



**SOLID :**  
**BREAD**

## A BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE END TIMES

Week 66: The Rise of the Beasts, Part 3

October 1, 2023

Instructor: Steve Schmutzer

- A. We are in the **13<sup>th</sup> Chapter of the Book of Revelation**. We have been studying the rise of the antichrist around the halfway point of The Tribulation
- B. This is about the same time that Satan has been cast out of heaven and confined to earth. The Bible says in **Revelation 12:12** that he is angry because he knows his time is short. So, all that means is that things are going to get really bad on earth.
- C. This also seems to be the time the antichrist is resurrected through occultic means following some sort of fatal head wound. I believe he is somehow a different entity after this point than he was before his death.
- D. And so, now that a new agenda for the antichrist is set in motion, the Bible goes into some additional details about the antichrist's character and actions at this juncture:
  1. He is blasphemous against God, and he says unheard-of things against God in ways that have never been noted in history.
  2. He is blasphemous against both God's name and all that God represents.
  3. He is blasphemous against both heaven and against the saints of God that dwell in heaven.
  4. His words are pompous, proud, and arrogant.
  5. He is given absolute authority to do whatever he wants. All nations, tribes, people, and languages are under his control. That's the whole planet.
  6. He wars against and overcomes the saints of God. Believers at this time are brutally oppressed, persecuted, and killed.
  7. As we learned last week, it appears beheading is the key means by which they are murdered by the antichrist.

**NOTE:** All of this brings us to **vs. 8 of Revelation Ch. 13:**

**NOTE:** This is a very cryptic verse that has some unusual language in it. This verse will be the focus of our study today because it has some important things to tell us.

- I. **"All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast...."** (Multiple translations say, "All those who dwell upon the earth." The NLT puts an interesting spin on this verse; it says "All the people who belong to this world")
  - A. A contrast is set up here between those who "dwell in heaven" in **vs 6**, and those who "dwell on earth" here in **vs. 8**

1. Those who dwell in heaven are those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ, but those who dwell on earth are those who have rejected Jesus Christ.
2. Those who dwell in heaven are praising Jesus Christ, while those who dwell on earth are praising the antichrist.
3. Those who dwell in heaven are not under judgment, however those who dwell on earth are facing unprecedented judgements.
4. Those who dwell in heaven are experiencing the joy of being with their Heavenly Father, while those who dwell on earth are experiencing the trauma of supporting and being with “Mother Earth.”
5. Those who dwell in heaven always knew that their citizenship was in heaven. Those that dwell on earth have placed all their affections and allegiances upon the earth and its processes.

B. A consistent point is being made here, and it shows up multiple times in the Book of **Revelation**.

1. While all of humanity resides on the Earth, the phrase used here, “*earth dwellers*,” is one used to denote moral and spiritual significance.
2. These individuals are either (a.) apostates from the truth, having deliberately rejected the heavenly calling, and have chosen the earth and its ideas instead, or (b.) they never considered the truth of God at all, and instead embrace the earth as their place and portion.
3. NOTE: Both scenarios are represented well within “woke” ideas, and within the “climate change” notions that are surging today. It’s alarming that these elements have infected many church leaders and their congregations.
4. All the references in **Revelation** to: “*them that dwell upon the earth*” indicate, in context, that they will be unsaved people of this future time of testing and judgement who will never get saved.
5. ....and that insight brings us to an important related phrase which follows:
  - a. “***...all whose names have not been written in The Book of Life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world.***”

**NOTE:** It’s here that we need to take a dive into this issue of The Book of Life. I want to begin by reading a similar verse from **Revelation 17:8** that also mentions the antichrist, these same earth dwellers and this same Book of Life.

*“The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.”*

C. Here, in **Revelation 17:8**, the same point is made as the verse in **Revelation 13:8** – There seems to be a population of people whose names were never recorded in The Book of Life going all the way back into time immemorial.

D. It's important to understand that this is a different situation than the group who lacked a proper faith in the church of Sardis and who would be blotted out of The Book of Life (**Cf. Revelation 3:5**).

*"The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of The Book of Life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."*

E. So, unlike the Sardis group in **Revelation 3:5**, these earth dwellers in **Revelation 13:8 and 17:8** never had their names written in The Book of Life to begin with.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Today, I want to "try to" unpack the concept of the Book of Life and explore it more. Most Christians have very little understanding of the doctrine of The Book of Life, and we'll do our best today to grasp its basic concepts.

