

3. EONIAN LIFE

According to Paul, the apostle of the nations who was given revelation directly by the risen and glorified Christ, *this mortal must put on immortality*.

Immortality means one is never subjected to death again, which is rightfully called *eternal life* or a life that will have no end. When death is finally abolished, it will truly be eternal life, for there will be no means to end life. *Today*, the only one who is beyond death and who has immortality is our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who abolishes death.

Now, for the observant reader, it should be apparent that in my writing on immortality I made no mention of *eternal life*. This is by design. The reason is that, concordantly speaking, the term *eternal life* should be translated as *eonian life*, a term which moves the emphasis from the eternal (beyond the eons) to the eons. In other words, *eonian life* refers to life in the oncoming eons, and not necessarily to immortality and endless life beyond the eons.

This distinction is obscured in most translations because the Greek word *aiōnion* is translated as *eternal* rather than as *eonian*, which is an adjective related to eon.

If the concordant approach to translation is applied, then wherever the phrase *eternal life* or *life eternal* is discovered in a translation, it should be substituted with the phrase *eonian life* or *life eonian*, respectively. A concordant search of the Greek Scriptures reveals that *eonian life* or *life eonian* appears forty-three times (Matthew 19.16, 29; 25.46; Mark 10.17, 30; Luke 10.25; 18.18, 30; John 3.15, 16, 36; 4.14, 36; 5.24, 39; 6.27, 40, 47, 54, 68; 10.28; 12.25, 50; 17.2, 3; Acts 13.46, 48; Romans 2.7; 5.21; 6.22, 23; Galatians 6.8; 1 Timothy 1.16; 6.12; Titus 1.2; 3.7; 1 John 1.2; 2.25; 3.15; 5.11, 13, 20; Jude 21).

The eonian God.

Before considering the meaning of *eonian life* there is one important point that needs to be addressed. There are some, perhaps many, commentators that have a problem with the use of the word *eonian*, or any other word that implies something other than *eternal*, because, to them, God Himself becomes *the eonian God*, as if He ceases to be *the eternal God*. It seems strange to me that people are challenged that God can be both the eternal and the eonian God without taking away the meaning and significance of either term. God is eternal; nothing that we say or write can ever change the very essence of who God is. He is outside of time, and He is in time. As God, He created time, so how could He not be intimately engaged in time? Even Jesus, the Son of God, entered this world and died and rose from the grave at the foreordained time of God, and He is coming again in accord with the time set by the authority of the Father (see Acts 1.7).

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People are probably challenged by this, for it also challenges the issues of life and death, and heaven and hell, as well as what some call *the eternal purpose of God*.

Just in case some might think that I am out on a limb all by myself and perhaps making up the whole idea of *the eonian God*, consider the following four translations of the same verses, recognizing that *eonian*, *of the ages*, *age-during* and *age-abiding* are equivalent expressions. ¹

Now to Him Who is able to establish you in accord with my evangel, and the heralding of Christ Jesus in accord with the revelation of a secret hushed in **times eonian**, yet manifested now and through prophetic scriptures, according to the injunction of **the eonian God** being made known to all nations for faith-obedience—to the only, and wise God, through Christ Jesus, be glory for **the eons of the eons**. Amen! (Romans 16.26-27 CV)

To Him who has it in His power to make you strong, as declared in the Good News which I am spreading, and the proclamation concerning Jesus Christ, in harmony with the unveiling of the Truth which in the periods of **past Ages** remained unuttered, but has now been brought fully to light, and by the command of **the God of the Ages** has been made known by the writings of the Prophets among all the Gentiles to win them to obedience to the faith—to God, the only wise, through Jesus Christ, even to Him be the glory through **all the Ages!** Amen. (Romans 16.25-27 WNT)

And to Him who is able to establish you, according to my good news, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the secret, in the **times of the ages** having been kept silent, and now having been made manifest, also, through prophetic writings, according to a command of **the age-during God**, having been made known to all the nations for obedience of faith—to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to him be glory to **the ages**. Amen. (Romans 16.25-27 YLT)

