

Will we live forever?

By

Yochanan Zaquantov

There is a fascination with living forever after we are resurrected. Most people have a desire that they never die. Is that what YHVH has in store for us? Or is there more to this than we read in the English translations? Is the ultimate benefit for obedience life eternal in the future or something more immediate? Does the Hebrew text reflect “forever” as translated in English? This is what we will be studying today as we look at living forever.

Search the Internet for Eternal Life and see the results you get which are predominately Christian in nature. Yes, where did the idea come from? If we look at Bereshit/Genesis 3:22 we see...

22 And YHVH Elohim said, “Now that the man has become like one of us, knowing good and bad, what if he should stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever!”

It appears that from this translation of the Hebrew text that Adam and Chava taking of the Tree of Life would live forever. So what does the Hebrew transliterated say:

22 Vayomer YHVH Elohim hen ha'adam hayah ke'achad mimenu lada'at tov vara' va'atah pen-yish'lah yadu valaqah gam me'etz hachayim va'akhal vachay le'olam.	22 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הֵן הָאָדָם הָיָה כְּאַחַד מִמֶּנּוּ לְדַעַת טוֹב וְרָע וְעַתָּה פְּנִי-יִשְׁלַח יָדוֹ וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים וְאָכַל וְחַי לְעֹלָם:
--	--

Which would be translated in English as?

22 And says YHVH Elohim, Behold the man has become like one from us to know good and evil and now less he sends his hand and takes also from tree the lives and eat and live to forever.

Notice that all the translations seem to miss the lamed prefix of the Hebrew in front of ‘Olam. So we see if they ate of the tree they would live “to forever”. So when exactly is “to forever”? Why would they want to perpetuate an idea of a tree giving eternal life?

Now if we look at another version of Torah we see that this translation is supported not as granting eternal life.

YHVH, Elohim, Said: Here, the human has become like one of us, in knowing good and evil. So now, lest he send forth his hand and take also from the Tree of Life and eat and live throughout the ages. (Schocken Bible)

What was the start of this story?

Bereshit/Genesis 2:15-16

15 YHWH, Elohim, took the human and set him in the garden of Eden, to work it and to watch it. 16 YHWH, Elohim, commanded concerning the human, saying: From every (other) tree of the garden you may eat, yes, eat, 17 **but from the Tree of the Knowing of Good and Evil- you are not to eat from it (ume'etz hada'at tov vara lo to'khal**

mimenu וַיִּמְעַץ הַדְּעַת טוֹב וְרַע לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ), for on the day that you eat from it, you must die, yes, die (Khiy bayom okhal'kha mimenu mot tamut כִּי בְיוֹם אֲכַלְךָ מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹת תָּמוּת). (Schoken Tranlation)

We see here that the rule was set. Don't eat utterly of the tree of knowledge. Mimenu is utterly from and so this made this an infinitive absolute of min or from. Thus, making what he spoke as a command. It is like never you will eat from it. Next the verse states that because in day you eat utterly from dead you shall die. Or you shall utterly die. Next, we will look at the

Bereshit/Genesis 3:1-7

1 Now the snake was more shrewd than all the living-things of the field that YHWH, Elohim, had made. It said to the woman: Even though Elohim said: You are not to eat from any of the trees in the garden . . . !

Serpent was a created animal.

2 The woman said to the snake: From the fruit of the (other) trees in the garden we may eat, 3 but from the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, Elohim has said: You are not to eat from it and you are not to touch it, lest you die.

Chava adds to the commandment the following: "and you are not to touch it." This is clearly the first transgression.

4 The snake said to the woman: **Die, you will not die (lo-mot temuton לֹא-מוֹת**

תָּמוּתוֹן)! 5 Rather, Elohim knows that on the day that you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will become like elohim, knowing good and evil.

Here the Nachash/Serpent countermands the punishment to put doubt in the woman. You will not utterly die but rather know what Elohim knows.

6 The woman saw that the tree was good for eating and that it was a delight to the eyes, and the tree was desirable to contemplate. She took from its fruit and ate and gave also to her husband beside her, and he ate. 7 The eyes of the two of them were opened and they knew then that they were nude. They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Adam was with her and likely heard the same thing. He did not correct his wife and willingly ate. Here was his transgression. The fruit's effect was to change their perception. The first indication was the noticing the genital areas. Thus, this is why they made loincloths or aprons of leaves.

That leads us back to where we started. We are at the point of taking of the etz hachayim and eating and living to forever. But does le'olam mean eternal life here or is it an indeterminate time of life that is like forever.

So there we see that as we examine the word 'Olam we need to remove that concept of forever in English and see what does it represent from a Hebrew perspective.

'Olam 5769 (Ayin-Vav-Lamed-Mem Sofit) pages 909-911 in the NEHC and pages 761-763. It is a Masculine Noun.

Bereshit/Genesis 6:3,4

3 YHVH said: My rushing-spirit shall not remain in humankind for ages, for they too are flesh; let their days be then a hundred and twenty years! 4 The giants were on earth in those days, and afterward as well, when the divine beings came in to the human women and they bore them (children)- they were the heroes who were **of former ages (me'olam**

מעולם), the men of name.

Here we see olam used as in from olam or from an ancient time. Clearly this was not a time of forever since in the previous verse man's lifetime is limited.