To add one more layer of considerations, and perhaps a little more confusion, I want to begin by reading **Daniel 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."*

- F. Now, what this verse appears to be saying is those whose names are written in The Book of Life will be delivered / rescued / spared / protected those kinds of things.
  - G. How do we weave this idea in alongside the ones we just mentioned from **Revelation**?
- II. I want to mention TWO things that tie into this before we dive into a better understanding of the Book of Life:
- A. To begin, this is not the first time in the Book of Daniel where there is this idea of books having a record that determine one's eternal fate (**Cf. Daniel 7:10**)

*"A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."*

- B. Here, Daniel sees a vision of God as the 'Ancient of Days' and the time is the judgment of humanity.
- C. It mentions courts and books and multiple thousands of attendees to The Throne of God. This is very similar language and concepts to the Great White Throne judgment we read about in **Revelation Ch. 20:11-12**.
- D. Now, back to **Daniel Ch. 7**. In this chapter, Daniel sees various aspects of the end of the age, the antichrist's defeat at the Battle of Armageddon, The Great White

Throne judgement, the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, and the onset of the Millennial Kingdom. **Daniel Ch. 7.**

- E. It's not all there in chronological order, because in his vision, Daniel gets a broad overview.
- F. However, Daniel sees "books being opened." There is a plurality of books and their types. We know from **Revelation Ch. 20:11-12** that these books include The Book of Life.
- G. Second: Getting back to that verse in **Daniel 12:1**: There is the point made that those whose names are written in the book "will be delivered."
  - 1. Question: Are they delivered in the eternal sense? The answer is yes! If one's name is found written in The Book of Life, then that person is guaranteed eternal glory.
  - 2. However, this is not the main thrust of what **Daniel 12:1** is saying. When it speaks of being "delivered" it means: being physically spared.
  - 3. The Hebrew word is *malat*. It means primarily to escape, to flee, to save, deliver or rescue, to slip away,
  - 4. Yes, certainly inclusion in The Book of Life results in eternal salvation and glory. However, in the immediate context of **Daniel 12:1** here, it is saying those who are eternally saved will be physically rescued.

**NOTE:** Why? This gets back to Jesus' instructions to flee into the Judean mountains, to Petra (to that territory that will be part of Israel at that point because of some prophetic wars which still need to take place).

- 5. This will be when The Abomination of Desolation takes place.
- 6. It will only be a FAITHFUL remnant that flees. It will be those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Messiah. We've studied all these issues and so you already know this.

**NOTE:** It is this faithful remnant who by virtue of their saving faith will do what Jesus instructed them to do. Therefore, they will flee, and as a result, they will be delivered and they will be rescued.

- 7. They will do this because their names are recorded in The Book of Life, meaning, they will do this because they are genuinely saved.
- 8. Their faith will show up in their actions, and their actions, as an expression of their faith, will physically spare them during this difficult time.
- 9. Remember, there is a faithful remnant of Jews and a few faithful Gentile survivors that will enter the Millennial Kingdom to repopulate it.
- 10. Nobody will enter the Millennial Kingdom who is not in a right saving relationship with Jesus Christ.
- 11. Three groups of people will enter the Millennial Kingdom: 1) The righteous Jews and Gentiles who survived the traumas of The Tribulation period, 2) the glorified saints which were taken up and resurrected at the

time of The Rapture (the church), and 3) the Old Testament faithful who will be resurrected at the physical return of Jesus Christ and the onset of His earthly kingdom (more on all this later).

12. As the Millennial Kingdom unfolds, there will be those born who will reject Jesus Christ. So, things will start well and end imperfectly.
13. Sin will still be present which is why Jesus Christ will reign and rule with a rod of iron. He will still need to judge sin and unrighteousness for these 1000 years.
14. It's not until the onset of the "new heaven and new earth" that all sin and unrighteousness will be permanently done away with.

III. But right now, let's look more closely at this concept of The Book of Life. This will not be an exhaustive study, but I hope it's a good overview.

A. **I want to begin by springing from *Revelation 20:12*.** Just a few quick points to mention here:

1. There are, apparently, multiple books used in the final judgement of mankind (this recalls the plural term "books" that was also used in ***Daniel 7:10***).
2. There is The Book of Life, and then, as a separate category, there are these "other books."
3. It appears that it is these 'other books' that hold an account of the unrighteous dead's deeds. See last part of the verse.
4. The Book of Life seems to hold a unique distinction in that it is a record of whether one is saved. If one's name is found written in The Book of Life, they ARE saved.
5. That is a unique purpose the Book of Life has which these 'other books' do not have.
6. Remember, God is a righteous judge. Sinners who meet their fate in The Eternal Lake of Fire will first know that they deserve this punishment.
7. Their deeds, their actions and choices, are recorded - every one of them!

B. Now, there are two terms which appear to be interchangeable in the Bible. They are "The Book of Life," and "The Lamb's Book of Life."

