

What Does the Bible Teach About Amen?

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction:

A. Deut. 27:11-16; 2Cor. 1:18-20

B. Where did "Amen" come from?

1. It may be one of the most ancient words in our language to remain in nearly unchanged form from its earliest origins
2. It is one of the most well-known words across nearly all languages.
3. Most of us use it every day, sometimes without realizing its significance.
4. The English word "amen" is a transliteration (untranslated, represented by corresponding letters in another alphabet) from the original Hebrew word "AMHN"
5. It has the same pronunciation, but with an English spelling; it has retained the original meaning.
6. Amen derives from a Hebrew root word "amhn" that means "to build up or support; to be firm, steady, trustworthy, faithful"; morally, it means "to be true or certain." (Strong's - H0549)
7. "Let it be granted, let it be done and unalterably confirmed" (Wilson's Old Testament Word Studies)

B. The Talmud teaches homiletically that the word Amen is an acronym for 'El melekh ne'eman, "God, our trustworthy King"

1. Amen is one of the few words of scripture which is written in its original Hebrew form. In fact, it is practically a universal word, adopted directly from the Hebrew into Greek, Latin, English, Spanish, and many other languages.

C. When we say Amen, we are declaring our trust and commitment to God who has already proven His faithfulness

1. Do you really think it's just part of a formula or ritual?
2. Prayer without an Amen is missing something critical
3. Why do we say Amen? What does it mean?
4. Amen is a word used so frequently in religion that one would think most Christians would know its meaning. Most do not. Others tend to use the word frivolously; some even think it simply means 'the end.'
5. Amen is much more than just the standard "thing to say," or the appropriate ending of a prayer.

D. In the KJV, Amen is preserved in a number of contexts. Notable ones include:

1. The of curses and blessings of the Law in Deuteronomy 27-28
2. A double amen ("amen and amen") occurs in Psalms (41:13, 72:19, 89:52), to confirm the words and invoke the fulfillment of them
3. Closing prayers with amen originates in the Lord's instructive prayer in Matthew 6:13
4. Amen occurs in several doctrinal statements of Paul in Romans (1:25, 9:5, 11:36, 15:33, ch. 16)
5. It concludes most of Paul's general epistles.

6. In Revelation 3:14, Jesus is referred to as, "the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation."
7. Amen concludes the New Testament at Rev. 22:21

I. "AMEN" IS GOD'S WORD OF AFFIRMATION

- A. Used a number of times of God
 1. Isa 65:15-16 - God is the God of "truth" (word=amen)
 - a. God will be faithful to his servants
 - a. Deut. 7:9 - "Faithful God" is literally "God the Amen"
 2. Rev 3:14 - Christ is the "Amen" faithful and true witness
 - a. Jesus is so faithful, He gave Himself up for us
- B. 2Cor. 1:18-20 - Yes and Amen go together
 1. Promises of God are "yes" and "amen"
 - a. Heb. 6:19 - Given as an anchor of hope
 2. When we say Amen to God, we are saying "yes"
 - a. When we say Amen, we are declaring our faith and trust
- C. 1Kings 1:34-36 - Shows agreement at the anointing of Solomon as king
- D. 1Chron. 16:35-36; Neh. 5:13 - "Amen" supports "Praise the Lord"
- E. Neh. 8:3-6 - Agreement to the reading of the law and the praise of God.
- F. 1Cor. 16:24; Gal. 6:18 - Paul often concluded his letters with "Amen"
- G. 1Cor. 14:15-16 - An implied command that "Amen" is said at the end of prayer
- H. Psalm 41:11-13, 72:17-20; Rom. 1:25, 9:5, 11:36 - Amen can be said twice in the same matter for emphasis

