

Saved



Will the lost suffer eternal conscious torment or be annihilated in hell?

Part 4

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(pt 4)

The human soul is not immortal, only the saved live eternally; the lost eventually cease to exist

The lost go to hell primarily because of the sins they commit

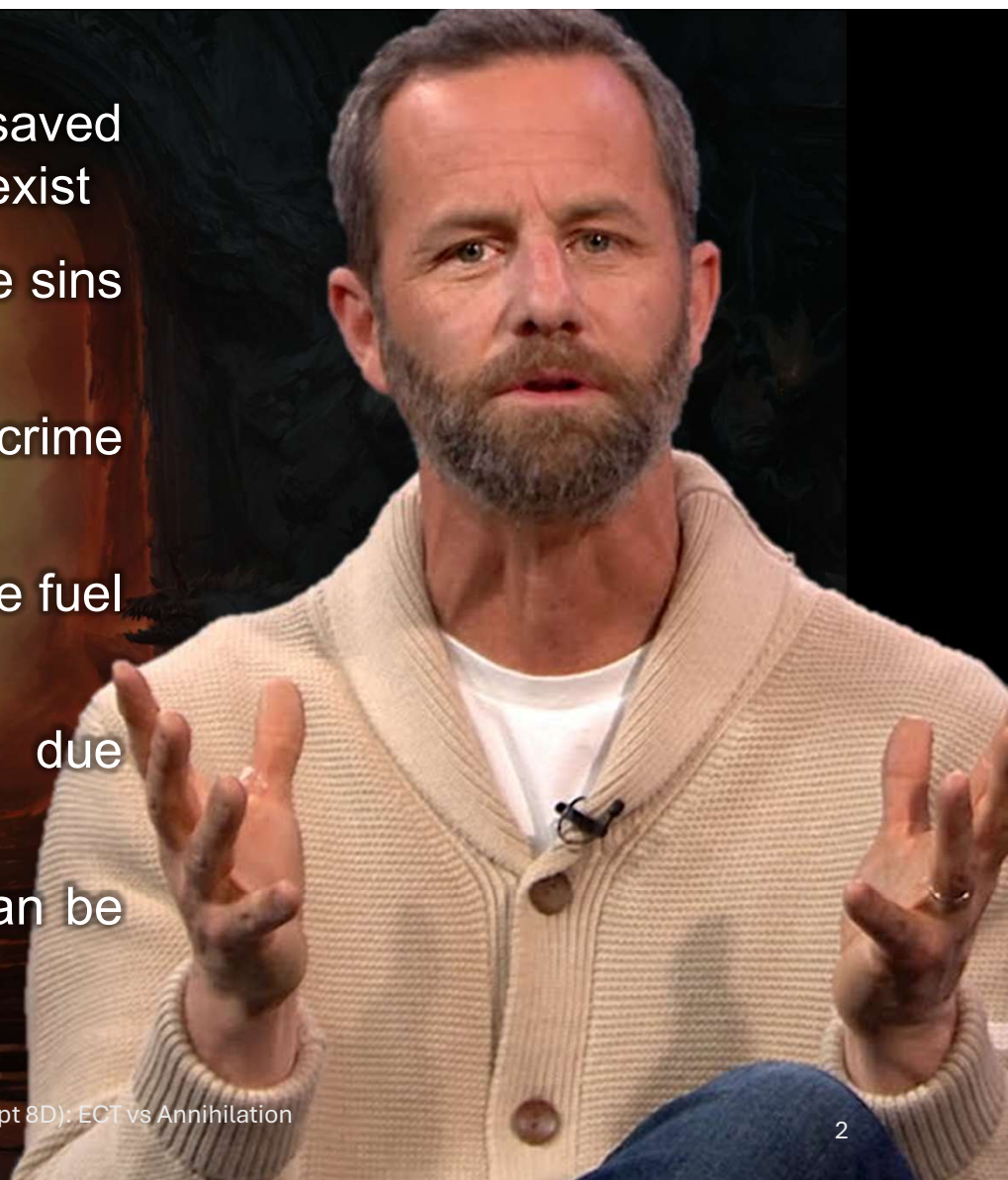
Eternal conscious torment does not fit the crime and is cruel and unusual