Now unto him who hath power to establish you according to my glad-message—even the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of a sacred secret in **age-past times** kept silent but now made manifest, and through means of prophetic scriptures according to the command of **the age-abiding God** for obedience of faith unto all the nations made known unto a God wise alone, through Jesus Christ, [unto whom] be glory **unto the ages**. Amen. (Romans 16.25-27 REB)

Paul declared that God is the *eonian God* or *the God of the Ages*, which means that He has been, and continues to be, actively engaged throughout the eons and has not been, and is not, like an absent landlord. He has established the eons in His

¹ The King James incorrectly translates the word *aiōnion* into *world* in the following: *Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the **world** began [**aiōnion**]....* (Romans 16.25 KJV)

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Son to work out His purpose in His Son, and when the eons are complete, He will continue to be what He has always been and will always be, *the eternal God*. Further, if the eons are made through His Son, then the eons are an essential and integral part of God's purpose and plan. This thought is so obvious that it is hard to imagine anyone being challenged by it.

Of the four translations, the one that states *the God of the Ages* should encourage our hearts. Why? Because knowing that God is actively engaged in the ages or eons gives meaning to the eons and assurance to us that everything is being worked out according to the counsel of His will, just as Paul declared.

In Him in whom also we were appointed by lot [or, obtained an inheritance], having been **predestined according to the purpose [or, plan]** of the One supernaturally working all [things] **according to the counsel [or, intention] of His will....** (Ephesians 1.11 ALT)

For the universe owes its origin to Him, was created by Him, and has its aim and purpose in Him. To Him be the glory **throughout the Ages!** Amen. (Romans 11.36 WNT)

Simply, God is in the eons (ages), and He abides or remains in the eons (ages). We should rejoice that the eons, and in particular the last two eons, are by design set to carry out God's plan to fulfill His glorious purpose. He is the eonian God, the God of the Ages, to His praise, honor and glory.

Now, if we put aside the concept of eternal and think in terms of the oncoming eons and our God being *the eonian God*, then *eonian life* makes sense according to Scripture.

Before looking at a few Scriptures that refer to eonian life, there are three points that need to be made.

Eonian life and immortality are not always the same.

First, technically, *eonian life* is not the same as *immortality*. *Eonian life* is associated with life in the *eons* and is not dependent on putting on immortality. *Immortality* is not necessarily associated with the eons or even time in general, for it is associated with being beyond death. Immortality is promised to all who believe, but all will not put on immortality at the same time. Some will put on immortality at the first resurrection, others will put it on at the second resurrection, and yet others will put it on at the consummation of the eons. Those who put on immortality in the first resurrection will also be enjoyers of eonian life, a life in the oncoming eons.

Not to confuse the issue; please note that the above caption states that eonian life and immortality are not *always* the same, which implies that there are times that

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they are the same in Scripture. Simply, context is always important and there are times in which eonian life and immortal life mean the same thing.

Eonian life refers to life in the oncoming eon.

Second, *eonian life* is associated with life in the coming eon as a time of marvelous blessing and glory. We could say that it represents a quality of life beyond one's most fertile imagination. For the conquering saints (overcomers) throughout the preceding centuries, *eonian life* simply means that they are promised life in the oncoming eon, or another way of stating it, they are promised to become an enjoyer of an allotment (inheritance) in the next eon when Christ manifestly heads up all in the heavens and on the earth.

Paul described it as *the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His allotment among the saints* (Ephesians 1.18 cv). The allotment refers to sharing in the coming kingdom in which Christ will continue to head up all in the heavens and on the earth.

Can you imagine anything greater than being part of what Christ will be doing? Just the thought of the glory to come to this earth should bring shouts of joy from the hearts of all who have been given the faith to believe in Jesus in our present eon. There is nothing greater than to join our Lord in heading up all in the heavens and on the earth, which will bring all creation into harmony with God.

Some will enjoy eonian life without putting on immortality.

Third, eonian life is not restricted to those who will put on immortality as the next eon commences. In the oncoming eon, there will be people on earth that will be enjoyers of eonian life, and yet they will not put on immortality; that is, they will remain mortal, at least for the eon. Consequently, some who enter eonian life will also be immortal; however, others who enter eonian life will remain mortal.

