

## Universal Salvation, Aion & Aionion

1: In order to study about the eventual salvation of all mankind, it is necessary to look at what is probably the single most tragic problem with most of today's Bible translations.

2: The Greek word Aion and its adjective, Aionios have been mistranslated forever, everlasting, ever and ever, eternal and other English words that have nothing to do with time such as world (Mat.12:32, 13:22, 13:39), or course (Eph.2:2).

3: These translations (KJV, NKJV, NIV etc) assume that since salvation, as discussed in the NT, is eternal, therefore punishment or damnation must be eternal as well.

4: Let's take a look at several verses that seem to indicate that salvation is universal:

**Joh 12:32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

**Rom 3:21-24** But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; **22** Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: **23** For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; **24** Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

**Rom 5:12-19** Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: **13** (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. **14** Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. **15** But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. **16** And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. **17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) **18** Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. **19** For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

**Rom 11:32-36** For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. **33** O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! **34** For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? **35** Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? **36** For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

**1Co 15:22-28** For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. **23** But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. **24** Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;

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when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. **25** For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. **26** The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. **27** For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. **28** And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

**2Co 5:14** For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

**Eph 1:9-11** Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: **10** That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: **11** In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

**Php 2:9-11** Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: **10** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; **11** And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Col 1:20** And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

**1Ti 2:3-6** For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; **4** Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. **5** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; **6** Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

**1Ti 4:9-10** This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. **10** For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

**1Jn 2:2** And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

5: Matthew 25:46 & 2 Thessalonians 1:9 are seen as limiting the meaning of these passages.

**Mat 25:46** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

**2Th 1:9** Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Thayer's Greek-English lexicon gives as its first definition of aion the sense of "age." This is the second definition (of four) given in the more recent lexicon edited by Arndt and Gingrich.

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Therefore a passage such as Matthew 12:32 could be (and should be) understood as referring to the present age (eon) and the age (eon) to come.

**Mat 12:32** And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

The 1st world is aion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> world isn't even in the original. The actual Greek word for world is kosmos. Why didn't Jesus just use this word? The Concordant version translates this passage:

**Mat 12:32** And whosoever may be saying a word against the Son of Mankind, it will be pardoned him, yet whoever may be saying aught against the holy spirit, it shall not be pardoned him, neither in this eon nor in that which is impending."

Do you see the problem? Almost everywhere else in the NT Aion is translated eternal/eternity etc. How could the translators say "in this eternity or the eternity coming? Doesn't make sense.

6: The problem gets even worse when we look at the adjective of Aion, which is Aionios. The lexicons mentioned above agree that at least one definition of Aion is age or eon. These words give the definite impression of being involved with time. But, they all say that Aionios means without beginning, without end or both... eternity. Again, this translation doesn't fit many NT passages.

**Rom 16:25-26a** Now to him that is of power to stablish 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, **26** But now is made manifest...

It certainly is difficult to understand how the keeping of a secret can have no beginning, and indeed if the secret is revealed, we must assume its being kept as a secret has come to an end.

**2Ti 1:9** Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

The translators couldn't use eternity here since eternity has no beginning.

**Tit 1:2** In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

This is my favorite. Eternal life and world are both aionios. Let's look at the Concordant again.

**Tit 1:2** in expectation of life eonian, which God, Who does not lie, promises before times eonian,

7: The confusion created by these attempts to preserve some sense of everlastingness in these terms makes the attempts rather suspicious. Putting all the evidence of the usage of these terms in the New Testament together, it seems to me that the threefold definition of *aionios* as

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signifying without beginning, or without end, or without beginning and end, must be dismissed as inadequate at the very least.

8: Of all widely used, modern attempts to define these terms, I have found the concluding definition given in THE VOCABULARY OF THE GREEK TESTAMENT most helpful. Concerning *aionios* we read, "In general, the word depicts that of which the horizon is not in view . . .". If the horizon of the extermination spoken of by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 is simply not in view, then we can see that what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:22 can truly occur. The same all who are dying in Adam, which includes some who incur eonian extermination, can indeed eventually be vivified in Christ. The Bible, in fact, does not speak of judgment and condemnation, death and destruction, hades and Gehenna, or any of these serious consequences of sin, as unending (they are eonian). It may refer to them as not having the end in view, but none of these fearful works of God can keep Him from achieving His will (1Tim.2:4); reconciling all through the blood of Christ's cross (Col.1:20), and becoming All in all (1 Cor.15:28). NOTE: This explains Mat.25:46.

