

**"THE TEACHINGS OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
AND JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
ON THE LIFE AFTER DEATH"**

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Appendix E
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KM Note: We have divided this appendix into two documents corresponding to the two aspects of eschatological teaching to which the opening paragraph below refers. What follows here is the second part of the appendix.

In this appendix attention will be given to two aspects of the eschatological teaching of both Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses: the question of soul-extinction and the question of the annihilation of the wicked.

PART II: THE ANNIHILATION OF THE WICKED

Both Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses teach the final annihilation of the wicked and deny that there is a place of eternal torment called hell. It will be recognized that we are now no longer discussing the so-called intermediate state between death and the resurrection, but that we are now treating an aspect of the doctrine of the final state -- the state into which men enter after the resurrection of the body.

Seventh-day Adventists teach that, after Satan's final assault on the "camp of the saints," fire will come down from heaven and will annihilate Satan, his evil angels, and all the wicked. Before this happens, however, those to be annihilated will be subjected to gradations of suffering, depending on the guilt of the persons or demons involved; Satan himself will suffer the longest and will therefore be the last to perish in the flames. At the end of this period of suffering, however, all those who have rebelled against God will be wiped out of existence.¹

The teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses on this point is a bit more complicated. Whereas Seventh-day Adventists affirm that all those who have died will be raised again, no matter how wicked they may have been, the Witnesses assert that certain individuals will not be raised but will remain in the nonexistence into which they were plunged by their death: those killed at Armageddon, Adam and Eve, those who died in the flood, and so on.² Individuals raised from the dead during the

¹ See above, p. 142.

² See above, p. 317.

millennium who do not obey God's kingdom will be annihilated before the end of the millennium.³ Satan and his demons, loosed at the end of the millennium, will succeed in leading some of earth's inhabitants astray; this host he will head in a final assault on the "camp of the holy ones." Fire will come down from heaven, however, and will annihilate this entire rebellious army.⁴ The possibility always remains that some who are left on the new earth after Satan's destruction may still have to be annihilated.⁵ In distinction from Seventh-day Adventists, however, Jehovah's Witnesses do not teach a gradation of suffering previous to the annihilation of the wicked.

The word apollumi. The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked is, however, not in agreement with Scripture. In order to refute this teaching, we must first of all look at some of the more common words used in the New Testament to describe the final punishment of the wicked. The word most commonly used for this purpose is the verb *apollumi*, usually translated *destroy* or *perish* (in the middle or passive voice). Seventh-day Adventists, on pages 536 and 537 of *Questions on Doctrine*, give the impression that the word *apollumi* when used in the New Testament of the fate of the wicked means to annihilate. Jehovah's Witnesses give the same impression. On page 97 of *Let God Be True* they quote Matthew 10:28, where the word *apollumi* is used to describe what God does to both soul and body in hell (Gehenna), and conclude: "Since God destroys soul and body in Gehenna, this is conclusive proof that Gehenna, or the valley of the son of Hinnom, is a picture or symbol of complete annihilation, and not of eternal torment." The implication is clear: *apollumi* must mean annihilation.

How can it be shown that *apollumi* in the New Testament never means annihilation? We note first of all that this word never means to annihilate when it is applied to other things than man's eternal destiny. Let us observe the range of meaning of the New Testament word:

(1) Sometimes *apollumi* simply means *to be lost*. It is so used in the three "lost" parables in Luke 15, to designate the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. In the case of the son, his being lost meant that he was lost to the fellowship of his father since he went against his father's purpose.

(2) The word *apollumi* may be applied in a somewhat related way to mean *become useless*. So in Matthew 9:17 it is used to show what happens to old wineskins when you pour new wine into them: the skins "perish" or become useless. And in Matthew 26:8 a related word is used for what the disciples thought was a waste of money -- the pouring of ointment on Jesus' head: "To what purpose is this waste?" (the word rendered *waste* is *apooleia*, the noun derived from *apollumi*). In neither of these instances can the word or its derivative possibly mean annihilation.

