

UPDATE: *Hope Beyond Hell* chapter one: AIŌN

In *Hope Beyond Hell* chapter one, I showed why “eternal” in *eternal punishment* (Matthew 25:46) was not forever. I focused mainly on the Greek word *aiōn* to make my case. However, I have since learned that some people insist the adjective *aiōnios* (Strong’s 166) always means eternal in Scripture. That is just not so! In this short paper I submit ample evidence to prove it. An adjective carries the root sense of its parent noun. A *daily* newspaper comes out each *day* not weekly; same in Greek! Note carefully how the following translations word Matthew 25:46: (A)

Punishment of the Ages

Weymouth NT in Modern Speech (1978) Kregel

Age-abiding correction

Rotherham Emphasized Bible (1902)

Punishment age during

Young’s Literal Translation (1898)

Chastening eonian

Concordant Literal Translation (1976 6th Ed)

Eonian correction

Clementson’s The NT (1938)

Aionian cutting-off

Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott (1942)

Long correction

Fenton’s The Holy Bible in Modern Eng. (1903)

An age of chastening

The Gospel (1975)

Age-abiding correction

The Restoration of Original Sacred Name Bible (1976)

Age-continuing correction

The People’s New Covenant (N.T.) Arthur Overbury (1925)

Rehabilitation for a set period of time

The Source NT A. Nyland (2004)

Unconditional-being correction

Etymological NT, An Ultra Literal Tran., by J.M. Wine (2011)

Punishment of the Last Age

The Christian Bible, Christian Bible Society (1995)

Will begin to serve a new period of suffering

The NT A New Translation by J Greber (1980)

Eonian discipline

The Writ, Dabhar Translation Art Kerber (2005)

Age-continuing punishment

A Critical Paraphrase of the NT Vincent Roth (1960)

Agelasting cutting-off

The N.T. of our Lord and Savior Jesus Anointed (1958)

Age-long punishment

2001 Translation —An American English Bible [LXX based] (2001)

Eonian pruning

Jonathan Mitchell Translation (2010)

Aeonian punishment

Twentieth Century NT (1900)

Aeonian chastisement

Hanson’s The New Covenant (1884)

Aionian punishment

The NT Abner Kneeland (1823)

Aeonian punishment

Scarlett’s NT (1792)

The original Greek in which the New Testament was written supports the above translations. The critical word we must look at is *aiōnios*. Does it always mean eternal? Knowing the answer is important because it qualifies punishment (Mt 25:46); hell fire [*Gehenna fire*] (Mt 18:8-9); destruction (2Th 1:9) and judgment (He 6:2). Does it mean “eternal” or “of the ages” or something else? Examine *aiōnios* in the Septuagint and you will find it cannot mean eternal in many cases. The Septuagint was the Greek translation of the Old Testament used at the time of Christ! Most Old Testament quotes in the New Testament come from it. Its authority is unrivaled having become itself part of the Scriptures. The following are passages based on the Septuagint and the NT which show that *aiōnios* cannot mean eternal in these contexts. Note that my format *aiōnios... but only until...* is for emphasis.

Old Testament

* Circumcision is an *aiōnios* covenant... *Ge 17:13*

but only until the New Covenant replaces the old. *He 8:6-13;9:15;Ch 7-8-9*

* Mountains are *aiōnios... Hab 3:6*

but only until they are scattered and collapse. *Is 40:4;Mk 13:31;2Pe 3:10*

* Jonah was in the fish for *aiōnios... Jon 2:6,10*

but only until three days later. *Jon 1:17*

* Jeremiah wished he had died in the womb with it remaining *aiōnios* pregnant... *Je 20:17NAS*

but only until at most, the end of his mother’s life. No physical condition is eternal.

* Every Sabbath Aaron sets frankincense before the Lord by an *aiōnios* covenant... *Le 24:7-8*

but only until the new covenant. *Lu 16:16;He 8:6-13;9:15;Ch 7-9*

* The field of the Levites is their *aiōnios* possession... *Le 25:34*

but only until the New Covenant ends their priesthood. *Lu 16:16;He 8:6-13;9:15;Ch 7-9*

* Ruins are *aiōnios... Is 58:12a NIV, NAS, etc*

but only until they are rebuilt... *Is 58:12b*

And your cities which were destroyed long ago [aiōnios] will be built again (NLV)

You will rebuild those houses left in ruins for years [aiōnios] (CEV) Eternal is only years.