Bereshit/Genesis 9:12-16

12 And Elohim said: This is the sign of the covenant which I set between me and you and all living beings that are with you, **for ageless generations (ledorot 'olam לדורת**

עולם): 13 My bow I set in the clouds, so that it may serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 It shall be: when I becloud the earth with clouds and in the clouds the bow is seen, 15 I will call to mind my covenant that is between me and you and all living beings-all flesh: never again shall the waters become a Deluge, to bring all flesh to ruin! 16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will look at it, **to call to mind the age-**

old covenant (liz'kor beriyt 'olam לְזִכֹּר בְּרִית עוֹלָם) between Elohim and all living beings- all flesh that is upon the earth.

While the covenant is kept for all times by Elohim who is himself eternal (never beginning and not ending), the covenant is kept with generations unending. It does not mean they live forever seeing this.

Bereshit/Genesis 13:14-17

14 YHVH said to Avram, after Lot had parted from him: Pray lift up your eyes and see from the place where you are, to the north, to the Negev, to the east, to the Sea: 15 indeed, all the land that you see, I give it to you and to your seed, **for the ages** ('ad-עַד-עוֹלָם 'olam). 16 I will make your seed like the dust of the ground, so that if a man were able to measure the dust of the ground, so too could your seed be measured. 17 Up, walk about through the land in its length and in its breadth, for I give it to you.

'ad is a preposition here for the noun 'olam. As a preposition it is generally translated as until. This could be understood as being “until forever” or “until an unknown ending time”. Thus, we can see to a human mind “never ending”.

Bereshit/Genesis 17:7,8,13,19

7 I establish my covenant between me and you and your seed after you, **throughout their generations as a covenant for the ages** (ledorotam liv'rit olam לְדֹרוֹתָם לְבְרִית עוֹלָם), to be Elohim to you and to your seed after you. 8 I will give to you and to your seed after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, **as a holding for the ages** (la'ochuzzat 'olam לְאַחֲזַת עוֹלָם) and I will be Elohim to them. 9 Elohim said to Avraham: As for you, you are to keep my covenant, you and your seed **after you, throughout their generations** (achoreykha ledorotam אַחֲרַיְכֶם לְדֹרוֹתָם).

13 Circumcised, yes, circumcised shall be your house-born and your money-bought (slaves), so that my covenant may be in your flesh **as a covenant for the ages** (liv'riyt לְבְרִית עוֹלָם 'olam).

19 Elohim said: Nevertheless, Sara your wife is to bear you a son, you shall call his name: Yitzhak/He Laughs. I will establish my covenant with him **as a covenant for the ages** (liv'riyt 'olam לְבְרִית עוֹלָם), for his seed after him.

Here we see that the covenant was for generations because no man lives forever. Yet, for Elohim who is ever living it is a beriyt 'olam or covenant for all time. This is showing us so far that olam does not always denote forever.

Bereshit/Genesis 21:33

33 Now he [Avraham] planted a tamarisk in Be'er-sheva and there he called out the name: **YHVH El of the Ages** (YHVH el 'olam יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם).

When referring to YHVH since we has not beginning nor ending then an indeterminate time period reflect his never beginning nor ending state. He is eternal where we are finite.

Bereshit/Genesis 49:26

26 The blessings of your father Surpass the blessings of my ancestors, to the utmost bounds of the **eternal hills** (giv'it 'olam). May they rest on the head of Joseph, On the brow of the elect of his brothers.

26 May the blessings of your father transcend the blessings of **mountains eternal, the bounds of hills without age** (giv'ot 'olam גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם). May they fall upon the head of Yosef, on the crown of the consecrated-one among his brothers.

Do hills last forever or do they stretch on forever. This is poetic and a blessing and so the word olam used here appears to have the connotation of a long time or seemingly lasting for a long time. However, we know through science that hills or mountains are not forever.

Shemot/Exodus 3:15

15 And Elohim said further to Moses, "Thus shall you speak to the Israelites: YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you: This shall be My name **forever** ('olam – for all times), this My appellation for all eternity [to generation of generation] .

Ex. 3:14 Elohim said to Moshe: EHYEH ASHER EHYEH/I will be-there howsoever I will be-there. And he said: Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: EHYEH/I-WILL-BE-THERE sends me to you.

Ex. 3:15 And Elohim said further to Moshe: Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: YHVH, the Elohey of your fathers, Elohey of Avraham, Elohey of Yitzhak, and Elohey of Yaakov, sends me to you. **That is my name for the ages (zeh-shemiy l'olam**

לְעוֹלָם לְעוֹלָם), that is my title (from) generation to generation (vezeh zikh'ri

ledor dor וְזֶה זִכְרִי לְדוֹר דָּר).

YHVH's name is for all times. You could argue that it is forever since he is forever. However, for humans it is equated with vedor dor which means all generations. Thus, its our remembrances (zik'riy) of him.

Shemot/Exodus 12:14,17, 24

14 This day shall be for you a memorial, you are to celebrate it as a pilgrimage-celebration for YHVH, **throughout your generations, as a law for the ages**

(ledoroteykhem chuqqat 'olam לְדוֹרֹתֵיכֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם) you are to celebrate it!

17 And keep the (Festival of) matzot! For on this same day I have brought out your forces from the land of Egypt. Keep this day **throughout your generations as a law for**

the ages (ledoroteykhem chuqqat 'olam לְדוֹרֹתֵיכֶם חֻקַּת עוֹלָם).

24 You are to keep **this word as a law for you and for your children, into the ages**

(hazeh lechaq-lekha ulebaneykha ad-'olam הַזֶּה לְחֻקְ-לְךָ וּלְבָנֶיךָ אֲד-עוֹלָם

עַד-עוֹלָם)!

Here he have the observance of Chag HaMatzot and it is a chaq/chuqqat olam to their generations. While the chaq or statue/practice will go on and on throughout every generation, no one would say each generation keep it forever. They keep their part of the continuum.