II. OUR COMMITMENT TO "AMEN"

- A. Consider what it means to say "Amen" - more than just agreement
 1. Neh. 9:38 - Binding agreement is called an "Amen"
 - a. Amen often used as a confirmation of an oath
 2. Amen is a statement of commitment
 - a. God's promises are "amen" and "yes,"
 - b. Our Amen is to be a "yes" of commitment as well
 3. This is the Biblical heart of faith and works
 - a. Faith is not faith without works or actions
 - b. Gen 15:6 - Abraham "believed" (Heb: Amen)
 - c. Heb. 2:4 - Righteous shall live by faith (Heb: Amen)
- B. Amen is a commitment of trust in God
 1. Making His priorities our priorities
 2. It is saying yes to doing it God's way

III. AMEN IS POWERFUL

- A. "Amen" means so much more than the prayer is finished. It means:
 1. We apprehend (understand) - 1Cor. 14:15-16, 20
 2. We affirm - 1Tim. 1:6-7; Psalm 106:48
 3. We agree - When we say "Amen," we agree to take action based on what we have affirmed - Ecc. 5:5; James 5:12

- B. "Amen" is not just a word we say, but a decision we make. When we say it, we show our approval, our endorsement, our commitment to what was stated.
 - 1. Too often Christians let denominations dictate their speech; some sects use "Amen" and "Praise the Lord" so often it has become little more than a chant.
 - 2. Saying Amen liberally doesn't mean we have become liberal.
 - 3. Have you carefully listened to the prayer? Do you agree with it? Then say, "Amen"
 - 4. Do you strongly agree with something in the sermon or class? Then support the Gospel by saying "Amen"
- C. Saying Amen in our assemblies
 - 1. It is not a healthy indicator that we do not hear Amens in our worship.
 - 2. Why are you not saying Amen?
 - a. Too sophisticated? Is saying Amen beneath you? So you are voiding an apostolic instruction over pride?
 - b. Too afraid or embarrassed? So you are more afraid of sounding out of place than you are of disappointing the Lord?
 - c. Too much trouble or too lazy or too bored? So how boring do you think perdition will be?
 - d. Don't think it is important, or old fashioned? So understanding, approving, agreeing, supporting, and committing to the Gospel and prayer is not important or old fashioned? Good luck with that attitude in Judgment
 - e. You say it silently to yourself? That entirely misses the point and purpose of saying Amen. If it is inaudible to others, it is as if you didn't say it at all. What if Israel did this at Ebal and Gerazim?
 - 3. You know what I find sad about most congregations of the Lord's people? There are more women asking if it is scriptural for them to say Amen than there are men with the courage to say it out loud.

IV. "CAN WOMEN SAY AMEN IN WORSHIP?"

- A. The poor Bible student bases his negative answer on 1Cor. 14:34-35 which says that women must be silent when the church is assembled. But that which proves too much proves nothing. It does not forbid all speaking and teaching by women in the assembly. There are exceptions to this qualified by commands and Divinely approved examples
 - 1. If a woman is literally forbidden to speak at all, how can she sing, teaching and admonishing one another in song? - Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - 2. How could she confess Christ before the assembly prior to baptism? Rom. 10:9-10
 - 3. How could a woman confess her public sins? - James 5:16; 1John 1:9
 - 4. How could a woman instruct her children to behave and be quiet during worship services?
- B. The question becomes -- are there commands or Divinely approved examples of women saying Amen in the assembly?

1. There are multiple commands and examples of women saying Amen in worship assemblies in the Old Testament
2. History records that women said Amen in Jewish synagogue worship in early New Testament times
3. However, to date, I have found no command, Divinely approved example, or Divine implication that women said Amen in assemblies of the Lord's church. Until it can be seen clearly in scripture, the answer remains No.
4. All the more reason for you men to grow some spiritual courage, open your mouths, and support the Gospel and prayers by saying Amen

Conclusion: When You Say AMEN, You Are:

- A. Affirming from the heart that you believe that what God said is perfect, absolutely true, and faithful
- B. Making an affirmation in agreement to what is being read or preached as the gospel truth
- C. Affirming the certainty that your prayers and petitions, when asked in accordance to God's will being done, are pleasing to God, and will be heard by Him.
- D. Affirming a solemn oath of agreement and loyalty before God, which should never be uttered lightly