The fires of hell are “unquenchable” but the fuel (the lost) is not

Every lost person will receive their due punishment and then be annihilated

God keeps people alive in hell so they can be tormented forever

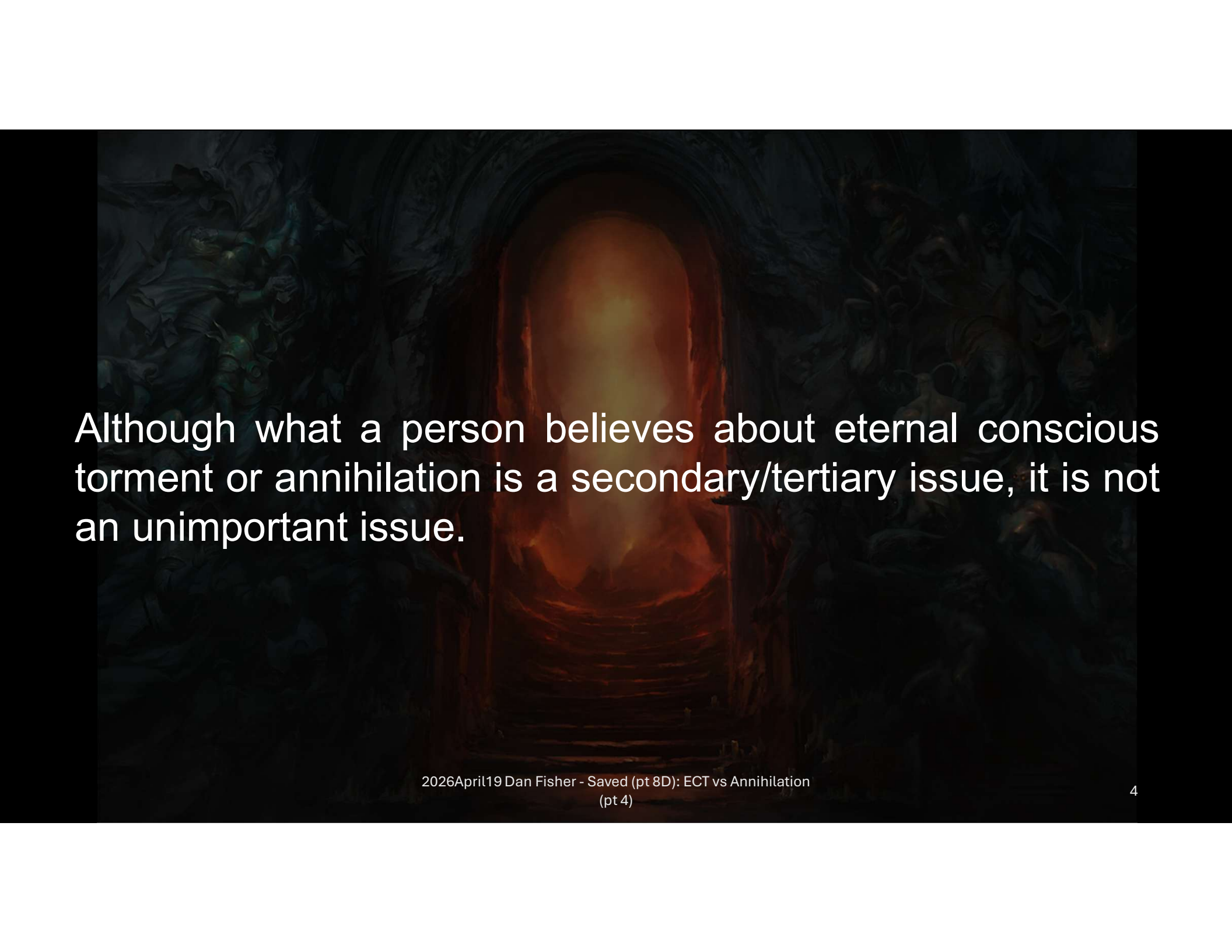
ECT contradicts God’s character





ABANDON ALL HOPE
YE WHO ENTER HERE

Some say this discussion is trivial since it is over a
secondary/tertiary issue



Although what a person believes about eternal conscious torment or annihilation is a secondary/tertiary issue, it is not an unimportant issue.



Hell is an infinitely terrible and yet, it is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith

“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” **Mt 10:28**



And it matters not what I “feel” about it, all that matters is what God says about it!



Annihilationists gaslight ECT by “poisoning the well”

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“Hell is an eternal barbeque!”

“Will they turn down the BBQ for a little ole grandma?”

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Verses that clearly teach eternal conscious torment:

Is 66:22-24

Dan 12:2-3

Mt 18:6-9

Mt 25:41-46

Mk 9:42-48


2 Thess 1:6-10

Jude 7,13

Rev 14:9-11

Rev 20:10

Rev 20:14-15




A loving & merciful God will punish the lost forever
Man is inherently immortal by God's creative act



The two questions we must answer from Scripture:

1. Do the wicked experience conscious torment?
2. Do they suffer this torment eternally?



According to Scripture, the wicked will experience
conscious torment

Logically, there is no other kind of torment other than
conscious torment

John Gerstner, theologian, church historian:

“[O]ne can exist and not be punished; but no one can be punished and not exist. Annihilation means the obliteration of existence and anything that pertains to existence, such as punishment. Annihilation avoids punishment, rather than encountering it.”

“The Bible and Hell,” part 1, p. 38



Dr. Alan W. Gomes
Prof of Systematic & Historical Theology
Talbot School of Theology

“A punishment [such as torment] that is not felt is not a punishment. Torment, by its very nature, demands a sentient (i.e., feeling) subject to experience it. A rock or a tree cannot be ‘tormented.’ How much less could a nonentity — such as an annihilated devil, beast, false prophet, or sinner — experience torment?”

“Evangelicals and the Annihilation of Hell,” (pt. 2), *Christian Research Journal*, Summer 1991, p. 11.



Dr. Ron Rhodes

Pres of Reasoning from the Scriptures Min
Assoc Editor of *Christian Research Journal*

“[I]f actual suffering is lacking, then so is punishment. ... punishment entails suffering. And suffering necessarily entails consciousness. ... torment cannot, by definition, be anything but conscious torment. ... Any honest seeker after truth must admit that one cannot define ‘eternal punishment’ as an extinction of consciousness.”

“Is Annihilationism Biblical?”

