

Translations & Tools

One solution for translating aion and aionon into English is to simply not translate them, but just transliterate them. That means the word is just spelled in English letters. This is the choice made for the Concordant Literal New Testament. Every time it translates aion as eon, and every time it translates aionion as eonian. This approach does not give any interpretation, but allows us to judge from the context what the meaning is, rather than have someone else decide for us what they think the meaning should be. The downside of this approach is that, while it provides accuracy and makes it easier for us to use in study, it does not always make for easy reading. In other words, the language may not always seem to flow and sound like our normal speech.

A different approach is taken by Young's Literal Translation (YLT), which usually translates aion and aionios as "age" and "age-during."

It can be wise to have more than one Bible translation. Some are more useful for doing in-depth word studies, and some are better for every day reading.

By using a Strong's Concordance, or a free computer Bible program like e-Sword¹, anyone can easily look up and see what Greek word is behind the English translation of any Bible word. So, it does not require a lot of money or a lot of education to be able to see what Greek word was used in any verse of the New Testament. Of course, this does not mean you will understand everything by using this approach -- far from it. I am simply pointing out that everyone can, if they desire, at least "look under the hood" and see which Greek words were translated into our English Bible verses.

e-Sword is a great tool if you have a computer. It comes with several Bible translations, including Young's Literal Translation. If you search for them, you can also find free copies of the Concordant Literal Version and Rotherham's Emphasized Bible to use with e-Sword. These three translations are still in print. You may not enjoy reading them, but they can be beneficial for study.

There are other translations that did not translate aion by words that meant eternity. I have 15 in my possession. But the only ones still in print are the three listed in the previous paragraph.

Another helpful study tool to have if you desire to do more extensive study is "The English-Greek Reverse Interlinear New Testament: English Standard Version." It combines a modern translation with the Greek text, a transliteration of the Greek words, and the Strong's number of each word so you can do further study.

¹ e-Sword is a free Bible software program for Windows found at www.e-sword.net. Macintosh and Linux users require additional software that must be purchased to run the program.