

El Olam - Everlasting God

GOD EVERLASTING
GOD ETERNAL
EL OLAM

First take a moment to worship El Olam, the....

[Lord of Eternity](#)
[by Fernando Ortega](#)

Lord of Eternity
Blessed is the man
Who walks in Your favor
Who loves all Your words
And hides them like treasure
In the darkest place
Of his desperate heart,
They are a light
A strong, sure light.

Sometimes I call out Your name
But I cannot find You.
I look for Your face,
But You are not there.
By my sorrows, Lord,
Lift me to You,
Lift me to Your side.

Lord of Eternity,
Father of mercy,
Look on my fainting soul.
Keeper of all the stars,
Friend of the poorest heart
Touch me and make me whole.

If You are my defender,
Who is against me?
No one can trouble or harm me
If You are my strength .
All I ask, all I desire
Is to live in Your house all my days.
[repeat chorus]

HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE NAMES OF GOD?

In the notes below, we will seek to answer this question specifically for the great Name, **El Olam, Everlasting God** (NB: Emphasis on application is in **bold red and green**). At the outset however, recall that Jesus helps us put the importance of the knowledge of the Names of God in proper perspective, teaching us how we should begin our prayers in Mt 6:9KJV-note...

Our Father Who art in Heaven Hallowed be Thy Name

There it is! God's Name is to be **hallowed**, to be sanctified, to be consecrated, to be made (considered) holy, to be set apart (not just in our head but in our heart, in our lives of loving, Spirit filled obedience!). And so by focusing on God's Great and Glorious Names is

ever how we are to begin our prayers, our petitions, our supplications, our requests, our cries for assistance! And so we must know what God teaches about His Great Name. For this reason we must study in depth the Names of God, not just knowing the Names "superficially" (e.g., knowing a specific title such as **Jehovah Jireh**, as excellent as that title is) but knowing His Names intimately, "Biblically" knowing **how** and **why** God chose to reveal them and **what** impact His self revelation had on the saints to whom they were revealed and continues to have on our lives today.

J C Ryle said it this way...

By the "**name** of God we mean all those attributes through which He is revealed to us—His power, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy and truth. By asking that they may be "**hallowed**," we mean that they may be made known and glorified. The glory of God is the first thing that God's children should desire. It is the object of one of our Lord's own prayers: "**Father, glorify** (aorist imperative) **Your Name!**" (John 12:28). It is the purpose for which the world was created; it is the end for which the saints are called and convened (See Piper's sermon [God Created Us For His Glory](#)): it is the chief thing we should seek—"that in all things God may be praised (glorified through Jesus Christ)" (1Pe 4:11-note).

As the **Psalms** declare...

May **His Name** endure **forever** (olam); May **His Name** increase as long as the sun shines; and let men bless themselves by Him; Let all nations call Him blessed....And blessed be **His glorious Name forever** (olam); And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen. (Psalm 72:17, 19)

Spurgeon: In its saving power, as the rallying point of believers, and as renowned and glorified, his name shall remain for ever the same. His name shall be continued as long as the sun. While time is measured out by days, Jesus shall be glorious among men. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 72](#))

I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your **Name forever**. (Psalm 86:12)

Spurgeon: In eternity gratitude will prolong its praise. God has never done blessing us, let us never have done blessing Him. As he ever gives us grace, let us ever render to Him the glory of it. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 86](#))

Blessed be the LORD forever!

Amen and Amen.

(Ps 89:52-note)

Therefore we must focus on **God's Great and Glorious Names**, so that we might be able to glorify His Name, so that we might, by His Spirit, be enabled to live in a manner worthy of His Great Name before a watching world in desperate need of a supernatural vision of the invisible God in and through the visible lives of His children (cp Mt 5:16-note, Phil 2:15-note)!

And so we begin at the beginning, focusing on Him Who has no beginning nor end, **EI Olam, the Everlasting God!** When we pray "**Hallowed be Thy Name, EI Olam**" we are acknowledging God as holy, as unlike any other, for there is none other who can claim to be **everlasting!** Enabled by His Spirit, we are choosing to reverence, honor, glorify, and exalt **EI Olam**, the Name which speaks of the eternity of His person and His character. In other words, all of the glorious attributes of **EI Olam** are themselves everlasting! And so for example, His **goodness**, His **longsuffering** and His **faithfulness** (etc) are all from "**everlasting (olam) to everlasting (olam)**" (Ps 41:13-note, Ps 90:2-note). And you could continue this chorus in a wonderful time of worship as you prayerfully recall all the great **Attributes of God** as all existing eternally!

Elmer Towns picks up on the idea of hidden or secret in the derivation of Hebrew word **olam** commenting that...

EI Olam, the Everlasting God, is a secret name for God, hinting at His mysterious nature. The prefix **EI**...is from Elohim ("strong Creator"). **Olam** means time, or age. With a tiny change in the vowel signs in Hebrew, the ancient rabbis spelled it **alam**, "hidden", underscoring the mysterious nature of God. God's everlasting or timeless nature— without beginning or end—is one of the most profound mysteries of His nature....

In teaching young theological students, the rabbis would write "for ever" (**olam**) defectively, rendering it **alam**, "to conceal," thus teaching their students that the name of God was to be concealed....

As **Olam**, God is the Everlasting One, available to His people throughout the ages. As **Alam**, He remains a mystery and a secret to mere human minds. ([My Father's Names - online recommended resource](#))

Note that the topics exhibit some overlap:

- [\(I\) El Olam is the God of History](#)
- [\(II\) El Olam is Self Existent](#)
- [\(III\) El Olam has Everlasting "Energy"](#)
- [\(IV\) El Olam Lives Forever](#)
- [\(V\) El Olam Knows the Beginning from the End](#)
- [\(VI\) El Olam's Ways are Everlasting](#)
- [\(VII\) El Olam Never Changes](#)
- [\(VIII\) El Olam's Covenant is Everlasting](#)
- [\(IX\) El Olam's Lovingkindness is Forever](#)
- [\(X\) El Olam is Jesus Christ](#)
- [\(XI\) El Olam is Our Protector](#)

SYNONYMS FOR "EL OLAM"

God's Name **El Olam** is His self-revelation. Neither Abraham, nor we would not have come to know on our own that God is **everlasting** had He not taught this truth in this great Name! **El Olam** sums up this attribute of His being. God is the...

Everlasting God

Eternal God

God of All Time

God of Ages

The Unchangeable God

The God of Perpetuity

In short, God's Names are all that by which He makes Himself known to men and all that He shows Himself to be. To know God's Name is to know Him in a "supernaturally intimate" way! (cp Jn 17:3) In the ancient world it was especially important to know the name of the deities in order to invoke their presence and obtain help from them (albeit a deceptively futile practice for pagans for there is only One True God Who is able to help!) One of the most famous Biblical encounters is when Moses was confronted by God at the burning bush, and given a commission to deliver Israel from bondage. Moses argued with God, saying that no one would believe him.

Then Moses said to God, "Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you.' Now they may say to me, 'What is His name?' What shall I say to them?" And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" And God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations. (Exodus 3:13-15)

EVERLASTING GOD

[\(Play the Chris Tomlin version\)](#)

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord

We will wait upon the Lord

We will wait upon the Lord (repeat)

Our God, You reign forever

Our hope, our Strong Deliverer

You are the everlasting God
The everlasting God
You do not faint You won't grow weary

You're the defender of the weak
You comfort those in need
You lift us up on wings like eagles

In his excellent exposition of Genesis, **James Montgomery Boice** wrote...

In my library I have a book containing studies of the biblical names for God. A study of the names of God is not unusual in itself, of course. There are many such books. But this book is unusual in that it contains studies of 365 names, one name for every day of the year.

Why are there so many names for God? The world seems to have many ideas of God, but it gets by with one name, the name "God" itself. Christians have one God by many names. Why many?...

The truth of the matter is that the Bible is one book, given by the one true God through human writers, and that the names of God, far from reflecting diverse gods or sources, are actually names given by God Himself to reveal His true nature and attributes. There are many Names for God because God is so great He cannot adequately be described by one Name or even a dozen Names. In fact, even the Names we have do not exhaust Him. They exhaust us—we will be able to spend an eternity learning of their full implications—but they do not exhaust the **Inexhaustible**. ([Genesis: An Expository Commentary, Vol 2 Genesis 12-36 James Montgomery Boice - Baker Books](#))

And so it follows, God reveals Himself to us as fallen men, that we might secure His help, help which is based on His character, His Name! Practically, when we find ourselves in need of help (which is most of the time whether or not we admit it or recognize it!) we should begin our plea by focusing on God's Names—we'll never exhaust the list!

THE FIRST REVELATION OF GOD AS EL OLAM: EVERLASTING GOD

Genesis 21:33 is the first revelation of this Name.

Genesis 21:22 Now it came about at that time that Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do; 23 now therefore, swear to me here by God that you will not deal falsely with me or with my offspring or with my posterity, but according to the kindness that I have shown to you, you shall show to me and to the land in which you have sojourned." 24 Abraham said, "I swear it." 25 But Abraham complained to Abimelech because of the well of water which the servants of Abimelech had seized. 26 And Abimelech said, "I do not know who has done this thing; you did not tell me, nor did I hear of it until today." 27 Abraham took sheep and oxen and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made (cut) a **covenant** (beriyth). 28 Then Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves. 29 Abimelech said to Abraham, "What do these seven ewe lambs mean, which you have set by themselves?" 30 He said, "You shall take these seven ewe lambs from my hand so that it may be a witness to me, that I dug this well." 31 Therefore he called that place Beersheba, because there the two of them took an oath. 32 So they made (cut) a **covenant** (beriyth) at Beersheba; and Abimelech and Phicol, the commander of his army, arose and returned to the land of the Philistines. 33 Abraham planted a [tamarisk tree \(Tamarix aphylla\)](#) at Beersheba, and there he **called on the Name (Ed: He worshipped)** of the **LORD**, the **Everlasting God** (El Olam). 34 And Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines for many days.

Elmer Towns comments that...

By calling on God as El Olam, Abraham was calling on the One Who is always and eternally available to us....People today need just such a God as the eternal, unchangeable Lord, El Olam.

Why was God called the Everlasting God at Beer-sheba, instead of somewhere else? Some have suggested that this is the place where Abraham first exercised squatters rights in the Promised Land. Giving Abraham and his descendants the land of Palestine was a part of the “everlasting [olam] covenant” that God had made with Abraham (17:7). When Abraham dug a well and possessed Beer-sheba, it was an act of faith in God's eternal promise. In calling Jehovah El Olam, Everlasting God, Abraham was expressing faith in the God of the everlasting covenant. There is mystery or hiddenness (alam) here, too: It is a mystery that Abraham had faith enough to see the well of Beer-sheba as a down payment on the future kingdom.

Place of Availability - By calling on God as El Olam, Abraham was calling on the One who is always and eternally available to us. To use modern theological language, he called upon the omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God—the God who is eternally changeless. People today need just such a God as the eternal, unchangeable Lord, El Olam. We call on Him because “thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses...have been ever [olam] of old” (Ps. 25:6). David also said that “the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations” (100:5). El Olam means “the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children” (103:17).

Place of Protection - Thus, when Abraham called upon El Olam at Beer-sheba, he was asking God to protect his well not only as long as Abimelech lived; he sought long-term protection as well. Prior to this event, God had given Abraham immediate help according to his daily need. When he needed protection, wisdom or peace, God was there. But when Abraham calls on El Olam, he is calling for God to protect the Promised Land from the enemies of Abraham's descendants after he died. Abraham wanted Beer-sheba and the Promised Land to be his family inheritance forever.

Place of Mystery - Others see the hidden (alam) God at Beer-sheba. They point out that since the future was hidden (alam) from Abraham, he called on the name of the God who can mysteriously see into future ages (olam). As the apostle Paul teaches, these Old Testament events were shadows or types of what was to come in Christ. For example, the birth of Isaac of a “free woman” and Abraham's rejection of the “son of the bondmaid” is a picture of God's dealing with the Jews and later with the Gentiles (see Gal. 4:22-30). Since these things are done in mystery—i.e., their fulfillment awaits a dispensation (olam) yet to be revealed—they are in the hands of El Olam, the God of secrets and mysteries.

This connection between eternity or age, and mystery, is seen in the way Paul related the idea of a dispensation to mystery:

If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery ...Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit (Eph. 3:2, 5).

“**Forever**” and “**hiddenness**” are also linked in the Old Testament laws of bondservants. If a slave who was about to go free loved his master and wanted to stay in his service, the law provided that the servant's ear could be pierced with an awl, as a symbol of his choice. It was a sign that he should serve his master “for ever” (olam, Exod. 21:6; Lev. 25:46 indicates that the servitude was only until the year of Jubilee, showing that olam can mean a specific period as well as “everlasting”). In such cases, perhaps God had a secret plan for the slave who made this special commitment.

Similarly, when Hannah gave her child Samuel to the Lord, she said,

“I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever” (1 Sam. 1:22).

By this she meant, “as long as he liveth, he shall be lent to the LORD” (v. 28). As it turned out, God had a secret plan for Samuel to carry out in leading Israel to greatness.

The word olam is also used to describe a former time. Joshua told his people,

“Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time” (olam, Josh. 24:2).

He did not mean they dwelt there forever, but for a certain time within God's purpose. The word can also refer to this present world, as when the psalmist says, “These are the ungodly, who prosper in the world” (olam, Ps. 73:12), meaning they prospered in this present age or in this lifetime. In these references, olam simply expresses the purpose of God in time and does not mean without limits. It shows that God has a purpose in

time that is not yet known-it is a mystery. El Olam is "God who has His own purpose in time," or, the "God of this time." It implies that God is working His will behind the scenes, and that His purpose will eventually be completed.

