

Chapter 14

Eonian Life & Immortal Life

Eonian Life

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

For God did so love the world, that His Son—the only begotten—He gave, that every one who is believing in him may not perish, but may have life age-during [life eonian; life age-abiding; aionian Life]. (John 3:16 YLT [CV, REB, WED])

The classic rendering of this famous verse is *eternal life*, but the literal rendering is *age-during* or *eonian life*. Obviously, one rendering promises life outside of time and the other promises life in time. Which is it? Actually, both; but before elaborating, consider another passage.

(29) And Jesus answering said, 'Verily I say to you, there is no one who left house, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or fields, for my sake, and for the good news', (30) who may not receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and fields, with persecutions, and in the age that is coming, life age-during [aionian Life]....' (Mark 10:29-30 YLT [WED])

Clearly, Jesus made no mention of life outside of time. He promised His disciples life in the age or eon that was coming. What age is this? It is the very age that the ancient prophets saw and all of Judah was looking for when the Anointed One stood in their midst.

The Age to come is called by several names, such as the Messianic Age, the Kingdom Age, and the Tabernacles Age. This age comes when heaven proclaims: **"The kingdoms of the world did become those of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign to the ages of the ages"** Revelation 11:15 YLT). It is the thousand-year age that comes after the conclusion of the six days (6,000 years) of man or **Man's Day** (1 Corinthians 4:3 YLT; also CV, REB, WAET). It is the age to come during which Christ and His conquerors reign over the nations to teach them righteousness so that true kingdom life and governance are manifested among the nations. The conquerors will be seated upon His throne, meaning they will rule with Him.

To the one who is conquering, to him will I be granting to be seated with Me on My throne as I, also conquer, and am seated with My Father on His throne. (Revelation 3:21 CV)

Those who are counted worthy of the Age to come are the ones who have conquered in our present wicked age. The rest of the dead will have to wait until the completion of the Age.

As some reckon, God's Day (2 Peter 3:12 CV), which follows the Kingdom Age, could consist of many ages until the consummation is reached after 49,000 years have passed. This is a very interesting subject, to say the least.

The vital question is: Who will be counted worthy to rule and reign with Christ during these ages as He sums up and subjects *the all* to Himself? In the next age, the Lord's Day, the conquerors or the anointed first fruits are the ones chosen to rule and reign. In God's Day, the entire body of believers will be privileged to do so. The ones who will miss out on eonian life in the ages to come will be those who must be disciplined through the lake of fire as their works are burned up.

Another way to explain this is that eonian life is dependent on the ages, for it speaks of life in time and, more specifically, life in the coming ages, starting with the Kingdom Age, the age when Christ, through His conquerors, rules over our present earth. Eonian life for the conquerors starts at the end of our present wicked or evil eon [age] (Galatians 1:4). Others will follow in God's Day which follows the Lord's Day or Kingdom Age, when a new heaven and a new earth come into view.

Eonian life is promised to all believers; the question is when each one will enter into this life—in the Age to come or in the age after the Age.

Let us consider the companion verse to Mark 10:30. Notice that the CV has chosen to use the expression *life eonian*, which is the same as *eonian life*. For comparison, the traditional rendering is presented from the NASB.

Who may not by all means be getting back manyfold in this era, and in the coming eon, life eonian [aionian Life; eternal life]. (Luke 18:30 CV [WED, NASB])

Again, eonian life is joined with the age or eon to come. Jesus does not make the point that it is about dying and going to heaven where, as far as we know, there is no time. In other words, there is reward in the Age to come for those who are faithful to the Lord and who bring forth Kingdom fruit in this age. The reward is to have eonian life in the next age, which is the beginning of the ages of the Kingdom of Christ. This life transcends both the physical and the spirit realms, meaning it is a life suited for both earth and heaven.

This may be difficult to grasp, given what so many of us have been taught; but, for the most part, eonian life is not about a life in eternity or exclusively in heaven but a life associated with both earth and heaven during the Age to come and the age(s) leading up to the consummation of the ages. Many have not been taught to think in terms of ages, but it appears that Scripture makes the point for us.

Paul refers to the **ages to come** (Ephesians 2:7), meaning that there is more than one. It is possible that before the consummation of the ages comes there are many ages. After all, God's plan calls for all mankind to be purified by His righteous law described as a lake of fire, a

consuming fire that judges works, not bodies. This may take many millennia to accomplish until all have paid the last farthing (Matthew 5:26; Luke 12:47-48).

Now, how do immortality and eonian life relate to each other?

