

eternallife

Eternal Life vs. Fleeting Life

In the Talmud, there are several references to the rabbinic concept of **Hayei Olam** (Hi-YAY Oh-LAHM) - meaning *eternal life*. Often it was contrasted with **Hayei Sha-Ah** (Hi-YAY Sha-AH) - meaning *fleeting life*, or earthly life led by a person "with the soul of a cow." Usually the rabbis didn't speak of one as before death and the other after death. Rather *eternal life* or "lasting life" referred to living a life **focused** on matters of eternal importance - living now as if you were living for eternity. John seems to think of this when he says:

Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3 NIV

Eternal life was life in its best sense, both now and extending into the future. Paul indicates in Romans 6:4 that if we now are living in our *eternal life* we should not let sin reign over us, but live the way God designed us to live. Just as Jesus now has eternal life, we have it too, here and now, and extending after we die. Paul exhorts us in 1 Tim 6:11-12 to:

"pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

We are not obliged to give all our money away, but **our focus** should be to use it to invest in eternal things - sharing the Gospel, deepening our relationships, and helping others in need. We have Jesus' blessing to spend our money extravagantly on things that will show God's love. We should also look at how we spend our time - on ourselves; or else on God and others. Do we fill our extra time with mindless entertainment, empty TV shows or godless living? Or do we invest in people who will live forever by nurturing friendships, showing hospitality, raising children, and loving those who hurt? Paul writes:

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. Gal 6:7-10 NIV

Will you live a life motivated by kindness and generosity full of deep relationships, acts of service and sacrifice, where you "bear the burdens of others and thus fulfill the law of Christ?" Or, will you live the animal-like existence of most of humanity concerned about their short term material needs of today - making money, eating, vacationing, etc?

15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For everything in the world-the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does-comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever. 1 John 2:15-17 NIV