We have seen that the name Jehovah is taken from the verb Hayah, which means "I am that I am." Jehovah is the God of the present tense. El Olam is the everlasting God, the God of the future, who "will be what I will be."

The New Testament application of El Olam is found in Ephesians 3:8, where Paul speaks of "the unsearchable riches of Christ." God has a secret purpose that we do not know, but it is rich and full of grace. Paul describes how this secret is revealed, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God" (Eph 3:10). Only in the New Testament do we see the full explanation of the eternal plan of El Olam, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph 3:11). ([My Father's Names - online recommended resource](#))

Abraham's life was punctuated by a number of **trees** - His first stopping place in Canaan (Shechem) was by a tree (Ge 12:6). Later he built an altar by a tree at Mamre (Ge 13:18). He lived near trees (Ge 14:13), and entertained Yahweh under a tree (Ge 18:1). Now in Genesis 21:33, he plants a tree.

The [tamarisk tree](#) is a long lived, **evergreen**, a fitting symbol of the covenant Abraham made with Abimelech. In Zech 3:10 dwelling under one's tree was a sign of peaceful security. These trees also required a supply of water and thus this act by Abraham indicated the fact that he was secure concerning his right to that parcel of land and had faith that God would provide water in what was otherwise a desert like area. The tree would also function as a *marker* of one of Abraham's sites of worship and as a memorial or memory aid to the acts of God. Yes the covenant Abraham made with a man (Abimelech) which secured the land he was to sojourn on, was but a reflection of the everlasting covenant God had made with him and in which He promised Abraham the land on which he sojourned for many days (Ge 21:34). Have you ever "marked" sites where you have worshipped God in a special way (or recorded such a time in your journal as a reminder)?

Keil on the tamarisk tree: The planting of this long-lived tree, with its hard wood, and its long, narrow, thickly clustered, evergreen leaves, was to be a type of the ever-enduring grace of the faithful covenant God.

Constable adds that the tamarisk tree...

was an appropriate symbol of the enduring grace of the faithful God Whom Abraham recognized as "the Everlasting God" (El Olam). (Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible)

GOD'S PROGRESSIVE SELF-REVELATION

El Olam is one of many Divine Names revealed in Genesis - **El Elyon** (Ge 14:18), **El Roi** (Ge 16:13), **El Shaddai** (Ge 17:1), **El-elohe-Israel** (Ge 33:20), **El-Beth-el** (Ge 35:7). Each Name in God's **progressive revelation** presents a new aspect of truth about His character and attributes.

A W Pink comments on the implications of El Olam: Instead of ceaseless change and decay in all around we see, as now, there shall be fixity, permanence, peace and blessing.

Wycliffe Bible Commentary: The patriarch would soon march off the map of history, but his God, the unchangeable, Eternal One would remain.

Murphy writes that **Everlasting God**

marks Him as the sure and able Performer of His promise, as the everlasting Vindicator of the faith of treaties, and as the infallible Source of the believer's rest and peace. Accordingly Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days. (A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Genesis)

Recall from Ge 23:4 Abraham understood he was "a stranger and a sojourner" in the land God promised him in the Abrahamic Covenant. It is therefore fitting that God's revelation as the Everlasting God who serve as a reminder of the unbreakable, everlasting nature of the covenant God had cut with Abraham. And his worship would also serve as a witness which contrasted with the little, limited, local "deities" of the heathen (including Abimelech), for Abraham's Everlasting God assured promised blessings for all people for all time.

Abraham called on the Name El Olam - Have you ever worshipped God using this Name? As you praise this great Name, recall the many personal benefits you receive because of the fact that He is everlasting (an everlasting covenant, everlasting life, everlasting fellowship with Jesus, etc).

THE PROPER RESPONSE TO REVELATION OF HIS NAME!

Abraham already knew God as **EI Elyon** and **EL Shaddai**, but now God reveals He is **EI Olam**. Abraham's response to this new revelation was to worship.

THOUGHT: When God's Spirit illuminates the Scripture showing us something about God we heretofore did not know or understand, the proper response is to worship! Indeed, progressive revelation (more accurately "progressive illumination" for Biblical revelation is complete in Genesis to Revelation) should be the saints desire and experience - as we go through life (and grow in spiritual maturity) we, like Abraham, should learn more and more about God, so that we might worship Him with a greater awareness and awe even as did the Psalmist David....

(A Psalm of Praise, of David.)
I will extol Thee, my God, O King;
And I will bless Thy Name forever and ever.
Every day I will bless Thee,
And I will praise Thy Name forever and ever.
My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD...
And all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.
Psalm 145:1-2, 21-[note](#)

R Kent Hughes comments that Abraham's...

planting of the (tamarisk) tree was a symbol of fruitfulness and prosperity. Abraham memorialized God as the source of his prosperity. It also demonstrated his rootedness in the land where he indeed stayed "many days." The title "**Everlasting God**" (el olam) as a divine designation is unique in the Bible. Abraham's use of it has to do with the eternal nature of the events in Genesis 20, 21—namely, Isaac's birth and a covenant relationship that is eternal. Abraham's God was the Everlasting One whose will for man cannot be thwarted. This awesome view of God would now inform all of Abraham's dealings. It was this exalted understanding that would be tested in his offering up of Isaac, and that also would help him to stand. (Genesis : Beginning and blessing. Preaching the Word)

Pulpit Commentary...

the everlasting God—literally, the God of eternity (LXX., Vulgate, Onkelos); not in contrast to heathen deities, who are born and die (Clericus), but "as the everlasting Vindicator of the faith of treaties, and as the infallible Source of the believer's rest and peace" (Murphy).

Matthew Henry describes EI Olam as...

The Everlasting God, Who was, before all worlds, and will be, when time and days shall be no more.

W H Griffith-Thomas comments on Abraham's receipt of a special revelation of God...

Abraham now adds on his own account another testimony to his recent experiences. He plants a grove, probably a tamarisk tree, one of the evergreens of the East, and a fit memorial of the perfect peace which he desired between himself, his God, and his fellow-men. But now there came a new revelation of the meaning of his relation to God. In the course of his prayer and communion he learned a new Name of God, and the new Name was no mere additional title, but contained a new truth about God; '**the Everlasting God**' (**EI Olam**). He was thus reminded of God's unchangeableness and his dependableness. This was a distinct advance on his previous knowledge of God as 'Most High' (Ge 14:22), and 'Almighty' (Ge 17:1). Thus, in the course of Abraham's daily life and his faithful attitude to those around him, came fresh mercies and blessings and new experiences of his God....

The unspeakable blessedness of new experiences of God.—A profound satisfaction is realised by the believer as he discovers more and more of the glories of God and His grace. The believer is 'ever learning,' and from the moment of his conversion, **in proportion to his faithful obedience day by day** (see following note for discussion of this vital principle), God becomes better known in all the fulness and manifold variety of His revelation. These new experiences as they come are, however, not merely a matter of personal satisfaction, blessed though that is; they tend to prepare the soul for still greater accomplishments.

(**THOUGHT**) God's revelations are not mere luxuries for personal enjoyment, but are given for the purpose of preparing the soul for fuller service and still clearer testimony for God.

We shall see how this new revelation of God to Abraham was a distinct preparation for a crisis that was to come in his life. It is the same today. God reveals Himself more and more fully in order that we may be more and more thoroughly equipped for greater efforts in the kingdom of God. ([Genesis 21:22-34 The Daily Round](#))

THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE OF... DOING GOD'S WILL KNOWING GOD'S WAYS

Comment: We know that there is no "new revelation" for the Bible represents God's full revelation to man. And yet we also know that as we walk with God through life, we can expect (and should desire) to have a greater spiritual understanding of His character and His ways. But how does this occur? Is it automatic? What part do we play? In John 7 Jesus declared....

"If (the condition) any man is willing to **do** His will, (the promise) he shall **know** of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself." (John 7:17)

Notice the conditional statement - this deals with our responsibility "**to do His will**" or in other words to obey the truth we already know. To say it another way "When God puts a period, don't change it to a question mark!" Remember that the word *obey* (Greek = hupakouo, hupakoe, hupekoos) means "hearing under" with the implication that **sincere doing** will follow **submissive hearing**.

Jesus follows the conditional statement with a promise that we "**shall know of the teaching**." In other words, the Spirit of Truth will illuminate the Word of Truth, opening our minds to see the wonderful Truth in His Word (Ps 119:18, cp Eph 1:16-17-note, Eph 1:18-19-note, Col 1:9-note Col 1:10-note). In short, **obedience** to the truth leads **knowing** the truth. **Obedience** is always the way to **blessing** in the spiritual life. While we will not know God by any new Names as did Abraham, we are promised new understanding of the Names He has already revealed. And so as we walk in obedience, surrendered to and enabled by the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Phil 2:13NLT-note), our Teacher (Jn 16:13, 14, 1Cor 2:12, 13, cp 1Jn 2:20, 27) will be our "Illuminator" of increasing degrees of spiritual knowledge (Cp this pattern in Col 1:10-note).

And don't be deceived by the fact that you are reading these truths about obedience and understanding, for one step forward in obedience is worth years of study about it! And remember, delayed obedience is disobedience --the cost of the latter far outweighs the former!

Oswald Chambers echoed this foundational principle declaring

It is only by **obedience** that we **understand the teaching** of God.

The **Puritan writer Thomas Brooks** agreed writing that

By **obeying** Christ's commands you will gain more than you can give.

Erwin Lutzer...

Obedience to revealed truth guarantees guidance in matters unrevealed.

S D Gordon...

Obedience is the eye of the spirit. Failure to obey dims and dulls the spiritual **understanding**.

Sinclair Ferguson...

Only in **obedience** can we discover the great joy of the will of God.

Dorothy Kerin

Obedience is the key that unlocks the door to every profound spiritual experience.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

One act of obedience is better than one hundred sermons.

ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE NAME EVERLASTING GOD

Warren Wiersbe comments on the Everlasting God...

What an encouragement to know **"the Everlasting God"**! Wells would disappear, trees would be cut down, ewe lambs would grow up and die, altars would crumble, and treaties would perish; but the **Everlasting God** would remain. This Everlasting God had made an **everlasting covenant** with Abraham and his descendants (Ge 17:7, 13, 19), and He had given them the land of Canaan as an **everlasting possession** (Ge 17:8; 48:4). As Abraham faced the coming years, he knew that God would not change and that **"underneath [were] the everlasting arms"** (Deut 33:27-[note](#)).

Waiting (Ge 21:34). The **"many days"** of this verse could mean as much as ten to fifteen years, because Isaac was a young man when he accompanied Abraham to Mount Moriah (Genesis 22). It must have been a peaceful time for Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, and a time of great happiness as they watched their precious son grow up. Little did they know the great test that lay before them, but God was preparing them, and they would be ready. (Be obedient. Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books)

Alexander Maclaren writes...that the Everlasting God is the...

unchanged, unchangeable, inexhaustible Being, (Who) spends, and is unspent; (Who) gives, and is none the poorer; (Who) works, and is never wearied; (Who) lives, and with no tendency to death in His life; (Who) flames with no tendency to extinction in the blaze. (**Ed**: And "Why not?" Because He is Everlasting in every aspect and attribute of His Divine Being!)

William E Wenstrom...

Abraham is worshipping the Lord because he has received another revelation concerning the character and nature of God, namely, that the Lord is faithful and is a God of unconditional love. Abraham responded to the Lord's love and grace in delivering him and his family from Abimelech and promising him the land of Canaan by worshipping Him. "The Everlasting God" is `el `olam literally means, "eternal God" emphasizing Abraham's awareness that although he made a covenant with an earthly king, he recognized that God Himself had made an eternal covenant with him, to give him and his seed all the land of Canaan.

Other revelations of God's Name as "Everlasting"

Ps 135:13 Thy Name, O **Jehovah**, is **everlasting** (olam; KJV = endureth for ever). Thy remembrance, O LORD, throughout all generations.

Spurgeon comments: God's Name is eternal, and will never be changed. His character is immutable; His fame and honour also shall remain to all eternity. There shall always be life in the Name of Jesus, and sweetness and consolation. Those upon whom the Lord's Name is named in verity and truth shall be preserved by it, and kept from all evil, world without end. **Jehovah** is a name which shall outlive the ages, and retain the fulness of its glory and might for ever. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 135](#))

Thy Name, O LORD, endureth for ever.

- 1. As the embodiment of perfection**: God's attributes and glory.
- 2. As the object of veneration**: "Holy and reverend is His name." (Ps 111:9)
- 3. As the cause of salvation**: "For my name's sake", etc.
- 4. As the centre of attraction**: "In His Name shall the Gentiles trust." (Mt 12:21) "Our desire is to the remembrance of thy name." (Isa 26:8) "Where two or three are gathered in my name" (Mt 18:20), etc.
- 5. As a plea in supplication**: "For thy name's sake, pardon" (Ps 25:11), etc. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name." (Jn 16:24)
- 6. As a warrant for action**: "Whatsoever ye do, do all in the name" (Col 3:17), etc.
- 7. As a refuge in tribulation**: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." (Pr 18:10) "I have kept them in Thy name." (Jn 17:12)
- 8. As a mark of glorification**: "I will write upon him the name of my God." (Rev 3:12)
- 9. As a terror to transgressors**: "My Name is dreadful among the heathen." (Mal 1:14)—
W. J

What is the meaning of the Hebrew word translated "everlasting"?