To make this point surer, consider the sheep nations that will be judged by the King of Glory at the commencement of His 1000-year reign over this earth.

“Now, **whenever the Son of Mankind may be coming in His glory**, and all the holy messengers with Him, then shall He be seated on the throne of His glory, and in front of Him shall be **gathered all the nations**. And He shall be severing them from one another even as a shepherd is severing the sheep from the kids. And He shall be standing the sheep, indeed, at His right, yet the kids at the left. (Matthew 25.31-33 cv)

It is most unfortunate that these prophetic words of Jesus are often misinterpreted as referring to the saved and the lost. However, Jesus spoke these words in reference to the nations that are on earth when He comes and sits on His throne of glory. The sheep and the kids deal with judgment of the nations and their entrance into the millennial kingdom on earth.

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“Then shall the King be declaring to those at His right, ‘Hither, blessed of My Father! **Enjoy the allotment of the kingdom** made ready for you from the disruption of the world. For I hunger and you give Me to eat; I thirst and you give Me drink; a stranger was I and you took Me in; naked and you clothed Me; infirm am I and you visit Me; in jail was I and you come to Me.’ “Then the just will be answering Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we perceive Thee hungering and nourish Thee, or thirsting and we give Thee drink? Now when did we perceive Thee a stranger and took Thee in, or naked and we clothed Thee? Now when did we perceive Thee infirm, or in jail, and we came to Thee?’ “And, answering, the King shall be declaring to them, ‘Verily, I am saying to you, In as much as you do it to one of these, the least of My brethren, you do it to Me.’ (Matthew 25.34-40 cv)

“And these [kid nations] shall be coming away into chastening eonian, yet the just [sheep nations] into **life eonian**.” (Matthew 25.46 cv) ²

The just from among the nations will enter into life eonian to be enjoyers of the allotment of the kingdom; however, there is no indication that any of the worthy nations (sheep) will be beyond death at this point. They will enjoy life eonian, but they will not be immortal. This supports the thought that eonian life refers to entering the blessing of life in the coming eon and does not necessarily equate to immortality for all, at least at this point in the oncoming eon.

We need to keep in mind that during the millennial reign of Christ there will continue to be mortals on earth, and that death will also continue to be operative for these mortals, as revealed by Isaiah the prophet. Besides, procreation ³ will continue during the Messianic kingdom on earth.

And no longer shall there be thence a child of a few days, or an old man who is not filling his days, for the youth will be a hundred years old, **yet the one dying will be a sinner**, a hundred years old; he shall be made light of. (Isaiah 65.20 cv)

This verse alone indicates that death will still be in action during the next eon, for sin will still be operative for all who have not put on immortality. Mortal earth dwellers will be living as in the days before the great deluge when the life span of mankind reached nearly 1,000 years. Perhaps most will live for the full thousand years, with the notable exception of the nations that are deceived by Satan, the adversary (Revelation 20.7-9). Many will be enjoyers of the allotment of the kingdom on earth, and many will be enjoyers of eonian life on earth.

² Contextually, *chastening eonian* means that the kid nations will be chastened during the millennial kingdom. It does not mean that they will be tormented in the modern-day hell or annihilated altogether. They will be ruled over with a rod or club of iron for the purpose of restoration and to learn righteousness.

³ Consider this fact: It is estimated that during 1999, the world population passed the 6 billion mark and during 2006 it passed the 6.5 billion mark. At this rate, the world population is projected to reach 7 billion people during the spring of the year 2010.

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Now, let us look at a few passages of Scripture that refer to eonian life from the perspective of the Jews in Jesus' day who were looking for the kingdom of the heavens or the reign of the heavens to come upon the earth with Messiah as the King of Israel. They were looking for their Rescuer to come and deliver them out of the rule of the nations and to establish His kingdom over the earth. This was the expectation given to them through the Hebrew prophets.

Kingdom life in the oncoming eon.

To begin, there are three sets of similar Scriptures in Matthew, Mark and Luke that refer to the expectation of eonian life. Because of their similarities, it is only necessary to look at the verses in Matthew.

