

What does the word **Maranatha** mean used in the Bible?

Maranatha (Aramaic: either תא מרנא *maranâ thâ'* or אתא מרן: *maran 'athâ'*, Greek: Μαραναθα) is a two-word Aramaic formula, occurring only once in sacred scripture in the New Testament:

“The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca together with the church at their house send you many greetings in the Lord. All the brothers greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write you this greeting in my own hand. If anyone does not love the Lord, let him be accursed. Maranatha. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Corinthians 16:19-24)

If parsed *marana tha*, it is a request or petition, and means “our Lord, come;” but if parsed *maran atha*, it is a confession and means “our Lord has come.”

In this closing of St. Paul’s first letter to the believers of the early Christian Church in Corinth [modern-day Greece], he addresses serious issues that were taking place in the Church and instructs them on what they should be growing in their faith. Chapter 16 addresses specific things that Paul wanted them to be doing in several matters. It starts with Paul addressing what they should do in matters of taking up the weekly offering (verses 1-4). In verses 5-9, Paul provides details on his travel itinerary and how it is affected by the work needed in Ephesus. In verses 10-12, he addresses Timothy’s coming arrival and how they should receive him.

In context

In 1 Corinthians 16:13-18, Paul challenges them to “stand fast” in their faith and take to heart the things he has written concerning how they should conduct themselves. This was a letter of rebuke concerning the evil that they were allowing to take place. Finally, in the closing (1 Corinthians 16:19-23), Paul gives the final warning that, *“If any man love not the Lord [Jesus Christ], let him be accursed [Anathema] Maran atha.”* The use of the word “anathema” gives further clarification as to how the word Maranatha is being used.

What does anathema Maranatha mean?

(1) Of Chaldian origin (meaning *our Lord has come*); *Maranatha* (i.e. an exclamation of the approaching *divine judgment*, Maran-atha). It is also described as being of “Syriac” or Syrian origin as a watchword that is used to urge them to prepare for *the Lord’s coming*

(2) Combined, *anathema Maranatha* is used to describe a person that is cursed to receive the wrath of Jesus Christ at His second coming because of the person’s rejection of God by unbelief and embracing of evil. (cf. Revelation 19:11-21; Mark 1:15; Luke 21:31; Philippians 4:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:2).

Conclusion

Paul used the phrase *anathema Maran atha* in describing those who were cursed because of unbelief and embracing of evil to be dealt with by the Lord. It is also mentioned in the Didache (the Teachings of the Twelve Apostles), Chapter 10 (written in 65-80 AD) ([Communion] *“If anyone is holy, let him come; if anyone is not so, let him repent. Maranatha.”*).

(SR: <https://www.whatchristianswanttoknow.com/what-does-the-word-maranatha-mean-in-the-bible/>)