Everlasting is the common Hebrew adjective *olam* (412x) discussed more fully in the [word study below](#).

What is the significance of God's Name as *El Olam*?

I. EL OLAM IS THE GOD OF HISTORY

History is a chronological record of significant events in a nation, in the world, and in each of our individual lives. As the everlasting God, **El Olam**, stands outside of the temporal events of history. Go back as far we might in the history of mankind and the Name *El Olam* teaches that God was still before that time! In fact He is in control of all the events of all time because His nature as everlasting transcends time.

APPLICATION: Since God is everlasting, He can accomplish whatever He wishes, whenever He wishes, or as Solomon writes (see below) "[IN HIS TIME](#)." Since He is everlasting, He transcends time and what appears to us as delay and/or denial, reflects no lack of interest, awareness or ability on His part to intervene in our situation *IN HIS TIME*. Yea, because He is the "time transcendent" Everlasting God, He inspired Solomon to remind us that...

There is an appointed time for everything.
And there is a time for every event under heaven--
A time to give birth, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to tear down, and a time to build up.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to throw stones, and a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing.
A time to search, and a time to give up as lost;
time to keep, and a time to throw away.
A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together;
A time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace....

He has made everything beautiful in His time.
He has also set ETERNITY ([olam](#)) in their heart,
--Solomon

(Ecclesiastes 3:1-11)

([Play the old Maranatha Classic Praise Song: — IN HIS TIME — Make the Lyrics your Prayer today](#))

Thomas Constable commenting on Hab 1:12 ([see discussion below](#)) alludes to God's attribute of eternity writing that...

The Lord's revelation of what He was doing in the prophet's day brought confidence to his heart and praise to his lips. Habakkuk affirmed his belief that Yahweh, his God, the Holy One, was from everlasting. **The implication is that Yahweh is the only true God and that history was unfolding as it was because the God who created history was in charge of events (sovereign).** (Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible)

II. EL OLAM IS

SELF-EXISTENT

If God is **EI Olam**, this signifies He has always been! In other words there is no time when He was not God! This further implies that He is self-existent even as taught in His great Name "I Am" (Ex 3:14). **EI Olam** is uncreated. He needs nothing, for everything is subsumed (encompassed as a component element) in Him.

As **Paul** said at [Areopagus](#)

In Him we live and move and have our being. (Acts 17:28)

And since He is **EI Olam**, we too will **FOREVER** "live and move and have our being" in Him!

THOUGHT: May this truth be a firm foundation for your soul, for Paul warned us that in the "last days difficult times will come. Men will be lovers of self, lovers of money." (2Ti 3:1-2-note) The earth will reel "to and fro like a drunkard" and totter "like a shack for its sins are very great" (Isa 40:24), but those who by grace through faith choose to run into the Strong Tower of the Name (Pr 18:10-note) of EI Olam will be safe (see word study)...not only in time but forever in eternity!

Do you find yourself in difficult circumstances today, even doubting God's capacity to meet your needs? Then meditate on His Name, Everlasting God. The Holy Spirit will use this truth about God (2Cor 3:18-note) to renew your mind (Ro 12:2-note, Eph 4:23-note), and produce peace in your soul (cp Phil 4:8-note, Phil 4:9-note) even in the midst of adversity and affliction.

III.

EL OLAM HAS "EVERLASTING ENERGY"

Isaiah records...

(Isa 40:1-27 Context - Israel was not praising but complaining to Jehovah as if He was unconcerned - Isa 40:27!) Do you not know? Have you not heard? (**Ed:** A [rhetorical](#) questions - here designed to awaken in the hearer a sense of God's greatness and ability to save. **Notice how he chooses to answer doubt with the truth about God, firing off three Names in quick succession....does this not teach us the value of intimately knowing His Names? And note the first Name chosen!**) **The Everlasting God, the LORD** (His covenant keeping Name), **the Creator of the ends of the earth** (Speaks of His **Omnipotence**) does not become weary or tired (KJV = "fainteth not"). His understanding (Speaks of His **Omniscience**) is inscrutable. (Isaiah 40:28)

Comment: Mark it down! God NEVER gets tired! The Everlasting God's "Everlasting Energy" ensures every promise especially **everlasting life** to His children and also **everlasting reproach** to His adversaries (Ps 78:66-note).

THOUGHT: Beloved, we all suffer "setbacks" but EI Olam never does and thus is ever able to help those who cry out in their time of need. (cp Heb 2:18). God knows what we feel and what we fear and as the Everlasting God, He is ever adequate to meet our every need! When we trust ourselves, we inevitably falter, fail and fall. When we jettison self-reliance and surrender wholly to EI Olam (specifically to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ Who now and FOREVER indwells us), He strengthens (endunamoo) us to do what we cannot do in our own strength (cp Phil 4:13-note).

Isaiah 40 is the "Comfort Chapter" (Isaiah 40:1) and in His Name, we see that God is ever able to comfort our weary souls!

Henry Morris (Creationist) comments: The available energy of the creation may decrease, in accordance with the law of entropy, but the power of the Almighty Creator, who imposed that law on His creation because of sin, does not run down.

F B Meyer gives a general exhortation based on Isa 40:28 They (Judah) spoke as though they had never known nor heard some of the most rudimentary facts about the nature and ways of God. "*Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard?*" In our dark hours we should revert to considerations which have been familiar

to us from childhood, but have of late ceased to exert a definite impression.

F B Meyer alerts us to the vital importance of recalling the Truth about God, especially as contained in summary form in His great Names. It therefore behooves us to store up for ourselves a treasure trove of truth regarding His Glorious Names. There may well come a day of relative spiritual darkness, in which we will need to recall truth about God which we have previously stored away. Have you ever performed a systematic study of the Names of God? If not consider doing so for the next several weeks to months using the template of notes available on this website. You will never regret the time you invest in such a worthy endeavor!

THE CREATION WEARS OUT BUT EL OLAM OUR CREATOR NEVER WILL!

W A Criswell adds: God is entirely free from all that is defective and imperfect in man. If He were to grow weary, all nature and every man would fail and drop into nothingness.

David writes that...

Psalm 9:7 But the LORD abides **forever** (olam); He has established His throne for judgment,

Comment: How could God abide forever if He were not the Everlasting God? Notice the message of this psalm...

**The eternity of God—
The comfort of saints,
The terror of sinners.**

Spurgeon: The enduring existence and unchanging dominion of our Jehovah, are the firm foundations of our joy. The enemy and his destructions shall come to a perpetual end, but God and his throne shall endure for ever. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 9](#))

**The eternity of divine sovereignty
yields unfailing consolation.**

IV. EL OLAM LIVES FOREVER

Thomas Carlyle reminds us that...

Time and space are not God, but creations of god: with Him it is the universal here; so it is an everlasting now.

Tillotson explains that...

Eternity is a duration without bounds or limits; now there are two limits of duration, beginning and ending; that which hath always been, is without beginning; that which always shall be, is without ending. But eternity, absolutely taken, comprehends both these, and signifies an infinite duration, which had no beginning, nor shall have any end: so that when we say God is eternal, we mean that He always was, and shall be for ever; that He had no beginning of life, nor shall have any end of days; but that He is "from everlasting to everlasting."

The fact that the **Everlasting God** is "everlasting" is a comforting truth, for it speaks directly to the great fear of all men - the fear of death and what follows that last breath. For those who have placed their faith in Jesus, they can know that they will never die the [second \(eternal\) death](#) because Jesus is **EI Olam** (cp Heb 13:8-note).

As **Jesus** Himself testified...

I am the **resurrection** and the **life** (not a temporal but everlasting, eternal life); he who **believes** in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die (**Ed**: Shall not experience the ["second death"](#)). Do you believe this? (Jn 11:25-26)

'Indeed, I lift up My hand to heaven and say, as I **live forever (olam)** (Deut 32:40)

Psalm 45:6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

Spurgeon: What a glad thing it is that He reigns on a throne which will never pass away, for we need both sovereign grace and eternal love to secure our happiness. Could Jesus cease to reign we should cease to be blessed, and were he not God, and therefore eternal, this must be the case. No throne can endure for ever, but that on which God Himself sitteth. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 45](#))

EVERLASTING GOD... FROM EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING!

Moses "the man of God" (Don't miss that Biblical description! May it provoke each of us to give his/her utmost for His highest!) describes the everlasting aspect of God declaring that...

(A Prayer of Moses the man of God) Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born (came into existence - implies before Creation) or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from **everlasting** (olam) to **everlasting** (olam), You are **God** (elohim)...For a thousand years in Thy sight is like yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (Psalm 90:1-2, 4)

Spurgeon comments: Before those elder giants had struggled forth from nature's womb, as her dread firstborn, the Lord was glorious and self sufficient.... God was, when nothing else was. He was God when the earth was not a world but a chaos, when mountains were not upheaved, and the generation of the heavens and the earth had not commenced. In this **Eternal One** there is a safe abode for the successive generations of men (cp Isa 26:4). If God Himself were of yesterday, He would not be a suitable refuge for mortal men (cp Heb 13:8); if He could change and cease to be God He would be but an uncertain dwelling place for His people. The **eternal** existence of God is here mentioned to set forth, by contrast, the brevity of human life. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 90](#))

Warren Wiersbe: First there were sundials. Then came water clocks, hourglasses and mechanical clocks. Now we have digital clocks and watches that split time into hundredths of a second. Our culture certainly is concerned with time. That's why it's good to read what Moses says:

"Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.... For a thousand years in Thy sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night." (Psalm 90:1,2,4).

It's good to contemplate God's eternity in the light of man's frailty. We are creatures of time, but God is eternal. He is our dwelling place from generation to generation. The eternity we face is in His hands.

The psalmist also tells us that God is faithful. From generation to generation, from everlasting to everlasting, He has been faithful, and He will continue to be faithful. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Ed: Speaks of His everlasting covenant - Ge 17:7). He's the God of individuals, the God of different personalities. He's the One we can trust.

Let Him be God in your life today. When you abide in Him and live for His glory, you are partaking of the eternal. The Bible says, "He who does the will of God abides forever" (1John 2:17).

When you compare time with eternity, you gain a bit of God's perspective. You can incorporate eternal values into this life. You can partake of the eternal by allowing God into your life. Is He your dwelling place? Have you partaken of His faithfulness? ([Prayer, Praise and Promises](#))

Henry Morris writes: To the skeptical question as to who made God, the only answer that satisfies all the facts of both science and human reason is that God is "from everlasting." He is the Creator of time as well as space and all things that exist in time and space. This is beyond our mental comprehension, but there is no other rational explanation for our existence, and it is surely compatible with the intuitions of our spiritual comprehension. God satisfies the heart regardless of difficulties conjured in the mind.

David Dickson: Thou art from **everlasting to everlasting** the same unchangeable God in purpose and affection toward us thy people, and so Thou art our God from everlasting, in regard of Thy eternal purpose of love, electing us, and in regard of Thy appointing redemption for us by the Redeemer (Our Source of Everlasting Salvation - Isa 45:17).

John Calvin: The **everlastingness** of which Moses speaks is to be referred not only to the essence of God, but also to His **providence** (in depth study), by which He governs the world. He intends not merely that He is, but that He is God.

Martin Luther: Such an (Everlasting) God have we, such a God do we worship, to such a God do we pray, at whose command all created things sprang into being. Why then should we fear if this God favors us? Why should we tremble at the anger of the whole world? If He is our (Everlasting) dwelling place, shall we not be (Eternally) safe though the heavens should go to wrack (He is our Everlasting Foundation - Pr 10:25? For we have a Lord greater than all the world. We have a Lord so mighty that at His (Eternal) word all things sprang into being. And yet we are so fainthearted that if the anger of a single prince or king, nay, even of a single neighbor, is to be borne, we tremble and droop in spirit. Yet in comparison with this (Everlasting) King (Jer 10:10, cp Ps 29:10), all things beside in the whole world are but as the lightest dust which a slight breath moves from its place, and suffers not to be still. In this way this description of God is consolatory, and trembling spirits ought to look to this consolation in their temptations and dangers. (Amen - The next time you fall into fear, fix your face firmly on Jesus, your Everlasting Rock - Isa 26:4)

Indeed as the [Isaac Watts](#) so eloquently said (notice the **time phrases**)...

**My God, my Help in ages past,
My Hope for years to come,
My Shelter from the stormy blast,
And my Eternal Home.**

**Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure**

**Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same**

**A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun**

**Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.**

(Dear weary one, may God strengthen you in your inner man by His Spirit — as you play, pray & ponder the wonderful words of this old hymn)

(Or play Maranatha Medley with "To Every Generation")

The Psalmist describes those who would sing this song confidently proclaiming that the Everlasting God is their Eternal Home...

Psalm 5:11 But let all who take refuge (NET=take shelter) in You be glad, Let them**ever** (olam) sing for joy; And may You shelter them, that **those who love Your Name** may exult in You.¹² For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O LORD, You surround him with favor as with a shield.

Comment: Notice how similar this truth is to that of Pr 18:10note. Notice also that in order to "love Your Name" one needs to know Him by His Name! Thus we have another motivation for learning the great Names of God. Finally, notice that those who run into the strong tower of His Names like **Everlasting** God, will **forever** sing for joy! (cp Ps 16:11 [note](#)); . Notice that Verse 12 begins with "**for**" a **term of explanation**, which should always cause you to ponder and pause and question (e.g., what is David explaining?, etc). This discipline will slow you down, engage your mind in active reading (in contrast to passive) and begin to teach you the blessed "art" of meditating on the Scriptures -- All by just observing and responding to one little conjunction (for - and Ps 5:11 actually begins with a **contrast**, which is another golden opportunity for practice

the "3P's" - Pause to Ponder the Passage)!