Starting in Matthew 19.16, we are told that a rich young man approached Jesus to inquire what he had to do to enter the kingdom, that is, to have life eonian.

And lo! one coming to Him said, "Teacher, what good shall I be doing that I should be having **life eonian**?" Yet He said to him, "Why are you asking Me concerning good? One is good. Yet if you are wanting to be entering into life, keep the precepts." He is saying to Him, "Which?" Now Jesus said, "These: 'You shall not be murdering.' 'You shall not be committing adultery.' 'You shall not be stealing.' 'You shall not be testifying falsely.' 'Be honoring father and mother,' and 'You shall be loving your associate as yourself.'" The youth is saying to Him, "These all I maintain. In what am I still deficient?" Jesus averred to him, "If you are wanting to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and be giving to the poor, and you will be having treasure in the heavens. And hither! Follow Me." Now, hearing this word, the youth came away sorrowing, for he had many acquisitions. Now Jesus said to His disciples, "Verily, I am saying to you that the rich squeamishly will be entering into **the kingdom of the heavens**. Yet again, I am saying to you that it is easier for a camel to be entering through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be **entering into the kingdom of God**." (Matthew 19.16-24 cv)

Passages like this are used by some to preach to the lost; however, the primary application has everything to do with those that believed in God. Notice that it was not a question of believing in the finished work of the cross, for Christ had not died for the sin of the world, and Jesus did not inject this into the conversation. The question was in reference to entering the kingdom of the heavens, which, to the Jew of Jesus' day, referred to the expectation of the Hebrew prophets that the kingdom of God would come upon the earth one day. This was the hope of those in that day, and this was what Jesus addressed in answering the rich man's inquiry.

The rich young man knew exactly what Jesus meant when He told him to sell his possessions and give to the poor. The only way for a Jew to have accumulated great wealth was at the expense of his brethren. Wealth was measured in terms of property or land (see Mark 10.22). Each was allotted a portion of the land; however, it was possible to acquire the land of others who might have fallen on

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hard times. Consequently, one acquiring riches meant that someone else suffered. Jesus was not telling the man to give up what was his rightful allotment but to give up what he had acquired at the expense of others, namely, the poor. According to God's law, the land was allotted among the Israelites, and all that had been acquired beyond their original allotment would revert back to the ones originally allotted the land during the year of jubilee. This undoubtedly will occur when the kingdom comes, which will be the first millennial Sabbath, so he would lose all right to the extra accumulation of land anyway. Thus, if he gave up his extra wealth, he would be storing up for himself treasure in the heavens for when the heavens do rule on earth in the next eon.

Now, this conversation caught the attention of Jesus' disciples.

Now, hearing it, the disciples were tremendously astonished, saying, "Who, consequently, can be saved?" Now, looking at them, Jesus said to them, "With men this is impossible, yet with God all is possible." Then, answering, Peter said to Him, "Lo! we leave all and follow Thee. What, consequently, will it be to us?" Yet Jesus said to them, "Verily, I am saying to you, that you who follow Me, in **the renascence** whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who leaves houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or fields, on account of My name, a hundred-fold shall be getting, and shall be **enjoying the allotment of life eonian**. Yet many of the first shall be last, and the last first." (Matthew 19.25-30 cv; also see Mark 10.17-31; Luke 18.18-30)

The question was about being saved. To most believers today, the word *saved* is thought of only in terms of the salvation of the unbeliever and "eternal life," but being saved must be viewed in light of the text. In this case, it referred to those who believed in God and would enter the Messianic kingdom on earth, which meant receiving life eonian in the coming eon.

The phrase *the renascence whenever the Son of Mankind should be seated on the throne of His glory* proves the point.

First, the title *Son of Mankind* refers to when Christ comes to this earth to reign, which is when He will sit upon His throne of glory (compare Matthew 16.28; 25.31).

