

Daniel 06-06-04a

This is the fourth day of June, 2006, Sunday morning. We continue our study in the book of Daniel at chapter 12. As we address ourselves to the study of God's word together, let's take a moment, as is our custom, to recognize that it is not our effort and it is not our wisdom.

It isn't even necessarily my preparation that will result in our edification and our growth. It is strictly the ministry of God's Holy Spirit, taking the truth of God's word and ministering it to each of our souls that will enable us to grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior. Shall we pray? Father, we come before you recognizing that it is a privilege, it is possible because you have made a way for us to recover from sin, from our human efforts, from contact with the world, all of which defiles us, all of which renders us unacceptable and distances us from you.

But because of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, because of the efficacious and availing sacrifice that he made on our behalf, we can be cleansed, we can wash our robes in the blood of the Lamb and make them spotless and pure. And through him we are able to enter in where even angels fear to tread. We are grateful for that privilege.

We thank you for the opportunity not only to bring our thoughts and our requests and our concerns before your throne, but also to glory in the treasure and the revelation of your word, the insights and the perspective that can be ours as we study your word, as we are nourished and built up in our souls through the truth of the Scriptures. We thank you for those who have had a hand in preserving them and bringing them to us so that we can, without fear and without inconvenience of any kind, have our own copy of the Scriptures. We think of those like Tyndall and Wycliffe and so many others who literally gave their lives just so that we could have this privilege, and it is one that we recognize and do not take for granted.

We ask your blessing on those who are part of the leadership of our nation in whatever branch of government. We pray especially for the President and his Cabinet as he faces difficult times and difficult decisions and is undermined and attacked at home by those who ought to be appreciating his leadership and his efforts to be pleasing in your sight as he leads our nation both at home and abroad. We pray for those in military service.

We pray for those who, by way of being faithful in the execution of their duties, are unable to worship and spend time exclusively meditating on your word. We ask that you will remind them of the truth that is stored in their souls, that God the Holy Spirit will minister a blessing to them through that truth, that they will be encouraged and gladdened and given peace and stability and confidence and clear sight to see where their duties lie, where their opportunities are, and that they will recognize that as all of us work our efforts as unto you, that they are blessed regardless of the earthly outcome. And we ask your blessing on us as a fellowship and as a group that as we open your word of truth this morning, that each one here will find in it those promises and principles and doctrines that will illuminate the path before us so that we might not sin, so that we might instead be bearers and partakers and those who lay hold of your

righteousness through faith.

We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. We are going to forego our scripture reading this morning.

We have a fascinating subject before us and we are going to need all of our time. It is in Daniel chapter 12. I had predicted, and of course this falsifies my identity as a prophet, I had predicted that we would finish our Daniel study this morning, but I seriously doubt that we will do so because you let me skip over something very important last week and having realized that fact, I have gone back to make sure we cover this in adequate detail.

Our study this morning is going to address itself to Daniel chapter 12 verse 1. At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people, and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time, and at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.

Well, I gave only glancing recognition to the book, but our study this morning is going to look at the book or books that are maintained by God in heaven. We have only really studied this subject in detail one other time, and that was in Revelation. And it is one that we need to know.

There are numerous scriptures that talk about things that are written in heaven. Book of the Living, Book of the Righteous, Book of Life, Lamb's Book of Life. And if you're like me, I suspect that if you are reading down through any given paragraph in the Word of God and something is written by way of reference to these books, you might be scratching your head saying, well, now, what was it we learned about that? What was the difference in the Book of Life and the Lamb's Book of Life and the Book of the Living and Old Testament and New Testament and since we've only really gone over it once, I think it's high time that we go over it again.

So that's what we're going to look at this morning because it is pertinent and directly applicable to us day by day by day. There are records being kept in heaven, and it's important for us to know what they are and what they contain because we are determining what is written under the heading of our name. So, first of all, what we want to look at here is how many books are there? And in particular, what we'll use as sort of the backbone and the axis about which all of our other investigations will turn is we know that there is a Book of Life, right? The Bible talks about a Book of Life.

What kind of life? Physical life? Eternal life? Life in terms of fruitfulness and production? Every time the Bible speaks of the Book of Life, is it talking about the same book? Or are there multiple books that fall under that heading? It can get very confusing. So the first thing we want to do is assemble a list of the passages in the Word of God that talk about what is written down in heaven. We're going to get these all together in one place so that we can look at them.