Spurgeon: The eternal God is the well-spring of our bliss. We love God, and therefore we delight in him. Our heart is at ease in our God. We fare sumptuously every day because we feed on him. We have music in the house, music in the heart, and music in heaven, for the Lord Jehovah is our strength and our song; he also is become our salvation. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 5](#))

NET Note Comment: Take shelter. "Taking shelter" in the Lord is an idiom for seeking His protection. Seeking His protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear and serve the Lord (Ps 31:17-20-[note](#), Ps 34:21-22-[note](#))

Puritan Stephen Charnock writes...

I. In what respects God is eternal.

1. Without beginning.

2. Without end.

3. Without succession or change.

Of a creature it may be said, he was, or he is, or he shall be. As it may be said of the flame of a candle, it is flame, but it is not the same individual flame as was before, nor is it the same that will be presently after; there is a continual dissolution of it into air, and a continual supply for the generation of more; while it continues it may be said there is a flame, yet not entirely one, but in a succession of parts: so of a man it may be said, he is in a succession of parts; but he is not the same that he was, and will not be the same that he is. But God is the same without any succession of parts, and of time; of Him it may be said, He is; He is no more now than He was, and He shall be no more hereafter than He is.

II. God is eternal, and must needs be so.

1. **This is evident by the name God gives Himself**(Ex 3:14). The eternity of God is opposed to the volubility of time, which is extended into past, present, and to come. Our time is but a small drop, as sand to all the atoms and small particles of which the world is made; but God is an unbounded sea of Being,--"I am that I am," i.e. an infinite life.

2. **God hath life in Himself** (Jn 5:26). He hath life by His essence, not by participation. He is a sun to give light and life to all creatures, but receives not light, or life from anything, and therefore He hath an unlimited life; not a drop of life, but a fountain; not a spark of a limited life, but a life transcending all bounds. He hath life in Himself; all creatures have their life in Him, and from Him. He that hath life in himself doth necessarily exist, and could never be made to exist, for then he had not life in himself, but in that which made him to exist, and gave him life. What doth necessarily exist, therefore, exists from eternity; what hath being of itself could never be produced in time, could not want being one moment, because it hath being from its essence, without influence of any efficient cause.

3. **If God were not eternal, He were not--**

(1) Immutable in His nature;

(2) An infinitely perfect being;

(3) Omnipotent;

(4) The first cause of all.

III. ETERNITY IS ONLY PROPER TO GOD, AND NOT COMMUNICABLE (1Ti 6:16).

All other things receive their being from Him, and can be deprived of their being by Him. All things depend on Him, He of none. All other things are like clothes, which would consume if God preserved them not. Whatsoever is not God, is temporary; whatsoever is eternal, is God.

IV. USES--

1. **Of information.**

(1) If God be of an eternal duration, then Christ is God (Col 1:16-17; Heb 13:8; Rev 1:8; Jn 16:28; Jn 17:5). As the eternity of God is the ground of all religion, so the eternity of Christ is the ground of the Christian religion.

Could our sins be perfectly expiated had He not an eternal divinity to answer for the offences committed against an eternal God? Temporary sufferings had been of little validity, without an infiniteness and eternity in His person to add weight to His passion.

(2) If God be eternal, He knows all things as present.

(3) How bold and foolish is it for a mortal creature to censure the counsels and actions of an eternal God, or be too curious in his inquisitions!

(4) What a folly and boldness is there in sin, since an eternal God is offended thereby!

(5) How dreadful is it to lie under the stroke of an eternal God!

2. Of comfort.

(1) If God be eternal, His covenant will be so.

(2) If God be eternal, He being our God in covenant is an eternal good and possession.

(3) The enjoyment of God will be as fresh and glorious after many ages as it was at first.

(4) If God be eternal, here is a strong ground of comfort against all the distresses of the Church, and the threats of the Church's enemies. God's abiding for ever is the plea Jeremiah makes for his return to his forsaken Church (Lam 5:19).

(5) Since God is eternal, He hath as much power as will to be as good as His word. His promises are established upon His eternity, and this perfection is a main ground of trust (Isa 26:4).

3. For exhortation.

(1) Let us be deeply affected with our sins long since committed. Though they are past with us, they are in regard of God's eternity present with Him; there is no succession in eternity as there is in time.

(2) Let the consideration of God's eternity abate our pride.

(3) Let the consideration of God's eternity take off our love and confidence from the world, and the things thereof. The eternity of God reproaches a pursuit of the world, as preferring a momentary pleasure before an everlasting God; as though a temporal world could be a better supply than a God whose years never fail.

V.

EL OLAM KNOWS THE BEGINNING FROM THE END

The Everlasting God cannot be caught by surprise. Because He is everlasting, He knows what is going to happen at the beginning at the end and everything in between. And many times He tells us what will happen in His prophetic word, so that our faith will be encouraged and we will not be caught by surprise. We can know that no matter what happens, His perfect plan will be accomplished in His perfect time. For example the prophet **Micah** uses **olam** in the great prophecy of Jesus' birthplace and tribe of origin...

But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of **eternity (olam)**." (Micah 5:2 - quoted in Mt 2:6, fulfilled in Lk 2:1-20)

As for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, seemingly insignificant among the clans of Judah— from you a king will emerge who will rule over Israel on my behalf, one whose origins are in the distant past. (NET Bible version)

Paul explained to the saints at Thessalonica that those who had died in Christ would return with Him and rise in new bodies to be with Him forever (1Thes 4:17-note). And then Paul declared the conclusion to this prophetic truth (the believer's hope - not "hope so" but a "sure thing!")

Therefore (term of conclusion) **comfort** (present imperative)
one another with these words." (1Th 4:18-note).

Because **El Olam** *knows* the future and *controls* the future He knows, believers can rest secure in the **Blessed Hope** (= In effect not just a truth but a person, Jesus Christ - Titus 2:13-note) of their Lord's promise to return (Table comparing Rapture vs Second

Coming) and make all things right and in the meantime can joyfully sing...

**He that formed me in the womb,
He shall guide me to the tomb;
All my times shall ever be
Ordered by His wise decree.**

--John Ryland

For such is God,
Our God forever (olam) and ever;
He will guide us until death.
Psalm 48:14

Spurgeon on Psalm 48:14: There are some who are so ready to comfort the wicked, that for the sake of ending their punishment they weaken the force of language, and make for ever and ever mean but a time; nevertheless, despite their interpretations we exult in the hope of an eternity of bliss, and to us "everlasting," and "for ever and ever" mean what they say.

We see that God's prophets appealed to and trusted in the everlasting character of God, Habakkuk giving us a good example...

Habakkuk 1:12 (Habakkuk's Second Lament) Art Thou not from **everlasting** (qedem), O **LORD**, (God's Covenant Name) my **God** (**Elohim** - speaks of His supreme might), my **Holy One** (Holy or "Set Apart" in character and righteous in all his dealings - Anticipating this same Name in Hab 3:3)? We will not die. Thou, O **LORD**, hast appointed (ordained, designed) them (Babylonians - Jer 25:9-14 Ezek 30:25, 2Ki 19:25) to judge (**NB:** God's sovereignty over the nations - how much more over the lives of individuals!); and Thou, O **Rock** (cp 1Cor 10:4, See Scripture chain on God as our Rock), hast established them to correct (Lxx = paideia = discipline, training, chastisement, correction).

Patterson has a lengthy note on "**everlasting**" (or eternal - qedem): The Hebrew form means lit., "from aforetime" but is usually employed in the sense of (1) "from of old" (Neh 12:46; Ps 77:11; Isa 45:21; 46:9), (2) "from most ancient times" (Ps 74:12), or (3) "from everlasting" (Mic 5:2). Any of its common meanings is possible here, and each has its advocates. Thus R. L. Smith (1984) favors the first and the NJB the second. Most English versions (e.g., KJV, NASB, NIV, ESV) and conservative expositors have followed the third alternative because the focus of the passage is more on God's existence than on his past deeds (which come into view in Hab 3:1-19). The NLT follows the third option. ([Cornerstone Biblical Commentary Minor Prophets Hosea-Malachi](#))

**Art not Thou from everlasting, O Jehovah?
My God, mine Holy One, we shall not die!**

Comment: **Why does Habakkuk begin this section with a question?** First note that he is not questioning God but is asking a rhetorical question which expects an affirmative reply - Yes, God is the Everlasting God is the idea. Habakkuk is confused by why God is going to use the evil Babylonians to discipline His people.

THOUGHT: How often we find ourselves in a similar state - confused by events the sovereign God has allowed into our life - Why me God? Why now? What did I do to deserve this? etc.

We need to take a "clue" from Habakkuk. When we are perplexed by the Lord's "strange dealings" with us, it is essential to begin with the right approach to God. We need to begin with "right thinking" about God. And so the prophet begins by thinking of God as the **everlasting One**.

Dr. Martyn Lloyd Jones says it this way

It is much more important that we should know the method of approach than that we should have pat answers to particular problems (Fear to Faith, 1953).

When God seems to be crushing us or bewildering us with life-threatening providences, how should we respond? Habakkuk teaches us to go back to the truth we know about God and he began with the truth that God is **everlasting, eternal**. Run into the strong tower of the truth about God, the great doctrines of God, the great Names of God, for they are the **warp and woof** of our existence and the foundation of our day to day survival. As the beautiful old hymn [Like a River Glorious](#) rightly reminds us ("stayed" = secured upright as if

with a "stay" a large strong rope used to support a mast! **Apply that picture to your life dear storm tossed saint!**)

**Stayed upon Jehovah,
Hearts are fully blessed
Finding as He promised,
Perfect peace and rest**
([Like A River Glorious Vocal](#))

Ries says it this way: Assuring himself of the reality of God, he proclaims boldly, **we shall not die**, no matter what may happen.

And in this day of turmoil and gross and blatant wickedness, we, too, need a fresh view of God. We, too, need to see Him as personal, sovereign, holy, eternal, all-caring—the covenant-keeping Jehovah.

The early Church, too, faced most trying days, but did exploits because it had a similar view of and faith in God (cf. Acts 4:24–31). (The Wesleyan Bible Commentary)

Comment: Note that the Hebrew word **everlasting** in Hab 1:12 is not **olam** but **qedem**, which in this context is essentially synonymous with **olam**. As discussed above, Habakkuk's opening question is **rhetorical** (for effect), expecting a resounding "**Yes!**". Though Habakkuk could not see God, He trusted God, because He knew Him through His Names and attributes, choosing to recall **six** of His Names (Observe them in Hab 1:12). This truth about God enabled the prophet to walk not by sight but by faith (2Cor 5:7-note, 2Cor 4:18-note, see Ro 10:17-note). Indeed **Elohim, Jehovah, the Holy One**, is from **everlasting (olam)**. Even His Name **Rock** speaks of His **everlasting** nature. He is our **Rock** (Dt 32:4 = first description of Rock as a Name of God; cp Dt 32:15, 18, 30-31). As such He is permanent, dependable, secure, stable, steadfast, One Who can be counted upon, and an immovable, unshakeable Source of protection in time of trouble! (cp Ex 33:22; Ps 18:2) His attributes and character are forever (eternally) unchangeable! And so Habakkuk's conclusion based on the truth he knew about God is "**We will not die**"

THOUGHT: Beloved, we can apply this truth to our life, for Habakkuk's confident declaration is the same declaration every child of El Olam can triumphantly proclaim. Because He is El Olam, the everlasting God, and we are in Him, in the everlasting Christ, we too are now everlasting and will not die - we may die physically but we will not experience the [second \(eternal\) death](#), which results in everlasting separation from the Everlasting God!

Notice also that Habakkuk twice employed the personal, possessive pronoun (*my*) describing the **everlasting One** as "**my** God, **my** Holy One," a God Who is not impersonal, disinterested, uninvolved, but One Who in a mysterious sense can be "*possessed*" by the man or woman who trusts in Him (ultimately of course trusting in Christ). The **Everlasting God** is *actively* (not *passively* like "Deism" teaches) involved in our lives. He is not just "*up there*" and disinterested. **El Olam** has been interested in and intimately involved with His creation from **everlasting to everlasting** (Amen!). There is not a day that goes by that God is not interested and involved in the life of His children, including your life, dear follower of Christ! In other words, the ancient prophet clearly had faith in God's character as revealed in and through His glorious Names (**NB:** Notice how many names Habakkuk uses! E.g., **Jehovah** is His covenant Name and God does NOT break covenant!), and based on that truth, he was able to confidently testify that Judah would not be completely destroyed. Yes, God would discipline His disobedient chosen people, but He would not annihilate them, for He had cut an **everlasting covenant** with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and He would not break the covenant promises!

THOUGHT: The Everlasting God has also cut an Everlasting New Covenant (Heb 13:20-note) with all who by grace believe in the Eternal One, Christ Jesus. The upshot is that El Olam will keep us safe forever! The eternal God assures us eternal security based on His eternal covenant. And He is not a man that He should lie. Beloved, do you wrestle with the doctrine of eternal security, believing as some teach that you can lose your salvation? If so, may the truth about His great Name, El Olam, give you an unshakeable hold on the great truth that El Olam's hold on you is eternally unbreakable!

As a corollary: Habakkuk was wrestling with a difficult question - Why would God use an evil nation to punish His chosen people? Notice that in the process, the prophet appeals to God's names (and/or attributes) - Everlasting, Jehovah, Elohim, Holy One, Jehovah

(second time) and Rock. This is a good pattern to practice when you are confused and cannot understand your circumstances, which may (often do) include trials and afflictions. Make the conscious choice (enabled by the Holy Spirit) to focus on God's character as revealed in His glorious Names.