Second, in most Bibles, the word *regeneration* is used rather than the word *renascence*, which means "again-becoming" or, according to Webster's dictionary, "to be born, a new birth, rebirth, revival." Thus, according to Jesus' own words, when He comes and establishes His kingdom, there will be a new birth. This lines up perfectly with the promise made through the Hebrew prophets about receiving new hearts and new spirits. All who will be counted worthy will receive life eonian. We see a further confirmation of this in the similar verses as recorded in Mark and Luke.

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Who should not be getting back a hundredfold now, in this era, houses and brothers and sisters and mother and father and children and fields, with persecutions, and **in the coming eon, life eonian.** (Mark 10.30 cv)

Who may not by all means be getting back manyfold in this era, and **in the coming eon, life eonian.** (Luke 18.30 cv)

A similar conversation occurred between Jesus and a lawyer, with Jesus essentially telling him the same thing.

And lo! a certain lawyer rose, putting Him on trial, and saying, “Teacher, by doing what should I enjoy **the allotment of life eonian?**” Now He said to him, “What is written in the law? How are you reading?” Now he, answering, said, “You shall be loving the Lord your God out of your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole strength, and with your whole comprehension, and ‘your associate as yourself.’” Now He said to him, “Correctly have you answered. This be doing and you shall be living.” Yet he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my associate?” (Luke 10.25-29 cv)

The lawyer knew that entering the coming kingdom meant having an allotment of life eonian. Again, Jesus referred the man to the law, particularly the need to love one another. As a lawyer, the man was accustomed to defending people and rationalizing behavior. In this case, he sought to defend or justify himself. Jesus saw through this self-centeredness and spoke a parable to him about the good Samaritan.

Thus God loves the world.

Now, let us look at one of the most quoted verses of Scripture.

Starting at the beginning of John 3, we discover Nicodemus, a devout Pharisee, a ruler or chief of the Jews, a man highly taught in the Hebrew Scriptures and, as such, well-versed in the matter of the kingdom of God. In other words, Jesus was not talking to a sinner, one that the Jews in that day called *a dog* or one whom many today call *the lost*. Nicodemus was a believer in the God of Moses.

Nicodemus approached Jesus and acknowledged that He must have come from God to be able to teach or do signs as He did. Undoubtedly, to Nicodemus the signs and the teaching all pointed to the coming of the kingdom. However, as learned as Nicodemus was, he was actually quite ignorant on the matter of entering the Messianic kingdom, that is, entering eonian life.

Other Jews had approached Jesus to inquire what they had to do to enter the kingdom, and considering what they saw Jesus doing and heard Him speak, it was a very appropriate question. Unfortunately, the Jews often failed to understand what was necessary to enter the kingdom. They looked at it as a matter of doing

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something. They knew they had to follow the law, so in their minds, all they had to do was add something to do, and they would be in the kingdom. After all, they had the sign of circumcision. But in each case, Jesus' answer canceled out any outward act or work and pointed to the need for a changed heart and for faith, which was Israel's failure in the very beginning when they were delivered out of Egypt. *The word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard* (Hebrews 4.2 NASB).

The words spoken through the Hebrew prophets should have been enough to make them realize that the flesh profits nothing. "*Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart*" (Jeremiah 4.4 NASB). It was and still is an issue of the heart.

Nicodemus was no exception in this regard. Jesus knew what this chief of the Jews wanted, and He put His finger on the pulse of the matter.

Jesus answered and said to him, "Verily, verily, I am saying to you, **If anyone should not be begotten anew, he can not perceive the kingdom of God.**" Nicodemus is saying to him, "How can a man, being a veteran, be begotten? He can not be entering into the womb of his mother a second time and be begotten!" Jesus answered, "Verily, verily, I am saying to you, If anyone should not be begotten of water and of spirit, he can not be entering into the kingdom of God. That which is begotten by **the flesh is flesh**, and that which is begotten by **the spirit is spirit**. You should not be marveling that I said to you, 'You must be begotten anew.' (John 3.3-7 cv)

For the Jews to understand or perceive the kingdom required (still requires) a rebirth or, as some translations put it, a new birth or a birth from above, and all that believed the message of Jesus and the evangel that followed through the apostles were born again. ⁴

True to his Jewish roots that were stuck in the physical realm, Nicodemus took this to mean that he had to enter the womb again, to be born again. He missed the spiritual truth that Jesus was putting forth, but he should have understood, for this is what is required for those qualified to enter the kingdom.