Shemot/Exodus 14:13

13 Moshe said to the people: Do not be afraid! Stand fast and see YHVH'S deliverance which he will work for you today, for as you see Egypt today, you will never see it again

for the ages (ad-'olam אֲד-עוֹלָם)!

Here we see that Moshe tells they will not see the Egyptians ad-'olam for forever which is not because they will live forever but because they will be dead.

Shemot/Exodus 21:6 (4-6)

4 If his master gives him a wife, and she bore him sons or daughters, the wife and those she bore are to remain her master's, and he is to go out by himself. 5 But if the serf should say, yes, say: I love my master, my wife and my children, I will not go out at liberty! 6 his master is to have him approach HaElohim, and then he is to have him approach the door or the post; his master is to pierce his ear with a piercer, and he is to serve him forever (le'olam לְעֹלָם).

Clearly this person will not live forever yet, he will be a slave/servant all his life. So this shows us another example where olam is not without ending.

Shemot/Exodus 27:21

21 Aaron and his sons shall set them up in the Tent of Meeting, outside the curtain which is over [the Ark of] the Pact, [to burn] from evening to morning before YHVH. It shall be a **due** from the Israelites **for all time (chuqat 'olam – statue for all times)**, throughout the ages.

21 In the Tent of Appointment, outside the curtain that is over the Testimony, Aharon and his sons are to arrange it, from sunset until daybreak before the presence of YHVH- a

law for the ages, throughout your generations (chuqat 'olam ledorotam חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדוֹרוֹתָם), on the part of the Children of Israel.

Here we see this lighting of the Menorah was to be done as a practice through generation and the effect was it was to be kept for all time or a long unknown time. Clearly, no one can claim they lived forever.

Shemot/Exodus 28:43 (42-43)

42 You are to make them breeches of linen to cover the flesh of nakedness; from the hips to the thighs are they to extend. 43 They are to be on Aharon and on his sons, whenever they come into the Tent of Appointment or whenever they approach the slaughter-site to attend at the Holy-shrine, that they do not bear iniquity and die **-a law for the ages (chuqat 'olam חֻקַּת עוֹלָם)**, for him and for his seed after him.

Here we see like the previous verses the chuqat olam is a practice for all time. However, they did not live forever to accomplish this just generation after generation.

Shemot/Exodus 29:9

9 you are to gird them with a sash, Aharon and his sons, and are to wind caps for them. It shall be for them as priestly-right, **a law for the ages** (lechuqqat ‘olam לְחֻקַּת עוֹלָם). So you are to give-mandate to Aharon and to his sons:

Just like before this a practice for them to keep generation to generation.

Shemot/Exodus 31:15 -17

15 For six days is work to be made, but on the seventh day (is) Sabbath, Sabbath-ceasing, holiness for YHVH, whoever makes work on the Sabbath day is to be put-to-death, yes, death! 16 The Children of Israel are to keep the Sabbath, to make the Sabbath-observance **throughout their generations as a covenant for the ages** (ledorotam beriyt ‘olam לְדֹרוֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם); 17 between me and the Children of Israel **a sign it is, for the ages** (ot hiv le’olam אֹת הוּא לְעוֹלָם), for in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, but on the seventh day he ceased and paused-for-breath.

Here we see again the Shabbat is a covenant for all time and kept by generations. As a sign it is kept by the generations. Thus, it is for all time but the people are not for all time.

Shemot/Exodus 40:15 (12-15)

12 You shall bring Aaron and his sons forward to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with the water. 13 Put the sacral vestments on Aaron, and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may serve Me as priest. 14 Then bring his sons forward, put tunics on them, 15 and anoint them as you have anointed their father, that they may serve Me as priests. This their anointing shall serve them for **everlasting** (‘olam – **for all times**) priesthood throughout the ages.

12 You are to bring-near Aharon and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Appointment, you are to wash them with water, 13 and you are to clothe Aharon in the garments of holiness; you are to anoint him, you are (thus) to hallow him, to be-priest to me, 14 and his sons you are to bring-near, you are to clothe them in coats, 15 and are to anoint them as you anointed their father, that they may be-priests for me; that shall become for them-their being-anointed-**priesthood for the ages, throughout their generations** (lik’hunat olam le dorotam לְכַהֲנֵת עוֹלָם לְדֹרוֹתָם).

If this as literally forever then should there be a priesthood be active today. Or was this anointing to designate them and their sons after them as Priests for each generation over the stretches of time.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 3:17, 6:11, 7:34

3:17 **a law for the ages, into your generations (chuqqat olam ledoroteykhem חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם)**, throughout all your settlements: any fat, any blood, you are not to eat!

6:11 Any male among the Children of Aharon may eat it, (as) **an allotment for the ages, throughout your generations (chaq-olam ledoroteykhem חֻק-עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם)**,

from the fire-offerings of YHVH; whatever touches it becomes holy (property).

7:34 For the breast of the elevation-offering and the thigh of the contribution, I take from the Children of Israel, from their slaughter-offerings of shalom, and I give them to Aharon the priest and to his sons, **as an allotment for the ages (lechaq-olam לְחֻק-עוֹלָם)**, from the Children of Israel.

In all three of these we see things that are given a due or practice for olam. Yet, no one would say these are indication anyone lived forever.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 17:7

7 that they may slaughter no longer their slaughter-offerings to the hairy (goat-demons) after whom they go whoring. **A law for the ages (chuqqat olam חֻקַּת עוֹלָם)** shall this be for them, throughout their generations.