John Gill comments on **everlasting** in Habakkuk 1:12: (Based on the truth he knows about God, Habakkuk declares) "**we shall not die**" meaning not a corporeal death, for all men die, good and bad; and even the Jews did die, and no doubt good men among them too, at the siege and taking of Jerusalem by the Chaldean army, either by famine or pestilence or sword. ("We shall not die") a death of affliction, which the people of God are subject to, as well as others; (affliction, testing)...is for their good, and in love and not wrath. (On the other hand) spiritual death, which none who are quickened by the Spirit and the grace of God can ever die. Though (their) grace may be "low," it is never lost. Though saints may be in dead and lifeless frames, and need quickening afresh, yet they are not without the principle of spiritual life. Grace in them is a well of living water, springing up to **everlasting** life. Their spiritual life can never fail them, since it is secured in Christ: and much less shall they die the second or an eternal death. They are ordained to eternal life. Christ is come and given His flesh for it, that they might have **everlasting** life. It is in His hands for them. They are united (Ed: by the oneness of covenant) to Him, and have both the promise and pledge of it: and this may be argued, as by the prophet here, from the eternity of God, art "**Thou not from everlasting?**"

He is from everlasting to everlasting, the Ancient of days, that inhabits eternity, is, was, and is to come. Therefore "**we shall not die**"; None of his people shall perish, because He loves them with an **everlasting love**; has made an **everlasting choice** of them; has set up Christ from **everlasting** as their surety and Saviour; entered into an **everlasting covenant** with them in Christ; is their **everlasting Father**, and will be their **everlasting portion**; is the unchangeable Jehovah, and therefore they shall not be consumed. This may be concluded from their covenant interest in God.

VI. EL OLAM'S WAYS ARE EVERLASTING

David has a great prayer based on the fact the **everlasting way**...

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
Try me and know my anxious thoughts
And see if there be any hurtful way in me,
And lead me in the **everlasting way**.
(Ps 139:23-24)

Spurgeon: If Thou hast introduced me already to the good old way, be pleased to keep me in it, and conduct me further and further along it. It is a way which Thou hast set up of old, it is based upon **everlasting** principles, and it is the way in which **immortal** spirits will gladly run **for ever and ever**. **There will be no end to it world without end. It lasts for ever, and they who are in it last for ever.** Conduct me into it, O Lord, and conduct me throughout the whole length of it. By Thy providence, by Thy word, by Thy grace, and by Thy Spirit, lead me evermore. (Amen) ([Treasury of David—Psalm 139](#))

The prophet Habakkuk describes the everlasting ways of God...

Habakkuk 3:6+ He (The Holy One = Hab 3:3) stood and surveyed the earth; He looked and startled the nations (**Ed:** The implication is that this will be a glorious global appearance [cp description in Hab 3:3], surely the Second Coming - cp Rev 1:7-[note](#)). Yes, the **perpetual** (KJV, ESV = **everlasting**); Hebrew noun - 'ad = eternity) mountains were shattered, The ancient hills collapsed. His **ways** are **everlasting (olam)**.

Comment: The Everlasting God's "**ways are** (also **everlasting**." In context this passage refers to the return of Christ to triumph over His enemies and the enemies of the nation of Israel.

THOUGHT: Beloved, here is the practical application to our lives -- El Olam's ways are everlasting -- what He has done in ages past, He can do again in your life. His power, His wisdom, His grace are unchangeably the same, for they are everlasting!

And they are at your disposal, to come to your aid in time of need! Cry out to El Olam, the One Whose ways are everlasting.

John Gill comments on His ways are everlasting: All He does in time, every step He takes, is according to His counsels, purposes, and decrees in **eternity**, which infallibly come to pass; nor can He be hindered and frustrated in the execution of them; as He has begun, He will go on; as He has set up His kingdom in the world, He will support and maintain it; and though there are many obstructions in the way of it, He will go on, and remove them, until He has thoroughly established it, and brought it to its highest glory, which He has designed; all mountains and hills are nothing before Him; He can soon make them a plain; see Re 11:15: or, "the ways of the world are his"; the world is under his government, and all things in it subject to his providence; he can rule and overrule all things for his own glory, and the good of his interest, and he will do it; everything is subject to his control, and under his direction; not a step can be taken without his will. This the prophet observes along with the above things, to encourage the faith and expectation of the saints, that the work of the Lord will be revived, and his kingdom and interest promoted and established in the world; though there may, and will, be many difficulties and distresses previous to it.

Jamieson writes: His marvelous **ways** of working for the salvation of His people mark His **everlasting** character: such as He was in His workings for them formerly, such shall He be now.

A C Gaebelein Comments: The great inspired ode which follows (Hab 3:3-19) is one of the greatest sections of Prophecy. It is a wonderful theophany the Spirit of God describes. Wrath and Mercy are manifested, so that it is an answer to the prophet's plea, "In wrath remember mercy."...Just as He was manifested when He had redeemed them out of Egypt, and constituted them His Kingdom people at Sinai (Ex 19:6), so will **He appear again** to deliver the **remnant** of His people from the dominion of the world-power, and judge them as He judged Egypt. He comes from the direction of Edom, for **Teman** is the southern district of Idumea, while Paran is more southward. Isaiah also beheld him advancing from the same direction. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from **Bozrah**?" (Isa. 63:1-6). It is unfortunate that the Authorized Version has "God came from Teman," when it is "God cometh," not a past but a future event...With the sixth verse (Hab 3:6) He draws nearer. Up to this point in the theophany He is described as coming forth, like the sun out of His chamber, heaven and earth reflecting His glory, but now He stands and measures the earth; He looks and the nations tremble, while all creation is affected, and earthquakes shake down the mountains. ([Gaebelein, A. C. The Annotated Bible, Volume 5: Daniel to Malachi](#))

Henry Morris writes: The literal fulfillment must be at His glorious **coming** (the Second Coming) following the **Great Tribulation** of the end-times. It seems that Habakkuk's prophetic vision, on which his psalm was based, contained a blending of both God's past miraculous deliverances of His people and also the future deliverances of which these had been a type. ([Defender's Study Bible - highly recommended for it's literal approach to interpretation](#))

The Psalmist speaks to the everlasting ways of Jehovah, writing that...

Psalm 33:11 The counsel of the LORD stands **forever** (olam), The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

Comment: Only the Everlasting God's counsel could stand **forever**.

Spurgeon: He changes not His purpose, His decree is not frustrated, His designs are accomplished. God has a predestination according to the counsel of His will, and none of the devices of His foes can thwart His decree for a moment. Men's purposes are blown to and from like the thread of the gossamer or the down of the thistle, but the eternal purposes are firmer than the earth.

The plans of His heart to all generations. Men come and go, sons follow their sires to the grave, but the undisturbed mind of God moves on in unbroken serenity, producing ordained results with unerring certainty. No man can expect his will or plan to be carried out from age to age; the wisdom of one period is the folly of another, but the Lord's wisdom is always wise, and His designs run on from century to century. His power to fulfill His purposes is by no means diminished by the lapse of years. He who was absolute over Pharaoh in Egypt is not one whit the less today the King of kings and Lord of lords; still do His chariot wheels roll onward in imperial grandeur, none being for a moment able to resist His eternal will. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 33](#))

VII.

EL OLAM NEVER CHANGES!

Think for a moment about the Name "Everlasting." What is the opposite of "ever"? "Never" of course. So what are some "corollary" Names of God based on the fact that He is everlasting? Indeed, He is...

Never Changing

Never Forsaking

Never Unfaithful

You see the point and doubtless could come up with your own names related to the "everlasting" attribute of God, which would be a wonderful addition to your times of prayer and praise to Him.

James Montgomery Boice writes that...

Where the word (**olam**) is used of God, it usually also includes His **Immutability** or unchangeableness. Times change, people change, needs change...

The following passages use **olam** to describe God's unchanging nature and character...

Ps 100:5 For the LORD is good; His lovingkindness is **everlasting**, and His faithfulness to all generations.

Spurgeon: His mercy is everlasting. God is not mere justice, stern and cold; he has bowels of compassion, and wills not the sinner's death. Towards his own people mercy is still more conspicuously displayed; it has been theirs from all eternity, and shall be theirs world without end. Everlasting mercy is a glorious theme for sacred song.

And his truth endures to all generations. (**Ed: How could this be true if He were not El Olam?**) No fickle being is he, promising and forgetting. He has entered into covenant with his people, and he will never revoke it, nor alter the thing that has gone out of his lips. As our fathers found him faithful, so will our sons, and their seed for ever. A changeable God would be a terror to the righteous, they would have no sure anchorage, and amid a changing world they would be driven to and fro in perpetual fear of shipwreck. It were well if the truth of divine faithfulness were more fully remembered by some theologians; it would overturn their belief in the final fall of believers, and teach them a more consolatory system. Our heart leaps for joy as we bow before One who has never broken his word or changed his purpose.

As well might He His being quit

As break His promise or forget.

Resting on His sure word, we feel that joy which is here commanded, and in the strength of it we come into His presence even now, and speak good of His Name (THE EVERLASTING GOD).

VIII.

EL OLAM'S COVENANT IS EVERLASTING

El Olam's Name backs up the reliability of His covenant promises made to Abraham and then through the New Covenant God's promises to all sinners who are saved by grace through faith. These unconditional covenants serve as the anchor of their soul when times are difficult. Remember that the **everlasting God** undergirds the promises of His **everlasting covenant** which assures us of **everlasting life** (Da 12:2-note),

Here are the 16 Scriptures that testify to the truth of El Olam's everlasting covenant...

- Everlasting covenant (Ge 9:16)

- Everlasting covenant (Ge 17:7, 13, 19)
- Everlasting covenant (Lev 24:8)
- Everlasting covenant (2Sa 23:5)
- Everlasting covenant (1Chr 16:17, 34)
- Everlasting covenant (Ps 105:10)
- Everlasting covenant (Isa 24:5)
- Everlasting covenant (Isa 55:3)
- Everlasting covenant (Isa 61:8)
- Everlasting covenant (Jer 32:40)
- Everlasting covenant (Jer 50:5)
- Everlasting covenant (Ezek 16:60)
- Everlasting covenant (Ezek 37:26)

The **Psalmist** writes...

He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained **His covenant forever** (Olam); Holy and awesome is **His Name** (Everlasting God). (Ps 111:9)

Spurgeon: When they were in Egypt He sent not only a deliverer, but an actual deliverance; not only a redeemer, but complete redemption. He has done the like spiritually for all His people, having first by blood purchased them out of the hand of the enemy, and then by power rescued them from the bondage of their sins. Redemption we can sing of as an accomplished act: it has been wrought for us, sent to us, and enjoyed by us, and we are in very deed the Lord's redeemed. **He hath commanded His covenant for ever.** His divine decree has made the covenant of His grace a settled and eternal institution: redemption by blood proves that the covenant cannot be altered, for it ratifies and establishes it beyond all recall. This, too, is reason for the loudest praise. Redemption is a fit theme for the heartiest music, and when it is seen to be connected with gracious engagements from which the Lord's truth cannot swerve, it becomes a subject fitted to arouse the soul to an ecstasy of gratitude. Redemption and the covenant are enough to make the tongue of the dumb sing. Holy and reverend is His name. Well may he say this. The whole **Name** or character of God is worthy of profoundest awe, for it is perfect and complete, whole or holy. It ought not to be spoken without **solemn thought**, and never heard without **profound homage**. His **Name** is to be trembled at, it is something terrible; even those who know Him best rejoice with trembling before him. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 111](#))

Blessed be the Name of the LORD
From this time forth and forever.
(Ps 113:2-note)

Below are some additional discussion of El Olam's **everlasting covenant** in selected passages

2Samuel 7:16 "Your (King David's) house and your kingdom shall endure before Me **forever** (olam); your (David's) throne shall be established **forever** (olam)."

Comment: This refers to the so-called "Davidic Covenant" an unconditional, everlasting covenant that God made with David and his descendents and which is therefore related to the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant.

Genesis 9:16 "When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the **everlasting** (Lxx = [aionios](#)) **covenant** between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

C H Mackintosh: The whole creation rests, as to its exemption from a second deluge, on the eternal stability of God's covenant, of which the bow is the token; and it is happy to bear in mind, that when the bow appears, the eye of God rests upon it; and man is cast, not upon his own imperfect and most uncertain memory, but upon God's. "I," says God, "will remember." How sweet to think of what God will, and what He will not, remember! He will remember His own covenant, but He will not remember His people's sins. The cross, which ratifies the former, puts away the latter. (**APPLICATION: As El Olam, He will forever remember His covenant and forever forget our trespasses against Him!**)

COMMENT - Sadly [universalists](#), those who hold to the unbiblical belief that every soul ever born will be saved and saved forever, do not believe that [aionios](#) means forever! Read the following discussion of what God Himself says about the Greek word [aionios](#) - [Digression on Eternal - The Greek Word Aionios](#)

Genesis 13:15 (Jehovah to Abram = Ge 13:14) for all **the land** which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants **forever**.

MacArthur comments: Strikingly and unmistakably, the Lord deeded the Land (v. 14—look in all directions, and v. 17—walk in all directions) in perpetuity to Abram and his descendants, whom He declared would be definitely innumerable (v. 16—as the dust).