This is what we call studying a category. Many of the churches who flow out of the tradition of Bob Thieme and Baraka Church or Dallas Theological Seminary in general talk about studying by way of isagogics and categories and exegesis. Isagogics, this is the background, the historical milieu, the context, the culture, the life of the ancient Near East, and so on.

Categories, when you look at something like this book that is opened, well, what does the Bible have to say about these books that are maintained in heaven? Exegesis, of course, is the rigorous examination of the text built on the knowledge that every word of Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable. And so we are not hesitant, we are not reluctant to look closely at the text right down to the individual words, the tenses of those words, their grammatical and contextual relationships, and so on. So this would fall under the category of categories.

So, as something of an ICE church, isagogics, categories, and exegesis, this is appropriate, we do it from time to time. Well, what are the passages that fall into this category? Your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book. Now, what kind of books did they have in Daniel's day? Did they have bound books with spines and writing on the back? These are actually scrolls, aren't they? They would take animal hides, in some cases papyrus, render them into some kind of a flat surface that would take ink and would roll up.

And if you've seen modern day scrolls from a Jewish synagogue, they've got these giant, looks to me like a rolling pin, with rims. And there's an art to turning the one in your right hand and turning the one in your left hand. Of course, you've got the big roll on the left, you've got the empty roll on the right, because in Hebrew you read right to left.

So you're scrolling this across in a left to right fashion, and you read a column and then you shift a little bit and you read the next column. They have these lectors, they have these readers, who will stand up and read scripture still yet in some of the big synagogues from these scrolls. That's what Daniel was referring to, that things were kept in scrolls in his day, circa 580 to 530 BC, that area of Daniel's life, actually 60 something to 530 something.

So this is a scroll, actually, that would be pictured in Daniel's mind when the angel tells him, your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in this scroll, in this writing. Well, there are several different kinds of records that are referred to in scripture. There's not just one book.

Dr. Criswell has a sermon called, There's Just One Book. But he's talking about the Bible on earth. There's just one set of inspired writings from God, and that's what we have in the 66 books of our Bible.

It's not the Apocrypha, it's not the Pseudepigrapha, it's not the other spurious writings, there's just one book. But in heaven, there are multiple books. Some of these books contain lists of names, some of these books contain the details of events, or happenings, or works that are performed by people.

So, at any given point, when you find a book referred to in scripture, you have to figure out, well now, which book are we talking about? Is this a book of deeds? Are we talking about righteousness versus unrighteousness here? Is this a book of events that are going to take place in history, or that have taken place in history? Or is this a roster of people who fall into a certain category? Well, there are many suggestions about these books that have been put forward by biblical scholars. Some people say, well, some of these books, this is your Calvinist, this is the roster of the elect. If you remember, over in Revelation, I think it was in chapter 17, where it said those who were written in the book of the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, there were two references like that in Revelation.

And a lot of Calvinists say, well, they were written down in the book from the foundation of the world, and God said, well, these are the ones I'm going to put efficacious grace on, I'm going to effectively move them, otherwise they would all reject me, they would all go to the lake of fire, but I'm going to tweak a certain number of humans, and I'm going to give them the faith to believe and to be saved. And those are the elect. So people say, well, that's the book of the elect.

And nobody can ever be blotted out of that book, because it's a decree of God. And the Calvinists are big on decrees. God sat in eternity past, mapped everything out, decreed every thought, action, decision, and it's just running like a, I always think of the Calvinist view of history as somebody who presses a long play record, and the grooves are made in the vinyl, and then when human history unfolds, it's just the needle following those grooves, and the sound plays, and everything happens, but it's all been foreordained.

Nothing happens that isn't in the little wiggles and bumps of those grooves. Well, that's one view. A second view is that there are people who are conditionally elect, might be the whole human race, might be some subset, but these are the people who think you can lose your salvation, and so you can be written down as saved, but if you lose your salvation, you're blotted out of the book.

We have these references to being blotted out of the book. So this would be conditionally elect. There are some people that are never in the book because they're just God-hating, savage pagans from the very beginning.

Other people are like the tree, like the little bush, the seed falls in the shallow ground, and now they rise up in a day, and then the sun comes, and they wilt, and people say, well, they were saved, but now they're not. So you get written in the book, but that book has some blots where people didn't endure, they didn't persist, they didn't make it. That's the second category.

Third idea is that there is a list of people who, it's very similar to the second one, it's true believers, but people who commit a sin unto death. It's kind of like a mortal sin in Catholicism. Most of the people are going to stay in there, but if you commit a mortal sin, you do the Judas thing or something, and well, okay, you're blotted out.

