

Upon the credit of the Word of God, if we believe, really, savingly, and repent, unfeignedly, all our sins will be blotted out; and a book of clean paper in respect of sin shall be presented to the judge. But, there is a book of life.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Rev. 20:11-12.)

(God neither needs nor uses books to judge by, but this is spoken for the understanding of men.) This book of life contains a register of particular persons in whose salvation God from all eternity determined to have his mercy glorified, and for whom Christ’s merited faith, repentance, and perseverance, that they should repent, believe, and be finally saved. *“The books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life...”* that is to say, the decrees of God will be then published and made known, which now are sealed up in his breast and locked up in his archives. Then it will be seen who are appointed to life for the glorifying of God’s free, rich, and sovereign grace, and whom he purposed to leave in their sins, and to perish for ever, for the exaltation of his justice.

It is called *“a book of life,”* (not that God needs a book) to note the certainty of predestination. That is, that God knows all and every of the elect, even as men know a thing. But for memory’s sake, men must set it down in writing. This book of life shall be opened in the great day, because then it shall appear who were elect, and who were reprobates; who truly believed in Christ, who not; who worshipped God in spirit and in truth, and who did not; who walked with God as Moses and who did not; who set up God as the object of their fear, and who did not; who followed the Lamb whithersoever he went, and who did not; who were sincere, and who were the pretenders; who preferred Christ above all else, and who preferred Barabbas before Jesus, or even their farms, and their oxen and swine; and the lusts of their flesh, before a Savior; a Redeemer; who are the sheep and who are the goats; who are sons and who are slaves; who have mourned for their own sins and for the sins of the times in which they lived and who made a sport of and a mock of sin.

Note that not to have our name blotted out of the book of life is to have our name to always remain therein, to our eternal joy and happiness, and to enjoy eternal glory. The names of the elect are written in the book of life. The elect do not obtain salvation by chance, their names are in the book of life. Now those names, being once written in the book of life, shall never, never be blotted out of that book. In the book of predestination there is not one blot to be found – the salvation of the elect is most sure and certain. Now from this book of life, that shall be opened in the great day, when the other books shall be opened, every sincere Christian, may form up this plea, because once our name is seen in the book of life, we are entitled to Summary Judgment! That is the end of the matter. Nothing else matters. So our plea could go something like this: Most holy and blessed Lord, cast thine eye upon the book, Election, and there thou wilt find my name written. Now, my name being written in that book, I am exempt from all condemnation, and interested in the great salvation; my name being written in the book of life, I am secured from coming into the judgment of the reprobation or condemnation.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (Rev. 21:27)

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. (John 5:24-29)

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”(Dan. 12:1-3)

Jesus Christ, who hath written my name in the book of life, hath made up my accounts for me; he hath satisfied thy justice, and pacified thy wrath, and borne the curse, and purchased my pardon, and put upon me an everlasting righteousness, and given me my quietus est; he has crossed out the black lines of my sins with the red lines of his blood; he has cancelled all the bonds wherein I stood obliged to divine justice. I further plead, O blessed Lord, that there is an immutable connection between being written in the book of life and the obtaining of eternal life; and if the connection between being written in this book of life and the obtaining of eternal life were not peremptory, what reason could there be of opening this book in the day of judgment? The book of life is a book of sovereign grace, upon which lies the weight of my salvation, my happiness, my all; and therefore by that book I desire to stand or fall. Well, saith the Lord, I cannot but accept of this plea, as holy, honourable, just, and righteous; and therefore, *“His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. ...Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”* (Matt. 25:21, 34.)

“After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”(Rev. 7:9-17.) I love you. Amen.

The Almighty has put us in the midst of a great war.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle (i.e., struggle, fight, combat, war) not [only] against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand (i.e. to overcome in battle). Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Eph. 6:10-18).

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” (2 Tim 2:3-4)

“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare.” (1 Tim.1:18)

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.” (Rev. 12:7)

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 12:17)

The following is adapted from *The Christian in Complete Armour*, William Gurnell, 1616-1679. Right now, as I speak, there is raging war between the Saint and Satan, and that so bloody a one, that the cruelest which ever was fought by men, will be found by sport and child's play to this. Alas, what is the killing of bodies to the destroying of everlasting souls? It is a sad meditation indeed, to think how many thousands have been sent to the grave in a few late years among us by the sword of man; but far more astonishing, to consider how many of those may be sent to hell by the sword of God's wrath.

It is a spiritual war we are in, and that not a history of what was fought many ages past and is now over; but of what now going on, the tragedy is at present acting, and that not at the furthest end of the world, but what concerns thee. The stage whereon this war is fought, is every man's soul. There is no neutral party in this war (no Switzerland).

The whole world is engaged in this quarrel of the covenant (**Lev. 26:24-25**), either for God against Satan or for Satan against God. Who are you for? This is not an academic question, even in this place. Who are you for? **Jude** spends a fair amount of his book on this subject of traitors. **Verse 4** warns of ungodly men who crept in unawares into the church. **Verse 5** speaks to the traitorous Israelites that were delivered out of Egypt but yet who believed not. **Verse 6**, is the rebellious angels and their coup d'état. **Verse 11** speaks to jealous Cain who slew Abel of his own flesh and blood, and Korah who led a rebellion against God's anointed and the earth swallowed them.

Who are you for? At this day and time it is a wonderful mercy that you may ostensibly choose your side. It will not be ever so. In the next world you must then stand to your colors. The drum beats in the gospel for volunteers. This is a volunteer army. O what can you be sure of while flying the devil's flag, but damnation? The curse of God cleaves to him and all that take part with him. O let not that little plunder and spoil of sinful pleasure and pelf (i.e. money, when gained dishonorably or dishonestly) bewitch you still to follow his camp.

How is a soldier bettered by the treasure he fights for, if before he can make off with it, he is himself slain in the fight? God's piece is charged (God's gun is loaded), and aim taken at thy breast, He will not miss. God's threatenings will go off at last and result in immediate and eternal death if thou persist. I must have word with you, my Christian friends, who have espoused (i.e., adopt or support a cause or belief - to marry) Christ's quarrel, and are in the field of battle against Satan. I know at any time you can resign your commission and go "Absent Without Leave" (AWOL).

***"And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned."*(Heb. 11:15)**

The way back to the land of our nativity, our first birth, this is the wide path of sin and lust is short and easy. Abraham could have returned to Ur with no problem. My heart is towards you, who have thus willingly offered yourselves among the Lord's people to His help against the mighty. God can destroy Satan without you, but He takes your love kindly and allows you to participate in this war and play a part in it and in His victory. O hold on, dear friends, in your Christian warfare. Listen to our Captain:

***"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."*(Rev. 3:11)**

This is bloody hand-to-hand, in your face, smash-mouth spiritual warfare with your soul hanging in the balance, so overcome. It is said of one of David's mighty men that he defied the Philistines that were gathered together to battle, while all Israel ran away. This mighty man of valor arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day, and then the people of Israel returned after him and only found spoil. He did all the work. There will be plenty of time in heaven to rest, when the war is won, but now we fight, so whet your courage at the throne of grace.

I love you. Amen.