W. Griffith-Thomas: Let us ponder these wonderful promises. They are to be interpreted literally and spiritually. They are already having their primary fulfilment in the Church of Christ as Abraham's spiritual seed (Gal. 3:7-9, 16), but there will surely be a literal fulfilment in the future to the Jewish nation (Rom. 11:26-29). (Genesis Commentary-Devotional)

Genesis 17:7 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an **everlasting** covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an **everlasting possession**; and I will be their God."

IX.

EL OLAM'S LOVINGKINDNESS IS FOREVER

The Scripture repeatedly emphasizes the truth that El Olam's lovingkindness is eternal! In fact, **El Olam's lovingkindness** is proclaimed as **everlasting** 44 times in the Old Testament! Clearly God wants us to know that He will never withdraw His lovingkindness from us! If this does not give comfort to your soul, I don't know what will!

- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (1Chr 16:41)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (2Chr 5:13)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (2Chr 7:3, 6, 20:21)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 100:5)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 103:17)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 106:1, 48)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 107:1)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 118:1, 2, 3, 4, 29)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 136:1-26, every verse)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 138:8)
- Everlasting lovingkindness (Isa 54:8)
- Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Jer 33:11)

The Hebrew word for lovingkindness is **hesed/chesed/heced** (see word study) and is closely related to the truth about God's covenant. **Lovingkindness** is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [see Hos 2:18, 19, 20, Isa 54:5, Jer 31:32] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's **hesed** denotes His persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man who is not seeking after Him! In fact God immediately began seeking man after Adam's sin (Ge 3:9), whereas Adam and Eve immediately sought to hide (Ge 3:8) and cover the shame of their sin (Ge 3:7). God demonstrated His own lovingkindness by spilling blood to provide animal skins to cover their shame (Ge 3:21), foreshadowing the ultimate manifestation of God's lovingkindness, the shedding of the precious blood of His Son, the Lamb of God (See Ro 5:8-note).

Only the **Everlasting God** could provide **lovingkindness** which is **everlasting** and would allow His prophet Jeremiah to make the bold declaration that...

The LORD'S **lovingkindnesses** indeed **never cease**,

For His compassions **never fail**.

They are new every morning;

Great is Thy faithfulness.

Lam 3:22-23

([Spurgeon sermon](#))

Never ceasing lovingkindnesses and **never failing** compassion issuing from the **ever lasting** God! This is truth worth living for!

And because He is the Everlasting God we can sing...

[The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,](#)

The sun forbear to shine;
But God, Who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

--John Newton
([Vocal Version](#))

The Everlasting God lives forever and thus is able to sustain His people and forever meet their needs.

Knowledge of the Name El Olam should prompt prayer which is in accord with this great everlasting Name:

May God grant us grace to pray and praise **El Olam** as did **Solomon** who prayed...

May His **Name** endure **forever (olam)**;
May His **Name** increase as long as the sun shines;
And let men bless themselves by Him;
Let all nations call Him blessed.
Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
Who alone works wonders.
And blessed be His glorious **Name forever (olam)**;
And may the whole earth be filled with His glory.
Amen, and Amen.
(Ps 72:17-19-[read Spurgeon's note](#))

Spurgeon comments: In its saving power, as the rallying point of believers, and as renowned and glorified, His Name shall remain for ever the same. His Name shall be continued as long as the sun. (**Ed:** And even after there is no need for the sun! Rev 22:5-[note](#))....He is the Blessed God, and His Name shall be blessed; His Name is glorious, and that glory shall fill the whole earth. **For so bright a consummation our heart yearns daily, and we cry Amen and Amen.**

Other associations of olam in Scripture:

(1) God's promise of the land to literal Israel (the remnant that is saved)

Exodus 32:13 "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Speaks of the Abrahamic Covenant,), Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and all this **land** of which I have spoken I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit **iforever**.'"

Ge 17:8 **everlasting possession**

X.

EL OLAM IS JESUS CHRIST

God is a Trinity and it follows that Jesus is El Olam. As **John Owen** reminds us...

Everything God does He does as the triune God. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in every action of God. Yet at the same time each Person has a special role to fulfill in that work. (Pneumatologia - Owen's Summa Bonum on The Holy Spirit)

In the **Revelation of Jesus Christ**, **John** records the declaration of **Jesus**...

Rev 22:13-[note](#) "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Comment: Because God existed from before all time and will exist beyond all time, there is no room for another God (Isa. 43:10). Throughout the Father's preexistence, the Son was with Him (John 1:1-3; Jn 8:54;

Col. 1:17-note). The Father, the Son and the Spirit are eternal and fittingly the title **El Olam** is an appropriate designation for each member of the Trinity. The Puritan theologian **John Owen** reminds us that...

Everything God does He does as the triune God. Each Person of the Trinity is involved in every action of God. Yet at the same time each Person has a special role to fulfill in that work....There is no good that we receive from God but it is brought to us and wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. Nor is there in us any good towards God, any faith, love, obedience to His will, but what we are enabled to do so by the Holy Spirit. ([Pneumatologia](#) - Owen's Summa Bonum on The Holy Spirit)

In Isaiah 9:6, the **Messiah** is referred to as **Everlasting**...

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, **Eternal** (KJV = "Everlasting") **Father**, Prince of Peace.

How do we understand this epithet of **Jesus** as "**Everlasting Father**?" The answer is not as difficult as one might imagine. First, Jesus is not the Father, and the Father is not Jesus. The concept of Jesus as "**Father**" describes the relationship God has with His children as explained for example in Ps 103:13

Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

Isaiah is not teaching a form of [modalism](#) as taught in the dangerous false cult of "Oneness Pentecostalism." ([See Robert Bowman's excellent critique of Oneness Doctrine - see especially points #40-46](#), cp 1Jn 2:23). Isaiah in no way is deprecating the Trinity. As always the best commentary on Scripture is Scripture and one should never use an obscure or difficult passage to develop a doctrine which is clearly not talk in other passages, which clearly teach the doctrine of the Trinity (even though the actual word "Trinity" is not found in Scripture).

The **writer of Hebrews** states clearly that

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever. (Heb 13:8-note)

Comment: This is a clear statement of His everlasting nature. Indeed, Jesus is El Olam, even as is the Father and the Spirit.

Henry Morris: Jesus Christ is "Alpha and Omega" (Revelation 1:11-note). He "all things created" yesterday (Colossians 1:16-note), is "upholding all things" today (Hebrews 1:3-note), and shall "make all things new" tomorrow (Revelation 21:5-note). He is the eternal Creator, the living Lord, and our coming King.

Charles Ryrie: **yesterday.** In the days of His life on earth (Heb 2:9-note; Heb 5:7-8-note). **today.** As our high priest in heaven (Heb 4:15-16-note). **forever.** To secure and consummate our salvation (Heb 7:25-note; Heb 9:28-note).

XI.

EL OLAM IS OUR PROTECTOR FOREVER

This "benefit" of **El Olam** has been alluded to earlier but is worth reiterating because of the fact that many saints find themselves frequently in fearful circumstances and/or have fear of people, especially people in power or position. Therefore this truth about El Olam is vital to recall to mind that we might shore up our sagging faith and be enabled to confidently hold forth the shield by which we can fend off the fiery missiles of the evil one (Eph 6:16-note). Remember that God's "antidote" for fear is faith (See also **Fear, How to Handle It**).

And so we read **David's encouraging words** writes...

Psalms 12:7 You, O LORD, will keep them; You will preserve him from this generation forever.

And then we do well to heed Spurgeon's encouragement to pray based on the truth of Ps 12:7...

O Eternal Spirit, fulfil in us the faithful saying of this verse! Our faith believes those two assuring words, and cries, "Thou shalt," "thou shalt."

Here is a similar **prayer**...

Psalm 28:9 Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; Be their shepherd also, and carry them forever.

Spurgeon: Carry them in thine arms on earth, and then lift them into thy bosom in heaven. Elevate their minds and thoughts, spiritualize their affections, make them heavenly, Christ-like, and full of God. O Lord, answer this our petition, for Jesus' sake. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 28](#))

Psalm 37:28 For the LORD loves justice and does not forsake His godly ones; They are preserved **forever** (olam), But the descendants of the wicked will be cut off.

Spurgeon: By covenant engagements their security is fixed, and by suretyship fulfillments that safety is accomplished; come what may, the saints are preserved in Christ Jesus, and because He lives, they shall live also. A king will not lose his jewels, nor will Jehovah lose His people. As the manna in the golden pot, which else had melted, was preserved in the ark of the covenant beneath the mercy seat, so shall the faithful be preserved in the covenant by the power of Jesus their propitiation. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 37](#))

Psalm 55:22 Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never (literally "not ever" = olam) allow the righteous to be shaken.

Spurgeon: Thy burden, or what thy God lays upon thee, lay thou it upon the Lord. His wisdom casts it on thee, it is thy wisdom to cast it on Him. He cast thy lot for thee, cast thy lot on Him. He gives thee thy portion of suffering, accept it with cheerful resignation, and then take it back to Him by thine assured confidence. He shall sustain thee. Thy bread shall be given thee, thy waters shall be sure. Abundant nourishment shall fit thee to bear all thy labours and trials. As thy days so shall thy strength be. He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. He may move like the boughs of a tree in the tempest, but He shall never be moved like a tree torn up by the roots. He stands firm who stands in God. Many would destroy the saints, but God has not suffered it, and never will (**Ed:** Because He is everlasting in His watchcare of His own!). Like pillars, the godly stand immoveable, to the glory of the Great Architect. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 55](#))

Psalm 73:26 My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion **forever** (olam).

Spurgeon: His God would not fail him, either as protection or a joy. His heart would be kept up by divine love, and filled eternally with divine glory. After having been driven far out to sea, Asaph casts anchor in the old port. We shall do well to follow his example. There is nothing desirable save God; let us, then, desire only him. All other things must pass away; let our hearts abide in him, who alone abideth for ever. ([Treasury of David—Psalm 73](#))

THE EVERLASTING ARMS OF THE ETERNAL GOD

An obvious synonym of Everlasting God is **Eternal God** which occurs in Deuteronomy...

The **Eternal** ([06924](#)) God is a dwelling place, and underneath are the **everlasting** (**olam**) arms; And He drove out the enemy from before you, And said, 'Destroy!' (Deut 33:27-[see comments](#))

Comment: What a comfort it is for the true Christian to have such an assurance in the storms of life! When the bottom seems to fall out of living, how encouraging is the realization that the eternal God is bearing us up and will give sustaining grace for every trial. Are you disturbed today by the trials of life? Is the air a little "choppy"? Are you experiencing some "turbulence"? Then just rest, relax, and trust in the Lord and you too will feel the strengthening resources of His power and know beyond a shadow of doubt that "underneath are the everlasting arms."

Note that the Hebrew word for **Eternal** ("eternal God") is not **olam** but **qedem** ([06924](#)) which means (1) "east (eastern)" (direction) which is the most frequent use. (2) Eternal, forever, describing an unlimited duration (used in this sense in Deut 33:27, Ps 55:19, Hab 1:12 - see below) (3) Ancient, long ago, existing a long time in the past.

It is interesting that the Greek (Lxx) chose to translate **Qedem** with **skepasis** which means shelter or protection, conveying a powerful metaphor (picture) of the eternal God as our everlasting Protector!

THOUGHT: Can you see how internalizing this truth about El Olam's everlasting protection can buoy your faith that you have a trustworthy Protector? The antidote for fear is faith but that faith must always have a firm foundation of truth in order to withstand our

tendency to fear.

David McCasland writes these devotional thoughts on Deut 33:26-27: A mother eagle builds a comfortable nest for her young, padding it with feathers from her own breast. But God-given instinct that builds that secure nest also forces the eaglets out of it before long. Eagles are made to fly, and love will not fail to teach them. Only then will they become what they are meant to be.

So one day the mother eagle will disturb the twigs of the nest, making it an uncomfortable place to stay. Then she will pick up a perplexed eaglet, soar into the sky, and drop it. The little bird will begin to free-fall. Where is Mama now? She is not far away. Quickly she will swoop under and catch the fledgling on one strong wing. She will repeat this exercise until each eaglet is capable of flying on its own.

Are you afraid of free-falling? Remember, God will fly to your rescue and spread His everlasting arms beneath you. He will also teach you something new and wonderful through it. Falling into God's arms is nothing to be afraid of.

After a pre-concert rehearsal in New York City's Carnegie Hall, Randall Atcheson sat on stage alone. He had successfully navigated the intricate piano compositions of Beethoven, Chopin, and Liszt for the evening program, and with only minutes remaining before the doors opened, he wanted to play one more piece for himself. What came from his heart and his hands was an old hymn by Elisha Hoffman:

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms?
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Those words echo the truth in the final blessing of Moses: "There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:26-27).

What a gift we have in our own arms and hands—they can swing a hammer, hold a child, or help a friend. But while our strength is limited, God's boundless power on our behalf is expressed in might and gentle care. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Isaiah 59:1). "He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom" (Isaiah 40:11).

Whatever challenge or opportunity we face, there is security and peace in His everlasting arms. —David C. McCasland The heavenly Father's arms never tire of holding His children

Ps 55:19 God will hear and answer them— Even the one who sits enthroned from **of old**— Selah. With whom there is no change, And who do not fear God.

Comment: The Septuagint (Lxx) translates *Qedem* with *aion* (word study) (also see [note above](#)) so that the English reads "He has existed from eternity."