Again, this is showing a practice to be continued in perpetuity but not that one will live forever doing it.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 24:3, 8, 9 (3-9)

2 Command the Children of Israel, that they take you oil of olives, clear, beaten, for lighting, to draw up lampwicks, regularly. 3 Outside the Curtain of the Testimony, in the Tent of Appointment, Aharon is to arrange it, from sunset to daybreak, before the presence of YHVH, regularly- **a law for the ages, throughout your generations**

(chuqqat olam ledoroteykha חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם). 4 On the pure lampstand

he is to arrange the lampwicks, before the presence of YHVH, regularly. 5 You are to take flour and are to bake it (into) twelve loaves, two tenth-measures shall be the one loaf; 6 you are to put them (into) two arranged-rows, six per row, on the pure table, before the presence of YHVH. 7 And you are to place on (each) row clear frankincense, it shall be for the bread as a reminder-portion, a fire-offering to YHVH. 8 Sabbath day (by) Sabbath day he is to arrange it before the presence of YHVH, regularly, from the

Children of Israel as **a covenant for the ages (beriyt olam בְּרִית עוֹלָם)**. 9 They are to be Aharon's and his sons', they are to eat them in a holy place, for they are a holiest holy-portion for him, from the fire-offerings of YHVH-**an allotment for the ages (chaq-olam חֶק-עוֹלָם)**.

Here we see again olam used to denote a practice in perpetuity but people live for their generation.

Bamidbar/Numbers 25:13 (10-13)

12 Therefore say: Here, I give him my covenant of shalom; 13 it shall be for him and for his seed after him **a covenant of everlasting priesthood (beriyt kehunah olam בְּרִית עוֹלָם כְּהֻנַּת עוֹלָם)** - because that he was zealous for Elohayv and effected-appeasement for the Children of Israel.

Here we have a covenant priesthood for all time and yet no one would say Phinehas would live forever.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 5:26

25 And YHVH hearkened to the voice of your words when you spoke to me, YHVH said to me: I have heard the voice of this people's words that they have spoken to you; it is well, all that they have spoken! 26 Who would give that this heart of theirs would (always) belong to them, to hold me in awe and keep all my commandments, all the days, in order that it might go-well with them and with their children, **for the ages (le'olam לעֲלָם)**!

This does not say they will do these forever only the hope that they would. Elohim knowing that they would not in the future. Here going well with them are all the blessings promised for obedience.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 12:28

28 Take-care to hearken to these words that I command you, in order that it may go-well with you and with your children after you, **into the ages (ad-olam עַד-עוֹלָם)**, that you may do what is good and what is right in the eyes of YHVH Eloheykha.

Ad is until as we will see later and with olam its like saying until forever. So until you get to end of time? So here it is saying that is will go well you and your children. Nowhere does it indicate this is a hint at eternal life.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 23:4,7 (3-7)

4 No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of YHVH; none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation, **shall ever ('olam - for all times)** be admitted into the congregation of YHVH, 5 because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey after you left Egypt, and because they hired Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Aram- naharaim, to curse you.—6 But YHVH Eloheykha refused to heed Balaam; instead, YHVH Eloheykha turned the curse into a blessing for you, for YHVH Eloheykha loves you.—7 You shall never concern yourself with their welfare or benefit **as long as you live (kal-yameykha la'olam – all you days to for all times).**

3 A mamzer is not to enter the assembly of YHVH; even (to) the tenth generation no one from him is to enter the assembly of YHVH. 4 An Ammonite or a Moabite is not to enter the assembly of YHVH; even to the tenth generation no one from them is to enter the assembly of YHVH, **for the ages (ad-olam עַד-עוֹלָם)**, 5 on account that they did not greet you with food and with water on the way, at your going-out from Egypt, and because he hired against you Bil'am son of Be'or from Petor, (in) Aram Of-the-Two-Rivers, to curse you. 6 But YHVH Eloheykha was not willing to hearken to Bil'am, and YHVH Eloheykha turned for you the curse into a blessing, for YHVH Eloheykha loves you. 7 You are not to seek their peace or their well-being, **all your days, for the ages (kal-yameykha le'olam כַּל-יָמֵיכָּד לְעוֹלָם)!**

This case is one where the Amoni or Moavi is to be allowed into the qahal YHVH or the assembled of Yisrael who gather for YHVH. This is for all time.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 32:7, 40

39 See, then, that I, I am He; There is no Elohim beside Me. I deal death and give life; I wounded and I will heal: None can deliver from My hand. 40 Lo, I raise My hand to heaven And say: As I live **forever (la'olam – to for all times),**

7 Regard **the days of ages-past** (yamot ‘olam יָמוֹת עוֹלָם), understand **the years of generation and generation** (shenot dor-vador שְׁנוֹת דּוֹר-וָדוֹר) (ago); ask your father, he will tell you, your elders, they will declare it to you:

Here we see that olam to designate a period going into the past. A long time past but not stated as forever past. This is linked to years of generations past. It shows that olam is not always future eternal or forever.

39 See now that I, I am he, there is no Elohim beside me; I myself bring-death, **bestow-life** (va’ochayeh וְאַחֵיָהּ), I wound and I myself heal, and there is from my hand no rescuing! 40 For I lift up my hand to the heavens, and say: **As I live, for the ages-** (chay anokhi le’olam חַי אֲנֹכִי לְעוֹלָם)

Here YHVH states he causes life. This is normal life not chayim olam or as some would state eternal life. Whereas, YHVH states as he lives forever. Clearly, there is no doubt that YHVH is eternal.

