

Psalms 41:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

Analysis

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting. Amen, and Amen. This doxology concludes both Psalm 41 and Book I of the Psalter (Psalms 1-41). The verse is not part of David's original composition but an editorial addition marking the first major division of the Psalter. Each of the five books (I-XLI, XLII-LXXII, LXXIII-LXXXIX, XC-CVI, CVII-CL) ends with similar doxology, mirroring the five books of Moses (Genesis-Deuteronomy).

"Blessed be the LORD God of Israel" (barukh Yahweh Elohei Yisrael, בָּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) is liturgical formula of praise. Barukh means blessed, praised, adored—the passive participle acknowledging God as worthy of blessing. Unlike ashrei (happiness of humans who walk rightly), barukh ascribes worth and honor to God. "LORD God of Israel" combines the covenant name (Yahweh) with emphasis on His relationship to His people (Elohei Yisrael). God is not abstract deity but covenant-keeping God bound to Israel in faithful love.

"From everlasting to everlasting" (min-ha'olam ve'ad-ha'olam, מִן־הָעוֹלָם וְעַד־הָעוֹלָם) emphasizes God's eternity. Olam means eternity, perpetuity, forever. The phrase spans from eternity past to eternity future—God exists before time began and will exist after time ends. Psalm 90:2 declares: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." This eternal nature distinguishes Yahweh from pagan gods tied to natural phenomena or human mortality.

"Amen, and Amen" (amen ve'amen, אָמֵן וְאָמֵן) concludes with double affirmation. Amen means "so be it," "truly," "certainly"—expressing agreement, confirmation, strong affirmation. The repetition intensifies: "Yes and yes!" "Truly and truly!" "So be it and so be it!" The congregation's response affirms the truth proclaimed. Jesus frequently used "Amen" (translated "Verily") to introduce solemn declarations, and doubled it in John's Gospel ("Verily, verily"). Revelation 3:14 calls Christ "the Amen, the faithful and true witness."

This doxology serves multiple functions:

1. Liturgical—providing congregational response in corporate worship
2. Structural—marking major division in the Psalter
3. Theological—affirming God's eternal nature and worthiness of praise regardless of circumstances described in preceding psalms
4. Covenantal—identifying God specifically as Israel's God while affirming His eternal existence beyond Israel's history.

Historical Context

The five-book structure of the Psalter parallels the Torah (Pentateuch), suggesting intentional editorial arrangement. Jewish tradition recognized this correspondence, with Midrash on Psalms stating: "As Moses gave five books of laws to Israel, so David gave five books of Psalms to Israel." Each book ends with doxology: Psalm 41:13 (Book I), Psalm 72:18-19 (Book II), Psalm 89:52 (Book III), Psalm 106:48 (Book IV), Psalm 150 (entire psalm as doxology for Book V).

These doxologies were likely added during the Psalter's compilation, possibly post-exile when the collection was finalized for temple worship. The repetitive structure provided liturgical framework for worship, with congregational response punctuating each major section. This mirrors ancient Near Eastern worship patterns where priest/worship leader would pronounce blessing and congregation would respond with affirmation.

The phrase "from everlasting to everlasting" appears in contexts emphasizing God's eternality and faithfulness across generations. Psalm 103:17 declares: "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him,

and his righteousness unto children's children." This affirms God's covenant faithfulness transcending individual lifetimes, extending to future generations.

"Amen" became standard liturgical response in both Jewish and Christian worship. Deuteronomy 27:15-26 records twelve curses with the people responding "Amen" to each. 1 Chronicles 16:36 describes David's psalm of thanksgiving with "all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD." Nehemiah 8:6 records: "Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands."

Early Christians continued this practice. Paul wrote: "how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?" (1 Corinthians 14:16), indicating corporate affirmation of prayer and worship. Revelation depicts heavenly worship with multitudes responding "Amen" (Revelation 5:14, 7:12, 19:4).

For contemporary readers, this doxology models appropriate response to God's Word and work: acknowledging His eternal nature, affirming His covenant faithfulness, and expressing wholehearted agreement with His character and purposes. Regardless of circumstances—whether blessing (Psalm 41:1-3) or betrayal (Psalm 41:9)—God remains eternally worthy of praise.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What is the significance of the Psalter being structured in five books parallel to the Torah?
2. How does affirming God's eternal nature ('from everlasting to everlasting') provide stability amid life's changing circumstances?
3. What does it mean to say 'Amen' to God's Word, and how does this corporate response shape worship and faith?

4. Why do you think the editors placed this doxology after Psalm 41, which includes themes of betrayal and sin?
5. How can believers cultivate the habit of concluding personal or corporate worship with explicit affirmation of God's worthiness?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|
| בָּרַךְ יְיָ | יְהוָה הוּא | אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | יְשׁוּעָה לְעוֹלָם | וְעַד | |
| Blessed | be the LORD | God | of Israel | and to everlasting | H5704 |
| H1288 | H3068 | H430 | H3478 | H5769 | |
| | | | | | |
| וְעַד | אָמֵן | אָמֵן | | | |
| and to everlasting | Amen | Amen | | | |
| H5769 | H543 | H543 | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 4:8 (References God): And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

Ephesians 1:3 (Blessing): Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Psalms 89:52 (Blessing): Blessed be the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 106:48 (Eternal Life): Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD.

Psalms 150:6 (References Lord): Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

Revelation 7:12 (Blessing): Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Chronicles 29:10 (Blessing): Wherefore David blessed the LORD before all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

Matthew 6:13 (Parallel theme): And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Jeremiah 28:6 (References Lord): Even the prophet Jeremiah said, Amen: the LORD do so: the LORD perform thy words which thou hast prophesied, to bring again the vessels of the LORD'S house, and all that is carried away captive, from Babylon into this place.

1 Corinthians 14:16 (Blessing): Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

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