

AMEN! – Rev 3:14

“O ‘Twas a Joyful Sound” – The Way We Worship #4

Introduction – How many times have you already said, “Amen” this morning? Have you thought about what you meant, why you said it, why we said it together? Many sing an amen at the end of a hymn: we speak (shout!) ours. Why? Together, the congregation is involved in a liturgy throughout the service and so the liturgy should display this corporate, covenantal presence, which the corporate amen accomplishes. Mumbled thoughtlessly, it becomes little more than an indication of the end of a prayer. Spoken, sung, even shouted, with understand and faith, it seals the words of God and of His people, brings glory to His name, and acts as a battering ram upon the world of unbelief. Jerome (4th Century AD) commented that when visitors were in the early church, they were often frightened at the “Amen”; they said it had the sound of thunder. If we study the use of this word throughout the scriptures, we will be amazed at how vast its meaning and use is. Let us make this study and sermon both instructional and devotional, for we are coming before the Great AMEN Himself.

The Word “Amen” – From the Hebrew, this word could be translated into Greek, *genoita*, or in English “*let it be*”. But it isn’t in most situations, and apparently was brought into the Gentile churches transliterated rather than translated because its meaning was much deeper than simply “Yes, let it be so.”

Amen, the Name of God – The word is used to describe the character of God or even the name of God. He is the God of “truth”, that is, the God of “Amen” (Is 65:16). More explicitly, John records these words of Jesus – “*These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God...*” (Rev 3:14). Jesus uses this word often, though in our translations we have changed it to “*verily*,” “*truly*,” or “*assuredly*” (example – Matt 24:34, John 12:24).

The Amen of Divine Purposes – There was a day before all days, when the Father chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3). He conceived a plan of redemption, foresaw a world ruined by sin, and determined a number whom no man could number to be redeemed for Himself through the blood of His Son, the forgiveness of sins (Eph 1:4-5). This is why Jesus is called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev 13:8). The coming of Jesus is the great Amen of those purposes. God’s “Amen” is the gift of His Son and the salvation of His chosen. “Amen” in that sense is the gospel come forth. Paul did not preach the great “*maybe*”, the potentiality of salvation. Paul preached the promises of Christ as “Yes” and “Amen” (2 Cor 1:20).

Our Response to the God of Amen – The word comes down to us untranslated, but not because it is a magic word. We see its use by God’s people corporately in their worship of God because in that worship, their covenant with God is being redeclared and renewed (Psalm 106:48).

Covenant Oath-taking – Whether blessings or curses, the saying of Amen affirmed the obligations of God’s people to the covenant (Deut 27, Josh 8:30ff). And of course, Jesus, the Great Amen, became that curse for us (Gal 3:13). Having read the law of God, reestablishing His covenant with them, Ezra blesses God and all the people answered “Amen, Amen!” (Neh 8:4-6). Amen has the force of an oath, indicating our agreement and submission to what has been said and commanded.

Sealing a Benediction – There are many examples of benedictions in the Bible where God’s name is placed upon His people as a blessing in their commissioning. It is right and proper to seal that blessing with “Amen” (Gal 6:18, Heb 13:20-21, 1 Pet 5:10-11).

Prayers and Blessings to God – Jesus taught us to end our prayer with “Amen” (Matt 6:13). But He was teaching the end of the prayer with a blessing to God, a doxology. We see throughout the Scriptures God being blessed and those blessings being ended with “Amen” (Rom 1:25, Eph 3:20-21, Rev 1:6). When a man represents us in our corporate prayer time, we together seal ourselves to that prayer corporately with our “Amen.”

“Amen” at the end of a Psalm or Hymn – Almost every book of psalms (there are five) end with a doxology and an “Amen”. Remember, when we sing praise to God, we are also teaching and admonishing one another. When we sing these words of Christ, we place our Amen, the name of Christ, the promise of Christ, at the end, and we say “Amen” binding ourselves to the truth and commands we have sung.

AMEN! – The Sound of Faith – The more we understand the nature of this gathering, the more this gathering should grow in solemnity and liveliness. In the use of “Amen”, you should first note that mumbling it out unthinkingly is nothing less than taking His name in vain.

By Whom – As God’s body we should say our Amen together as one body, corporately. It emphasizes the fact that we are not simply being entertained by the religious professionals “up there.” “*And all the people shall answer and say, ‘Amen!’*” (Deut 27:15). “*And all the people said, ‘Amen!’ and praised the Lord*” (1 Chron 16:36). “*And all the assembly said ‘Amen!’ and praised the Lord*” (Neh 5:13). “*And let all the people say, ‘Amen!’*” (Psalm 106:48).

How – Volume is not required on the one hand. But I don’t know how we won’t find ourselves exclaiming our loud “Amens!” when we know we are responding at Mt. Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant (Heb 12:22-23). We must come with faith. And if we have come with faith, our “Amens” will thunder.

Jesus is Your AMEN as You Go – All of God’s promises are “Yes” and “Amen” in Christ. And are you in Christ? Then “*He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Phil 1:6). And all God’s people said, “Amen.” Then “*we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them*” (Eph 2:10). Amen. Then “*If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things*” (Rom 8:31-32). Amen. The God of Truth, the God of AMEN, told the Son, “*Ask of Me and I will give you the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession*” (Psalm 2:8). The Son, the Amen, upon His resurrection said to His disciples, “*All authority has been given to me in heaven and earth...*” and Matthew’s last word of His gospel is – AMEN.

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