(3) Sometimes *apollumi* is used to mean *kill*. For example, note Matthew 2:13, "for Herod will seek the young child to destroy (*apolesai*) him." Even aside from the fact that Jesus is involved here, is killing annihilation? As we have learned from Matthew 10:28, one is not annihilated when he is killed. Further, strictly speaking, one does not even annihilate the body when he kills a man. The particles of a decaying body pass into other forms of matter.

3 See above, pp. 320-21.

4 See above, pp. 321-22.

5 See above, p. 324.

(4) There is a significant type of passage in which *apollumi* cannot possibly mean annihilation: Luke 9:24, "For whosoever would save his life (*psuchee*) shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." *Lose his life* in the second half of the verse is a translation of *apolesee teen psucheen*. One could render *psuchee* by soul, if he wished. In either case, annihilation is out of the question. If *apollumi* meant annihilation in the second half of this text, the person who would enter into a state of annihilation would be the saved person! To lose one's life or soul must mean something quite different from annihilation: to be willing to subordinate one's own interests to those of the Kingdom of God.

(5) We come now to those passages in which *apollumi* is used to describe the future destiny of the wicked. In the light of the usages we have noted, we certainly would not expect the word to mean annihilation in these instances. If it did have this meaning when applied to man's future state, *apollumi* would have undergone a rather abrupt change of meaning. Now in the abstract such a change of meaning would be possible. But if this were so, there would have to be a clear indication in the relevant passages that the meaning of the word had thus changed. If this were so, moreover, descriptions of the final destiny of the wicked in which the word *apollumi* is not used should unambiguously support the idea of annihilation.

The Meaning of Gehenna. Let us now examine some of these descriptions. We look, first, at a word which occurs twelve times in the New Testament and is usually translated *hell*, the Greek word *ge-enna*. Seventh-day Adventists understand this word to refer to the fires of destruction which shall finally annihilate the wicked; Jehovah's Witnesses interpret the word as a symbol of annihilation.⁶ In Matthew 18:9, however, the phrase, "the Gehenna (or hell) of fire" is parallel with the expression, "the eternal fire" (*to pur to aionion*) in verse 8. So the fire of Gehenna is not a temporary one but an eternal or endless one.⁷ If the fire of Gehenna is eternal, we must conclude that the punishment of which the fire is symbolic will also be eternal. For what would be the point of keeping the fire of Gehenna burning after the last individual had been annihilated by it?

Note further that in Mark 9:43 the word *ge-enna* occurs in parallel construction with the expression, "the unquenchable fire" (*to pur to asbeston*). If the fire of Gehenna is unquenchable, will it not be an everlasting fire? Observe also that in Mark 9:48 Gehenna is described in words quoted from Isaiah 66:24, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." These expressions clearly indicate that there is no end to the punishment of Gehenna. Jehovah's Witnesses reply that what is here said not to die is the worms and not man."⁸ What Jesus says here, however, is "*their* worm dieth not." Since the worm stands for the punishment suffered by the wicked, we are compelled to conclude that the symbol of the undying worm is simply a picture of unending punishment.⁹

⁶ *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 558; see above p. 323.

⁷ That *aionios* means endless when used in this sense will be shown later in this appendix.

⁸ *Let God Be True*, p. 95.

⁹ When Mr. Ulysses Glass of the Watchtower staff, whom the author interviewed on June 6, 1962, was asked why the Scriptures say that this fire will not be quenched, he replied, "The fire is not quenched because there will always be a place of punishment." The implication of his statement was that, after the wicked shall have been annihilated, the fire of Gehenna will be kept going in order to punish possible rebels who might still appear on the scene. Cf.

Much is made by both Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses of the figurative nature of the descriptions of the punishment of the wicked found in the New Testament. To be sure, these descriptions are figurative and symbolic, but the figures are intended to convey meaning. Though we cannot apply every detail of these figures literally, we must accept the teaching they are intended to convey, namely, that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting. The Biblical descriptions of Gehenna, therefore, rule out annihilationism, for creatures who have been annihilated cannot be everlastingly punished.