<https://www.ronrhodes.org/is-annihilationism-biblical>

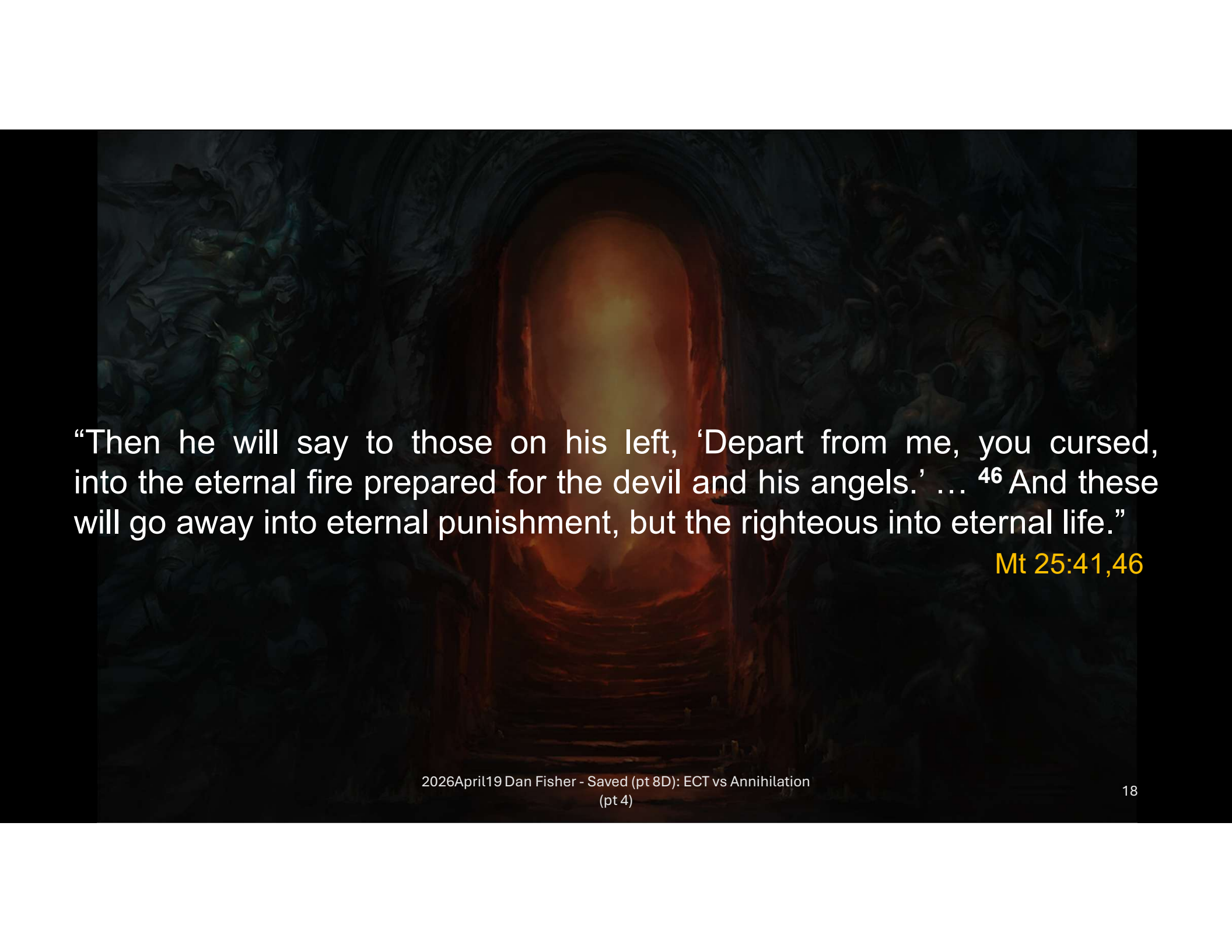


Do the lost suffer conscious torment eternally?



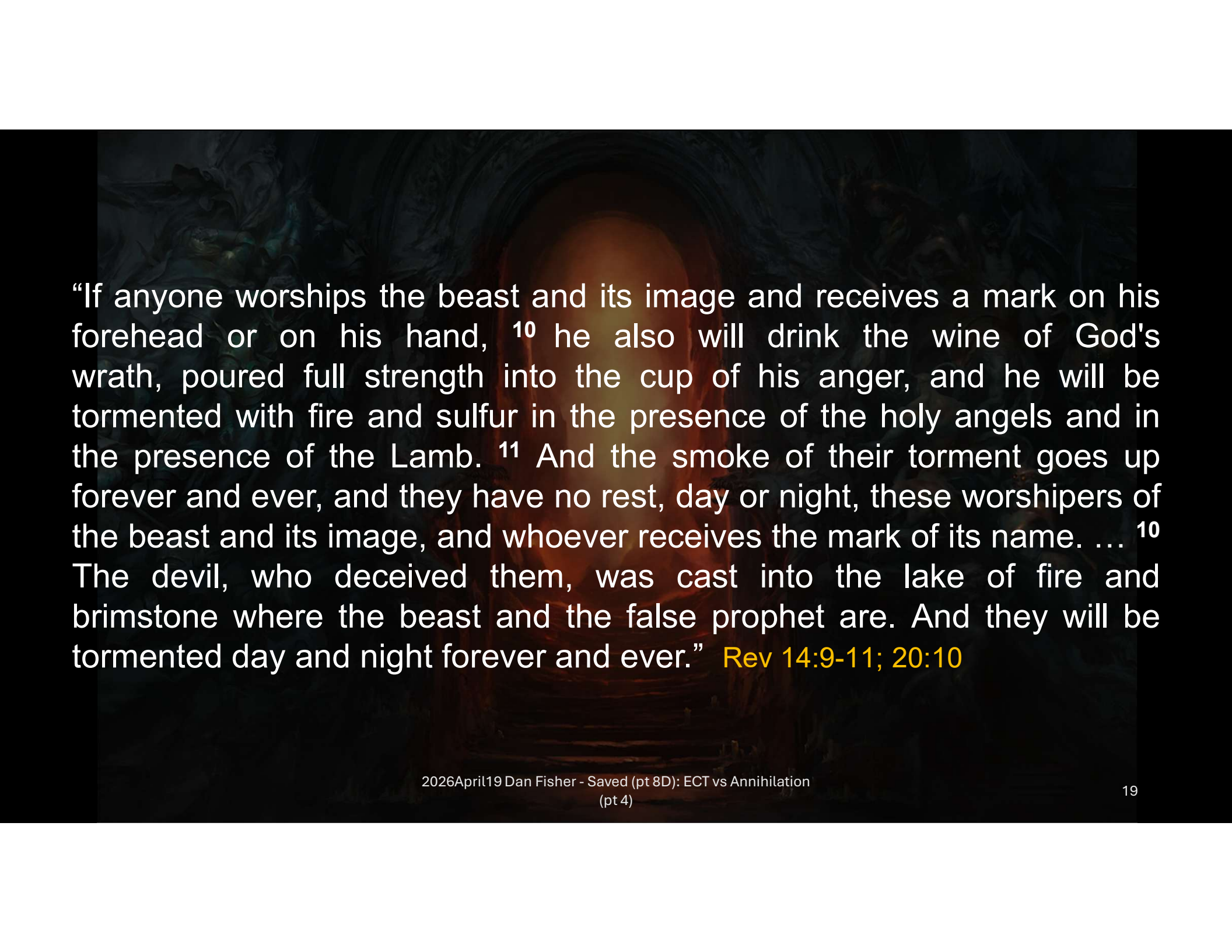
1. Is the fire in hell real?

