing something that moves and then stops, and then it disappears. He is describing a process and he says, "The unsaved are already in the process. It is just going to get worse for them. They just do not know it yet."

It is not speaking of something that stops existing, this word translated 'perishing,' the Greek verb 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι). It is speaking more of an enduring process. 'Apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι) is also used for the lost or used of lost living—not non-existence, but lost living.

Notice Matthew 10:5-7.

*"These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them: 'Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; but rather go to the...'" (Matthew 10:5-6).*

What is the next word?

*"...lost sheep of the house of Israel..." (Matthew 10:5-7).*

This is the offer of the kingdom to first-century Israel.

*"...And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matthew 10:5-7).*

When it is translated lost there, that is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι). So, how do you preach the kingdom offer to a bunch of people that do not exist?

Do you see that? That makes zero sense. There, it is referring to lost people: in this case, a lost nation that is in existence.

Notice, if you will, Matthew 15:24, same account.

*"But He answered and said..." (Matthew 15:24).*

Again, it is the offer of the kingdom to first-century Israel, which they rejected, causing the kingdom to be postponed. God is not building His kingdom today. Can I get an 'amen' on that? He is building the church.

*"...I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it" (Matthew 16:18).*

"But, Andy, you have got to come to the latest conference called 'Kingdom Builders!'"

And I say, "Count me out because that is a waste of time."

Jesus is not building His kingdom right now. He is building sons of the kingdom for the future kingdom. But there is no kingdom being built now. If you think you are building the kingdom, have you ever looked at the headlines? Not a lot of progress being made.

Anyway, I digress.

Matthew 15:24:

*"But He answered and said, 'I was sent only..." (Matthew 15:24).*

Here is 'apollymi' again.

*"...to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24).*

How do you offer the kingdom to people that do not exist? Lostness does not mean non-existence.

Notice Matthew 16:25.

Matthew 16:25: the cost of discipleship.

It says:

*"For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25).*

There, 'lose,' or 'loses,' is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι). So, lostness does not mean non-existence. It is just that if I never submit to the principles of discipleship, which as a Christian are given to me in Scripture, I cannot find the purpose for which I exist.

I spend my whole life kind of—how does that song go? I 'Can't Get No Satisfaction.'

You just go through life not even knowing why you are here. That is what it means to be lost. It does not mean you do not exist anymore.

That is a problem in all the verses that these Annihilationists are trying to use for non-existence. Notice Luke 19:10. This one you might have memorized—Luke 19:10.

Jesus says:

*"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost"  
(Luke 19:10).*

That is 'apollymi' (ἀπόλλυμι): 'lost.'

How do you seek and save people that do not exist? That is basically my response to all of these verses that they are using about the wicked perishing.

They never mean non-existence. If you perish, it does not mean you stop existing. You are just forever in a state in which you cannot find out why you are here. You are shut out from God and everything that is good when you are there, and you are in a perpetually ruined state.

Let us go to this argument here: blotting out of existence.

There is a guy named Le Roy Froom who wrote some wonderful things about church history, but he was a Seventh-Day Adventist. (I used Le Roy Froom's four-volume set a lot to deal with who believed what about eschatology in church history. You know, what did Luther believe? Whoever you are looking up, Le Roy Froom in a four volume set will tell you about.)

The thing to understand about Le Roy Froom is that he was a Seventh-Day Adventist, and the Seventh-Day Adventists have basically the same view on this as the Jehovah's Witnesses have—meaning they are into this Annihilationism perspective. That alone should tell Kirk Cameron that he is on the wrong track.

If groups that are either heretical or, in the case of the Adventists have different orthodoxy—if they are the ones that are espousing all of this, then maybe you should hit pause for a minute rather than racing this Annihilationism view into the body of Christ as as Kirk Cameron and others are doing.

Le Roy Froom assembles a lot of verses that he thinks are evidence that God blots the wicked out of existence. Notice that he quotes Hebrews 9:25-26.

Hebrews 9:25-26; he uses this one.

