

INVESTIGATION

A man in a dark blue suit, white shirt, and brown tie is holding a white rectangular sign with both hands. His index fingers are pointing towards the text on the sign. The background is plain white.

What
is
Salvation?

(10 – What is Eternal Life?)

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Our understanding of salvation is predicated on our understanding of “eternal life”.

But, could our understanding of “eternal life” as it appears in our Bibles and from what we’ve been taught, be totally wrong?

Heresy!

Let's look at "eternal life" in the Hebrew and the Greek that the Bible is translated from.

First, we'll use the Greek Septuagint from which the OT is primarily transcribed. This translation of the Hebrew was done by 50 Jewish scribes. It was completed in the 4th century.

Let's also check to see if the Orthodox religious dogma around "eternal life" is an **ERROR.**

Orthodox religion was the standardization of what Christians should believe. It was formulated by the Roman Catholic clergy in the 4th century, along with the Bible canon.

They then had the 'correct' way to worship God and all the 'true' knowledge.

NOTE: A great deal of Orthodox dogma has been followed by the protestants (including the Charismatics & Pentecostals) since the Reformation of the 16th Century.

The Greek term *aionios* (αἰώνιος) which is translated as ‘eternal’ can actually be translated in opposite ways.

Bible interpreters have rendered this NT word either as: Looking forward to the future (“eternal”); or looking backwards (“ancient” or “old”).

The NASB translates ***aionios*** in the Greek Septuagint OT as “ancient” in:

- Job 22:15; Psalm 24:7, 9; Proverbs 22:28, 23:10; Isaiah 58:12, 61:4; Jeremiah 6:16, 18:15; Ezekiel 26:20 & Habakkuk 3:6

And, translates it as “old” in:

- Psalm 77:5; Isaiah 63:11 & Ezekiel 26:20

Examples of *aionios* translated from the Gk Septuagint:

- Job 22:15 – Will you keep to the old way which wicked men have trod?
- Proverbs 22:28 – Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.
- Psalm 24:7 – Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in.

Orthodox theology has no concept of past life with God (i.e. life NOW with 'The Living Word').

Therefore, *aionios* is usually given an eschatological meaning when translated into English. This places it sometime in the future.

For example:

“Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal [*aionios*] life [*zoe*]?”

Matthew 19:16 (NASB)

Note: *aionios zoe* is almost always translated “eternal life” when in fact it should be “ancient life”, the life Moses taught about.

Why?

In Matthew 19:6 Jesus directed Nicodemus backwards in time. So, it should be “ancient life”, the life Moses taught about.

Therefore, his question couldn't have been about eternal life in the future.

The example of Nicodemus highlights the Christian focus on going to Heaven after death as their quintessential goal.

Translators producing “eternal life” would do so because they would consider going to Heaven as the most important question a person could ask.

Translation example:

“...for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”

Psalm 133:3 (KJV)

The underlined phrase is translated either, “life forever”, “life forevermore” or “eternal life” in English translations.

The actual phrase in the Septuagint is ζῶν ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος which translates properly to **“life until now of the ancient”**.

It was normal in the time of David to reference the “ancient life”.

That’s because an important Jewish theology about living forever after physical death **DID NOT** exist.

‘Salvation’ has been translated wrongly because of Orthodoxy’s divorce from Jewish understanding, where the term originated.

In Hebraic thought, ‘salvation’ was not looking ahead to life after death in Heaven, but a description of God’s help and rescue in a person’s daily life.

This “ancient life” was one of faithful obedience in partnership with Almighty God and was characterized by the prophetic empowerment of prophets.

It's plain then that Jesus (a Jewish rabbi) taught his disciples about their heritage in the “ancient life”, not eternal life sometime in their future.

Here's the impact of
knowing this

An example of a modern translation:

“You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 5:6 (NKJV)

That's translated wrongly:

Melchizedek was an “ancient” [*aionios*] priest who Abram met. (Genesis 14:18)

Therefore, it should say that Jesus is an “ancient [*aionios*] priest” of the ancient order of Melchizedek, **not** a “a priest for ever” – even though he is a priest forever in Heaven.

Jesus is not a source of “eternal salvation” but a source of “ancient [*aionios*] salvation”.

That's the 1st century Hebraic understanding of Hebrews 5:5-14

When we examine Jesus' teaching, as well as that of the Gospel writers, they were more concerned that people should learn to experience the word/Kingdom/reign of God in their lives, in 'the here and now', so they can find the "salvation" that was '**yeshuah**' (Jesus) – i.e. God's help for every day.

So, is that all theological word-games which is not worth considering?

Here's another view

What would a modern rabbi think of
“*aionios zoe*”?

