

The Amen

By Anand Peter

"Amen" is one of the most often spoken words in Christendom, most often said at the end of a prayer, a sermon, or a hymn. The word "Amen" solemnly confirms what has gone before. Let us first discover what "Amen" actually means. It is a Hebrew word, derived from the Hebrew root aman, which stands for stability, and means "so be it," "I agree," "let it be so." Thus, when we say "Amen" at the end of our prayers, we are asking God, "please let it be as we have prayed."

We find the word "Amen" used in both the Old and New Testaments. Many Old Testament references link the word "Amen" with praise. In 1 Chronicles 16:36, we read: "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD."

New Testament writers also use "Amen" — some at the end of their epistles, others connecting it with praising and glorifying God, and with the promise of Christ's second coming: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Revelation 22:20-21).

Jesus is the great Confirmer; immutable and everlasting is the "Amen" in all His promises. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). If you come to Him, He will breathe "Amen" into your soul; His promise shall prove true to you. "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Revelation 3:14). "Amen," then, becomes "I AM WHO I AM" — an indescribable God — and "Amen" should be said with great reverence, ready to be revitalised by His Spirit. Punctuating every sentence of a sermon with "Praise the Lord" or "Amen" is a meaningless utterance, made merely for effect. "Amen" should sink in, not be passed over lightly.

Next time we say "Amen," let it be an imploration — an affirmation that we truly know Jesus keeps His promises, a glorification of our Creator, a simple means of breathing His grace into our inner selves, and an acceptance of Him as our never-failing, all-knowing Saviour. Amen.