Devotional - President Franklin D. Roosevelt loved the song we call the "Navy Hymn." It was sung at his funeral in Hyde Park, New York, on April 14, 1945. The words of the hymn were written in 1860 by William Whiting, who taught and directed a 16-voice boys choir. He penned them for a student who was about to set sail for America and who was apprehensive about the journey. The beautiful tune was written by John B. Dykes and first published in 1861. He named the hymn tune "Melita," the Roman name for Malta, the island where Paul was shipwrecked. **The hymn is a simple prayer based on the profound truth that the Eternal God Who created the universe controls all the elements of nature and can protect His own no matter how great the peril. Wind and wave are subject to His command.** The first verse reads:

[Eternal Father, Strong to Save,](#)
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
O hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.

[\(Vocal version\)](#)

The Everlasting God secures everlasting salvation for those who are His - Jesus Christ is the everlasting God. Therefore, beloved, we can always count on Him for salvation and need turn to no other savior or religion. We can trust Him for our yesterdays, our todays, our tomorrows and our eternal future. Does this truth not comfort your soul, even though "All the foundations of the earth are shaken" (Ps 82:5).

Pr 8:22 The LORD possessed Me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. 23 From **everlasting** (Hebrew = **olam**; Lxx = aion; eternity = NET; Ages ago = ESV) I was established, from the beginning (Hebrew = ros = head), from the earliest times (Hebrew = qedem = earlier, formerly, long ago) of the earth.

Comment: Clearly the NT associates Jesus Christ with "**wisdom**" calling Christ "the power of God and the **wisdom** of God" (1Cor 1:24), the One "Who became to us **wisdom** from God." (1Cor 1:30). So these passages in Proverbs 8 surely speak of Christ and underscore the truth that He is **everlasting God**.

Charles Bridges in his excellent "Commentary on Proverbs" associates this section of Proverbs 8 with the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, writes: So glorious are the rays of the eternal supreme Deity, His distinct personality, His essential unity, that the mysterious, **ever-blessed** Being now undoubtedly stands before us. To receive His own revelation of Himself is our great privilege. How clear is His essential unity with the Father. "The LORD brought me forth," for He was present with Him in the heart of the Deity. Every movement of the divine mind was infinitely known, every purpose of divine counsel **eternally** present and fully developed. The mode of his existence in the Godhead (and this is all that is revealed of this inscrutable subject) is generation. **He was brought ... forth, the only begotten Son**, a term that it is much safer to adore than to expound, expressing, as it does, what is unsearchable. "Take care," says an old expositor, "that in this generation we invent nothing temporal, carnal, or human. But rather let us worship this generation, beholding it by faith; and let us take heed from searching further than Scripture teaches us. Otherwise we should deserve to be blinded and punished for our great curiosity." **No less clear is his eternal existence. He was in the beginning.** He was "the first of his works." He was "destined and advanced to be the Wisdom and Power of the Father, Light and Life, and all in all, both in the creation and the redemption of the world" (Matthew Henry).

(**Pr 8:23–29 Comment**). Connected with **His eternity** was His agency in the work of creation. "**I was appointed from eternity**, from the beginning, before the world began" (Pr 8:23). The whole detail of the creative work is here laid out. Thus uncreated wisdom displayed in clear and undoubted glory "**the divinity and eternity of Wisdom, meaning thereby the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ our Savior**" (Reformers' Notes). (**Pr 8:30 Comment**). Next He describes His unspeakable blessedness in communion with His Father. "**I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in His presence**" He was in the heart of His Father as He delighted in His presence. So God is "willing that by the Son we should approach Him, in the Son we should honor and adore Him, and honor the Son as Himself" (Scott). (**Pr 8:31 Comment**). But the wonder of wonders remains that He Who was His Father's infinite delight and was infinitely delighting in Him should find His delight **from all eternity in mankind**. How wonderful that He should, as it were, long to be with us, rejoicing in His whole world. On this foundation is our confidence, rest, and security. (**Pr 8:32 Comment**). It is no mean and undeserving person who is calling. It is none other than the Wisdom of God, the source of all light and knowledge (Pr 8:12–14), the King of kings (Pr 8:15–16), the loving rewarder of his children (Pr 8:17), the rich portion and unfailing guide of his people (Pr 8:18–19). Look at Him once again in His divine glory as the only-begotten Son of God (Pr 8:22, 24), the **Mediator in the everlasting councils of redemption** (Pr 8:23), the almighty Creator of the world (Pr 8:27–30), the adorable Friend of sinners (Pr 8:31). How should His divine majesty and condescending love endear His instruction to us! Yet His promised blessing is only for those who carry out what they hear Him say and for those who keep [His] ways with godly fear, constancy, and perseverance, keeping their eye on His ways, their hearts toward them, and their feet in them. Yes, such people will be blessed.

ESV Study Bible: The eternity of wisdom with God anticipates the **eternality of the second person of the Trinity**, Who is the Word of God and Who mediated creation (John 1:1–3)...(Adding on Pr 8:35 that) Life is obtained ultimately from Christ, Who is the life (John 14:6) and the wisdom of God (1Cor. 1:30).

The exact Name **Ei Olam** does not occur, but there are uses of **olam** and **Elohim** in the following passages...

Psalm 90:1-2 A Prayer of Moses the man of God. Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were born (came into existence - implies before Creation) or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from **everlasting** (olam) to **everlasting** (olam), You are **God** (elohim).

Spurgeon on "before the mountains were born": Before those elder giants had struggled forth from nature's womb, as her dread firstborn, the Lord was glorious and self sufficient...

Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God, or, "thou art, O God." God was, when nothing else was. He was God when the earth was not a world but a chaos, when mountains were not upheaved, and the generation of the heavens and the earth had not commenced. In this Eternal One there is a safe abode for the

successive generations of men. If God himself were of yesterday, he would not be a suitable refuge for mortal men; if he could change and cease to be God he would be but an uncertain dwelling place for his people. The eternal existence of God is here mentioned to set forth, by contrast, the brevity of human life.

[\(Treasury of David—Psalm 90\)](#)

Warren Wiersbe: First there were sundials. Then came water clocks, hourglasses and mechanical clocks. Now we have digital clocks and watches that split time into hundredths of a second. Our culture certainly is concerned with time. That's why it's good to read what Moses says: "Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God... For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night" (Psalm 90:1,2,4).

It's good to contemplate God's eternity in the light of man's frailty. We are creatures of time, but God is eternal. He is our dwelling place from generation to generation. The eternity we face is in His hands.

The psalmist also tells us that God is faithful. From generation to generation, from everlasting to everlasting, He has been faithful, and He will continue to be faithful. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He's the God of individuals, the God of different personalities. He's the One we can trust.

Let Him be God in your life today. When you abide in Him and live for His glory, you are partaking of the eternal. The Bible says, "He who does the will of God abides forever" (1John 2:17).

When you compare time with eternity, you gain a bit of God's perspective. You can incorporate eternal values into this life. You can partake of the eternal by allowing God into your life. Is He your dwelling place? Have you partaken of His faithfulness? ([Prayer, Praise and Promises](#))

Henry Morris writes: To the skeptical question as to who made God, the only answer that satisfies all the facts of both science and human reason is that God is "from everlasting." He is the Creator of time as well as space and all things that exist in time and space. This is beyond our mental comprehension, but there is no other rational explanation for our existence, and it is surely compatible with the intuitions of our spiritual comprehension. God satisfies the heart regardless of difficulties conjured in the mind.

The Everlasting God - new revelation is preparation for future revelation. In Genesis 21 Abraham received a new revelation of God as El Olam and in Genesis 22 he was called to make the greatest act of obedience in his life - the sacrifice of His son Isaac. How could Abraham do this? He knew God and He knew He was Everlasting. And he knew that his son would live again, even if he died, because the Everlasting God had at some point revealed to His servant the truth of everlasting life. In other words, God had revealed to Abraham that He was "able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him (Isaac) back as a type." (Hebrews 11:19-note). Abraham's obedience to what he knew to be true about God, in turn resulted in God blessing him with another revelation, a new Name, **Jehovah Jireh: The LORD Will Provide!**

Do you want to know God better? Do you "want more of God?" Then give Him more (all) of yourself in unhesitating, whole hearted obedience, and the Everlasting God will disclose Himself to you (cp John 14:21).

W H Griffith-Thomas reminds us that

These new experiences as they come are, however, not merely a matter of personal satisfaction, blessed though that is; they tend to prepare the soul for still greater accomplishments.

(APPLICATION) God's revelations are not mere luxuries for personal enjoyment, but are given for the purpose of preparing the soul for fuller service and still clearer testimony for God.

We shall see how this new revelation of God to Abraham was a distinct preparation for a crisis that was to come in his life. It is the same today. God reveals Himself more and more fully in order that we may be more and more thoroughly equipped for greater efforts in the kingdom of God. ([Genesis 21:22-34 The Daily Round](#))

A fitting way to end this discussion on the Everlasting God is to praise Him with David's doxology...

**Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
From everlasting to everlasting.
Amen and Amen!**

Ps 41:13-[see Spurgeon's note](#)

HEBREW WORD STUDY: THE NOUN OLAM

Olam (05969) is a masculine noun which according to some authorities is derived from **alam** (05956) which means to conceal, hide, be hidden, be concealed, be secret (2Ki 4:27, Ps 10:1). (others say the origin is uncertain) **Gesenius** feels **olam** refers to that which is hidden, especially "hidden time" the beginning or end of which is either uncertain or undefined = eternity, perpetuity.

The most common associations of "everlasting" (olam) ([Complete list below](#)) (Based on the NAS)...

- Everlasting covenant = 15x,
- Everlasting lovingkindness = 44x

Olam is translated twice as **everlasting** in the beautiful English phrase "**Everlasting to Everlasting**" which is found in Ps 41:13 , Ps 90:2, Ps 103:17.

(A Prayer of Moses the man of God.)

Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.

Before the mountains were born,

Or Thou didst give birth to the earth and the world,

Even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.

(Psalm 90:1-2)

([Let this Vocal of "Shelter to Every Generation — stir the missionary embers of your heart"](#))

Can't Go to An Unreached People Group? Yes you can!

Pray every day through the [Global Prayer Digest](#)

About 225 of the over 412 uses of Olam are used to convey the meaning of **EVERLASTING** (including forever, eternal, eternity, etc) -

ages(1), all successive(1), always(1), ancient(13), ancient times(3), continual(1), days of old(1), **eternal**(2), **eternity**(3), ever(10), **Everlasting**(2), **everlasting**(110), **forever**(136), **forever and ever**(1), **forever***(70), **forevermore***(1), lasting(1), long(2), long ago(3), long past(1), long time(3), never*(17), old(11), permanent(10), permanently(1), perpetual(29), perpetually(1).

Boice agrees with **Gesenius** explaining that...

olam, translated "eternal," originally meant that which was secret, hidden, concealed, or unknown. The Jews used the word when they wanted to refer to an unknown or indefinite time.

Thus, in Leviticus 25:32, **olam** is translated "at any time" (KJV) or "always" (NIV) (**Ed**: NET = perpetual, NAS = permanent).

In Joshua 24:2, it means "long ago" (NIV) (NET = distant past; KJV = in old time).

From the idea of an indefinite past or future, the Jews soon developed the idea of **eternity**," which referred to the incalculable and unknown past and to the incalculable and unknown future. **Olam** came to mean "**everlasting**" and is generally so translated in our Bibles (**Ed**: See list above).

Where the word (**olam**) is used of God, it usually also includes His immutability, or unchangeableness. Times change, people change, needs change. El Olam never changes. This is the meaning of the word in Psalm 100:5: "For the Lord is good and his love endures *forever*; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (italics mine). The word has the same significance in Isaiah 40:28. (italics mine).

BDB says **olam** = long duration, antiquity, futurity

Arnold Fruchtenbaum has this comment on **olam**...

The root meaning of the word **olam** is that which is "secret," "hidden," "concealed," or "unknown." **Olam** implies an unknown or indefinite period of time. Again, the term "**everlasting**" does not carry the concept of eternity as the English word would, but stands for an indefinite period of time or "up to the end" of a period of time, to be determined by context. Only because God's nature is everlasting can the term have the meaning "eternal" here (referring to Ge 21:33); He is indeed the Everlasting God. The point is that **olam** indicates an unknown period

of time, so that the context alone determines the time element applied, and in this context **everlasting** would be equivalent to the English sense of **eternal**. (Ariel's Bible commentary: The book of Genesis)

Olam means a very long time, an indefinite continuance into the distant future. Time immemorial. While *olam* often refers to time future, some uses refer to time past (Dt 32:7, Job 22:15, Jer 6:16, 18:15), without the idea of endless or limitless past.

Olam is translated in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** most often by the Greek word **aion**, which refers to an age or time. It denotes duration or continuance of time, but with great variety.

Baker writes that **olam**...

may cover a given person's lifetime (Ex. 21:6; 1Sa 1:22); a period of many generations (Josh. 24:2; Pr. 22:28); the time of the present created order (Dt. 33:15; Ps. 73:12); time beyond this temporal sphere, especially when used regarding God (Gen. 21:33; Ps. 90:2; Da 12:2, 7). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament).

Olam is used to express the eternal duration of the being of God (Ps 90:2, "From everlasting to everlasting"), and is the Hebrew synonym of the Greek *aion*, age.

W E Vine summarizes the nuances of olam:

First, in a few passages the word means "eternity" in the sense of not being limited to the present. Thus, in Eccl. 3:11 we read that God had bound man to time and given him the capacity to live "above time" (i.e., to remember yesterday, plan for tomorrow, and consider abstract principles); yet He has not given him divine knowledge.

Second, the word signifies "remotest time" or "remote time." In 1Chr. 16:36, God is described as blessed "from everlasting to everlasting" (KJV, "for ever and ever"), or from the most distant past time to the most distant future time.