The Smoke of Their Torment. Let us now turn to another passage which describes the final state of the wicked: Revelation 14:11, "And the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name." These words obviously refer to the punishment of the lost.¹⁰ The smoke of the torment of these lost ones is said to go up for ever and ever. Though we must not think of literal smoke here, the expression is meaningless if it is not intended to picture, in a vivid way, punishment which will never end. The words "for ever and ever" read as follows in the Greek: *eis aioonas aioonoon* (literally, unto ages of ages). In Revelation 4:9 God is described as the one that liveth for ever and ever" (*eis tous aioonas toon aioonoon*). Except for the addition of the definite articles, this is the same expression as that used in 14:11 of the ascending smoke of the torment of the lost. From a comparison of these two passages, therefore, we learn that the torment of the lost is as endless as God Himself! Moreover, the word for torment, *basanismos*, cannot possibly refer to an eternal state of unconsciousness or non-existence. If these lost were reduced to non-existence, how could the smoke of their torment go up endlessly?¹¹

Note further that we are told in Revelation 14:11 that the individuals here described have no rest day and night. Annihilation cannot be pictured here, for annihilation would mean a kind of rest. The lot of these lost ones is contrasted with the lot of the saved in verse 13: "Blessed are the dead

Watchtower, Nov. 15, 1955, p. 703; and note what is said on p. 303 of *This Means Everlasting Life*: "Second death could at any time throughout eternity be inflicted upon any who might choose to sin. That always remains within God's power." That this interpretation of the "unquenchable fire" is a deliberate attempt to evade clear Scriptural teaching is evident from Jesus' words, "Their worm dieth not." When this clause is followed by the words, "the fire is not quenched," it is obvious that this is so because the fire continues to punish *them*.

¹⁰ Seventh-day Adventists, as we have seen, apply this passage to those who, after having received the coming enlightenment about the obligation of the true Sabbath, still refuse to keep the seventh day (see above, pp. 127-28). Adventists would, however, agree that the punishment here described is that of the eternally lost.

¹¹ Seventh-day Adventists attempt to evade the thrust of this passage (and of Rev. 19:3 and 20:10, where similar expressions are used) by pointing to Isa. 34:10, where the expression, the smoke thereof shall go up for ever (*le'oolam*)" is used in a chapter depicting the judgment which shall fall upon Edom. Since the unquenchable fire and unending smoke here pictured ended in desolation for Edom, and since obviously the fire that destroyed Edom is no longer burning, so they reason, it is clear that Rev. 14:11 and similar passages are only vivid ways of describing the complete annihilation of the wicked (*Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 542-43). In reply, it may be said that Isaiah in Chap. 34 is using Edom as representative of all powers that are hostile to the church of God, and that therefore God's judgment on Edom is pictured in terms some of which can only apply to His final judgment on all the wicked: "The unquenchable fire . . . and the eternally ascending smoke (cf. Rev. 19:3), prove that the end of all things is referred to" (F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on Isaiah* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1881], II, 72; cf. p. 70). How would Seventh-day Adventists explain the 4th verse of this chapter, "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. . ." Were these words also fulfilled at the time of the destruction of Edom?

who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors. . . ." The saved, therefore, will have rest after they die, whereas the lost will have no rest day or night. Can the latter expression possibly picture a condition of unconsciousness or non-existence?

We return now to the question of the meaning of the word *apollumi* when applied in the New Testament to the future destiny of the wicked. In the light of the usage of this word when it does not refer to man's final destiny, of passages like Revelation 14:11 where the future state of the wicked is described as one of endless torment, and of Biblical descriptions of Gehenna, we are compelled to conclude that *apollumi* when used of the final lot of the wicked cannot mean annihilation. We must therefore not be led astray by the sound of words like *destroy* or *perish*, when these are used in translations, as if they proved that the wicked shall be annihilated.¹² *Apollumi* when used of the ultimate destiny of the wicked means everlasting perdition, a perdition consisting of endless loss of fellowship with God, which is at the same time a state of endless torment or pain.