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“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’ ... ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Mt 25:41,46



“If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰ he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name. ... ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” **Rev 14:9-11; 20:10**

- Scripture often uses fire to describe the awesome power & presence of God



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- **Fire is used to describe God's judgment**

For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.” **Deut 4:24; Heb 12:29**

“The sinners in Zion are afraid; trembling has seized the godless: ‘Who among us can dwell with the consuming fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?’” **Is 33:14**

“For behold, the Lord will come in fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger in fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. ¹⁶ For by fire will the Lord enter into judgment,” **Is 66:15-16**


“when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels ⁸ in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹ They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,” **2 Thess 1:7-8**



Gehenna

“ge” = land of/valley of

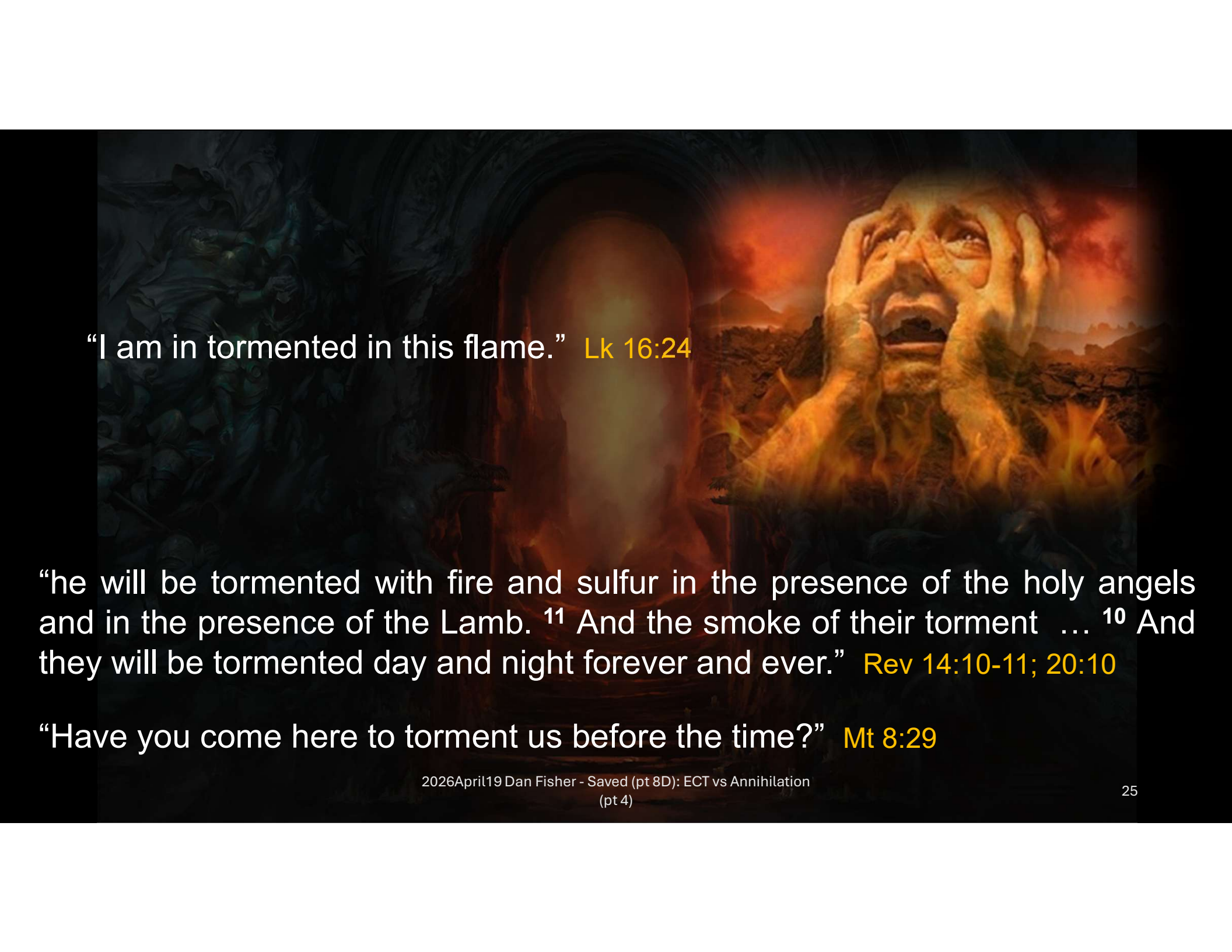
“henna” = Hinnom

A wide-angle photograph of a hillside town under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A red oval is drawn over the lower-middle portion of the image, highlighting a valley area with a road and dense vegetation. The town's buildings are visible on the slopes above the valley.