1. Some passages use one term, and other passages use the other.
  - a. There does not seem to be any difference in the purpose of the book that each of these terms describe rather, it's the same thing.
  - b. Since Christ's atoning sacrifice is the only basis for salvation, it is also referred to as "The Lamb's Book of Life" (***i.e. Revelation 13:8***)
2. Those whose names are written in The Book of Life are said to have their names "written or registered in heaven." Two examples:  
**(Cf. Luke 10:20)**

*“However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*

**(Cf. Hebrews 12:23)**

*“...to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.*

a. These verses state that The Book of Life is kept in heaven. This is where we find it at the end of history: at The Great White Throne Judgment:

C. A burning question constantly arises in scholar’s circles: **“When is one’s name actually recorded in the Book of Life?”**

1. There are two views on this.

a. The first view is one’s name is recorded in the Book of Life at the time of one’s exercising of faith leading to salvation.

➤ This idea suggests that the thief on the cross had his name recorded at the moment he asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His kingdom.

➤ For the jailer who followed Paul and Silas’ instructions to “believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved” - - that was the moment his name was recorded in the Book of Life

b. This idea would also cover the actions of faith of Old Testament saints. When Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did, then by faith he was commended as a righteous man and his name was recorded in The Book of Life

➤ When “by faith” Abraham, Isaac, Gideon, David, and all the other Old Testament saints demonstrated a right relationship with God, this view suggests that it was at THAT point that their names were recorded in The Book of Life

➤ Generally, scholars quote **Luke 10:20, and Philippians 4:3** to support the view that one’s name is recorded in The Book of Life at the time of salvation. We read **Luke 10:20** earlier, but here is what **Philippians** says:

*“Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.”*

➤ However, it’s important to note that these passages in **Luke** and **Philippians** do not specifically make that point. They don’t say one’s name is recorded in The Book of Life at the time of salvation.

➤ They only seem to suggest that one’s righteous deeds are evidence that one’s name is recorded in The Book of Life.

➤ That’s the very same idea that the actions of the faithful remnant of fleeing Jews during The Tribulation is evidence that their names are recorded in The Book of Life.

2. The second view as to when one's name is recorded in The Book of Life is this: One's name is recorded in The Book of Life from eternity past, this is what I mean by my earlier phrase of "time immemorial."
  - a. Scripture appears to support this view from two vantage points.
  - b. The first vantage point is those whose names ARE chosen and recorded from eternity past.
    - One key passage here is ***Ephesians 1:4-5***.

*"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—"*

- This passage makes it clear that those who are saved were chosen to be saved the passage says "predestined."
- It means God made a unilateral choice. It's the same concept as when God chose Abraham to be the father of the Jewish people.
- Now obviously, if these who are saved are "predestined," it means their names are recorded in The Book of Life before they are born. This is what the Bible teaches.
- This insight raises the age-old debate of: "free will versus sovereign election."

**QUESTION:** Do we choose to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, or does He choose us? The answer to both questions is, "Yes!"

- I don't want to get off on a tangent here. However, you will run into fierce debates on this issue that have been so hot they've split churches.
- Do you believe in Armenianism (the idea that we choose salvation through free will), or do you believe in Calvinism (that is the idea that we are chosen by sovereign election).
- Never forget that both doctrines are true at the same time. That's hard for us to wrap our heads around, but 'tensions in our theology keep us faithful.'
- Remember, God's ways are higher than ours. Simply put, we are not equipped to understand everything while we are in our mortal bodies.
- It's no different than the concept of The Trinity. Three separate expressions and manifestations of God – yet all one. It's not possible to understand this vital doctrine fully while we are on this earth.

NOTE: Getting back to the idea that our names are recorded in the Book of Life from eternity past: there is another passage which affirms this same concept, and it's one I read earlier and will read again. It's **Revelation 17:8**.

*"The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition. And those who dwell on the earth will marvel, whose names are not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast that was, and is not, and yet is."*

- Here, the other side of the same coin is emphasized. The same point is made another way.
- Here, we see that there is a population of unsaved whose names were NEVER recorded in The Book of Life from before the creation of the world.
- ***This not only supports the predestination idea of Ephesians 1:4-5***, but here it lends the opposite angle: God did not choose these people for salvation.
- Again, I don't want to get lost in the weeds here, but the doctrine of sovereign election IS clearly affirmed in God's Word, as are the doctrine of free will and personal choice. Both doctrines co-exist in God's Word.
- That is why God is a righteous judge at the Great White Throne Judgement. People will be judged according to their deeds and choices, according to the exercise of their free will.