Devarim/Deuteronomy 33:15

15 And from the tops of the ancient hills, from the excellence of **the age-old mountains** (giv’ot olam גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם),

We see that again referring to the hills as age old which as we have earlier that hills don’t last for all time.

Joshua/Yehoshuah 24:2

2 Then Joshua said to all the people, “Thus said YHVH, the Elohim of Israel: **In olden times** (me’olam מֵעוֹלָם), your forefathers—Terah, father of Abraham and father of Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and worshiped other Elohims.

Here we see that olam is being used again for a past time once more.

Melekhim Aleph/I Kings 1:31

31 Bathsheba bowed low in homage to the king with her face to the ground, and she said, “**May my adoni King David live forever** (yechiy adoniy hamelekh David le’olam

יְחִי אֲדֹנָי הַמֶּלֶךְ דָּוִד לְעוֹלָם:”

Here we see the same useage in Hebrew of chay le'olam as in Bereshit 3:22 and do you think Bathsheva is telling David to have eternal life?

Mish lei/Proverbs 22:28

28 Do not remove the **ancient boundary stone** (gevul 'olam גְבוּל עוֹלָם) That your ancestors set up.

Here the markers are olam in the past.

Mish lei/Proverbs 23:10

10 Do not remove **ancient boundary stone** (gevul 'olam גְבוּל עוֹלָם); Do not encroach upon the field of orphans,

As is this verse the same as the previous verse.

Koholet/Ecclesiastes 1:4, 10

4 **One generation goes, another comes** (dor hilekh vedor דֹּר הַלֵּךְ וְדֹר), But the earth abides [to] **forever** (le'olam omadet לְעוֹלָם עֹמֶדֶת).

This verse is interesting in that generations come and go and the earth stays the same for all time. However, we know this is not necessarily that the earth will be eternally alive since in time a new one will come. Therefore, olam is not forever but in comparison to life of the man it lasts longer.

10 Sometimes there is a phenomenon of which they say, "Look, this one is new!"—it occurred long since, **in ages** (le'olamim לְעוֹלָמִים) that went by before us.

Again olam used in a past time.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 26:4

4 Trust in YHVH **for ever(adey) and ever ('ad)**, For in Yah, YHVH you have an **everlasting ('olameym) Rock**.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 44:7

6 Thus said YHVH, the King of Israel, Their Redeemer, YHVH of Hosts: I am the first and I am the last, And there is no Elohim but Me. 7 Who like Me can announce, Can foretell it—and match Me thereby? Even as I told the future to **an ancient people** (**‘am-‘olam עַם-עוֹלָם**), So let him foretell coming events to them. 8 Do not be frightened, do not be shaken! Have I not from of old predicted to you? I foretold, and you are My witnesses. Is there any Elohim, then, but Me? “There is no other rock; I know none!”

Again olam used for a past period.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 46:9

9 Bear in mind what happened **of old** (**me’olam מֵעוֹלָם**); For I am Elohim, and there is none else, I am divine, and there is none like Me. 10 I foretell the end from the beginning, And from the start, things that had not occurred. I say: My plan shall be fulfilled; I will do all I have purposed.

Here YHVH reminds us that he has been from times old.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 58:12

12 Men from your midst shall rebuild **ancient ruins** (**har’vot ‘olam חֲרָבוֹת עוֹלָם**), You shall restore foundations laid long ago. And you shall be called “Repairer of fallen walls, Restorer of lanes for habitation.”

Old ruins or Har’vot Olam is again stating something from the past.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 63:11,12

11 Then they remembered the **ancient days** (**yamey-‘olam יָמֵי-עוֹלָם**), ~~His~~ [Moseh his people], ~~who pulled His people out [of the water]:~~ “Where is He who brought them up from the Sea Along with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put In their midst His holy spirit,

Again the Days of old.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 18:15,16

15 Yet My people have forgotten Me: They sacrifice to a delusion: They are made to stumble in their ways—**The ancient paths** (**badarekheyhem sheviyley ‘olam**

בְּדַרְכֵיהֶם שְׁבִילֵי עוֹלָם)—And to walk instead on byways, On a road not built

up. 16 So their land will become a desolation, An object of hissing **for all time** ('**olam** עולם). Every passerby will be appalled And will shake his head.

Thus, the people have forgotten the old ways of living and have left the way of YHVH. They will be a object of scorn for a long time. We know it is not forever since we know they will be brought back to the land.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 37:24-28

24 [and] My servant David shall be king over them; there shall be one shepherd for all of them. They shall follow My rules and faithfully obey My laws. 25 Thus they shall remain in the land which I gave to My servant Jacob and in which your fathers dwelt; they and their children and their children's children shall dwell there **forever** (**ad-'olam**

עד-עולם), with My servant David as their prince (ruler) **for all time** (**le'olam**

לעולם). 26 I will make a **covenant of friendship** Shalom (**Beriyt Shalom** ברית

ברית עולם) with them—it shall be an everlasting covenant (**barit 'olam** ברית עולם)

with them—I will establish them and multiply them, **and I will place My Sanctuary among them forever** (**venattiy et-miq'dash betokhem le'olam**

וְנִתַּתִּי אֶת־מִקְדָּשִׁי בְּתוֹכְכֶם לְעוֹלָם). 27 My Presence shall rest over them; I will be their Elohim and they shall be My people. 28 And when My Sanctuary abides among them **forever** (**le'olam** לעולם), the nations shall know that I YHVH do sanctify Israel.

We can see from these that olam can mean a time stretching into the future or into the past. It designated something old and something established as long lasting or something to last a long time in the future. Only with YHVH Elohim does eternal really fit since he has no end and no beginning.