EXAMPLE

This is how we normally see this verse:

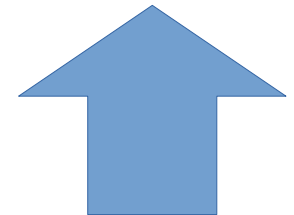
“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have
the words of eternal life”

John 6:68 (NKJV)

But translated literally it reads:

“Sir, unto whom shall we go? thou hast sayings of life age-during;”

John 6:68 (Young's Literal Translation)



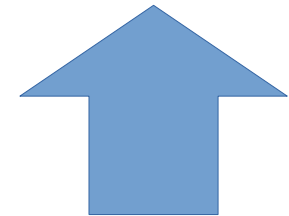
“Age-during” means?

- From age to age it doesn't change or diminish.
- Continues on
- Never stops
- Endures forever

In Hebrew the verse reads like this:

“*Adoni*, to whom will we go? You have
the *divrei ha**Chayyei Olam*.”

John 6:68 (Orthodox Jewish Bible)



Chayyei Olam חַיֵּי עוֹלָם

What was it's meaning in the 1st century?

This phrase has the modern understanding of ‘life after death’.

However, for Hebrews, *chayei olam* often had a different emphasis, especially when it was contrasted with *chayei sha’ah* (‘fleeting life’).

Chayei sha'ah: This is living a life that's only concerned about everyday things.

It's about eating, sleeping, working & making money.

Chayei olam: This is ‘lasting life’ or a ‘life of eternity’.

It referred to living a life that was focused on matters of eternal (heavenly) importance.

Consider this verse:

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

John 17:3 (CEB)

Translated literally:

“and this is the life age-during, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and him whom Thou didst send – Jesus Christ”

John 17:3 (Young's Literal Translation)



Jesus was saying that knowing God intimately and living with him as your Lord, **here & now**, is living as if you were already in eternity (in Heaven's realm).

That makes a whole lot of sense, considering what we've been taught by our King.

What more eternal significance can there be than living that way – his way?

Consider these verses...

You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved...And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. →

John 5:33-34, 37-38 (NKJV)

→ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

John 5:39-40 (NKJV)

Jewish people traditionally considered studying scripture as the way to genuinely live out their *Chayei olam*.

Jesus told his hearers that diligently studying the scriptures was **not** the way to *Chayei olam*, he was, which the scriptures actually showed them.

That's why Jesus said he'd come to give us abundant life, the life of Heaven.

That's *Chayei olam*

Looking at it another way

When considering eternity, it must be understood that the state of eternity is God's state of existence.

Putting it succinctly:

Eternity is God's condition – God is eternal

Because God is eternal, we can't refer to eternity using timeframes of reference.

That's because the concept of eternal "time" is outside of God's domain.

The NT informs us that God desires to give this eternal life to us!

When God grants 'eternal life', he is offering us his own state of being, not a time and place.

That's so we can share in all of **him** – the Creator.

Can you see that part of “oneness” with
the Trinity is sharing their life
and their existence?

Going back to this verse:

“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

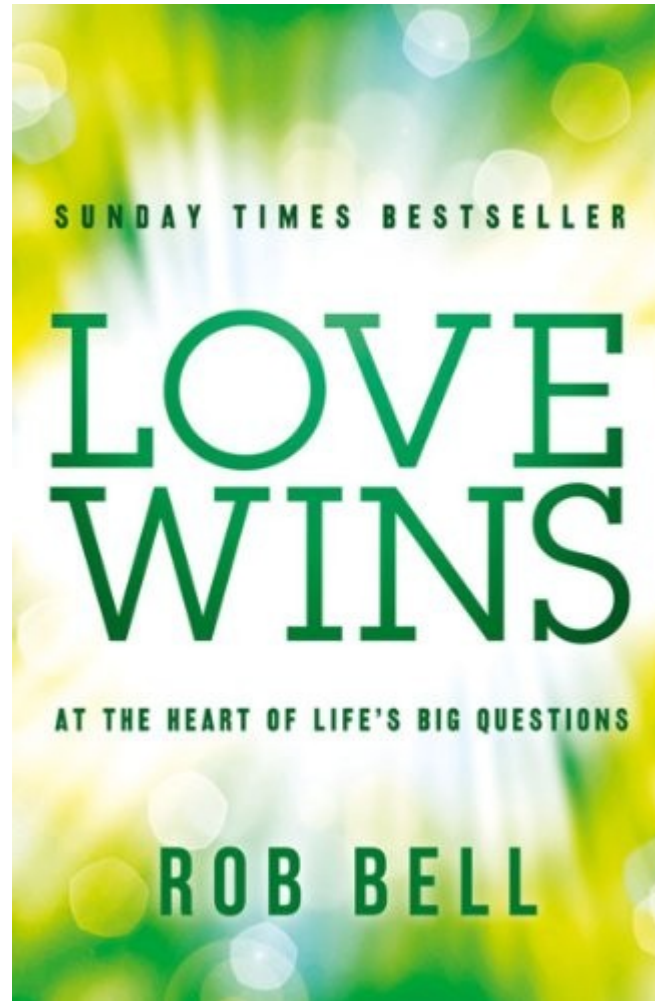
John 17:3 (CEB)

Chayei Olam is the knowledge of the one true God (Father) who sent Jesus into the world to bring us back into his family.

