

THE BOOK OF LIFE

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I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Luke 10:17-20:** ¹⁷*The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in Your name.”* ¹⁸*He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. ¹⁹I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. ²⁰However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that **your names are written in heaven.**”*
- B. Concept found in both the O.T. and the N.T. – always refers to a list or register of the names of the saved

II. BOOK OF LIFE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. **Ex. 32:32-33:** ³²*“But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then **blot me out of the book You have written.**”* ³³*The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me **I will blot out of My book.**”* – Moses
- B. **Ps. 69:27-28:** ²⁷*Charge them [the wicked] with crime upon crime; do not let them **share in Your salvation.*** ²⁸*May they be **blotted out of the book of life** and not be listed with the righteous.* – David
- C. **Dan. 12:1:** *At that time Michael, the great prince who protects your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of nations until then. But at that time your people—everyone whose name is found written in the book—will be delivered.*

III. BOOK OF LIFE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. **Luke 10:20** – *rejoice that **your names are written in heaven.***
- B. **Phil. 4:3:** *...women... Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, **whose names are in the book of life.*** – Paul
- C. **Heb. 12:22-24:** ²²*But you have come to **Mount Zion**, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, ²³to the **church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.** You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, ²⁴to Jesus the mediator*

of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

1. “Written” [Gk. *apographo* = “to write off, enroll, register”]
 - a) Only found in Luke 2:1, 3, 5 (“taxed, census, register”)
 - b) Enrolled as citizens of heaven – Mt. Zion and Jerusalem (Phil. 3:20)
 2. “Firstborn” – the only way to be “registered” is through **birth**
 - a) **Ps. 87:1-6:** ¹*He has set His foundation on the holy mountain;* ²*the LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.* ³*Glorious things are said of you, O city of God.* ⁴*“I will record Rahab and Babylon among those who acknowledge me— Philistia too, and Tyre, along with Cush— and will say, ‘This one was **born in Zion.**’”* ⁵*Indeed, of Zion it will be said, “This one and that one were born in her, and the Most High himself will establish her.”* ⁶***The LORD will write in the register of the peoples: “This one was born in Zion.”***
 - b) **John 3:3-7** – “***must be born again***” [lit. “from above”]
- D. **Rev. 13:8:** *All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast— all **whose names have not been written in the book of life** belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.*
- E. **Rev. 20:11-15:** ¹¹*Then I saw a great white throne and Him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from His presence, and there was no place for them.* ¹²*And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. **Another book was opened, which is the book of life.** The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.* ¹³*The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.* ¹⁴*Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.* ¹⁵***If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.***
- F. Summary: There is a Book in heaven in which God writes the names of all those who have been “born from above”; He uses this book in determining each one’s final destiny at the time of Judgment

IV. CAN NAMES BE BLOTTED OUT OF THE BOOK?

- A. **Ex. 32:32-33:** ³² *“But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book You have written.”* ³³ *The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of My book.”*
1. “Blot” [Heb. *machah* = “to stroke or rub; by implication to erase; also to smooth (as if with oil or grease)”]
 2. Also in **Ps. 69:27-28:** ²⁷ *Charge them [the wicked] with crime upon crime; do not let them share in Your salvation.* ²⁸ *May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.*
 3. Also in Ps. 51:1, 9 – *“blot out my transgressions... all my iniquity”* [Good news: Sins can be blotted out now!]
- B. **Rev. 3:4-5:** ⁴ *Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with Me, dressed in white, for they are worthy.* ⁵ *He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before My Father and His angels.*
1. “Blot” always conveys the idea of removing something already present or existent [Gk. *exaleipho* (*ex* = “from, out” / *aleipho* = “to oil or smear”) “to smear out”]
 - a) In Acts 3:19, it refers to sins being blotted out
 - b) In Col. 2:14, it refers to blotting out handwriting (exactly what Rev. 3:5 is talking about—God blotting out His own handwriting in the Book of Life!)
 - c) In Rev. 7:17, 21:4 it speaks about wiping away tears
 2. Jesus’ statement makes no sense if there is no possibility of one’s name being removed or erased
- C. **Rev. 22:18-19 (NKJV):** ¹⁸ *For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;* ¹⁹ *and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book [Gk. *biblos* = “book”] of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

- D. These Scriptures all seem to contradict the so-called “once saved, always saved” doctrine: we must walk worthy of the great salvation Christ has offered us, working out our salvation with fear and trembling in order to ensure that our names remain in that book!

V. SUMMARY

- A. God keeps a written record of the names of all the saved in His Book of Life
- B. The Book of Life determines each one’s eternal destiny at the Final Judgment
- C. Must be born again (make sure your name is there!)
- D. Cause for great rejoicing!
- E. We are eternally secure if we continue to listen to His voice and follow Him (**John 10:27-29**): ²⁷*My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.* ²⁸*I give them eternal life, and **they shall never perish**; no one can snatch them out of My hand.* ²⁹*My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand.*
- F. Keep trusting in Him, persevering, hoping, working out your salvation with fear and trembling!
- G. He is able to keep us from falling (Jude 24), save us to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25), complete the good work He began in us until the Day of Christ (Phil. 1:6)