

# The Timing of Christian Salvation

A very strong argument for Biblical Christian Universalism centers on the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words, “olam” and “aion” and their derivatives. A case can be made that these words in their original context referred to a definite period of time, or successive periods of time, each with a beginning and an end. The literal translation of the nouns would be “age” or “succession of ages.” The adjective forms of the words would be literally translated as “age-during” or “pertaining to an age or ages.”

Some would argue that the ages in question do not necessarily have to be of limited duration, but instead could refer to a time period of “indefinite” duration, with the context determining the meaning and intent of the original Hebrew and Greek words. It could be that in some contexts, the intent would be to convey the meaning of an infinite period of time. According to this argument, the writers used the best, though imperfect, word or words available in their vocabulary to express a time period of unlimited duration. In my view, it is quite possible that many of the writers, at least in some contexts, intended that meaning. Assuming they were right about Christian salvation and/or condemnation lasting for “all time,” a strong case could still be made for universalism.

In order to make my case, I would only need to demonstrate that time, although of indefinite duration, cannot possibly be of infinite duration. Time as we now understand it only has relevance in relation to the space/time universe in which we live. Once released from our physical bodies, our souls or spirits (ie. our consciousness) enter an eternal heavenly domain in which time as we know it does not technically exist, at least not as commonly understood, and Einstein’s theory of relativity no longer applies. The universe in which we currently reside is not of infinite duration. It had a beginning in time, and eventually it will end. At the end of the universe, time as we know it will also have ended.

I believe that the timing and duration of Christian salvation only have relevance within the confines of our space/time universe. Once released from the confines of this life, all bets are off, and we return to our original state as infinite beings with no beginning or end. In the Bible, Christian salvation is described many different ways. There are past, present and future components to it. Christians have been saved, are currently being saved, and will be saved in the future, depending on what aspect of the salvation experience is being referred to. I have quoted elsewhere many Scriptures in support of this.

At the end of time, at the conclusion of our earthly stage of existence (or stages, if you believe in reincarnation), all of us will be fully reconciled with God, and God will be truly “all in all.” Time will be no more.