The Verb 'Alam (Ayin-lamed-mem sofit) and is reference number 5965. It is found on page 943 in the NEHC and page 761 in the BDB. It is used to describe something hid.

Tehillim/Psalms 90:8

8 You have set our iniquities before You, **our hidden** ('**alumenu** עֲלֻמֵּנוּ) sins in the light of Your face.

One way alam is know is hidden or secret. In this case the suffix nu makes it "our".

Vayiqra/Leviticus 4:13

13 If it is the whole community of Israel that has erred **and the matter escapes** (vene'elam וְנֶעְלַם) the notice of the congregation, so that they do any of the things which by YHVH's commandments ought not to be done, and they realize their guilt

Here we see this in error committed and it is not noticed or is hidden.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 5:2, 3, 4

2 Or when a person touches any unclean thing—be it the carcass of an unclean beast or the carcass of unclean cattle or the carcass of an unclean creeping thing—and the fact has **escaped** (vene'elam וְנֶעְלַם) him, and then, being unclean, he realizes his guilt;

3 Or when he touches human uncleanness—any such uncleanness whereby one becomes unclean—and, though he has known it, the fact has **escaped** (vene'elam וְנֶעְלַם) him, but later he realizes his guilt;

4 Or when a person utters an oath to bad or good purpose—whatever a man may utter in an oath—and, though he has known it, the fact has **escaped** (vene'elam וְנֶעְלַם) him, but later he realizes his guilt in any of these matters—

So from these verses we see that Olam, as related to Alam, would have the meaning of a immeasurable or unknowing into the future or the past. As such one might use the word forever, since in the unknown time one would not see an end. Yet there is an end since we see that hills do end, and men didn't always exist in the past.

So let's look at some related words to Olam and how they fit into this idea of forever.

Netzach (Nun-Tsadie-Chet) which is a masculine noun and found as reference number 5331. You can find this in the NEHC on page 835 and in the BDB on page 664. It is from the verb natzach.

Shemu'el Bet/II Samuel 2:26

26 Abner then called out to Joab, “Must the sword devour **forever** (holanetsach הֲלֹנָצַח)? You know how bitterly it's going to end! How long will you delay ordering your troops to stop the pursuit of their kinsmen?”

The verb of natzach is to oversee or excel and can mean “unending”. Thus while it is similar it is not the same as ‘olam/alam.

Tehillim/Psalms 44:24

24 Rouse Yourself; why do You sleep, YHVH? Awaken, do not reject us **forever**

(lanetzach לְנֶצַח)!

Here again we see it used as unending.

Tehillim/Psalms 49:10-11

10 Shall he live **eternally (lanetzach לְנֶצַח)**, and never see the grave? 11 For one sees that the wise die, that the foolish and ignorant both perish, leaving their wealth to others.

He we see this as one living unending as a rhetorical question. The answer is no to verse 10.

Tehillim/Psalms 74: 1,3,10

1 A maskil of Asaph.

Why, O Elohim, do You **forever (lanetzach לְנֶצַח)** reject us, do You fume in anger at the flock that You tend? 2 Remember the community You made Yours long ago, Your very own tribe that You redeemed, Mount Zion, where You dwell.

3 Bestir Yourself because of the **perpetual (netzach נֶצַח)** tumult, all the outrages of the enemy in the sanctuary.

10 Till when, O Elohim, will the foe blaspheme, will the enemy **forever (lanetzach לְנֶצַח)** revile Your name?

Here we see again this is unending. Something that might seem like forever and yet will end.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 25:8

8 **He will destroy death forever** (bila hamavet lanetzach בִּלְעַ הַמּוֹת לְנֶצַח). My YHVH Elohim will wipe the tears away From all faces And will put an end to the reproach of His people Over all the earth—For it is YHVH who has spoken.

We see that other than in Yeshayahu it is unending which is like forever. Here bila is swallow, cover, or consume. So “The Death” not all death is swallowed unending. Death still occurs but this is one is made to go away.

So here we see another word which appears to use the English word forever. Yet, what does the Hebrew verb tell us about its meaning. We will see it is unending or in some cases to excel as in to oversee.

Natzach (Nun-Tsadie-Chet) which is a verb and found as reference number 5329. You can find this in the NEHC on page 834 and in the BDB on page 663.

Ezra 3:8, 9

8 In the second year after their arrival at the House of Elohim, at Jerusalem, in the second month, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brother priests and Levites, and all who had come from the captivity to Jerusalem, as their first step appointed Levites from the age of twenty and upward **to supervise**

(lenatztzeach לְנֶצַח) the work of the House of YHVH. 9 Jeshua, his sons and brothers, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together were appointed **in charge**

(lenatztzeach לְנֶצַח) of those who did the work in the House of Elohim; also the sons of Henadad, their sons and brother Levites.

Here you can see that these were ones who oversaw.

Divrei HaYamin Aleph/I Chronicles 15:21

21 also Mattithiah, Eliphalehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, with lyres **to lead** (lenatztzeach לְנֶצַח) on the sheminith;

Again in this verse we see latzach as the verb form used to those who oversee.

Divrei HaYamin Aleph/I Chronicles 23:4

4 of these there were 24,000 **in charge** (lenatztzeach לְנֶצַח) of the work of the House of YHVH, 6,000 officers and magistrates,

This again shows those who oversee.

Divrei HaYamin Bet/II Chronicles 34:12

12 The men did the work honestly; over them were appointed the Levites Jahath and Obadiah, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of Kohath, **to supervise (lenatztzeach לְנִצְּחַת)**; while other Levites, all the master musicians,

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 8:5

Why is this people—Jerusalem—rebellious, **With a persistent (nitzzachat נִצְּחַת) rebellion?** They cling to deceit, They refuse to return.