Where Ahaz and Manasseh offered sacrifices to Molech (2 Chron 28:3; 33:6)



2. Will the lost be tormented?



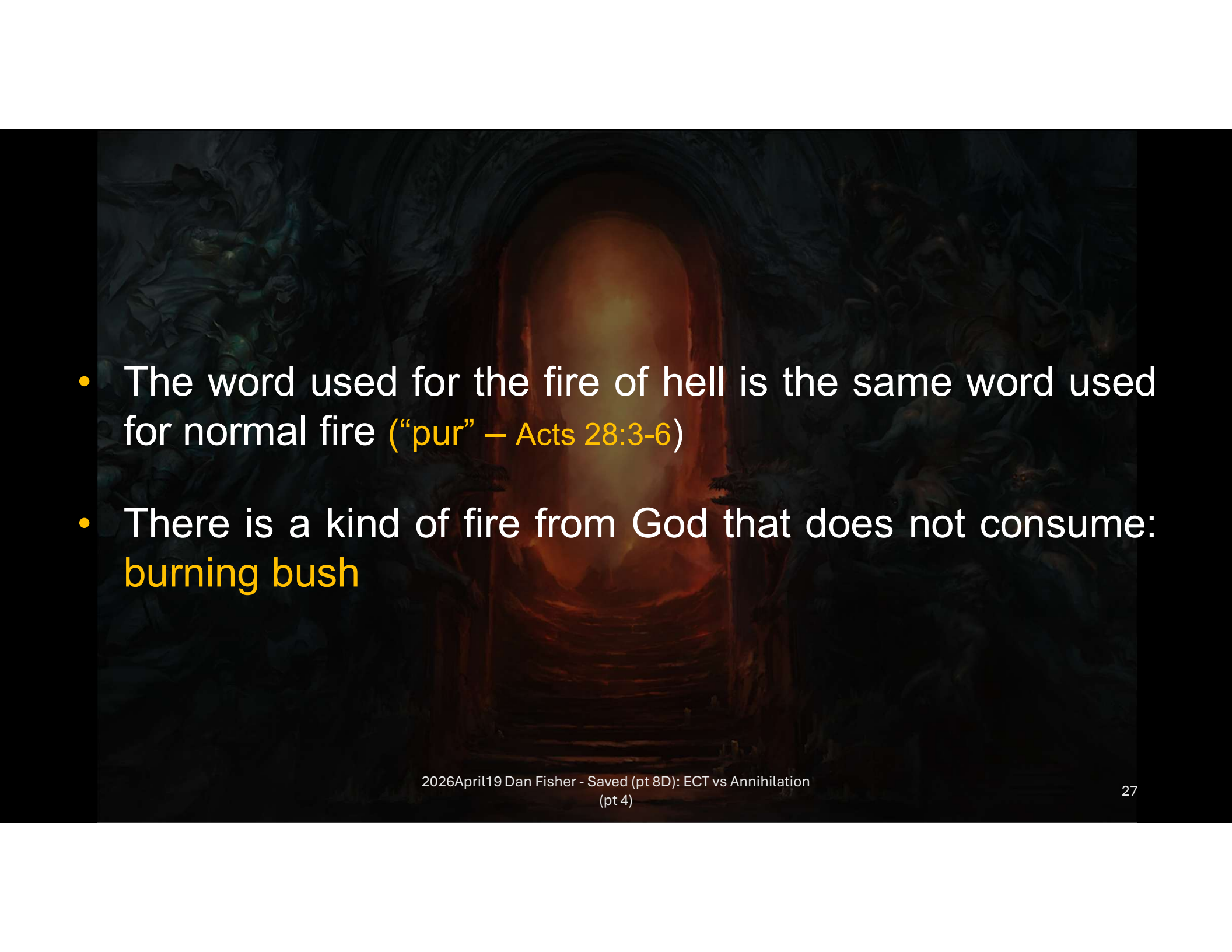
“I am in tormented in this flame.” Lk 16:24

“he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹ And the smoke of their torment ... ¹⁰ And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Rev 14:10-11; 20:10

“Have you come here to torment us before the time?” Mt 8:29



3. So, if the fire is not real, what is it?

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- The word used for the fire of hell is the same word used for normal fire (“pur” – Acts 28:3-6)
 - There is a kind of fire from God that does not consume: **burning bush**