9: Compare Rev.11:15 & 1Co.15:25

**Rev 11:15** And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

**1Co 15:25** For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

In Rev. the word aion is used and is translated forever. So, does Jesus rule forever like Rev says or only until His enemies are under His feet? They can't both be right.

10: You can quickly see how this one mistranslated word can cause a lot of confusion.

**Act.2:34&35** say: **34** For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, **35** Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Again, how long does Jesus reign? The answer is for the eons.

There are many, many words (at least 7 that I have seen) that Jesus could have used if He meant forever but He chose aion. Again, that means age or a period of time, not forever.

So, with death defeated, all those who died in the second death (Rev.20:14&15) will be resurrected and be justified because they too have belief now.

At the end, when all things are subjected to Jesus, what the Concordant version calls "The Consummation", Jesus will turn over the kingdom to God and subject Himself and everything under Him to God and God will become "All in All" (1Co.15:28).

Conclusion: Jesus succeeded in doing what no mere mortal man could do. He not only redeemed lost and condemned humanity, He defeated sin, He defeated death and He gave us, those who believe now, a home in Heaven forever.

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We will not be a part of the Great White Throne judgment. We will not die the second death. We will not be thrown into the lake of fire. We are joint-heirs with Christ. We get Heaven. How glorious that will be and we are part of the privileged few that God chose for this.

Final thoughts:

11: Is it reasonable to think that God is in control of everything... except who gets saved?

12: What gives God the most glory; condemning 99% of humanity to an eternity of pain and suffering (creating people He knew would reject Him & sending them to Hell) or eventually saving all to be with Him? (Rom. 5:18&19 ,1Co.15:22)

13: The eventual salvation of all mankind demonstrates the true love of God and declares that *all* of His children shall eventually receive the life that God has prepared for them without exception.

14: Anything less and God certainly could not truly be considered as being "Love". For to willingly create life with the foreknowledge that the majority of it should be subjected to a hideous torture eternally, violates all notions of decency and morality, let alone true love.

15: The majority of the fathers of the first Christian theological schools in the first three centuries were proclaimed Universalists. Not a writer among those who describe the heresies of the first three hundred years of Christianity intimates that Universal Salvation was then a heresy because, naturally, it was held as a fact by a majority, and certainly by the greatest of the "fathers".

16: There are also many translations that don't translate aion to mean forever. The Concordant version, Youngs Literal Translation and Rotherhams Emphesized Bible to name a few.

### **Original Greek New Testament**

That the Old Testament does not teach even post-mortem punishment is universally conceded by scholars, as has been seen; and that the Egyptians, and Greek and Roman Pagans did, is shown already. That the doctrine was early in the Christian church, is equally evident. As the early Christians did not obtain it from the Old Testament, which does not contain it, and as it was already a Pagan doctrine, where could they have procured it except from heathen sources? And as Universalism was nowhere taught, and as the first Universalist Christians after the apostles were Greeks, perfectly familiar with the language of the New Testament, where else could they have found their faith than where they declare they found it, in the New Testament? How can it be supposed that the Latins were correct in claiming that the Greek Scriptures teach a doctrine that the Greeks themselves did not find therein? And how can the Greek fathers in the primitive church mistake when they understand our Lord and his apostles to teach universal restoration? "It may be well to note here, that after the third century the descent of the church into errors of doctrine and practice grew more rapid. The worship of Jesus, of Mary, of saints, or relics, etc.,

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followed each other. Mary was called 'the Mother of God,' 'the Queen of Heaven.' As God began to be represented more stern, implacable, cruel, the people worshiped Jesus to induce him to placate his Father's wrath; and then as the Son was held up as the severe judge of sinners and the executioner of the Father's vengeance, men prayed Mary to calm the anger of her God-child; and when she became unfeeling or lacked influence, they turned to Joseph and other saints, and to martyrs, to intercede with their cold, implacable superiors. Thus theology became more hard and merciless--hell was intensified, and enlarged, and eternalized--heaven shrunk, and receded, and lost its compassion--woman (despite the deification of Mary) was regarded as weak and despicable