

# A Different Take On: Israel's Everlasting Covenant

The standard evangelical understanding of Yahweh's covenant with Israel is that it is everlasting. That means it's perpetual and will never end. That permanency is said to cover their status as 'the Children of God', as well as the 'land of Israel' that Kings David and Solomon were monarchs over. However, even though the Old Covenant (OC) was a blood covenant, covenants are never permanent.

Why never permanent? It's important to understand that in a covenant between 2 people or 2 people groups, that even though the covenant is said to be permanent and binding, it ceases when one of the parties breaks the terms of the agreement. For those covenanted to Father he always keeps his covenant agreements, BUT – and that's the big thing – he only keeps it with those who love him and obey him.<sup>1</sup>

Blood covenants (like the one between Yahweh and Abraham) are more binding than verbal covenants. The dead animals and their blood that are added to the agreement stand for something like this: "If one of us breaks this covenant, the other covenanter has permission to kill the offender, their family and all those who they represent in this covenant". No wonder Israel and Judah were both allowed by Yahweh to be killed and taken captive despite his blood covenant with Abraham, because they broke it. No wonder their kingdom (The Kingdom) was taken away from them and given to people of faith because of their unfaithfulness for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time.

But, you ask, "Isn't the Abrahamic covenant everlasting, which would override anything Israel would do in terms of covenant-breaking?" Let's check that out.

The word used in the OT that's translated 'everlasting' in Hebrew is  $\text{עלם}$ . The big question is, "Does the Hebrew word  $\text{עלם}$  actually mean 'everlasting', 'forever' or 'eternal'?"

To answer that question, a good place to check is what the rabbis translated  $\text{עלם}$  into when they produced the Septuagint version of the OT in Greek. In that version, they chose the Greek word *aionios* ( $\alpha\iota\omega\nu\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ) as its equivalent. Now, *aionios* means 'age enduring', not 'everlasting' or 'permanent'. It's actually used for an undefined period, but not for endless time. That means **the Greek word *aionios* is equivalent in meaning to the Hebrew word  $\text{עלם}$** , otherwise it would have been inconceivable for them to have used it as the translation.

Young's Literal Translation shows this clearly, as it translates scripture literally, without any Christian theological bias:

**Exodus 12:14** (YLT) – *And this day hath become to you a memorial, and ye have kept it a feast to Jehovah to your generations; – a statute age-during; ye keep it a feast.*

Opposed to that, here are a few versions which translate *aionios* from the Christian worldview that the OC and it's attachments will never end:

**Exodus 12:14** (NKJV) – *So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.*

**Exodus 12:14** (NASB) – *throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.*

**Exodus 12:14** (ESV) – *throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.*

Some would say, "That's just semantics. It doesn't prove anything."

So, let's take it further.

Was the Aaronic priesthood meant to be everlasting? It was part of the OC, so it should be.

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1 – READ: "Understanding the Transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant"

[canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Understanding-the-Transition-from-the-Old-Covenant-to-the-New-Covenant.pdf](http://canberraforerunners.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Understanding-the-Transition-from-the-Old-Covenant-to-the-New-Covenant.pdf)

The following translations say that the OC priesthood was a permanent function:

**Exodus 40:15** (NKJV) – ...*for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.*

**Exodus 40:15** (NLT) – ...*Aaron's descendants are set apart for the priesthood forever, from generation to generation.*

**Exodus 40:15** (CSB) – ...*Their anointing will serve to inaugurate a permanent priesthood for them throughout their generations.*

But, in contrast, Young's Literal Translation states that it wasn't. It was confined to an age:

**Exodus 40:15** (YLT) – ...*and their anointing hath been to be to them for a priesthood age-during, to their generations.*

Is this another case of semantics? Well, no.

We know from the book of Hebrews that “there should arise another and different kind of Priest, one after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one appointed after the order and rank of Aaron”<sup>2</sup>. We know that this priesthood is Jesus' and that it's the priesthood that we belong to as Kingdom priests. We also know that under the New Covenant (NC) that the OC priesthood has become extinct, having no role because the Kingdom is spiritual, not natural and religious.

That means that  $\hat{o}l\hat{a}m$  in the Aaronic priesthood statement doesn't mean ‘everlasting’, ‘permanent’ or ‘forever’. If it did, then Yahweh lied to Aaron because it ended in 70AD – but he doesn't lie.

$\hat{o}l\hat{a}m$  means an indefinite period, as it's a word associated with time and not timelessness. Of course, a specific age may have no end, but that cannot be true of the OC age of the law, because we know it became obsolete and ended.