It says:

*"nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now*

*once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:25-26).*

So, "do away with." Le Roy Froom says that just as that verse can mean completely "do away with," that can be applied to unsaved people. That is what it means: that God completely does away with them; just like He eradicated sin, He eradicates unsaved people.

The Greek word for "do away with" is *'athetesis'* (ἀθέτησις).

When you look up some of these words in a leading lexicon, you start to see that that is not what *'athetesis'* (ἀθέτησις) means at all. It does not mean annihilation. It means annulment.

This is how it is used about a chapter earlier in Hebrews: Hebrews 7:18.

Look at Hebrews 7:18.

*"For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside..." (Hebrews 7:18).*

See that? That is 'athetesis.' Not eradication, but 'setting aside'—an annulment.

*"For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness" (Hebrews 7:18).*

When you actually look at this word 'athetesis' (ἀθέτησις) in Greek, and you reference some important lexical sources, it means removal: being taken from one place to another. It is like taking your kids that are acting up and putting them in time out.

You transfer them from a place of privilege to a place of discipline. You did not annihilate them (you might be tempted to annihilate them, but you did not annihilate them), because they are still in existence. They are just in time out. They did not stop existing in time out.

So when Le Roy Froom, who is a brilliant, off-the-charts church historian, uses that word and that verse to support annihilation, I am saying, "Thanks, but no thanks. I cannot agree with what you are saying here, even though I love what you did with church history."

We have to develop a little maturity where we can eat the meat and spit out the bones. Just because you like someone on one subject does not mean that they are right on everything. There are many conservative influencers that I used to listen to, and they are good on all kinds of political subjects and very knowledgeable and very articulate, but all of a sudden they started turning on the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. I do not sit there and try to defend them.

I say, "Well, I am not going to agree with what you are doing. Even though I agreed with your video that you made five years ago about whatever."

That is how to handle things in the body of Christ. You have to do the same kind of thing when someone departs from the Bible: you depart from them at that point, always, because the Bible is your ultimate authority.

Notice what they are doing with Revelation 3:5.

Jesus is speaking to the church of Sardis in Revelation 3.

Revelation 3:5. It says:

*"He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not..." (Revelation 3:5).*

Look at this.

*"...erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels" (Revelation 3:5).*

Le Roy Froom says, "Look at that. If you are a Christian, then your name is in the Book of Life."

Which is the most important book you can get into, right? That is the book I want my name in. I am glad it is there. Jesus in Luke 10 told the disciples not to rejoice that the demons were in submission to them; rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven. That is what He said.

There is a promise that if your name is in the book, He cannot erase your name. But what if your name is not in the book? Then you get erased. Le Roy Froom says that erased means you are gone; you do not exist anymore. You are blotted out.

Now, this is the word '*exaleipho*' (ἐξαλείφω). When you look this up in the BDAG (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich) lexicon, it does not mean 'erase' as in 'annihilate.' What it means is 'wipe away,' 'wipe out.'

Team A beat Team B in an athletic contest. "Man, they really wiped them out."

Well, does that mean the losing team does not exist anymore? No, they are just in a state of defeat.

'Wipe away,' 'wipe out,' 'remove'—but never 'annihilate.' The thing that is interesting about this is why would you use this verse to promote Annihilationism, since it is teaching something that God will never do?

That is a very strange use of the verse. Whatever this means, God's not going to do it. Why would that be a proof text for annihilation?

And by the way, the erasing does not pertain to people. Did you notice that it pertains to your name? Le Roy Froom is misusing Revelation 3:5.

Notice Revelation 18:21.

Le Roy Froom quotes this verse.

Notice Revelation 18:21, which is speaking of what is going to happen to Babylon.

It says:

*"Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, 'So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer'" (Revelation 18:21).*

Never to be found again. Le Roy Froom says, that as this is applied to unsaved people, it means they will not exist anymore in hell.

This is the noun *'heurisko'* (εὕρισκω).

Basically, when you look it up in the BDAG lexicon, it says, "never to be found again, despite a diligent search."