This understanding of *apollumi*, which agrees fully with the teachings of such passages as Mark 9:48 and Revelation 14:11, does not at all go contrary to the first usages of the word discussed, but supplements them. For example, one could say that to "perish" in the sense of everlasting perdition means to become useless (meaning 2), to experience eternal death in distinction from eternal life (meaning 3; compare the expression, "the second death," in Rev. 20:6), and to remain permanently lost as the Prodigal Son was lost for a time -- that is, permanently out of fellowship with God (meaning 1).

The word olethros. Another word used occasionally in the New Testament to describe the punishment of the wicked is the word *olethros*. Though Seventh-day Adventists do not quote the Greek word, they cite II Thessalonians 1:9, where *olethron aioonion* is translated "everlasting destruction," to prove the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked.¹³ Jehovah's Witnesses find in I Thessalonians 5:3, where the expression *aiphnidios olethros* is rendered "sudden destruction" in the *New World Translation*, a description of the sudden annihilation which shall overtake all non-Witnesses at the time of the Battle of Armageddon.¹⁴

It can readily be shown, however, that *olethros* can never mean annihilation when it is applied to the final lot of the wicked. This word is used four times in the Greek New Testament. A puzzling usage is that found in I Corinthians 5:5, where the Corinthian church is told by Paul "to deliver such a one [the fornicator in their midst] unto Satan for the destruction (*olethros*) of the flesh, that

12 Though the editors of the 1951 ed. of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* assert that they have assigned only one meaning to each major word (p. 9), it is significant to note that the word *apollumi* is translated variously in this volume by *lose* (Lk. 15:4), *be ruined* (Mt. 9:17), *perish* (Lk. 21:18), and *be destroyed* (Jn. 3:16). The Watchtower translators would therefore have to grant, on the basis of their own New Testament, that the word *apollumi* is often used in ways in which it cannot mean *annihilate*.

13 *Questions on Doctrine*, pp. 537 and 539. Note that in the middle paragraph on p. 537 four texts are quoted to prove that the wicked shall be "destroyed." No indication is given, however, of the fact that the word translated *destroyed* in these passages represents four different words in the original: one Hebrew word (*shamadh*) and three Greek words (*apollumi*, *olethros*, *katargeo*). Is this responsible scholarship?

14 *New Heavens and a New Earth*, pp. 292-93.

the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Though commentators are divided on the meaning of the word *olethros* as here used,¹⁵ it is clear that the word does not at this place describe the final lot of the wicked, since the hope is expressed that this man may yet be saved. In I Thessalonians 5:3 the word *olethros* is used to describe what happens to the wicked on the "day of the Lord": "When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction (*olethros*) cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child. . . ." If the sudden *olethros* here described meant utter annihilation, it would be impossible for these individuals to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. But Scripture teaches plainly that all men, both good and evil, shall appear before that judgment-seat (II Cor. 5:10).¹⁶ The word *olethros* as here used must therefore mean sudden ruin, sudden "loss of all that gives worth to existence."¹⁷

There are two passages where *olethros* is used to describe the final state of the wicked. One of these is I Timothy 6:9, where we read, "But they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction (*olethron*) and perdition (*apooleian*, the noun derived from *apollumi*)." Since, as we have seen above, *apooleia* and *apollumi* cannot mean annihilation, it is obvious that *olethros*, which is here used in apposition with *apooleia*, cannot mean annihilation either. Neither can *olethros* mean annihilation in II Thessalonians 1:9, "who [those that know not God and obey not the gospel of Jesus] shall suffer punishment (*dikeen*), even eternal destruction (*olethron aioonion*) from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." The word here translated punishment, *dikee*, cannot mean annihilation; it is used in Jude 7, in fact, to describe the eternal punishment of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah: "suffering the punishment (*dikeen*) of eternal fire. *Olethros* cannot, therefore, mean annihilation either, since it stands in apposition to *dikee*. Furthermore, how could there be an eternal annihilation? Annihilation, by definition, must take place in a moment; what sense does it make to speak of "endless annihilation"?¹⁸ The doom of the wicked, as here described, means a ruin which is everlasting, a punishment which will never end.

