

The BBI BULLETIN

Volume 10

Winter 2008-2009
December, January, February

Issue 3

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Training Workmen that Need Not Be Ashamed

THE INSTITUTE UPDATE

The Timothy/Macedonian Fund

In the summer edition of the *BBI Bulletin* we announced that the **Berean Bible Institute** Board of Directors had established the *Timothy/Macedonian Fund*, for the purpose of providing temporary financial assistance to help former **BBI** students to get started in ministry. In this edition of the *Bulletin* we would like to say something about **BBI's** students. The average age of our student body is over 30 years old and virtually all of them are working to support themselves while attending **BBI**. A good number of them are married and supporting their families while going to school. Because of the time and cost involved in pursuing their studies, this calls for a considerable amount of sacrifice on the part of them and their families.

Our students receive no federal grants or scholarships and **BBI** does not provide room and board. Some of our younger students right out of high school do get some help from their parents, but for the most part our students are on their own to support themselves and pay their tuition. They do day-to-day labor to earn their own bread.

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Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

UNIVERSALISM AND ANNIHILATIONISM

CONTINUED (PART 2 OF 3)

By Dr. W. Edward Bedore

A LOOK AT UNIVERSALISM'S SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE

In the last edition of the *Bulletin* we looked at the Doctrine of Universalism and its ramifications. While its proponents rely heavily on philosophical arguments to defend their beliefs they also use the Bible to try to substantiate their beliefs.

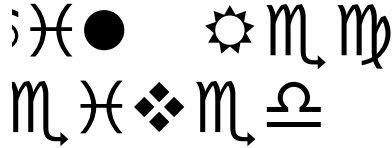
Because those who teach that all will be saved appeal to the Scriptures to support their beliefs, we want to look at some of the verses they build their doctrine on.

THE MANY WHO WILL BE MADE RIGHTEOUS

Universalism says that Romans 5:19 teaches that as all men were made sinners in Adam so all men will also be made righteous in Christ. From this assumption, they conclude that all men will eventually believe and be saved, even if they die in their sins. But, in trying to force this verse to fit their doctrine, they have ignored the context that it is found in.

First, Paul's purpose in this passage is to explain to those who have been "*justified by faith*" (see Rom. 5:1) what it means to be in Christ in contrast to being in Adam. He sets this out in Romans 5:1-8:39. In other words, he is not dealing with who will be saved, but with those who are already saved throughout these four chapters. Even so, we would have to at least acknowledge that the Universalist understanding might be a probable interpretation of Romans 5:19 except that

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FROM

FROM OREGON:

“May the Lord continue to richly bless and keep you. I thank God for providing a way for me to be a doer and a giver! What a blessing. Keep up the good work.”

FROM WEST VIRGINIA:

“Thank you so much for ‘Rightly Dividing the Word’. We don’t have any Pauline church in our area but I do find a few good ones on the Internet. I try to donate to your organization because you are teaching Paul’s gospel and I know we will be judged according to Paul’s gospel as he received it from the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul always had to defend his gospel and it isn’t any different today. I thank God for you pastors and laymen who preach II Tim. 2:15 and the mystery.”

FROM GEORGIA:

“Thank you for your newsletters and for training others for the Grace ministry. I am praying that all of you will stay strong in these trying times we live in.”

FROM NORTH CAROLINA:

“We thank the Lord for you all and pray that you have men this year who are eager to learn and go out to serve. How badly we need Grace

*Only one life; 'twill soon be past.
Only what's done "in Christ" will last.*

THE BULLETIN BOARD



BBI MISSIONS CONFERENCE

Dates: March 20th, 21st, 2009

Location: BBI, Slinger, WI

Contact: Berean Bible Institute at:
(262) 644-5504 or
<bbi@bereanbibleinstitute.org>

We are so excited for our 3rd annual Missions Conference! We have several missionaries who will be sharing with us the Word of God and what the Lord has accomplished in their field of service. Please join us for this exciting time!

Midwest Grace Fellowship Spring Conference

Location: Miracle Hills Ranch,
Bethany, Missouri

Dates: June 5th-7th, 2009

Contact: Pastor Ken Lawson at:
(217) 498-6958 or
<kandblawson@sbcglobal.net>

41ST ANNUAL BEREAN BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CONFERENCE

Location: Cedar Lake, Indiana

Dates: June 20th-25th, 2009

Contact: Pastor Richard Ware:
(870) 941-6110 or
<rnware@aol.com>

**Register now for fall classes!
Semester starts August
24th!!!**

Paul has inserted a qualifier into the passage. Let's look at what he has said in its context.