It does not mean 'disappear.' It means it is hidden so far into the ground that the best searchers in the world cannot find it. That is what is going to happen to Babylon. It does not mean that suddenly it stops existing.

Beyond that, that is a really odd—again, another very odd verse—to use to support Annihilationism, because it is dealing with a city. To take this situation with the city and then apply it to a human being that bears God's image.

Souls last forever; material things, not necessarily—particularly when this earth is going to be destroyed by fire. That is something else to consider.

One more for good measure: Le Roy Froom will use 1Corinthians 1:19. Here is *'apollymi'* (ἀπόλλυμι) again.

1 Corinthians 1:19. Paul says:

*"For it is written, 'I...'" (1 Corinthians 1:19).*

God.

*"...WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE AND THE CLEVERNESS OF THE CLEVER I WILL SET ASIDE" (1 Corinthians 1:19).*

So, as you know, when you look this up in BDAG, *'apollymi'* (ἀπόλλυμι) means "ruin, kill, put to death, pass away, but never to put out of existence."

*'Apollymi'* (ἀπόλλυμι) never means that. Besides, what is God going to destroy? Look at the verse very carefully.

He is not going to destroy the wicked here. He is going to destroy the wisdom of the wicked. Do you see the difference? That is what God's going to put out of existence: the wisdom of the wicked, which is no wisdom at all; but the wicked will continue on in a ruined state.

There under Point I, there are all of these verses that mean blotted out of existence, supposedly, that Le Roy Froom cites. 1 Corinthians 1:9, Revelation 18:21, Revelation 3:5, Hebrews 9:25-26—absolutely none of them mean what he says that they mean.

See, what Kirk Cameron is doing is that he is taking an ancient playbook. Let us pretend this is an ancient playbook that Le Roy Froom wrote (he is long since deceased). Kirk Cameron has just reached back in history and brought it into the limelight through his podcast without putting Le Roy Froom's name on it.

And everybody hears this and it sounds so nice. "Wow, what an educated actor this guy is. He must really know what he is talking about."

All he is doing is taking something that has long since been refuted and bringing it out so that people think it is brand new.

You just put another bow on it, put some new wrapping paper on it—and people are mesmerized by this, as if it is some great work of academia and scholarship. New age, old lie, right? Solomon said that there is nothing new under the sun.

It is just that the devil trots things out that look shiny and new, and people are deceived by them.

Let us go into these passages here, if we have time.

'Life activity suspended in death' argument—This is Point J. These are arguments that Annihilationists use: 'life activity suspended in death.'

They use the Book of Ecclesiastes.

At my first interaction with all of this annihilation, I was seduced by it as a new Christian by a Jehovah's Witness, because I emotionally wanted to believe it was true. Man, this guy could work the Book of Ecclesiastes. There are some things in the Book of Ecclesiastes that look an awful lot like Annihilationism.

Because the guy already had my emotions, I was pulled into this for a season.

One of the verses I will use is Ecclesiastes 9:10, which says:

*"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might; for there is no activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol where you are going" (Ecclesiastes 9:10).*

Once you go into Sheol, which is common death, there is no more activity, no more planning, no more knowledge. You can see how an Annihilationist would use this to their advantage.

Death is a place of darkness, silence—in contrast to that of the living. To develop this idea that Sheol is non-existence, they say it is the opposite of life.

Life is existence with God. What is Sheol, then? It is life without the existence of God, which means even existence itself disappears.

Notice Deuteronomy 30:15.

Deuteronomy 30:15.

God speaking through Moses:

*"See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;" (Deuteronomy 30:15).*

That is 'death'—Sheol. What is 'death'? It is the opposite of life, they say. What is the opposite of life? It is non-existence.

Notice Deuteronomy 30:19.

*"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse" (Deuteronomy 30:19).*

One end of the stick is life; the other end of the stick is death. If this side is being alive, then the opposite side must mean you are not alive anymore.

Look at 1 Samuel 2:6-9.