You can see from these it has the meaning of something, which is overseen. The other ways this was used to be in charge or lead. In the Niphal form as seen in Yermiyahu, it is also used to designate something as ongoing. So the word netzach would be something also set forward as done continually or perpetually.

The next word we will look at is ‘Ad which in the first part is used as a masculine noun. ‘Ad (Ayin-Dalet) is reference number 5703 and found in the BDB on page 723 and in the NEHC on page 901. It is from the verb ‘adah.

Shemot/Exodus 15:18

18 YHVH will reign **for ever and ever (le’olam va’ed לְעֹלָם וָעֶד)**!

Here the ad is used to add emphasis that YHVH will reign always.

Bamidbar/Numbers 24:20

20 He saw Amalek and, taking up his theme, he said: A leading nation is Amalek; But its fate is to perish **forever (adey אֲדַיְיָ)**.

Here we see it used to express the idea of ever perishing.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 30:8

8 Now, Go, write it down on a tablet And inscribe it in a record, That it may be with them for future days, A witness **forever (la’ad ad-‘olam לְעֵד עַד-עוֹלָם)**.

A witness for ever, ever for all time.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 64:8

8 Be **not implacably** (ad-meod אַד־מְעֹד) angry, YHVH, **Do not** remember iniquity **forever** (ve'al-la'ad אֲלֵ־לְאֵד). Oh, look down to Your people, to us all!

Here we see expressed ad used to express that Elohim “not ever exceedingly angry” and “not for ever or always”

The next word we will look at is ‘Ad which in the second part is used as preposition, adverb and participle. ‘Ad (Ayin-Dalet) is reference number 5704 and found in the BDB on page 723 and in the NEHC on page 901-902. It is from the verb ‘adah.

Bereshit/Genesis 3:19

19 By the sweat of your brow Shall you get bread to eat, **Until** (‘ad אַד) you return to the ground—For from it you were taken. For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

Here we see ‘ad used to designate until something happens.

Bereshit/Genesis 8:5

5 The waters went on diminishing **until** (‘ad אַד) the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first of the month, the tops of the mountains became visible.

Again we see it used for until something happens.

Bereshit/Genesis 13:15

15 for I give all the land that you see to you and your offspring **forever** (‘ad-‘olam אֲד־עוֹלָם).

Here is it used to show until for all times or until olam. This given of Avram the Land of Canaan was later contingent upon his descendant’s obedience to YHVH. While promised to Avram it still had condition as it does today.

Vayiqra/Leviticus 23:14,16

14 Now bread or parched-grain or groats, you are not to eat, **until that same day** (‘ad-‘etzsem hayom אֲד־עֶצֶם הַיּוֹם), **until you have brought the near-offering** (‘ad

hoviyochem et-qar'ban אֶת־קִרְבַּןְךָ (עַד הַבִּיאָכֶם) of your Elohim- (it is) a law for the ages, into your generations, throughout all your settlements.

16 until the morrow of the seventh Sabbath ('ad mimchotat hashabbat hashavi'it אֶת־מִמְחֹתַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִית) you are to number-fifty days, then you are to bring-near a grain-gift of new-crops to YHVH.

Until something happens is used for this verses also.

We see from these that 'Ad can denote "until", "even to". Thus when used with the earlier word 'Olam it is emphasizing the time period. Like saying to this time and even more.

The next word we will look at is 'Adah which is a verb. 'Ad (Ayin-Dalet-Hey) is reference number 5710 and found in the BDB on page 723, 725 and in the NEHC on page 902. It is from the verb 'adah.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 23:40

40 Moreover, they sent for men to come from afar, [men] to whom a messenger was sent; and they came. For them, [Oholibah,] you bathed, painted your eyes, **and donned your finery** (ve'adiyt ediy וְעִדִּית עֲדִי);

You don or add your finery or added on objects. After all Ediy is also from the verb adah.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 16:11, 13

11 [**and**] **I decked you out in finery** (va'e'dekh ediy וְאַעֲדֶיךָ עֲדִי) and put bracelets on your arms and a chain around your neck.

13 **You adorned** (vata'diy וְתַעֲדִי) yourself with gold and silver, and your apparel was of fine linen, silk, and embroidery. Your food was choice flour, honey, and oil. You grew more and more beautiful, and became fit for royalty.

It is the same for these verses also. The adding on of jewels is in direct relation to why I see ad from adah as a adding on of time when using olam.

Yermiyahu/Jeremiah 4:30

30 And you, who are doomed to ruin, What do you accomplish by wearing crimson, **By decking yourself** (kiy ta'diy כִּי־תַעְדִּי) in jewels of gold, By enlarging your eyes with kohl? You beautify yourself in vain: Lovers despise you, They seek your life!

Again the same usage here. This is continuing the same usage but now lets look at an opposition usage.

Mish lei/Proverbs 25:20

20 **Disrobing** (ma'odeh מַעֲדָה) on a chilly day, Like vinegar on natron, Is one who sings songs to a sorrowful soul.

We can see from these that indeed adah is an adding to something. So we see that ad is also an adding to something and in the case of the unmeasurable time period that is expressed by olam. Le'olam va'ed is like saying to for a long time plus more. We can see why forever might be a translator's choice for the word as it seems to express it best. Yet, in our examination of the words here show us that olam is not equal to eternity or forever but a time period with out measure or a very very long time.