Immortal Life [Immortality]

To those, indeed, who in continuance of a good work, do seek glory, and honour, and incorruptibility [immortality]—life age-during [aionian life, eonian life, life age-abiding, eternal life].... (Romans 2:7 YLT [WED, CV, REB, NASB])

Paul joins immortality with eonian life. However, technically speaking, eonian life is not exactly the same as immortal life. **Eonian life is life in the ages to come, and immortality is life beyond death, regardless of the age.** Immortal life is not dependent on the eons, or time and space.

The Greek word *athanasia* is translated as *immortal*, which means "deathlessness" or "beyond death." Paul uses this word in 1 Corinthians 15:53-54 and 1 Timothy 6:16.

Clearly, immortality is life beyond death, never to be subjected to the possibility of death. This should be the hope and expectation of all believers. However, it would be remiss not to add that it is also the ultimate destiny of all mankind when, at the consummation of the eons, God the Father is all in all.

In this age, immortal life is the promise for all believers. The issue is when one enters into immortal life in the true and full sense. Will it come in the first resurrection and transfiguration or in the second resurrection at the Great White Throne?

The greatest expectation of a believer should be to attain to immortality at the end of our present eon, for this ensures the Life of the Ages or eonian life for all the ages that lead up to the consummation of the ages at Creation's Grand Jubilee. See Chapter 24.

Contrary to the tradition of men, immortality does not come about when one dies, that is, through death of the mortal body. It comes about with the redemption of our body that occurs with resurrection and transfiguration; a future event for which Christians should be waiting eagerly (Romans 8:23). No one has immortality at this point in time, for **the King alone possesses immortality [athanasia]** (1 Timothy 6:16). **"No one [man] has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man"** (John 3:13). In other words, no one of mankind has immortality today and no man except the Man is in heaven today.

The **redemption of the body** comes with the placing or **adoption as sons** (Romans 8:23) when this mortal puts on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53). It is when we put on our dwelling from heaven so that what is mortal is swallowed up by life (2 Corinthians 5:1-5). It is when we are glorified into the image of the Son of God. This does not take place in death; it takes place with resurrection and transfiguration.

However, all believers will not put on immortality **at the same time**. Some will put it on at the first resurrection that commences the Lord's Day, and others will put it on at the second resurrection that commences God's Day. The anointed first fruits of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:23) will be the first to come into immortality as they are raised from among the dead in the **first resurrection** (Revelation 20:5-6) or the **out-resurrection** (Philippians 3:11), also referred to as the **better resurrection** (Hebrews 11:35). They will enter into both immortality and eonian life, Life in the Age to come and all the ages to follow.

The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. (Revelation 20:5 NASB)

The rest of the believers will follow 1,000 years later, brought forth from death in the second resurrection to appear before the **Great White Throne** where they will be saved through God's consuming fire that removes all dross (carnality); the unbelievers will face the judgment of the lake of fire where they will be justified by faith and begin the process of sanctification that many of us experienced in this life, so they too will attain glorification.

Indestructible Life

Another reference to immortal life is found in the epistle to the Hebrews. In the Greek, the word *akatalutos* is properly used to express *immortality*, and it is used to contrast the Levitical priesthood with the Melchizedek priesthood. The Levites were placed as priests based on a law of physical requirement, that is, based on their genealogy or bloodline that was traced to Levi. These priests died and had to be replaced with other mortals of the same genetic line. But God's Son is a high priest of an entirely different order based on the law of life.

(15) And this is clearer still, if another priest arises according to the likeness of Melchizedek, (16) who has become such not on the basis of a law of physical requirement, but according to the power of an indestructible [akatalutos] life. (Hebrews 7:15-16 NASB)

Some translations use the word *endless* in place of *indestructible*, but the meaning is the same, for it means that death has no power over such a life. Death is what destroys (brings destruction to) life, but **the power of the indestructible life** ensures that death has no more power over such a life. This is our expectation!

Thus, eonian life is a matter of timing and quality of life. It speaks of the privilege and joy of coming into immortal life in the Age to come and the ages to follow. Immortality is a life beyond all forms of death, which includes the first and the second death. Immortality will come to all eventually, even if it takes God millennia to bring all mankind into this glory. The issue for us individually is whether we will be counted worthy to attain to the Age to come to rule and reign with Christ when **the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea** (Habakkuk 2:14). We must be conquerors to enjoy eonian life and immortal life in the Age to come. It is worth striving for while living during our present wicked age. Let us conquer through the Conqueror!