There are many OT examples in where  $\hat{o}l\hat{a}m$  doesn't mean ‘forever’ or ‘everlasting’. For instance, here are some of them where  $\hat{o}l\hat{a}m$  has been translated that way to show how ridiculous they would be:

- Jonah was in the fish forever<sup>3</sup>
- A slave serves his master forever<sup>4</sup>
- Solomon's temple is built to last forever<sup>5</sup>
- Sodom's fiery judgement is eternal<sup>6</sup>
- The Mosaic covenant is everlasting<sup>7</sup>
- Circumcision was an everlasting<sup>8</sup>
- Israel's judgement lasts forever<sup>9</sup>
- Animal sacrifices are to be offered forever<sup>10</sup>
- The Gezites and Amaekites lived in the land forever<sup>11</sup>

In regard to Israel, ‘forever’/‘everlasting’ has been theologically programmed into evangelicals, especially Christian Zionists<sup>12</sup>. They believe Israel's covenant and their Promised Land are permanent,

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2 – Hebrews 7:11 (AMPC)

3 – Jonah 2:6

4 – Exodus 21:6

5 – 1 Kings 8:13

6 – Ezekiel 16:53-55; Jude 1:7

7 – Leviticus 24:3, 8

8 – Genesis 17:9-13

9 – Isaiah 32:13-15

10 – 2 Chronicles 2:4

11 – 1 Samuel 27:8

12 – “Christian Zionism is a belief among some Christians that the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 were in accordance with Bible prophecy.” [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_Zionism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Zionism)

rather than enduring just for an age – the age of the Old Covenant.

This problem of perpetual Israel has been created by the inclusion of Christian uses of *ôlâm* ('forever', 'permanent' & 'everlasting') in concordances so that translators and Bible students pick up meanings that weren't in the original Ancient Greek of the OT or the Koine Greek of the NT. Other linguists are clear about the meaning of *ôlâm* as age enduring. (*See statements on the Hebrew meaning of ôlâm at the end of this document*)

It appears then that the reality of the NC (Kingdom NOW) and the rejection of the two Israelite nations (Judah and Israel) by Father is a fact. It was never meant to be an eternal covenant. Of course a person can believe that Israel is still in covenant with Father, or that Father still favours them covenantally, if they wish to do so.

No beliefs outside of the Kingdom remove a son from the Kingdom. All other beliefs and teachings do is distract them from focusing where it needs to be – the King, the Kingdom and the King's plans.

Finishing on another point:

*“In reality, Jesus has fulfilled all the covenantal promises to Abraham, Moses and David in the new covenant; and that includes the land, which is now a heavenly country and city, the New Jerusalem. This message is consistent throughout the New Testament.”* <sup>13</sup>p:272

**Statements on the Hebrew meaning of *ôlâm* are on the next page**

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(Readers will need to look up for themselves any scriptures alluded to in this document)

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13 – Mike Parsons (2022) “The Eschatology of the Restoration of All Things” (PDF) p:272  
[eg.freedomarc.org/course/eschatology-ebook](http://eg.freedomarc.org/course/eschatology-ebook)

# The Hebrew Meaning of Ôlâm

- Gesenius' 'Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon':<sup>14</sup>  
"What is hidden; especially hidden time, long; the beginning or end of which is either uncertain or else not defined."
- J. W. Haley states:<sup>15</sup>  
"The Hebrew word 'olam' rendered 'forever,' does not imply the metaphysical idea of absolute endlessness, but a period of indefinite length, as Rambach says, a very long time, the end of which is hidden from us."
- Dr Bullinger's Appendix 129 to 'The Companion Bible', states:<sup>16</sup>  
"The Hebrew [word] olam...denotes indefinite, unknown or concealed duration (an age); just as we speak of 'the patriarchal age', or 'the golden age', etc."
- 'The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible', Vol. IV, under 'Time', states:<sup>17</sup>  
"The O.T. and the N.T. are not acquainted with the conception of eternity as timelessness. The O.T. has not developed a special term for 'eternity' which one could contrast with 'temporality.' The word aion originally meant 'vital force,' 'life;' then 'age,' 'lifetime.' It is, however, also used generally of a limited or unlimited long space of time. The use of the word aion is determined very much by the O.T. and the LXX (Septuagint). Aion means 'long distant uninterrupted time' in the past (Luke 1:10), as well as in the future (John 4:14)."
- In the 'Dictionary of Theology' J.S. Blunt, under the entries for 'Eternity', states:<sup>18</sup>  
"The conception of Eternity in the Semitic languages is that of a long duration and series of ages."
- Jeff Benner's description states:<sup>19</sup>  
"The Hebrew word olam literally means "beyond the horizon"... The word olam is also used for time for the distant past or the distant future as a time that is difficult to know or perceive. This word is frequently translated as "eternity" meaning a continual span of time that never ends. In the Hebrew mind it is simply what is at or beyond the horizon, a very distant time. A common phrase in the Hebrew is "l'olam va'ed" and is usually translated as "forever and ever," but in the Hebrew it means "to the distant horizon and again" meaning "a very distant time and even further." "

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14 – [www.amazon.com.au/Gesenius-Hebrew-Chaldee-Lexicon-Testament/dp/0801037360](http://www.amazon.com.au/Gesenius-Hebrew-Chaldee-Lexicon-Testament/dp/0801037360)

15 – John W. Haley (1984) "An Examination of the Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible" [Whitaker House] p:216

16 – [www.amazon.com.au/Companion-Bible-Enlarged-Type/dp/0825420997](http://www.amazon.com.au/Companion-Bible-Enlarged-Type/dp/0825420997)

17 – [www.amazon.com.au/R-Z-v-Keith-R-Crim/dp/0687192730](http://www.amazon.com.au/R-Z-v-Keith-R-Crim/dp/0687192730)

18 – Out of print

19 – [www.ancient-hebrew.org/definition/eternity.htm](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/definition/eternity.htm)