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, Thus said the Lord Jehovah: Not for your sake am I working, O house of Israel, but—for My holy name, that ye have polluted among nations whither ye have gone in. And I have sanctified My great name, that is profaned among nations, that ye have polluted in your midst, And known have the nations that I am Jehovah, an affirmation of the Lord Jehovah, in My being sanctified in you before your eyes. And I have taken you out of the nations, and have gathered you out of all the lands, and I have brought you in unto your land, and I have sprinkled over you clean

⁴ Peter, an apostle of the circumcision, also made this point in his first epistle: For you have been *born again* not of seed which is perishable but imperishable (1 Peter 1.23 NASB).

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water, and ye have been clean; from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols, I do cleanse you. And I have given to you **a new heart**, and **a new spirit** I give in your midst, and I have turned aside **the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I have given to you a heart of flesh**. And **My Spirit I give in your midst**, and I have done this, so that in My statutes ye walk, and My judgments ye keep, and have done them. (Ezekiel 36.22-27 YLT)

A spiritual birth is required not only to perceive the kingdom but to enter it. There is no other way! The water represents cleansing from sins, just as the priest had to do in order to enter the holies of the holies. But the Lord Jehovah is the one who cleanses and also gives a new heart and a new spirit. In other words, no one can do this on his own; only the Lord Jehovah can and will do it.

Nicodemus thought he could enter the kingdom based on the flesh; that is, he thought that merely being of the commonwealth of Israel was all that was needed. But Jesus shut him out of the kingdom based on the flesh. Nothing short of a spiritual birth was (and is) required, which is something that no one can do on his own, just as in the natural world a new life has no say as to when it will form in the mother's womb. Simply, all must be born of the spirit (John 3.8).

Jesus continued educating Nicodemus by revealing the way to receive eonian life or life in the kingdom.

And no one has ascended into heaven except He Who descends out of heaven, the Son of Mankind Who is in heaven. And, according as Moses exalts the serpent in the wilderness, thus must the Son of Mankind be exalted, that everyone believing on Him should not be perishing, but may be having **life eonian**. (John 3.13-15 cv)

Again, the Son of Mankind is one of Christ's titles in relation to His kingdom in the next eon. Jesus referenced an event that Nicodemus surely knew, and that was when the afflicted Israelites in the wilderness were commanded to look at the serpent on a stick that was held by Moses. If they looked off unto the bronze serpent they lived; if they did not look they died. Consequently, Jesus was telling Nicodemus that if he expected to live in the eon he had to look off unto the Son of Mankind, who is *the Way* into the kingdom. He had to believe on the Son to have eonian life in the coming kingdom. It was not a matter of works but a matter of faith. The Jews that did not believe that Jesus is the Son of Mankind were disqualified to enter into the life of the eons or life eonian. In that day, they would perish without this hope. *Perish* meant that they would die and not be part of the first resurrection. It does *not* mean that they will be cast into a fiery lake to be tormented forever and ever. The fate of those that perish will be to appear before the great white throne and be cleansed in the spiritual fire of God, *for our God is*

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also a consuming fire (Hebrews 12.29 cv). They will miss out on the joy of the eon to come, but eventually they will be reconciled and receive immortality. ⁵

Now, it is within this context that Jesus spoke these oft-quoted words.

For thus **God loves** the world, so that He gives His only-begotten Son, that everyone who is believing in Him should not be perishing, but may be having **life eonian**. For God does not dispatch His Son into the world that He should be judging the world, but that the world may be saved through Him. (John 3.16-17 cv)

Notice that it is God *loves*. It is not God *loved*, as if it is a love of the past. It is a love that never ends, and it extends particularly to the eons of the eons. The *world* is a reference to the *kosmos* or the orderly arrangement or system in which mankind lives. This is the same world that the Hebrews epistle refers to as the impending inhabited earth or the coming world (Hebrews 2.5). The Son was dispatched to this orderly arranged system to save it, not to judge it, and this is exactly what the Son of Mankind will do when He takes the scepter of the kingdom of this earth and rules with an iron club.