The word kolasis. A third word used in the New Testament to describe the final state of the wicked is *kolasis*. This word is used in Matthew 25:46, "And these [those on the left hand] shall go away into eternal punishment (*kolasin aioonion*); but the righteous into eternal life (*zooeen aioonion*)." This passage occurs at the end of the section in which Jesus describes the judgment of the sheep and the goats. Jehovah's Witnesses translate the first part of this verse as follows: "And these will depart into everlasting cutting-off" (NWT). By means of this translation they give the impression that *kolasis* means annihilation. Though it is true, as their footnote on page 112 of the 1951 edition

15 Some hold that it refers to the visitation of bodily affliction upon this man, while others insist that it means the eventual subjugation of this man's evil nature. In neither case could the word mean annihilation.

16 Seventh-day Adventists contend that the wicked, though annihilated at the time of Christ's coming, shall again be "raised" at the end of the millennium. It should be noted, however, that the "annihilation" thus attributed to the word *olethros* is of a temporary nature. If *olethros* means only this kind of annihilation when applied to the final state of the wicked, how do we know that God will not at some point again bring them back to life?

17 Moulton and Milligan, *op. cit.*, p. 445, quoting Milligan on I Thessalonians. See also Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 153-54.

18 "The very fact that this 'destruction' is 'everlasting' shows that it does not amount to 'annihilation' or 'going out of existence.'" Quoted from Wm. Hendriksen, *Exposition of I and II Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1955), p. 160. See also Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-206.

of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* indicates, that the stem *kolazoo* originally meant pruning, there is no justification for the above translation. The word *kolasis* is rendered "punishment" by Thayer, Arndt-Gingrich, and Moulton-Milligan. Josephus, who lived from A.D. 37 to 100, indicates that the Pharisees of his day believed in the eternal punishment of the wicked;¹⁹ if Jesus had felt it necessary to correct them (as He did correct the Sadducees on the matter of the resurrection of the body), he certainly should have done so.

The people of Jesus' day, however, understood the word *kolasis* as meaning not annihilation, but punishment. In the *First Epistle of Clement*, written in A.D. 96 or 97, section 11, the following expression occurs: ". . . He forsaketh not them which set their hope on Him, but appointeth unto punishment (*kolasis*) and torment (*aikismon*) them which swerve aside."²⁰ Had the writer understood *kolasis* as meaning annihilation, how could he have placed it first? Surely one cannot torment an annihilated person! Moulton and Milligan quote a fragment from an uncanonical gospel written during the early centuries of the Christian era in which the word *kolasis* is used in apposition with *basanos*, which means torment. The passage reads, in part, "for the evil-doers among men . . . await punishment (*kolasin*) and much torment (*polleen basanon*)."²¹ If *kolasis* was thought to mean annihilation, one would have expected the writer to use *basanos* first and *kolasis* later, for the reason mentioned above.²¹ It is therefore clear beyond doubt that *kolasis* at the time the New Testament was written meant punishment, not annihilation.²²

We may further observe that in the only other New Testament passage where *kolasis* occurs, I John 4:18, the *New World Translation* renders the word as follows: "fear exercises a restraint" (*kolasin echei*). To be consistent, the Witnesses should have translated: "fear has cutting-off" (which, of course, makes no sense). Certainly restraint is not annihilation. We can further check the meaning of *kolasis* by noting the two instances in which the verb from which *kolasis* is derived, *kolazoo*, is used in the New Testament: Acts 4:21 and II Peter 2:9. In the former passage even the *New World Translation* has: "they did not find any ground on which to punish (*kolasoontai*) them." The latter passage, as we saw above, can best be rendered, "The Lord knoweth how . . . to keep the unrighteous being punished (or under punishment, ASV; the Greek has *kolazomenous*) unto the day of judgment." Since the verb *kolazoo* is used in both instances in the sense of *punish*, and since *kolasis* in I John 4:18 means restraint (NWT), punishment (ASV), or torment (KJ), it is clear that *kolasis* in Matthew 25:46 cannot by any stretch of the imagination mean annihilation, but must mean punishment. This punishment is there described as being everlasting or eternal.

