

Personal Questions that the Bible Answers

Why do we end our prayers with “Amen”?

First of all, many of us routinely say “Amen” at the end of prayers that we pray or hear. How about you? What do you mean when you say, “Amen”?

Have you ever wondered these questions?

— Approximately how many times does the word “Amen” appear in the Bible? Obviously, it depends on the version. . .

Q. Does *Amen* appear more in the Old or New Testament? . . . Why would you think so? . . .

Q. How often is it used in the OT? . . . **Q.** How about the NT? . . .

Q. Did Christ ever say, *Amen*? . . .

Q. What is the very last word in *your* Bible?

Here’s an example of version differences for “Amen” occurrences, depending on the version:

NIV: OT = 25 times (in Deut., 12 times or 49%); NT = 29 times

ESV: OT = 28 times, NT = 28 times (equal frequency)

KJV: OT = 28 times, NT = 51 times (almost double in the NT)

MSG: OT = 4 times, NT 4 times (other words used for *Amen*)

Q. Have you ever seen or heard this term: “Amen and Amen”? . . .

A. The fixed phrase “Amen and Amen” was written three times by King David the psalmist: [Psalms 41:13](#); [72:19](#); [89:52](#).

Q. What does *Amen* mean and how is it used? . . . **A.** *Amen* is commonly used after a prayer, creed, or other formal statement. It’s spoken to express solemn ratification or agreement. It’s used adverbially to mean “certainly,” “verily” (KJV), “it is so,” “surely,” “let it come to pass,” “I believe,” and “Praise God!”

Amen is most often used at the conclusion of *formal* prayers. It’s also used to *punctuate personal* prayers, as in “*Amen and Amen.*”

Amen can also be used as an affirmation outside of religious settings. If you call out, “We need access to quality education for all children,” people might respond, “Amen!” (an exclamation).

Amen is derived from the Hebrew *āmuna*, which means “truth,” “certainty,” “faith,” and “trust.” In English, the word has two primary pronunciations: “short-a” [ah-men] and “long-a” [ey-men].

It can be expressed in endless ways, from a soft whisper to a joyous shout. Either way, when pronounced as “*ah-men*,” it’s not meant to suggest a woman’s putdown of men: [ah-men]. 😊

Seriously. Christ said *Amen* 100+ times (KJV). He gave us an outline for prayer in [Matthew 6:7–13](#) (and [Luke 11:2–4](#)), in which he concluded his prayer with *Amen* in Bible versions ending with, “*For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*”

Q. So, where in the Bible do we learn why the word “Amen” is added after a prayer? **A.** We say, *Amen*, at the close of prayer, following this biblical example: [Deut. 27:14–26](#) NIV. In it, people respond to curses pronounced by God for various sins.

God had Moses tell the Israelite people to obey God’s laws; he intentionally repeated each law or commandment so that everyone understood what was expected of them. After each pronouncement was recited, people were to say, “*Amen.*” Levitical priests were told to recite these warnings/curses to all of Israel in a loud voice; the people were to respond by closing in agreement with a reassuring *Amen*.

This shows that people applauded the righteous sentencing that was handed down on them by their holy God. They responded, in effect, “*So let it be.*” Their *Amen* attested to the conviction of the hearers that the curses or laws that they’d heard were true, just, and certain.

Interestingly, seven OT references link *Amen* with “praise.” First, [1 Chronicles 16:34–36](#). The sentence found in v. 36b, “*Then all the people said ‘Amen’ and ‘Praise the LORD,’*” typifies the connection between “Amen” and “praise.”

Look at these two OT verses that link “Amen” with “praise”: [Nehemiah 5:13](#) and [8:5–6](#). In each, the people of Israel affirmed Ezra’s exalting of God by worshiping the Lord and obeying him. The highest expression of “praise” to God is obedience. When we say “Amen” to God’s commands and his pronouncements, our praise is sweet music to his ears.

There’s something noteworthy in the NT. Most of its writers use “Amen” at the end of their epistles. And, **Apostle John** uses it (in the KJV) at the end of his gospel, two of his three letters, and the book of Revelation (where it appears nine times). Each time in Revelation, he connects *Amen* with praising and glorifying God, while referring to the second coming and the end of the age.

And, **Apostle Paul**, in his letters to some of the fourteen churches he founded, says *Amen* to the blessings he pronounces on them. So do **Peter** and **Jude** in their three letters (KJV). This implies that John, Paul, Peter, and Jude are saying this: “May it be that the Lord will truly grant these blessings upon you.”

When we Christians say “Amen” at the end of our prayers, we’re following the model of the apostles. They were the ones who asked this of Father God: “Please let it be as we have prayed.” Remembering the connection between *Amen* and the *praise* of obedience, all prayers should be prayed according to the will of God. Praying with that focus, when we say, “*Amen*,” we can be confident that God will respond with his “so be it.” He’ll then gladly grant our requests, according to his will.

We find God’s promised confirmation — his *Amen* — in [John 14:13](#) and [1 John 5:14](#). Especially in v. 14, John exhorts us to be

confident in what we pray. We believers can know assuredly that God definitely hears our prayers. However, this verse specifies that getting a positive answer to prayer is based on our asking “according to *his* will.” Hey: Can I hear your *Amen* now?

There’s one more essential NT passage to read: [2 Corinthians 1:20](#). It focuses on God’s promises and our glorification of him. Read and realize how Paul uses the *Amen* most appropriately to confirm all that the Lord is in our lives: *“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are ‘Yes’ in Christ. And so through him, the “Amen” is spoken by us — to the glory of God.” . . .* When we hear a promise from the Bible, we can then *assuredly* say aloud, “_____.”

Closing question: **Q.** What name does John give to Jesus in [Rev. 3:14](#)? **A.** “The _____.”

Remember: Don’t merely say “Amen” casually and routinely! Instead, realize this: It is through God, for his glory, that we use the word “Amen”! So, say “Amen” with purpose, with conviction.



Question:

Should we say Amen at the end of saying or hearing a prayer?

Answer: Yes, with confidence! First, remember that we’ve found that saying, “Amen,” after a prayer is a biblical practice!

In addition, if we agree with what’s been prayed, we’re then to make the words of that prayer *our* words by declaring, “Amen” for “So be it.” By doing that, we’ll abide by what was prayed and we’ll agree that everything in that prayer was true, trustworthy, and reliable, amen!