

5. Satan, the beast, and the false prophet are tormented for ever and ever in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20; 20:10); how can the Lake of Fire represent extinction?

Revelation 20:7-10 pictures Satan, the beast and the false prophet cast into the Lake of Fire and describes them as "being tormented day and night for ever and ever." In 20:15 those not listed in the Lamb's book of life are cast into the same Lake of Fire. If Satan, the beast, and the false prophet can be *tormented for ever and ever*, there is no basis for stating that the Lake of Fire means *extinction* for sinners cast into it, or *destruction* in the sense of annihilation! This is a *formidable* objection to annihilation.

6. Unbelievers should not be told about annihilation, lest they adopt hedonism as their way of life.

If unbelievers are to be resurrected, judged, and then annihilated, *they should not be told about this*, lest they begin to weigh alternatives and decide that it is preferable to adopt a hedonistic lifestyle of "eat, drink, and be merry" in this life and then face annihilation, rather than to adopt the Christian lifestyle of repentance, faith, radical discipleship and holiness, and then look forward to an endless life in the presence of God.

In fact, if they *are* told about annihilation, they may decide to throw themselves fully into the spirit of "let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die," realizing that there is no negative payoff in terms of endless punishment, but at most a brief period of suffering.