"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 offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One; Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto the justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:16-19).

In verse 17, it is made clear that it is only those who "receive...the gift of righteousness" that "shall reign in life." The Greek word translated *receive* here is *lambano* and it is used in the present tense and active voice. So the content of this passage can only be applied to those Paul is addressing which are only those who have been "justified by faith" and as a result "have peace with God" (Rom. 5:1). The overall context of the chapter disallows Universalism's interpretation of verse 19. Yes, Christ's blood is sufficient to save all of mankind, but it is only applied to those who receive the gift of eternal life that He has made available. Paul wrote to Timothy, "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the Living God, who is the Savior of all men, **specialy of those who believe**" (I Tim. 4:10). Out of the "all men" that Christ died, for the salvation He made available is only applied to "those who believe" (also see I Cor. 1:18-21).

THE EVERLASTING LAKE OF FIRE

While the Scriptures are clear on the subject of the duration of the punishment of the wicked, Universalists deny that it will last forever and ever. Their argument from Scripture is based on the meaning of two Greek words, the noun *aion* and its adjective *aionios*. They insist that since the basic meaning of *aion* (or *eon*) is "age" that its meaning is limited to a specific period of time, or an age, and so the aionian punishment of the unsaved must be temporal in nature rather than being everlasting.

Because of the Universalists claims about the meaning of *aion* and *aionios*, it is important that we look at these words here. Vernon A. Schutz has written an excellent booklet on the subject entitled "*Universal Reconciliation: Do the Eons Ever End?*" which is subtitled "*Does Eon Ever Mean Eternal?*". In this work, Pastor Schutz has challenged the premise of Universalism, which says that the phrases "for the age of the ages" ("*aion* of the *aions*") and "for the ages of the ages" (*aions* of the *aions*) have been incorrectly understood and thus wrongly translated as "forever" and "ever" in our English Bibles. In regards to how a word is used being vital to understanding its meaning he states:

"It is the way the word is used in its context and circumstances that will determine whether or not *aion* means *just an age* or *forever*, or *eternity*. *Aion* in many New Testament passages obviously means *just an age*, such as Matthew 12:32: 'neither in this age, or in the age to come.' It would not make sense to say: 'neither in this eternity or the eternity to come.' It would be ridiculous to contend that *eon* or *aion* always means *eternal* or *forever*. However, it would be just as ridiculous to contend that *aion* never means *eternal* or *forever* but this is precisely the position of the U.R. (Universal Reconciliation: Do the Eons Ever End? Schutz, Vernon A., Grace Publications, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI 1978, pg. 5).

In reference to how the crowds would shout "the Emperor *eis ton aiona* (the Emperor forever)" in ancient times, Schutz goes on to say:

Can anyone really feel or believe that the shout "The Emperor *eis ton aion*" means, "The Emperor *for an age?*" Surely we can see that this meant "The Emperor *forever*." Therefore the context, the circumstances, and the usage of the word *aion* determines whether an age or eternity is in view. (Schutz, pg.6).

The primary principle of Bible interpretation is: Interpret in the light of context. This is important to keep in mind when looking at the Scriptures.

In his refutation of the Universalists claim that *aion* is never used to mean eternity, Schutz has aptly demonstrated that they are wrong through the parallelism of Hebrew poetry and its adaptation to

the New Testament in the book of Luke. Hebrew poetry does not use rhyme or rhythm but employs a parallelism of ideas or thoughts. The following explanation and chart by Schutz makes this clear.

In both Hebrew poetic and literary styles, the second of the two parallel statements often repeats, amplifies, or explains the first. For instance:

The Lord of Hosts.....is....With us:

The God of Jacob.....is....Our refuge (Ps. 46:7).

The law of the Lord.....is....Perfect

The testimony of the Lord...is...Sure

Making the wise the simple (Ps. 19:7).

Both statements mean the same, but the second repeats the thought in different words. Observe Ps. 114:1.

“When **Israel**.....went out of**Egypt**
the **House of Jacob**.....from.....**a people of strange language.**”

It is obvious that the second line repeats the same thought of the first line. The same literary style is adhered to in Luke 1:33:

“And He (Christ) shall reign over the **House of Jacob**.....**forever** (*eis tous aionas*); and of his **kingdom** there shall be**no end** (*ouk telos*)”.