* Foundations are *aiōnios... Is 58:12b “age-old” foundations NIV, NAS etc*

- but** only **until** they are raised.
- * Aaron cares for **aiōnios** lamps... *Le 24:3; Ex 27:21*
but only **until** they are no longer needed after “their generations” have passed.
 - * Hills are **aiōnios**... *Ge 49:26*
but only **until** made low and the earth burned up. *Is 40:4; Mk 13:31; 2Pe 3:10*
 - * Priests eat tabernacle bread by an **aiōnios** statute... *Le 24:9*
but only **until** the end of the law in Christ. *Lu 16:16; Ro 10:4; He Ch7-9*
 - * Israel’s law includes foreigners through all their generations for **aiōnios**... *Nu 15:15*
but only **until** generations cease or its law is annulled. *Lu 16:16; Ro 10:4; He 8:6-13; 9:15*
 - * An **aiōnios** landmark is not to be moved... *Pr 22:28*
but only **until** it is lost, destroyed or otherwise disturbed. Most Bibles have *ancient* not eternal.
 - * Sinful people walk on an **aiōnios** path or way... *Job 22:15 NIRV*
but only **until** they repent. *Is 55:7* Jesus is the only eternal “Way.” *Jn 14:6*
 - * God gave Phinehas an **aiōnios** priesthood... *Nu 25:11,13*
but only **until** the New Covenant. *He 8:7-8,13; 9:15; Ch 7-9*
 - * Once again, an **aiōnios** landmark is not to be moved... *Pr 23:10*
but only **until** something moves it. Nothing is permanently fixed in this world.
 - * A priest makes atonement as an **aiōnios** statute... *Le 16:32-34*
but only **until** Christ atones for all, once for all, and the priesthood is changed. *Lu 16:16; He 7:27; 1Jn 2:2*
 - * Asaph considered the years of **aiōnios** times... *Ps 77:5b* Eternal cannot be pluralized or measured in years.
but only **until** they passed. The NAS and NIV say *of long ago*
 - * Then his people recalled the **aiōnios** days... *Is 63:11 NIV*
but only **until** “the days of old” came to an end. Most Bibles say “days of old.”
 - * The heights of Israel are **aiōnios**... *Ez 36:1-2*
but only **until** made low and the earth is burned up. *Is 40:4; 2 Pe 3:10*
The NIRV has *for a long time*
 - * God’s people stumbled from the **aiōnios** paths.... *Jer 18:15* Most Bibles say *ancient* paths
but only **until** those paths ceased or changed with the change in the law. *He Ch7-9*
 - * Priests blow trumpets as an **aiōnios** ordinance for generations.... *Nu 10:8*
but only **until** Christ brings a new priesthood or generations cease. *Lu 16:16; He 8:6-13; 9:15; Ch 7-9*
 - * God gives all Canaan to Abram as an **aiōnios** possession...
but only **until** at most, the passing of the earth. *Ge 17:8; Mk 13:31*
How much of Canaan does Israel still possess or lost since its inception?
 - * The above promise regarding Canaan is repeated three more times: **aiōnios**...
but only **until**... *Ge 48:4; 1Chr 16:17; Ps 105:10*
 - * (Again) Ruins are **aiōnios**... *Is 61:4*
but only **until** they are rebuilt...

New Testament

- * Jesus warned of hell fire and its punishment (correction) as **aiōnios**...
but said it was “**until**” the last cent was paid. *Mt 5:22-26; 18:8-9*
Thus in Jesus’ first mention of hell He clearly affirmed that **aiōnios** punishment is not eternal.
- * A mystery is hidden for **aiōnios**...
but only **until** it is “revealed and made known.” *Ro 16:25-26*
An eternal secret cannot be revealed. That is why the NIRV states: *a very long time*
- * God’s grace was given us in Christ before **aiōnios**...
but we know eternity has no beginning. It is timeless. *2Ti 1:9*
- * God promised **aiōnios** life **before** time **aiōnios** ever began! *Tit 1:2*
How can something precede what is not supposed to have a beginning?
NRSV, RSV, ESV state *before the ages began*; NASB: *long ages ago*; YLT: *before times of ages*
Note how these respected translations equate **aiōnios** with the word **age**, which is limited in duration.
- * A slave returns for **aiōnios**...
but only **until** he dies, is released or escapes. *Philemon 15-16* Does anyone live forever?
- * Sodom experienced **aiōnios** fire... *Jude 7*
but only **until** it burned out ages ago. Ezekiel prophesied Sodom’s restoration. *Ez 16:53-55*

How can what is eternal exist only “until” another event takes place? This is incontestable evidence that *aiōnios* does not always mean eternal. There is no judgment in all Scripture qualified by *aiōnios* or its noun *aiōn* that must be interpreted to mean unending punishment. The above examples confirm this! Not only am I convinced by these examples, but by numerous other Biblically based arguments and texts presented in *Hope Beyond Hell*, its website and numerous other sources.

(A) My thanks to Gary Amirault of Tentmaker Ministries for most of this translation compilation.