So that's a book of the saved, and there's far fewer blots. You've got to really work hard to get blotted out of that book. It's not just the sun rising and your plant wilting.

Number four, everybody who claims to be a believer is written down. If you profess, if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, but false professors, backsliders, Ne'er-do-wells, you get written down, anybody that even mentions the name of Jesus, they get put in there, but then they get blotted out. So this is basically, these three that I've just given you are all sort of the same.

There's a list of people who are supposed to be saved, but one way or another, people get blotted out of that book. People are trying to explain the passages that say something about being blotted. Now, the more common understanding is this fifth one, that God starts out and every human being is written in the book.

There's a roster of all humans, but if you die without ever believing in God or believing in Christ, Old Testament or New Testament criteria of salvation, you die and you never got saved, well, then you're blotted out. So this is the complete list of humanity, unbelievers, blotted out. Number six, that the book of life is really the book of the living, and anybody who's alive on the earth, their name is in the book.

Anybody who's dead, their name is blotted out. Well, of course, you can only make this fly in a few passages, like over in the Psalms, where David is talking about his enemies, and he says, blot them out of the book of the living, and let them not be recorded with the righteous. But that's a very limited definition.

But they say, well, there's at least one book that is just a record of who's walking around breathing air. You get written into it when you're born, you get blotted out when you die. Number seven, a book listing those who are, and this is interesting, those who are in line to receive covenant blessings.

Now this goes to the conditional covenants. Remember the covenant of circumcision with Abraham over in Genesis, where male children are to be circumcised on the eighth day, and anyone who is uncircumcised is separated from the people. Later on in the law of Moses, there were things where you could be cut off from your people, you could be removed.

And so if you're in the fellowship of the saints, if you are qualified to receive God's covenant blessings, God says, I will honor those who honor me. And then you have the whole law of Moses idea, where if you're obedient, if you follow the instructions for sacrifice, for purification, and so on, then you will live long in the land. Remember the blessings and cursings on Mount Gerizim, Mount Ebal? I mixed, I reversed those, but, you know, blessings and curses.

And if you are obedient, if you are faithful, here's all the great things God is going to do. If you're disobedient, unfaithful, here's all the things God is going to do. And you're on the blessing side, well, then you're written in the book.

So those who are qualified to receive blessing is an idea. Then people see that there would be, this is number eight, a book of deeds. And this book is basically kept until the day of judgment.

And then the book is open. This is your Revelation 20 idea. The books are open, men are judged according to their deeds, they're judged out of the books.

What did you do? You're going to be weighed in the balance and either found good or wanting. And then people recognize that some of these passages seem to indicate, and this is the ninth, a book of destiny containing events that are going to take place. And we saw this in Daniel specifically.

We'll look at the passages that fit each of these nine different descriptions or are suggested to fit them right now. Now what we want to do is separate because our passage is talking about people, isn't it? It says, Michael is going to stand up to the great prince, there's going to be a time of trouble, and then the people will be delivered. Three times in this verse, 12-1 of Daniel, it says, that time, that time, that time.

What is that time? It's the time that's been spoken of ever since we got into that prediction of Antiochus and lifted up into the 70th week of Daniel into that time of trouble such as there never was. It's the time of the end. It's defined for us back in chapter 10, I think, where he says, at the time of the end, this is what's going to take place.

And if you look at the end of chapter 10, verse 21, Gabriel says, I will tell you what is noted in the scripture of truth, the writing of truth. Well, this is a book, because he goes on in chapter 11 to say, here's what's going to happen. Three more kings are going to arise, etc., etc., etc.

So this seems to be a writing of truth that records the events that are going to take place that are future to Daniel's time. Well, this type of book is not really in view, a record of the progress of human history. Obviously, God knows how history is going to proceed, which kingdoms are going to rise and fall.

He's got angels who have assignments. He says, okay, when the kingdom of the Medes and the Persians come up, here are the angels assigned to those kingdoms. When the kingdom of Greece comes up, here are the angels assigned.

The people of Israel are going to be a nation for a while, and they're not going to be a nation for a while. What's Michael going to do when Israel is not a nation? He's the national angel. Which, by the way, this is something of a digression, but I think it's an interesting observation.

You know how people are always saying, well, do we have a personal guardian angel? People crack jokes about can your guardian angel fly as fast as you drive or not, because some of us pretty well fly the mail down the highway, and our poor guardian angel has his feathers ruffled trying to make sure we stay alive. But it's interesting to note, we have often observed the principle that what applies to national Israel in the Old Testament applies to the individual believer in the New. And this idea of national angels, and that there is an angel, Michael, who is

assigned to the nation of Israel, would suggest you could make a case that as goes the nation in the Old Testament, so goes the individual believer in the New, that there would be an angel assigned to each individual believer, just as there was an angel assigned to nations in the Old Testament.