The word *forever* is the Greek word *eon* or *aion*. Literally it is (*eis tous aionas*) or *unto the ages*. Notice the parallelisms: “The house of Jacob” is equivalent to or is the same as kingdom.” “Unto the ages” is equivalent to or the same as “there shall be no end.” (Schutz, pg. 7)

Here is proof that *aion* can be, and is, used of that which will last forever. Universalism is simply wrong in what they teach about its use. The combining of “parallelism” and “antithesis”, a contrast or opposition of thought is also found in Scripture. Schutz also shows how both Peter and Paul did this.

Paul combines these two rules of language, parallelism and antithesis, in II Corinthians 4:17:

“For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Permit us to point out the parallelism and antithesis.

our afflictions.....light or insignificant
our glory.....weighty or great
our afflictions.....momentary or temporal
our glory.....eternal or forever

Peter does the same thing, only this time the noun *eon* is involved, and it has to mean *endlessness* or *eternal*. The King James renders I Peter 1:23:

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, but the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”

The term for *ever* is the translation of the Greek word *eon* or *aion*....one would think Peter would have used *eon* in the plural here and at least say that the Word abides for the *ages*. The very fact that Peter does not use the plural of *eon* shows us that *aion* in the singular had an idiomatic usage, that is, at times *aion* was used in the sense of *for ever*, *everlasting*, or *eternal*.

The parallelism and antithesis of this passage makes our point abundantly clear:

Corruptible...seed....flesh....withereth....falleth away
Incorruptible..Word..God..endureth...abides for ever

(Schutz, pgs. 10-11)

Schutz' point is that those who say that the noun *aion* never means eternal are wrong. To say otherwise is to deny that “the incorruptible” Word of God “abideth forever.” This is telling because if the singular of *aion* is used to convey the idea of that which is everlasting, as we have just seen that it is, then most surely when used in the plural form, the *aions*, or the *aions* of the *aions*, it can and sometimes does mean everlasting or eternal.

We understand that these words can be used of an age (a certain period of time) or of unending time (eternity), depending on the context they are used in. And since *aionios* is used to describe God, Who we know is by nature an Eternal Being, it is again obvious that the word can be used to mean eternal or everlasting (see Rom. 16:26; I Tim. 6:16). In addition, the fact that the translators of the Septuagint used *aionios* to describe the eternal nature

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continued from page 4)

of God in Genesis 21:33 and Isaiah 40:28 shows that the word did indeed carry that meaning at least 100 years before the New Testament was written. This proves that the meaning was not forced on it later by the translators of the Scriptures as the some Universalists (and Annihilationists) claim it was.

In the book of Matthew, we find the Lord Jesus pronouncing everlasting punishment on the wicked and ascribing eternal life to the righteous in the same verse. *“And these shall go away into everlasting (aionios) punishment: but the righteous into life eternal (aionios)”* (Matt. 25:46). The same word, *aionios*, is used of both the punishment and the life given by the Lord here. Since the punishment of the lost is set in direct contrast to the blessing of the saved, the same duration of time must be assigned to both. In other words, if the life given by God to the believer is everlasting, so also will the punishment of God on the unbeliever be everlasting as both are described by the same word in what is undeniably the same context and are set against each other as absolute opposites. If both were treated equally, according to Universalists, we would have to say that the believers in this passage are only given “age-long life” just as the unbelievers are only assigned to an “age-long punishment.” But, even if this were so, what happens at the end of the age would be opposite as well. If, in the *aionion* Kingdom, the sheep on the Lord’s right hand are allowed to enter into their inheritance as only a prelude to their receiving of eternal life, then the *aionion* fire the goats on His left hand are cast into must be a prelude to the everlasting punishment that is their final destiny. In the context and manner *aionios* is used in these verses, the end results for both parties are graphically portrayed, however one chooses to interpret it.

It is obvious that this proclamation of punishment stands in contrast to eternal life, which is the life of God that is given to the righteous. The unrighteous, on the other hand, will be separated from the life of God forever and ever. The same Greek words that are used to describe the eternal nature and His worthiness to be praised and of eternal life are also used of the nature of the punishment of the wicked.