4. If Scripture does not mean “torment,” what does it mean?



5. How long does Scripture say the punishment/torment of hell will last?

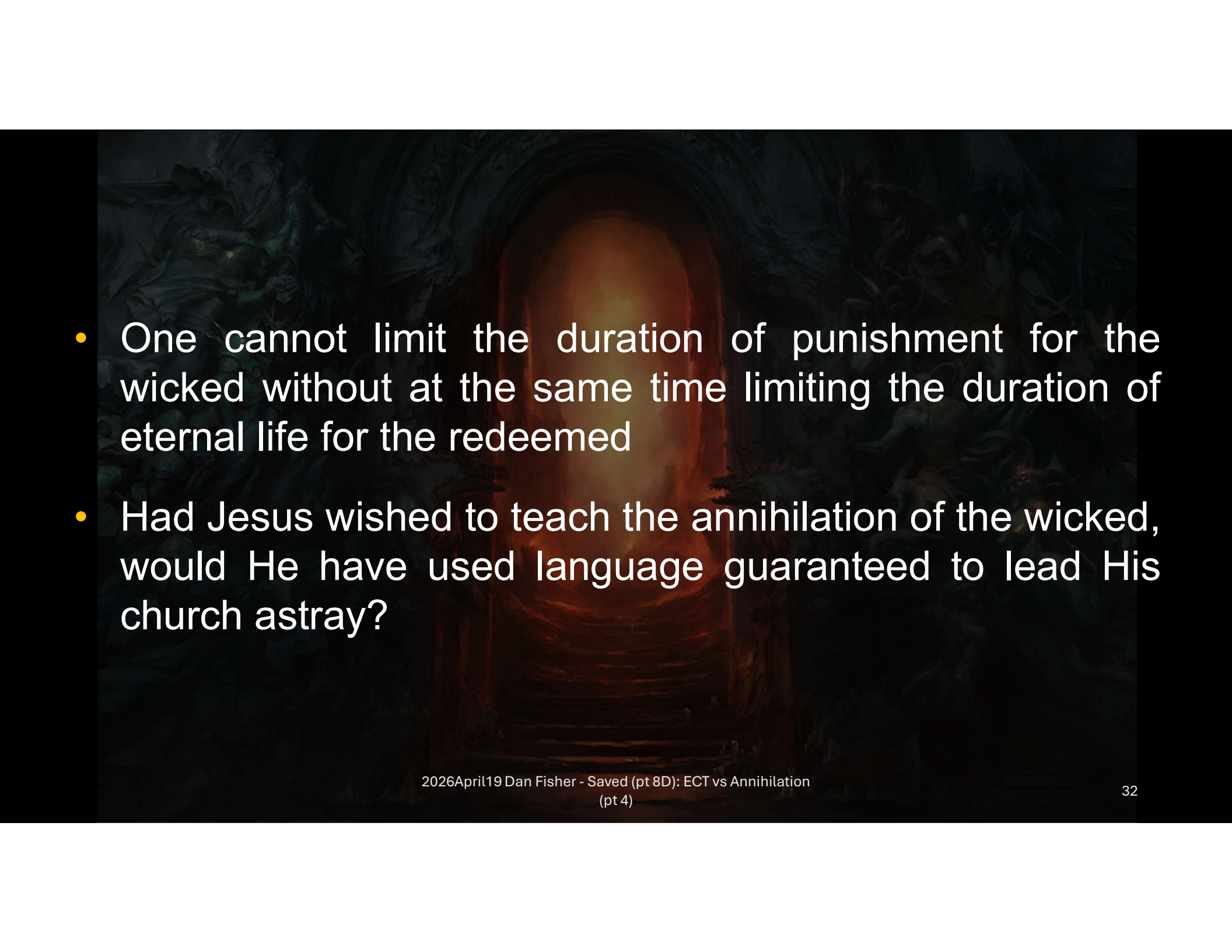
- Scripture uses the Greek adjective *aionion* to describe the duration of hell
- *Aionion* literally means “everlasting, without end”
- *Aionion* is used to describe God’s eternity – Rom 16:26; Heb 9:14, 13:8; Rev 4:9-10; 10:6
- *Aionion* is used to describe the unending worship of God – 1 Tim 1:7; Rev 1:6; 4:9; 5:3
- *Aionion* is used to characterize the everlasting reign of the saints – Rev 22:5

- 
- The wicked share the same fate as Satan and his demonic hosts

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the **eternal** fire prepared for the **devil and his angels.**” **Mt 25:41**

- The duration of punishment for the wicked is parallel to the duration of life for the righteous

“And these will go away into **eternal** punishment, but the righteous into **eternal** life.” **Mt 25:46**

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- One cannot limit the duration of punishment for the wicked without at the same time limiting the duration of eternal life for the redeemed
 - Had Jesus wished to teach the annihilation of the wicked, would He have used language guaranteed to lead His church astray?



6. Words Scripture uses to describe the nature of the punishment or torment of hell:



Annihilationists force common, modern understandings of words onto scriptural descriptions of hell

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death/dead, destroy/destruction, perish, cut off, consume, burn



- **dead/death**

“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” **Gen 2:17**

“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air” **Eph 2:1-2**

“second death” – **Rev 2:11, 20:6, 20:14, 21:8**

- **destroy/destruction**

The Hebrew words used in the O.T. do not always mean annihilation

Num 21:29 – used to refer to the people of Chemosh being “destroyed” as they were being sold into slavery – not being annihilated

1 Sam 9:3,20 – used to refer to Saul's “lost donkeys” (*athonoth abadoth*). In this context, the word means “lost,” not “annihilated”

Ps 31:12 – used to refer to a vessel that is “broken” – not annihilated

The Greek words used in the N.T. do not always mean annihilation

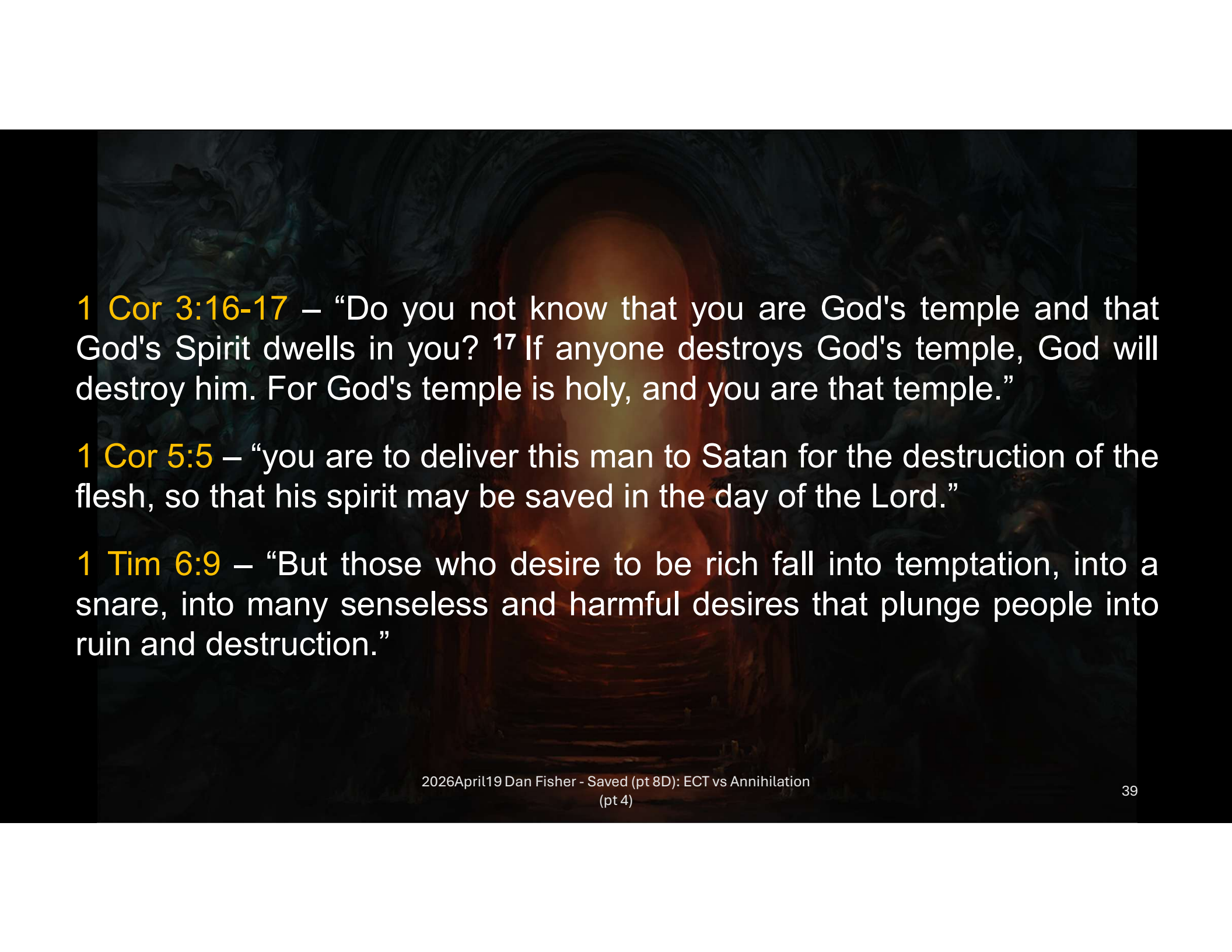
Mt 2:13; 12:14; 27:4 – used to refer to King Herod's desire to kill the baby Jesus and the Jewish plot to execute Jesus