The word aionios. This leads us to consider the meaning of the word *aionios*, usually rendered *eternal* or *everlasting* in our translations. We have already seen that this word is applied to God in

19 *Antiquities*, XVIII, 1, 3; cf. *Jewish Wars*, II, 8, 14: "They [the Pharisees] say . . . that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."

20 The translation is that of Lightfoot.

21 *Op. cit.*, p. 352. The quotation is from Grenfell and Hunt's *Oxyrynchus Papyri*, V, 840, 6. The editors of the latter volume indicate that, though the papyrus itself was probably written in the 4th century, the original gospel of which it was a partial copy dates from the second half of the 2nd century A.D. (pp. 1 and 4).

22 Matthew is generally considered to have been written some time between 50 and 70 A.D. For other references to *kolasis* in writings contemporary with the New Testament, see Joh. Schneider, "Kolasis," in Kittel's *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, III, 717.

Revelation 4:9, where God is said to live *eis tous aionas toon aioonoon* (literally, into the ages of the ages). In Romans 16:26 Paul speaks about the commandment *tou aioniou Theou*, of the eternal God. Surely no annihilationist would wish to deny that God is without end!

When the word *aionios* is used to describe future time, moreover, it denotes time without end.²³ The word is therefore frequently used in the New Testament to describe the endless future blessedness of God's people. We find it so used in Matthew 25:46, quoted above. We also find it so used in John 10:28, "And I give to them eternal life (*zooeen aioonion*), and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Besides, we find *aionios* used to describe the eternal glory which awaits believers in II Timothy 2:10, the eternal weight of glory in II Corinthians 4:17, an eternal inheritance in Hebrews 9:15, and an eternal heavenly building in II Corinthians 5:1. In II Corinthians 4:18, in fact, the word *aionios* is used to modify "the things which are not seen," in contrast to "the things which are seen," called temporal (*proskaira*, lasting only for a time). No annihilationist would, one may be sure, care to deny that the future blessedness of God's people will be without end. Neither Seventh-day Adventists nor Jehovah's Witnesses do in fact deny that the future glory of the saints, described in the Scriptures as *aionios*, is endless.

If, however, the word *aionios* means "without end" when applied to the future blessedness of believers it must follow, unless clear evidence is given to the contrary, that this word also means "without end" when it is used to describe the future punishment of the lost. *Aionios* is so used in Matthew 25:46 and in II Thessalonians 1:9. Since the word *kolasis*, used in the former passage, and the word *olethros*, used in the latter, do not mean annihilation, but punishment, as has been shown, it follows that the punishment which the wicked will suffer after this life will be as endless as the future happiness of the people of God.

Seventh-day Adventists admit that the word *kolasis* in Matthew 25:46 does mean punishment. Since they also grant that *aionios* as used in this verse means endless, it would seem to follow that they should accept the doctrine of the endless punishment of the lost. They have found a way out, however. Referring to such expressions as "eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12) and "eternal judgment" (Heb. 6:2), they affirm, "In the expression 'eternal punishment,' just as in 'eternal redemption' and 'eternal judgment,' the Bible is referring to all eternity -- not as of *process*, but as of *result*. It is not an endless process of punishment, but an effectual punishment, which will be final and forever (*aionios*)."²⁴

By way of refutation, it must be said that in the parallel expression, eternal life (*zooeen aioonion*), the word *aionios* is used to picture a life which is not just everlasting in its result, but everlasting in its duration or continuance. Seventh-day Adventists admit that eternal life is everlasting in its duration since they hold that immortality is bestowed upon the righteous at the Second Coming of Christ,²⁵ and that Abraham and his seed shall possess the new earth throughout the endless ages of

23 Arndt and Gingrich, *op. cit.*, p. 28. Cf. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 20; and H. Sasse, "Aionios," in Kittel, *op. cit.*, I, 209.