That's so we can regain the life that Adam and Ezer had before The Fall. That was life that was lived without death, in the spirit, and in the presence of God.

Chapter 2

E-book p:28-31, 45



9:55-16:07, 43:08-45:14

“[W]hen Jesus talked about heaven, he was talking about our present eternal, intense, real experiences of joy, peace, and love in this life, this side of death and the age to come. Heaven for Jesus wasn’t just “someday”; it was a present reality. Jesus blurs the lines, inviting the rich man, and us, into the merging of Heaven and Earth, the future and present, here and now. →

→ *To say it again, eternal life is less about a kind of time that starts when we die, and more about a quality and vitality of life lived now in connection to God.*

Eternal life doesn't start when we die; it starts now.

It's not about a life that begins at death; it's about experiencing the kind of life now that can endure and survive even death."

Can you now see that *Chayei olam* is God's life, the very ancient life that Adam was given and the one people were all invited to have in the post-Fall world?

It's Heaven's life **NOW**,
not
sometime in the future

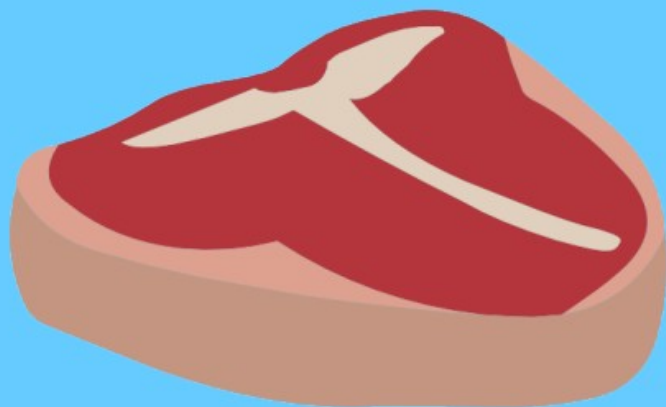
As you can see, we thought we had all the answers, but it's pretty clear – we don't.

Yes, we thought we knew it all

Turns out, there's a lot more reprogramming we still have to go through to be freed of the false teaching that religion has indoctrinated us with.

ETERNAL LIFE

*Not “pie in the sky
when you die”.*



*It’s “steak on the plate
while you wait”.*

**This is the abundant life that Jesus
taught about that never stops**



LINKS

Steven R. Service (2015) “The Lost and Forgotten Gospel of the Kingdom : A First Century Hebraic Perspective” [e-book 2nd ed.]

www.amazon.com.au/Lost-Forgotten-Gospel-Kingdom-Perspective-ebook/dp/B07124XNG9

Steven R. Service (2015) “The Lost and Forgotten Gospel of the Kingdom : A First Century Hebraic Perspective” [PDF of 2nd ed.]

www.academia.edu/39895038/The_Lost_and_Forgotten_Gospel_of_the_Kingdom_A_First_Century_Hebraic_Perspective_2nd_Ed [FREE PDF]

Rob Bell (2011) “Love Wins” p:28-31, 45 [audio]

www.amazon.com.au/Love-Wins-Heart-Lifes-Questions/dp/B00NPB3CWO

Rob Bell (2011) “Love Wins” p:28-31, 45 [e-book]

www.amazon.com.au/Love-Wins-Heart-Lifes-Questions-ebook/dp/B004TAAKKC

Lois Tverberg (1-7-2015) “Chayei Olam – Eternal Life” [article]

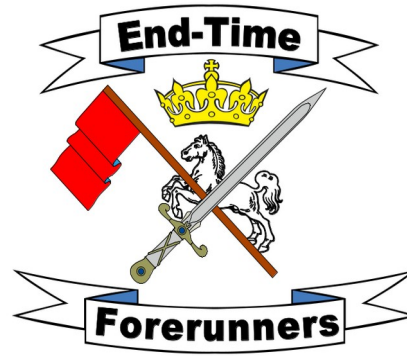
engediresourcecenter.com/2015/07/01/chayei-olam-eternal-life

John Parsons (???) “Chayei Olam – The Wonder of Eternal Life” [article]

hebrew4christians.com/Articles/Chayei-Olam/chayei-olam.html



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L.D. Smart

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