In passages where God is viewed as the One Who existed before the creation was brought into existence, **olam** may mean:

(1) **"at the very beginning"**: (Isa. 46:9)

(2) **"from eternity, from the pre-creation, till now"**: (Ps. 25:6).

In other passages, the word means **"from (in) olden times"**: Ge 6:4.

In Isa. 42:14, the word is used hyperbolically meaning **"for a long time"**:

This word may include all the time between the ancient beginning and the present: (Jer. 28:8).

The word can mean **"long ago" (from long ago)**: (Jer. 2:20).

In Josh. 24:2, the word means **"formerly; in ancient times."**

Jer. 5:15 means **"ancient"**:

When used with the negative, *olam* can mean **"never"**: (Isa. 63:19). Similar meanings emerge when the word is used without a preposition and in a genitive relationship to some other noun.

With the preposition **ad**, the word can mean **"into the indefinite future"**: (Deut. 23:3). The same construction can signify **"as long as one lives"**: (1Sa 1:22). This construction then sets forth an extension into the indefinite future, beginning from the time of the speaker.

In the largest number of its occurrences, *olam* appears with the preposition *le*. This construction is weaker and less dynamic in emphasis than the previous phrase, insofar as it envisions a "simple duration." This difference emerges in 1Ki 2:33, where both phrases occur. *Le olam* is applied to the curse set upon the dead Joab and his descendants. The other more dynamic phrase (*ad olam*), applied to David and his descendants, emphasizes the ever-continued, ever-acting presence of the blessing extended into the "indefinite future": "Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever [*le olam*]; but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever [*ad olam*] from the Lord."

In Ex 21:6 the phrase *le olam* means "as long as one lives": This is its emphasis in Ge 3:22, the first biblical occurrence of *olam*

The same emphasis on "simple duration" pertains when *olam* is used in passages such as Ps. 61:8, where it appears by itself: "So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows." The parallelism demonstrates that *olam* means "day by day," or "continually."

In Gen. 9:16, the word (used absolutely) means the "most distant future"

In other places, the word means "without beginning, without end, and ever-continuing": " (Isa. 26:4).

Olam - used in 412 verses in the OT (Vine says olam "appears 440 time in Biblical Hebrew) - Ge 3:22; 6:3,4; 9:12, 16; 13:15; 17:7, 8, 13, 19; 21:33; 48:4; 49:26; Ex 3:15; 12:14, 17, 24; 14:13; 15:18; 19:9; 21:6; 27:21; 28:43; 29:9, 28; 30:21; 31:16, 17; 32:13; 40:15; Lev 3:17; 6:18, 22; 7:34, 36; 10:9, 15; 16:29, 31, 34; 17:7; 23:14, 21, 31, 41; 24:3, 8, 9; 25:32, 34, 46; Nu 10:8; 15:15; 18:8, 11, 19, 23; 19:10, 21; 25:13; Dt 5:29; 12:28; 13:16; 15:17; 23:3, 6; 28:46; 29:29; 32:7, 40; 33:15, 27; Josh 4:7; 8:28; 14:9; 24:2; Jdg 2:1; 1Sa 1:22; 2:30; 3:13, 14; 13:13; 20:15, 23, 42; 27:8, 12; 2Sa 3:28; 7:13, 16, 24, 25, 26, 29; 12:10; 22:51; 23:5; 1Kgs 1:31; 2:33, 45; 8:13; 9:3, 5; 10:9; 2Kgs 5:27; 21:7; 1Chr 15:2; 16:15, 17, 34, 36, 41; 17:12, 14, 22, 23, 24, 27; 22:10; 23:13, 25; 28:4, 7, 8, 9; 29:10, 18; 2Chr 2:4; 5:13; 6:2; 7:3, 6, 16; 9:8; 13:5; 20:7, 21; 30:8; 33:4, 7; Ezra 3:11; 9:12; Neh 2:3; 9:5; 13:1; Job 7:16; 22:15; 41:4; Ps 5:11; 9:5, 7; 10:16; 12:7; 15:5; 18:50; 21:4; 24:7, 9; 25:6; 28:9; 29:10; 30:6, 12; 31:1; 33:11; 37:18, 27, 28; 41:12, 13; 44:8; 45:2, 6, 17; 48:8, 14; 49:8, 11; 52:8, 9; 55:22; 61:4, 7; 71:1; 72:17, 19; 73:12, 26; 75:9; 77:5, 7; 78:66, 69; 79:13; 81:15; 85:5; 86:12; 89:1, 2, 4, 28, 36, 37, 52; 90:2; 92:8; 93:2; 100:5; 102:12; 103:9, 17; 104:5, 31; 105:8, 10; 106:1, 31, 48; 107:1; 110:4; 111:5, 8, 9; 112:6; 113:2; 115:18; 117:2; 118:1, 2, 3, 29; 119:44, 52, 89, 93, 98, 111, 112, 142, 144, 152, 160; 121:8; 125:1, 2; 131:3; 133:3; 135:13; 136:1, 2, 3; 138:8; 139:24; 143:3; 145:1, 2, 13, 21; 146:6, 10; 148:6; Pr 8:23; 10:25, 30; 22:28; 23:10; 27:24; Eccl 1:4, 10; 2:16; 3:11, 14; 12:5; Isa 9:7; 14:20; 24:5; 25:2; 26:4; 30:8; 32:14, 17; 33:14; 34:10, 17; 35:10; 40:8, 28; 42:14; 44:7; 45:17; 46:9; 47:7; 51:6, 8, 9, 11; 54:8; 55:3, 13; 56:5; 57:11, 16; 58:12; 59:21; 60:15, 19, 20, 21; 61:4, 7, 8; 63:9, 11, 12, 16, 19; 64:4, 5; Jer 2:20; 3:5, 12; 5:15, 22; 6:16; 7:7; 10:10; 17:4, 25; 18:15, 16; 20:11, 17; 23:40; 25:5, 9, 12; 28:8; 31:3, 40; 32:40; 33:11; 35:6; 49:13, 33; 50:5; 51:26, 39, 57, 62; Lam 3:6, 31; 5:19; Ezek 16:60; 25:15; 26:20, 21; 27:36; 28:19; 35:5, 9; 36:2; 37:25, 26, 28; 43:7, 9; 46:14; Da 9:24; 12:2, 3, 7; Hos 2:19; Joel 2:2, 26, 27; 3:20; Amos 9:11; Obad 1:10; Jonah 2:6; Mic 2:9; 4:5, 7; 5:2; 7:14; Hab 3:6; Zeph 2:9; Zech 1:5; Mal 1:4; 3:4

Some representative uses of **olam**...

Genesis 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live **forever**"--

Genesis 6:3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man **forever**, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

Genesis 9:12 God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all **successive** (perpetual = KJV; future - ESV, subsequent=NET, perpetual = KJV) (Lxx = aionios - [see note above](#)) generations

Genesis 13:15 (Jehovah to Abram = Ge 13:14) for all **the land** which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants **forever**.

MacArthur comments: Strikingly and unmistakably, the Lord deeded the Land (v. 14—look in all directions, and v. 17—walk in all directions) in perpetuity to Abram and his descendants, whom He declared would be definitely innumerable (v. 16—as the dust).

W. Griffith-Thomas: Let us ponder these wonderful promises. They are to be interpreted literally and spiritually. They are already having their primary fulfilment in the Church of Christ as Abraham's spiritual seed (Gal. 3:7-9, 16), but there will surely be a literal fulfilment in the future to the Jewish nation (Rom. 11:26-29). (Genesis Commentary-Devotional)

Genesis 17:7 "I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an **everlasting** covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 "I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an **everlasting possession**; and I will be their God."

Genesis 17:13 **everlasting covenant**

Genesis 17:19 But God said, "No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an **everlasting covenant** for his descendants after him.

Genesis 48:4 and He said to me, 'Behold, I will make you fruitful and numerous, and I will make you a company of peoples, and will give this land to your descendants after you for an **everlasting possession**.'

Exodus 3:15 God, furthermore, said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'The LORD, the God

of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name **forever**, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.

Leviticus 25:32 'As for cities of the Levites, the Levites have **apermanent** right of redemption for the houses of the cities which are their possession.

Joshua 24:2 Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, 'From **ancient times** (Lxx = arche = beginning) your fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set **eternity** in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

Ecclesiastes 3:14 I know that everything God does will remain **forever**; there is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it, for God has so worked that men should fear Him.

Proverbs 10:25 When the whirlwind passes, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has (better "are") an everlasting foundation.

NET Note Comment: The metaphor ("righteous are an everlasting foundation") compares the righteous to an everlasting foundation to stress that they are secure when the catastrophes of life come along. He is fixed in a covenantal relationship and needs not to fear passing misfortunes. The wicked has no such security.

Pr 8:23 "From **everlasting** (Lxx = aion; eternity = NET; Ages ago = ESV) I was established, from the beginning, from the earliest times (qedem) of the earth.

Psalms 5:11 But let all who take refuge (NET=take shelter) in You be glad, Let them **ever** sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You.

NET Note Comment: Take shelter. "Taking shelter" in the Lord is an idiom for seeking his protection. Seeking his protection presupposes and even demonstrates the subject's loyalty to the Lord. In the psalms those who "take shelter" in the Lord are contrasted with the wicked and equated with those who love, fear and serve the Lord (Ps 31:17-20, 34:21-22)

Love Your Name = "Lovers of Your Name" = those who are loyal to the Lord.

Psalms 103:17, 18 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those who remember His commandments to do them.

TERMS MODIFIED BY EVERLASTING

Summary of terms modified by "everlasting" (**olam**)...

1. Everlasting covenant (Ge 9:16)
2. Everlasting covenant (Ge 17:7, 14, 19))
3. Everlasting possession (Ge 17:8)
4. Everlasting God (Ge 21:33)
5. Everlasting possession (Ge 48:4)
6. Everlasting hills (Ge 49:26)
7. Everlasting covenant (Lev 24:8)
8. Everlasting hills (Dt 33:15)
9. Everlasting arms (Dt 33:27)
10. Everlasting covenant (2Sa 23:5)
11. Everlasting covenant (1Chr 16:17, 34)
12. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (1Chr 16:41)
13. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (2Chr 5:13)
14. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (2Chr 7:3, 6, 20:21)
15. Everlasting reproach (Ps 78:66)

16. Everlasting (God) (Ps 93:2)
 17. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 100:5)
 18. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 103:17)
 19. Everlasting covenant (Ps 105:10)
 20. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 106:1, 48)
 21. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 107:1)
 22. Everlasting (truth) (Ps 117:2)
 23. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 118:1, 2, 3, 4, 29)
 24. Everlasting (righteousness) (Ps 119:142)
 25. Everlasting (righteous ordinances) (Ps 119:160)
 26. Everlasting (Name) (Ps 135:13)
 27. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 136:1-26, every verse)
 28. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Ps 138:8)
 29. Everlasting way (Ps 139:24)
 30. Everlasting kingdom (Ps 145:13)
 31. Everlasting foundation (Pr 10:25)
 32. Everlasting covenant (Isa 24:5)
 33. Everlasting Rock (Isa 26:4)
 34. Everlasting joy (Isa 35:10)
 35. Everlasting God (Isa 40:38)
 36. Everlasting salvation (Isa 45:17)
 37. Everlasting joy (Isa 51:11)
 38. Everlasting lovingkindness (Isa 54:8)
 39. Everlasting covenant (Isa 55:3)
 40. Everlasting sign (Isa 55:13)
 41. Everlasting name (to eunuchs) (Isa 56:5)
 42. Everlasting pride (Israel) (Isa 60:15)
 43. Everlasting light (Isa 60:19, 20)
 44. Everlasting joy (Isa 61:7)
 45. Everlasting covenant (Isa 61:8)
 46. Everlasting Name (Isa 63:12) <-> **KJV adds:** Everlasting (Thy Name) (Isa 63:16)
 47. Everlasting King (Jer 10:10) (See also Ps 29:10)
 48. Everlasting disgrace (Jer 20:11)
 49. Everlasting reproach (Jer 23:40)
 50. Everlasting humiliation (Jer 23:40)
 51. Everlasting desolation (Jer 25:9) ???
 52. Everlasting desolation (Jer 25:9)
 53. Everlasting love (Jer 31:3)
 54. Everlasting covenant (Jer 32:40)
 55. Everlasting (lovingkindness) (Jer 33:11)
 56. Everlasting covenant (Jer 50:5)
 57. Everlasting covenant (Ezek 16:60)
 58. Everlasting enmity (Ezek 25:15)
 59. Everlasting enmity (Ezek 35:5)
 60. Everlasting desolation (Ezek 35:9)
 61. Everlasting heights (Ezek 36:2)
 62. Everlasting covenant (Ezek 37:26)
 63. Everlasting kingdom (Da 4:3) ('alam = Aramaic equivalent of olam)
 64. Everlasting dominion (Da 4:34) ('alam = Aramaic equivalent of olam)
 65. Everlasting dominion (Da 7:14) ('alam = Aramaic equivalent of olam)
 66. Everlasting kingdom (Da 7:27) ('alam = Aramaic equivalent of olam)
 67. Everlasting righteousness (Da 9:24)
 68. Everlasting life (Da 12:2)
 69. Everlasting contempt (Da 12:2)
 70. Everlasting (ways) (Hab 3:6)
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The Everlasting God rightly deserves this everlasting doxology...

Now to Him (The Everlasting God) Who is able to keep you from stumbling & to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
BE GLORY, MAJESTY, DOMINION AND AUTHORITY,
BEFORE ALL TIME AND NOW AND FOREVER.

Amen.

(Jude 24-25⁺)