Notice what it says here:

*"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up" (1 Samuel 2:6-9).*

See how being alive is being contrasted with Sheol? So, the Annihilationist wants this text to mean that the opposite of life is death. Life is existence. So, Sheol or death must mean non-existence.

These are the kind of passages that they use. How in the world would you ever respond to this? How would you ever respond to this use of Ecclesiastes? Well, let us go to Ecclesiastes 12:5.

This is the end of the book. Solomon is summing up what he is trying to say. Tell me, how in the world does this summation fit with annihilation?

In fact, rather than Ecclesiastes teaching annihilation, Ecclesiastes actually has some of the strongest evidence against annihilation in it. Look at Ecclesiastes chapter 12:5.

*"Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective..." (Ecclesiastes 12:5).*

Look at this last sentence.

*"...For man goes to his eternal home..." (Ecclesiastes 12:5).*

Does that sound like annihilation? It does not to me.

*"...For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street" (Ecclesiastes 12:5).*

There is no annihilation, according to the Book of Ecclesiastes. Look at Ecclesiastes 12:7.

*"then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).*

It is kind of funny, the Jehovah's Witness who tried to convince me of all of that never showed me those verses. One of the things I will say about Ecclesiastes is you have to be very careful with Ecclesiastes.

The reason I say that is it is written by Solomon under the sun, meaning the fellow spent the end of his life—you can read about all of this in 1 Kings 11—being seduced by foreign gods. He spent much of the end of his life in international treaties, which God says do not enter into, as the third king of the United Kingdom.

Solomon was so wicked at the end of his life that upon his death, the kingdom was divided between the north and the south. The man had through these treaties—and Deuteronomy says, the king should not enter into treaties; and he entered into a ton of them. Deuteronomy 17 says the king should not amass wealth for himself and multiply wives for himself, and it is almost like Solomon just decided to do the opposite.

He entered into all these treaties because part of the deal with the treaty is you get the princess, and the princess is going to bring with her the foreign deities that God says are an abomination. The man had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Does that sound like a guy walking with the Lord?

This is what he writes at the end of his life. You see, the first book he wrote, Song of Solomon, was his first book during his young marital years. Then he wrote Proverbs during his midlife.

You talk about a late life crisis—he went through it, and that is when he wrote the Book of Ecclesiastes. A large portion of the book is the folly of what he went through by pursuing wisdom under the sun.

'Under the sun' means not divine wisdom, but human wisdom. So, when you are looking at the Book of Ecclesiastes, you have to say, "Hmm, do I take all of this stuff as didactic, 'thus saith the Lord' truth pronouncements? Not necessarily.

You have to look at the context very carefully and say, "Was he writing this in a state of carnality or not?" The doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy guarantees you that

everything happened as it is written, but it does not necessarily guarantee you that everything spoken in this book is true.

I realize that is counterintuitive when you hear that the first time, but I could show you things in the book recorded in the book that are not true. One of the proclamations comes from the devil in Genesis 3, when he said to the woman, "You will not surely die."

What do you do with that? You say, "Well, that is a statement that was accurately recorded, but it is a statement that is not true because there is context."

They are telling you that Satan is deceiving Eve at that point, so the verse, "You will not surely die," does not become your life verse, right? You do not put that on your Christmas cards and put that on your refrigerator, and say, "Look, there is what it says!"

Because you would be abusing the Bible at that point. It is clearly an inaccurate statement, even though inerrancy guarantees you that the statement was made.

That is what you have to do with Ecclesiastes. Whatever is said here, you should be able to find it elsewhere to say that this is a 'thus saith the Lord' statement, because some of the things that Solomon says in Ecclesiastes are statements that he made at the end of his life, when he is giving his perspective under the sun.

What is being spoken of here in Ecclesiastes? No activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom are statements of the body, the physical life. It is not a statement of the spiritual reality, because the body separates from the spirit.

And yes, there is no more activity or planning or knowledge or wisdom when a person dies on earth; but do not take that as some kind of statement of the afterlife.

That is how this particular Jehovah's Witness was using this verse with me.