

## A Immortal souls?

### ❖ The immortality of worms.

- The word “worm” in Isaiah 66:24 (also in Jesus’ quote in Mark 9:44, 46, 49) refers to the worms that eat decomposing bodies. Are those worms immortal?
- Those worms will finish their task eventually. That is, they will consume the corpse they’re eating (a physical cadaver, not an incorporeal soul). It’s the same concept as the fire that endures until everything has been consumed.
- Both Isaiah and Jesus used this metaphor to compel us choose between two destinies: eternal life or eternal destruction.

## B Where are immortal souls supposed to go?

### ❖ Hell.

- Hell is an eternal fire where sinners are punished (Matthew 25:41). Does that mean that sinners will be burning forever?
- The word “eternal” or “forever” has several meanings in the Bible:
  - (1) Eternity with a beginning and an end. For example, slavery (Exodus 21:6)
  - (2) Eternity with a beginning but no end. For example, the eternal life of the redeemed (John 3:36)
  - (3) Eternity without a beginning or an end. Only God’s (1 Timothy 6:16; Genesis 21:33)
- Where does the eternal fire fit in?
  - According to Malachi 4:1, hell (the eternal fire) will begin on a day that’s coming, “burning like an oven.” It will end when it “will leave them neither root nor branch.”
  - Jude 7 introduces an example of this “eternal fire:” the fire that consumed Sodom and Gomorrah. That fire began when Lot was taken out of Sodom. It ended when all the cities had been fully consumed.
  - Hell is shown as a “lake of fire” in Revelation 20:11-15. This fire will begin on the day of the Final Judgment. It will end once every condemned sinner has died “the second death.” No one will suffer forever, not even Satan: “And shall be no more forever.” (Ezekiel 28:19)

### ❖ Purgatory.

- Purgatory is described as a place or state between heaven and hell. There, souls are purifying their sins before entering heaven. Their living relatives or friends are supposed to intercede for them with penance and masses.
- This doctrine goes against the Bible:
  - (1) The dead are not conscious souls (Ecclesiastes 9:10)
  - (2) No one can sanctify or transfer their holiness to other people (Ezekiel 18:20; Psalm 49:8)
  - (3) There is only one Mediator between God and men: Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5)
  - (4) After death there’s only the judgment, there’s no intermediate state (Hebrews 9:27; Acts 17:31)

### ❖ Heaven.

- According to the Bible, the only ones who are dwelling in Heaven are God (1 Kings 8:30); the angels (Psalm 148:1-2); Enoch (Genesis 5:24); Elijah (2 Kings 2:11); Moses (Jude 9); and those who were resurrected along with Jesus (Matthew 27:52-53).
- There are no incorporeal souls living there. The human beings who ascended to Heaven have resurrected or transformed bodies.
- Paul explained that we’ll go to Heaven at the Second Coming with a physical body. The dead will be resurrected, and the living will be transformed (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

## C Who can be immortal?

### ❖ How to get eternal life.

- We’ve learned that the eternal punishment has an end. Does eternal life have an end too?
- God is the only truly immortal being (1 Timothy 6:15-16). He’s the only one who can give and sustain life (Psalm 36:9; Colossians 1:17).
- Therefore, all created beings have (and will have) a conditional immortality. Therefore, the question is: What must we do to get eternal life and never die?
- The answer can be found in 1 John 5:11-12: “He who has the Son has life.” Since we will be close to Jesus forever after His Second Coming, we will never die.