

Aion and Aionios
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The following was an answer to a brother who asked for input re: an article that claimed that the Christian Universalist position on the meaning of the Greek words, "aion," and "aionios" was in error. The author also tried to make his point by referring to how the Greek words for immortality and incorruption are used in passages of scripture. John offered these thoughts below:

The article contains much crude, clumsy, thinking, brother, and is completely lacking in the spiritual skill of "rightly cutting the word of truth." First off, there's no way that one can get around a very foundational principle of language, i.e., that the adjective form (in this case, "aionios,") of a noun (in this case, "aion,") can have more force than the noun. The adjective is limited to the scope of the noun.

"Aion" means age; pure and simple. If we translated "aion" everywhere it's used in the New Testament as eternal or everlasting, it would make nonsense out of many, many passages. An aion has to be understood as an increment of time, and "aionios" most simply put, means pertaining to time, not to eternity.

Let's for a moment, think in terms of material mass, rather than time, and take two words, a noun and its adjective form that are relative to material mass. We're seeking understanding by pointing out a correlation between age and age-pertaining, compared with material mass and what pertains to material mass.

The word, "measure," as in "a measure" of something, is using the word as a noun (though it can be used as a verb). In the case of it being used as a noun in respect to material mass, it cannot be understood to convey infinite material mass. A measure of material mass, would never be understood to mean all the material mass of the universe.

It's a measure of the whole, as in the dictionary definition for "measure" as a noun---"a definite or known quantity measured out,"

and/or a quantity, degree, or proportion.". So, it's adjective form, "measured," (again, used as an adjective, not a verb), conveys a portion of whatever material mass one is talking about. If something is described as "measured," it pertains to "measure"---a quantity, degree, or proportion.

A measure of something pertains to a portion of whatever material is in question, and is not to be used in the opposite sense of "measureless,"

or "immeasurable." Now to the question of how "aionios" is used to describe God. It is the equivalent of saying, "Emmanuel, God with us."

God, by nature, is eternal, but He is, bless His name, also aionian. He is the transcendent God who is also the immanent God. He pertains to the created human condition and He abides in the aions with us out from the eternity of His nature. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." To speak of God as the aionian God, conveys exactly that.

Aion, or aions, must be understood in relationship to the created (Greek) "kosmos," (the orderly arrangement), and in the relationship of time, space, and materiality, the aions are the unfolding of the the cosmos incrementally, yet with one increment or age flowing into the next, with Christ being the Beginning and the End.

Also, the writer's assertion that the Greek word for "incorruptible," and the Greek word for "immortal" are identical in meaning; obviously they are not. They convey two different conditions, though certainly the conditions are closely related. They are not synonomous. I won't go into the difference in detail, I'll simply point out that Christ, in His humanity, was mortal (He had to be, or He couldn't have died for us). He was subject to death in identification with us; BUT, all the while, He was incorruptible.

Think on that. It is a profound matter that incorruptibility is in fact demonstrated by being subjected to mortality, and mortality cannot intrinsically alter incorruptibility, so that out of incorruptibility, death is finally conquered.

Whoever wrote that article is spiritually and intellectually adolescent.

He's, in a word, out of his league in trying to deal with these subjects.
He needs grounding in the fundamentals of the administration of God.
I hope this is helpful.