This is a dilemma for the Universalist. So, to get around this obvious contradiction to their

doctrine, they resort to claiming that since we know that God is an Eternal Being, we can assign the meaning of eternal or everlasting to *aion* or *aionios* when they are used to describe Him or His works, but otherwise it never means that. However, that simply is not how language works. If a word or phrase can be used to describe something, even something unique, it can be used in the same way to describe other things. They acknowledge that these words are often used in regard to eternal life, but when used of the punishment of the wicked the Universalist says it has to be temporary based on their presupposition that Hell cannot be eternal. In other words, they interpret the word according to what they have decided to believe and simply ignore the context it is found in along with the normal principles of hermeneutics. Just because we want something to be true does not make it true, regardless of any effort to force an interpretation of Scripture that agrees with one’s preferences. Besides, if the *aionios* life given can be deemed eternal because it was given by the eternal God, then the *aionios* punishment must also be seen as eternal for the same reason.

In dealing with this passage, they also point to the Greek word for punishment, *kolasis*, saying that it can only refer to a remedial or corrective type punishment because the word carries the idea of “cutting off” or “pruning”. But that is not an accurate assessment as it is found in other Greek literature in reference to divine punishment. Regardless though, as we have already said, since it is set as the opposite of eternal life, the punishment in view must be everlasting in nature as well or the obvious contrast is made meaningless. Even so, the idea of pruning or cutting off does not negate the concept of everlasting punishment because the penalty of sin is death, which speaks of being “separated” or “cutoff” from the presence of the Lord. To know God is eternal life (John 17:3), to not know Him then is eternal destruction from His presence (II Thess. 1:9). Whatever kind of punishment the unrighteous will suffer, it will last as long as the life given to the righteous. This verse by itself renders Universalism an untenable doctrine. And, when we look at where the unrighteous are being sent to be punished, we see that it is a place of everlasting fire that was originally created as a place of punishment for Satan and the fallen angels (Matt. 25:41).

(continued on page 6)

If Universalism is true and the punishment of the Lake of Fire is only temporary and remedial, then logically the Devil and his demons would have to be purified and made righteous in Hell as well. Actually some Universalists do teach this, but there is no Scriptural evidence of any such hope for Satan and the fallen angels or for mankind.

THE BOWING OF EVERY KNEE

Universalists look at Philippians 2:10 and say that the fact that eventually *“every knee should bow”* at the name of Jesus Christ proves that all of mankind will eventually be saved. But, based on their presuppositions about the fate of those who die in their sins, they read much more into this verse than is there. To bow down before someone does not necessarily have to be an act of adoration and worship as would be expected of believers who come into the presence of Jesus Christ. It can also be done in an act of acknowledgment and submission. When those who have died in their sins are brought before the Great White Throne to be judged for their works (see Rev. 20:11-13), they will no doubt fall down before the Holy One who is sitting on the throne as their Judge. The God they rejected in favor of His creation will be acknowledged as their Creator and the Sovereign of the universe while bowing to Him as vanquished foes.

Yes, *“every knee should bow”* to the Exalted One and *“every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord”* (see Phil. 2:9-11), but only the redeemed will do it in joy and adoration of the One who is worthy of praise. The lost, on the other hand, will do so in shame and despair. Their defiant hearts laid bare (Heb. 12-13; Jer. 17:9-10), they will acknowledge that they are worthy only of the righteous judgment pronounced on them and will not offer any defense or speak a word of protest against their deserved fate (Rom. 1:18-20, 32; 3:19).

THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM AND THE LAKE OF FIRE

The Millennial Kingdom is connected to eternity in the sense that even though it will give way to the eternal state at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on earth, His rule will continue unabated from one age to the other.

When the Lord Jesus returns to earth to claim the throne of David that is rightfully His, *“Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon His throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this”* (Isa. 9:7; cf. Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14; Lk. 1:32-33; II Pet. 1:11; Rev. 11:15).

In contrast, Hell, or the Lake of Fire, is a place of personal and everlasting separation from the presence of God (II Thess. 1:8-10; Matt. 7:23; 8:12; 25:32; Rev. 14:10-11; 21:8).

As we pointed out earlier, Universalism tries to deny the everlastingness of the torment of the Lake of Fire by saying the term used to describe it has been mistranslated. They claim that since the Greek literally says *“ages of the ages”* (Rev. 14:11; 20:10), it only refers to an *“age-long”* or *“age-lasting fire”* of limited duration. They do this in spite of the evidence that the Bible writers expressed the idea of eternity with this term. As we have already looked at the translation issue and word meanings, what we want to look at here is how the meaning that Universalism gives to *aion* and *aionios* would actually affect the length of time that those who are cast into the Lake of Fire will be there.