- D. Again, it's tough to comprehend, but let's summarize what we've learned so far:
1. When all these facts are taken and absorbed together, they indicate several truths:
    - a. The Book of Life existed before the foundation of the world, before the world was ever created. Before you and I were ever born or even thought about by any human agent.
    - b. That means the plan of "salvation by faith in Jesus Christ" was set up at the same time. ***(1 Peter 1:18-20)***

*"For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life you inherited from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or spot. He was known before the foundation of the world, but was revealed in the last times for your sake...."*

- c. Also, according to God's sovereign election, the names of all who are saved were written in The Book of Life before the foundation of the world.



- d. The names of all those who ultimately reject Jesus Christ (like the beast worshipers) are omitted from The Book of Life from the foundation of the world as well.
- E. Now, a very tough question needs to be raised: **“What about those whose names are blotted out of The Book of Life?”**
1. Let’s get one thing straight right up front. This is not a question of eternal security. I believe the Bible teaches that once a person is saved, they are truly and always saved.
    - a. Here’s the more specific and the greater dilemma: “Who is a real Christian?”
    - b. Unfortunately, the church has done a lousy job at answering this very critical question.
    - c. A “Christian” is not a person who has said a prescriptive prayer, or walked down to the front, or raised their hand, or flopped around like a wet fish in the aisle, or has engaged in mindless stammering and buzzing called ‘speaking in tongues,’ or has been raised in a Christian family, or attends any particular church.
    - d. SOME of these things may become part of the Christian experience, however, they are not what makes a Christian.
    - e. A Christian, one who is truly saved, is one who has trusted in Jesus Christ as their **only** Savior. They place no trust in anything or anyone else.
    - f. A Christian is one who believes Jesus Christ is WHO He said He is, and it is one that wholly recognizes Jesus Christ did ALL the work necessary for redemption.

**NOTE:** A Christian possesses the Holy Spirit and will therefore demonstrate the reality of Spirit-led control in their life.

- g. They will make the right decisions, they will take the right actions, they will show by their deeds that they are saved.
- h. In terms of habits, they will say certain things, and they will not say others. They will seek to avoid a consistent and willful pattern of sinful choices, and they will be distressed when they fail here.
- i. Yes, they will make mistakes in all these processes, they will fail here and there. But, they will also repent of these things and get back on track.
- j. **Here’s the bottom line:** We don’t bring anything to the salvation transaction. As the hymn says, *“Jesus paid it all... and all to Him I owe...”*
- k. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that true salvation is a guarantee of eternal glory.

- l. **(Cf Romans 8:30)** “Those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified” (There is a process here > if one is truly saved, then they are guaranteed eternal glory)
- m. We know, too, that nothing can remove a true believer from God’s hand according to **John 10:28-29** (this is another way of saying there is no force or circumstance that can dissolve or undue our salvation if we are truly saved).
2. But the Bible does seem to teach that one’s name can be blotted out of The Book of Life. How do we reconcile this?
  - a. There are a number of passages which seem to suggest this (**Psalms 69:28**, and **Revelation 3:5** are two cases in point).

**Psalms 69:28** – “May they be blotted out of the book of life and not be listed with the righteous.”

**Revelation 3:5** “The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.”

- b. This issue is not an easy one to get past, but we don’t want to violate the clear doctrine of eternal security any more than we want to compromise the Biblical positions of free will and sovereign election.

### CONCLUSION:

There is a lot to consider here, but this is how I conclude on this matter (This is where I am at with what I am able to understand from all the relevant Bible passages):

1. The names of all the living (including those who were conceived but were not born) are written in The Book of Life. That means everyone.
2. Those *who never attain salvation* are blotted out. It’s not the same thing as *losing salvation*. Rather it is a clarifying statement about those who are in danger of dying without gaining salvation. It says something sobering about those who think they are saved, but in fact they are not.
3. Therefore, the warning Jesus gives to the church at Sardis (**Revelation 3:5**) is an admonition to those who are **not yet** overcomers. Jesus is telling them to become overcomers or else their names will be blotted out. This verse indicates that those who overcome will *never be blotted out*—which is the substance of the promise Jesus makes.

4. As far as the references concerning the earth-dwellers who worship the beast, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, I acknowledge that some questions may remain about the language that is used here.
5. My conclusion is that this is another specific insight that God knew, from eternity past, that this population would not come to salvation. He knew their choice would be to reject His offer of salvation. Perhaps the beast worshipers are a unique category of people of this unique time of the end. They are so hardened against God and destined to reject Him in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary that they are *never written* in The Book of Life.
6. I cannot explain it better than this, and so I rest with these tensions that are presented in God's Word.