Lk 15:4-6,8-9 – used to describe the lost but existing sheep & coin

Lk 15:17,24 – used it to describe the prodigal (but existing) son

Mk 1:24, Mt 8:29 – used for the demons asking if Jesus was going to “destroy” them or “torment”

Rom 14:15 – “For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died.”



1 Cor 3:16-17 – “Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.”

1 Cor 5:5 – “you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.”

1 Tim 6:9 – “But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.”

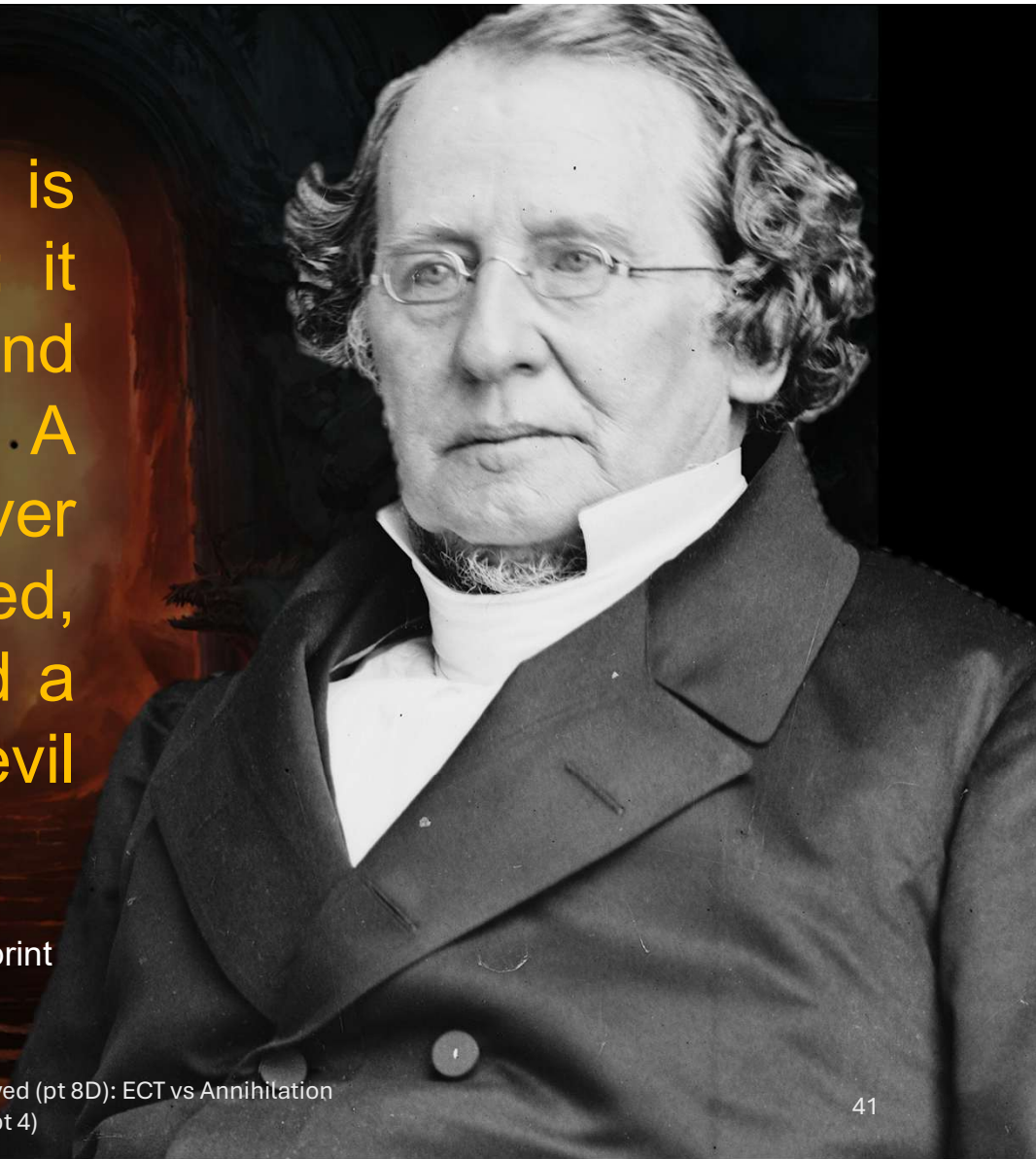


Scripture defines “eternal destruction” as being banished
from the presence of the Lord and His glory

“They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the
presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,” **2 Thess 1:9**

Charles Hodge: “To destroy is to ruin; render unfit for use; it can no longer answer the end for which it was designed ... A soul is utterly and forever destroyed when it is reprobated, alienated from God, rendered a fit companion only for the devil and his angels.”

Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979 reprint edition), 3:874.



- **perish/perishing**

“But the wicked will perish; the enemies of the Lord are like the glory of the pastures; they vanish – like smoke they vanish away.” **Ps 37:20**

“As smoke is driven away, so you shall drive them away; as wax melts before fire, so the wicked shall perish before God!” **Ps 68:2**

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” **1 Cor 1:18**

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“[This participle is a present tense participle] describing existing people who are presently perishing. The verb does not suggest that their future state will be non-existence.”



- **Cut off**

“For the Lord loves justice; He will not forsake his saints. They are preserved forever, but the children of the wicked shall be cut off. ...³⁸ But transgressors shall be altogether destroyed; the future of the wicked shall be cut off.” **Ps 37:28,38**

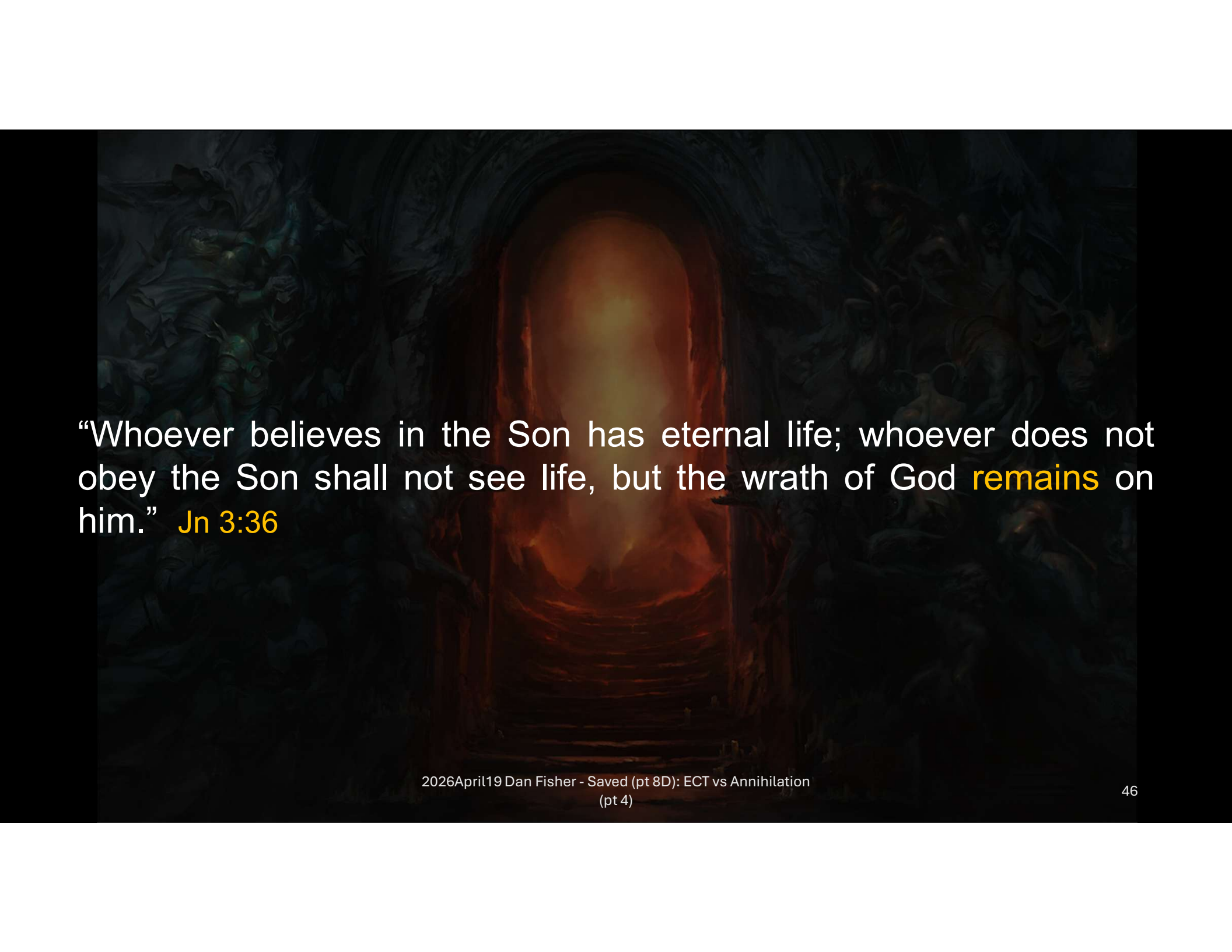
The word used for “cut off” is *carath*. This same word is used to describe the Messiah being “cut off” (Dan 9:26).

“There is a clear biblical example of still-conscious beings who have endured a thousand years of hell’s torment. The beast and the false prophet ‘were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur (Rev 19:20) before the ‘thousand years’ (Rev 20:2). Yet, after this time the devil ‘was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false [still] are (v. 10 NKJ). Not only were they alive when they entered, but they were still alive after a thousand years of conscious torment. This alone is a definitive argument against annihilationism.”

Dr. Noman Geisler, *Systematic Theology* Vol IV, p. 408

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“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God **remains** on him.” **Jn 3:36**

“When God made the human soul, God made it in His own image, and our souls could never cease to exist, any more than God could cease to exist. Our souls will go on – endless, timeless, dateless, and measureless. When the sun, moon, and stars have grown cold, our souls will still be in existence. There was a time when we were not. There never will be a time when we are not. Our souls will exist forever, either in Heaven or in Hell.”

Adrian Rogers

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