Daniel 12:2

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some **to everlasting life** (le'chayey olam לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם), and some to shame [and] **everlasting contempt** (le'dir'on olam לְדִרְאוֹן עוֹלָם).

Here in Daniel is the most direct evidence that might support eternal life in the Tanakh. The problem here is that Daniel's dreams tend to be very cryptic and not always literal. If we take the previous study then I would say that Daniel is stating that those who live live such long lives that it appears they live forever. Just as the ones judged as wrong here will last so long their bodies appear to be lasting forever without life of course. The next verse is tied in with the le'dir'on and dera'on.

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 66:24

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be **an abhorring** (dera'on דִּרְאוֹן) unto all flesh.

These are the only two places dera'on is used in the Tanakh. Carcasses are dead without life bodies and therefore we cannot tie an everlasting life of Abhorrence but a judgment death and their bodies slowly consumed while the living look on.

Death after consuming the Death:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 25:8

8 **He will destroy death forever** (bila hamavet lanetzach בִּלְעַם הַמָּוֶת לְנֶצַח). My YHVH Elohim will wipe the tears away From all faces And will put an end to the reproach of His people Over all the earth—For it is YHVH who has spoken.

Here bila is swallow, cover, or consume. So “The Death” not all death is swallowed unending. Death still occurs but this is one it is made to go away. We see this in a verse from later in the chapter of Yeshayahu

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 65:20

20 No more shall there be an infant or graybeard who does not live out his days. He who dies at a hundred years shall be reckoned a youth, and he who fails to reach a hundred Shall be reckoned accursed.

לֹא־יְהִיָּה מִשָּׁם עוֹד עוֹל יָמִים וְזָקֵן אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִמְלֵא אֶת־יָמָיו כִּי
הַנֶּעַר בֶּן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יָמוּת וְהַחוּטָא בֶן־מֵאָה שָׁנָה יִקְלָל:

Here we see that in the future men will be living long lives and a hundred years is considered young to die and cursed. Yet, we will die.

Yechez'qel/Ezekiel 37:11-14

11 And He said to me, “O mortal, these bones are the whole House of Israel. **They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, our hope is gone; we are doomed.’** 12 Prophesy, therefore, and say to them: Thus said YHVH Elohim: I am going to open your graves and lift you out of the graves, O My people, and bring you to the land of Israel. 13 You shall know, O My people, that I am YHVH, when I have opened your graves and lifted you out of your graves. 14 I will put My breath into you and you shall live again, and I will set you upon your own soil. Then you shall know that I YHVH have spoken and have acted”— declares YHVH.

Yechez'qel states that Yisrael will live and be placed upon its land. Whether you see this as literal resurrection or figurative, all of Yisrael and Yehudah will live in the land as flesh and blood not as spirit. The part in highlight above shows bones speaking. This is why I lean towards this being figurative since we know the dead do not speak.

We can see that the only one with eternity here is YHVH. With no start and no finish he is the only one who is forever.

Lastly, there are some who would say that Devarim/Deuteronomy 30:19

19 I call on you this day the heavens and the land/earth, the life and the death choose you for your faces the blessing and the curse and choose you in life for only you shall live, you and your seed. (my translation)

Here we see that nowhere in this verse is anything saying chayim is eternal. Only indicates if we choose life (following his commandments) we will live. In choosing death we accept punishment, exile (death from the land), and cut off from YHVH.

Perfectness or Wholeness of Adam:

There is nothing in the Hebrew that alludes to Adam and Chava eating the fruit of any particular tree except the one they ate from. The only thing it states about them is:

Bereshit/Genesis 1:27

And he made, Elohim, mankind in his image, image of Elohim created his site male and female created them.

וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה בָּרָא אֹתָם:

Bereshit 1:31 only states all he created that day was very good וַהֲיֵה טוֹב מְאֹד vehinneh-tov meod. Not perfect, not eternal. (my translation)

Bereshit/Genesis 2:7

And he formed, YHVH Elohim, the man dust from the earth (Ha'adamah) and he breath in his nostrils breath the lives and he live the man for flesh living. (my translation)

וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה:

It only says he lives not eternal life. Anything else is adding to the text,

Bereshit/Genesis 2:18

And spoke YHVH Elohim not good should be the man (Ha Adam) for him alone, I make not one who helps like his opposite. (my translation)

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים לֹא-טוֹב הָיִית הָאָדָם לְבַדּוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה-לּוֹ עֶזְרָא כְּנֶגְדּוֹ:

If Adam was created whole and perfect there would be no reason to create another for him. He would truly be like Elohim alone.

Bereshit/Genesis 2:21

And he caused, YHVH Elohim, a deep sleep on the man (Ha Adam) and he slept and HE took one from his ribs and he closed flesh he subdued. (my translation)

וַיִּפֹּל יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים תְּרִדְמָה עַל-הָאָדָם וַיִּישָׁן וַיִּקַּח אֶחָת מִצְלָעָתָיו וַיִּסְגֶּר בָּשָׂר תְּחַתְּנָהּ:

Bereshit 2:22-23 states that the woman was formed and thus for them to be complete they must be together. Completeness in Hebrew is often shown wholeness or perfection. These verses show us that they were neither individually complete nor is there any indication they were created with eternal life.

Nowhere in this paper is olam, ad, natzach used to elicit the idea that this life is anything more than expressing them living in the land of Yisrael. Those who propose any more than “eternal life” this do so only because it fits their paradigm. I will also state that while I do believe in a final judgment and a resurrection, I don’t believe we will have eternal spiritual life or eternal physical lives. We will be resurrected to a physical life and live extremely long lives on our land.