24 *Questions on Doctrine*, p. 540. Cf. p. 506, note.

25 *Fundamental Beliefs*, Art. 9.

eternity.²⁶ If *aioonios* in the last part of Matthew 25:46 means *endless in duration*, what right do they have to restrict the meaning of *aioonios* in the first part of this verse to *endless in result*?²⁷

Degrees of Punishment. A further consideration against annihilationism is the fact that the New Testament speaks of degrees in the punishment of the wicked: Luke 12:47, 48, "And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes." It is here clearly taught that not all the lost will be punished in the same way. If, however, the wicked are annihilated, how can there be degrees of punishment? Can there be degrees of annihilation?

We may well challenge Jehovah's Witnesses to show how their view of the destiny of the wicked leaves any room for the variation in punishment taught by Jesus in the above passage. Seventh-day Adventists try to answer this objection by contending that there will be degrees of punishment previous to annihilation, some suffering longer than others.²⁸ It was taught by Mrs. White that this graded suffering is to occur after fire shall have come down from heaven to devour the devil, the evil angels, and all the wicked.²⁹ Satan, it is said, will suffer the longest, and will therefore be the last to perish in the flames.³⁰ In reply, it should be noted that it is specifically stated in the context of the passage which describes the descent of fire from heaven (Rev. 20:9) that the devil shall be tormented (*basanistheesontai*), not just for a long period of time, but "day and night for ever and ever" (*eis tous aioonas toon aioonoon*).³¹

In conclusion, we may well take note of I. M. Haldeman's comment on Christ's words about Judas, recorded in Matthew 26:24, "Woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born." While Russell was still living, Mr. Haldeman, then pastor of the First Baptist Church of New York City, wrote a brochure against the "Russellites" entitled *Millennial Dawnism*. The following words, taken from that brochure, are a devastating refutation not only of the teachings of present-day Jehovah's Witnesses on the future life, but of the eschatology of Seventh-day Adventism as well:

If death means the extinction of being, why should life be worse for him [Judas] than any other wicked traitor? No matter how great his guilt, death would end it all. . . .

Never to have been born means never to have come into existence.

If death means going out of existence,³² then never to have been born and to die are equivalent

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Art. 22.

²⁷ On this point, see also Bird, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

²⁸ See above, pp. 141, 142.

²⁹ *Early Writings* (1882), p. 294; quoted by Douty, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

³⁰ See above, p. 142.

³¹ Rev. 20:10. It will be recalled that precisely the same expression is used in Rev. 4:9 to describe the eternity of God. The attempt of Seventh-day Adventists on pp. 542-43 of *Questions on Doctrine* to tone down the meaning of this expression by an appeal to Isa. 34:8-10 has been answered earlier in this appendix. See on this point also Douty, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-58.

³² It will be recalled that according to current Jehovah-Witness teaching Judas will not be raised again (above, p. 317);

conditions; they mean the same thing -- non-existence.

Why, then, did the Lord say it would have been good not to come into existence? Why did he not say (seeing the man was born and there was no use in wasting regrets over his birth) -- why did he not say, "It will be good for that man when he dies, for when he dies he will then be just as if he had never been born -- non-existent"?

If death means non-existence, this is what he *ought* to have said.

To say anything else -- if death means non-existence -- was utterly meaningless.

But if death does not mean the end of existence; if death means an eternity of condition; if in this conditioned eternity of being Judas is to suffer for his deed of betrayal, then it is comprehensible why the Son of God should say it would have been good for that man if he had never been born -- if he had never come into existence.

On no other basis is the "Woe to that man" of any intelligent force.³³

hence he did go out of existence when he died. According to Seventh-day Adventists, moreover, Judas will be raised after the millennium and will have to endure a period of punishment for his sins; after that, however, he will be annihilated. Despite the differences in teaching between these two groups, therefore, Haldeman's comment is applicable to both positions.

³³ *Millennial Dawnism* (New York: Charles C. Cook, n.d.), pp. 29-30. For a similar use of this passage, see Douty, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-59.