

the land of Canaan for an *everlasting* possession." And yet He hath cast them out from it 1800 years ago.

The Covenant of Circumcision was to be an *everlasting* covenant, though it has long since been abolished by Jehovah himself. And the priesthood of Aaron was set up on Divine authority, as an *everlasting* priesthood. And yet by that very authority it was abolished nearly 2000 years since, and the priesthood of Jesus set up in its place. See Genesis xvii: 48, and Exodus xl. So the sacrifice of atonement is pronounced an *everlasting* statute, though it lasted only through the law dispensation, and then gave place to the atonement of Christ. See Leviticus xvi. Now it is plain that the Sacred Record could not employ the word "*everlasting*" in these cases in the sense of strict eternity, otherwise Christianity is a human invention. The obvious meaning of the word in these Scriptures is duration, not limited by any specification, but determined only by the circumstances. The righteous were to inherit the land *forever*. The servant should serve his master *forever*. They shall be your bondmen *forever*. Again, "Out of the belly of hell cried I. The earth with her bars was about me *forever*"—Jonah ii. Here the word "*forever*" is applied to a punishment which lasted only *seventy-two hours*. And it is further described as being in hell, thus showing that one may be punished in hell *forever*, and yet only suffer three days and nights. The word "*everlasting*" occurs in the Old Testament 61 times—and all critical scholars admit that it is never there applied to punishment in a future state. The same phrase occurs in the New Testament 25 times. No one denies that when applied to the existence of *God* it conveys the sense of unlimited duration. But sin and punishment have not existed *from* eternity nor shall exist *to* eternity, like the infinite Jehovah. The question *when* the words are to have the meaning of absolute eternity, or when the sense is limited, is readily perceived by our own common usage of the word "*everlasting*." We speak of the everlasting Jehovah, and of a person as an everlasting brawler, &c. And we hazard the assertion that the author of the pastoral, or any other person, will find it impossible to prove, by any proper usage of the word, whether scriptural or popular, that when