In the coming eon, the Son of Mankind will save the *kosmos*. An orderly arrangement does not mean that the system is good or bad. A *kosmos* could be systematized, and yet its core is evil. Who can disagree with the conclusion that the orderly system in which we live today needs saving? Although it appears civilized at times, and it has some semblance of order, it is corrupt in its core. It is Babylon. Its foundation is not one of righteousness and justice. Only the kingdom to come is built on the foundation of righteousness and justice (Psalm 33.5; 89.14).

John's writings contain many references to life eonian. *Eonian life* in the impending eon as recorded in his evangel is the same as the *renascence* in the coming eon as recorded in Matthew's evangel. Those entering the next eon on earth will enter either by way of the first or former resurrection (immortality and eonian life), or by the fact that they are alive on earth when Christ comes (eonian life).

John was not alone in his understanding of eonian life, for eleven of the forty-three references to eonian life or life eonian are attributed to Paul (Acts 13.46, 48; Romans 2.7; 5.21; 6.22, 23; Galatians 6.8; 1 Timothy 1.16; 6.12; Titus 1.2; 3.7).

⁵ Many commentators state that all who appear before the great white throne will suffer the second death; however, Scripture might indicate otherwise. Consider the Pharisees that blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Jesus declared that they would not be forgiven for this eon and the eon to come, which means the present wicked eon and the Messianic eon, but does not include the last eon or God's day (see Matthew 12.31-32). Scripture also gives a further indication that judgment that leads to death will be only for a season (see Matthew 5.26; 18.34). Perhaps, those who miss out on life in the next eon will receive life in the last eon. In John 10.27-28 (cv), Jesus spoke about His sheep hearing His voice: *And I am giving them life eonian, and they should by no means be perishing for the eon*. In this case, the eon is the coming eon of Christ. Notice that He did not state eons.

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Turning to the nations.

Paul is the apostle of the nations (gentiles), and the first indication of life eonian for the nations is discovered as Paul and Barnabas reached a turning point in their service as they turned to the nations.

Being bold, both Paul and Barnabas say, “To you first was it necessary that the word of God be spoken. Yet, since, in fact, you are thrusting it away, and are judging yourselves not worthy of eonian life, lo! we are turning to the nations. For thus the Lord has directed us: I have appointed Thee for a light of the nations; for Thee to be for salvation as far as the limits of the earth.” Now on hearing this, the nations rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord, and they believe, whoever were set for **life eonian**. (Acts 13.46-48 cv)

It was at this time that the evangel entrusted to Paul began to go forth. Salvation by grace through faith, justification by faith and reconciliation is the evangel that leads to life eonian and immortality.

For even as, through the disobedience of the one man, the many were constituted sinners, thus also, through the obedience of the One, the many shall be constituted just. Yet law came in by the way, that the offense should be increasing. Yet where sin increases, grace superexceeds, that, even as Sin reigns in death, thus Grace also should be reigning through righteousness, for **life eonian**, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. (Romans 5.19-21 cv)

Yet, now, being freed from Sin, yet enslaved to God, you have your fruit for holiness. Now the consummation is **life eonian**. For the ration of Sin is death, yet the gracious gift of God is **life eonian**, in Christ Jesus, our Lord. (Romans 6.22-23 cv)

These verses are examples of ones in which eonian life and immortal life should be viewed as one and the same.

The key to eonian life is *in* Christ Jesus, our Lord. Let us be ever mindful that Jesus declared that He is *the Way*. The only way into eonian life in the oncoming eons is *through* Christ and is not based on one's bloodline. Christ is the Way into eonian life. For those of us who believe in this present eon, it is His life that we receive, and it is His life that will raise us up to meet Him. Let us never lose sight of Christ who is our Life and our Expectation. By God's grace, the conquering saints from all eras will enter eonian life **and** receive immortality, and we pray this day will come soon. This is in accord with the purpose of the eons.