All of the unsaved will be consigned to the Lake of Fire either at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 25:41,46; Rev. 19:20) or at the end of it (Rev. 20:7-15). For any of them to remain in the Lake of Fire until the *“ages of the ages”* comes to an end must mean that they will have to wait until multiple ages have ended. That would be at least four different ages as that would be the minimum number that *ages of the ages* could refer to. Of course, since the Eternal Kingdom that follows the Millennial Kingdom age will never come to an end, those who end up in the Lake of Fire would be there forever and ever, wouldn't they? If the idea of *ages of the ages* is not that of long ages followed by ages upon ages to represent that which never ends, then it must refer to multiple ages that succeed each other until the last one comes to an end. No such ages upon ages that follow the Millennium can be identified in the Scriptures as they only exist in the imagination of the Universalists.

TO BE CONTINUED.....

(THE INSTITUTE UPDATE *continued from page 1*)

Our student body has included people who were college trained as engineers, schoolteachers, nurses, agriculturists, horticulturists, landscapers, architects, system designers, and financial advisors. In addition, there are those with technical training as computer programmers, graphic design, mechanics, carpenters, sheet metal workers, dental assistants, underground cable installers, truck drivers, welders, and other lines of skilled work. There are also those who have worked as security guards, factory workers, warehouse men, forklift drivers, servers, secretaries, bank tellers, laborers, painters housekeepers and a variety of other jobs. Some have even owned their own business.

I would also like to mention that many of our students have moved to Wisconsin, at their own expense, especially to attend **BBI**. They have sold their homes and quit good jobs to do so. Uprooting one's family and moving away from their relatives and friends is not an easy thing to do. They have sacrificed a lot to prepare for the ministry.

As you can see **Berean Bible Institute** is not like the average college or university whose graduates are generally in their early twenties and just entering in to the work force. They are hard working individuals that are doing what it takes to prepare themselves to better serve the Lord through the work of ministry. Our goal for the *Timothy/Macedonian Fund* is to provide short-term supplemental assistance for those called to smaller churches with few resources or who are beginning new works or are going into missions. The idea is to help for a year or two in order to give their ministry time to grow to where it can provide at least one-half of what would be an adequate income for a family to live on. This would allow a man to work part-time at a regular job and be able to give a substantial amount of time to the work of ministry.

No one would be getting a "paid position" simply because they attended **BBI**. Each applicant would be assessed along with the ministry that they would be involved in and the actual need determined before any support would be granted. And then **BBI** would work closely with the local church or mission that they would be serving under. In supporting an individual, the Fund would actually be supporting a Grace ministry.

I hope that this gives you a better idea about the kind of people that are students here at **Berean Bible Institute** and our desire to help them get started in ministry when they go out.

Please pray with us that the Lord would provide the resources needed to make the *Timothy/Macedonian Fund* a viable support ministry for new and/or struggling Grace ministries.

THE DAYS AHEAD

Like everyone else in America, we realize that we are living in turbulent times. The economy is in shambles, there is concern over the political situation, many are worried about climate change, and the Middle East continues to be a hot spot. For those whose hope is in their own abilities and material wealth these are certainly troubling days that are at hand and many fear what lies ahead. But, those of us who know Jesus Christ as Savior have a sure hope for the future. Because of our hope in Christ, we should consider these as days of opportunity.

Desperate hearts that are looking for meaningful answers in troubled times are often open to the truth of the Gospel Message. It is more important now than ever to share the Good News of the Grace Message with the lost. **BBI** is working to make sure that the Grace Gospel will continue to have a clear voice in these remarkable times we are living in.

Your prayers and gifts to the ministry of **BBI** would be greatly appreciated. The Lord's richest blessing to you.

Because Christ Lives!

Dr. W. Edward Bedore, Executive Director

WHAT I CAN DO

Edward Hale, former chaplain of the U.S. Senate, said, "I am only one, but I am one. I can't do everything, but I can do something. What I can do, I ought to do, and what I ought to do, by the grace of God, I shall do!"

The Bible says, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10).

The BBI Bulletin is the official newsletter of the **Berean Bible Institute Inc.**, and is sent free of charge to any who request it.

Berean Bible Institute exists as a school of adult education, which endeavors to provide advanced Biblical and doctrinal studies in accordance with the Biblical principle of right division and the revelation of the mystery along with practical training in ministry and leadership skills, in order to help individuals become prepared to do the work of the ministry in local churches, the mission field, at home or abroad, with the overall goal of making the Gospel of Jesus Christ known to the lost throughout the world, the edification of believers, and the promotion of personal Bible study.

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Berean Bible Institute, Inc. admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.



BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE

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