So there is some traction for that idea. But here we are looking at one major distinction between the different kinds of books that are maintained in heaven. One of them refers to events, such as the course of history, the rise and fall of nations and empires.

And that's not going to be the primary focus of our investigation, because these books that we're interested in are the ones that pertain to people, and specifically at the judgment. That's what 12.1 is talking about, people who are found written in the book. It doesn't say events found written in the book.

It's people, people found written in the book. So, here are some passages that talk about the lists of future events or deeds and such like. We have seven major references.

You can find some others, some allusions and so on. But there are seven major references that talk about records of deeds, specifically. This is not a list of names, necessarily.

This is a list of either what happened or what's going to happen. Nehemiah chapter 13 and verse 14. This is a part of a prayer where he says, do not wipe out or do not blot out my good deeds that I have done.

Well, if you're going to blot out or erase or obliterate, it has to be written down somewhere. So, Nehemiah 13.14 refers to a record of good deeds. Psalm 58.8, you remember this verse where he says, my tears, are they not in your book? Sufferings that have taken place, sorrows that have taken place, grief, bereavement.

These tears, are they not written in God's book? There is a record of these tests, these times of challenge and suffering are written in God's book, Psalm 58.8. The third one is Psalm 139.16. In thy book, all my members were written, when as yet there were none of them. Depending on which version you read, it can say all my days, all my parts is the idea. And you have to say, well, what kind of parts? But he says, in your book, all my parts were written, when as yet there were none of them.

And this is some sort of reference. We would exegete the psalm to nail this down. I don't have time to do that right now.

But, there is a book in which the parts related to a person, parts of the life, parts of the existence. I don't think this is talking about a book of DNA, where the way you're, what kind of smile are you going to have, and how many wisdom teeth are going to grow in what direction. We're talking about parts, when as yet there were none of them.

He's talking about the events of life, the course of one's existence. When as yet there were none

of them, Psalm 139.16. The fourth is Daniel 7.10. And this is very pertinent to our 12.1 passage. We've already seen this.

Remember the vision of the Ancient of Days that Daniel had? And he says the judgment was set and the books were opened. And judgment is set and books are opened. And this very strongly suggests that these are books of deeds, these are books of works.

What happened? There's going to be judgment out of those books, just as there is in Revelation 20.12. The one I just referenced, Daniel 10.21. I will show you, Gabriel says, that which is noted in the Scripture of truth, or the writing of truth. There's a heavenly book that details the career of Antiochus Epiphanes and of the Antichrist and so on. It's written in heaven.

A book of deeds or events. Malachi 3.16. A book of remembrance was written before God of, or concerning, those that feared the Lord. A book of remembrance.

Now, this one's iffy. Is it a book of names of those that fear the Lord, or is it a book of their lives? When it says a book of remembrance, *zakar* is the Hebrew word for memory or remembering. And so there is a record, but it is the fear of the Lord that is in view.

And we all know that in our lives, we have times where we're really kind of hitting on all eight cylinders and we're passing our tests, we're trusting, and we're faithful. There are other times in our life when they're not, and it would be unlikely, in my view, that there would be one book that says, well, here is the faithful man. I think there are times in our life you can be going great guns and then have a severe downturn at the end.

You think of Solomon, for example, who really seems to do well at the beginning, and then he gets tangled up with his wives and concubines and kind of tails off. So this book in Malachi 3, the book of remembrance, would record the times in our lives when we are fearing the Lord and living as we should. So more so than just an absolute black-and-white list of names, here's the faithful, here's the unfaithful, these would be, well, look, for three years, Sam did a great job.

The rest of his life, Woodhay and Stubble. But here was a three-year period where he just really was pegging the meter in terms of faith and obedience. So you get the idea that this book is really a book of remembrance of fear of the Lord.

And, of course, it's going to include the people, those that fear the Lord. Revelation 20.12, of course, very famous. The books were opened.

The dead are judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. Very clearly a record of works. Now, what is more interesting to us in terms of Daniel 12.1, when those who sleep in the dust of the earth awake and there are two different classifications of resurrection.

Some rise to everlasting life and others to shame and contempt. Some are going to shine like

the brightness of the firmament and like the stars forever and others are not. Well, I'm going to go through these rather quickly.

If you're writing them down, you'll have to write quickly. The first one, the first time we have a reference to books in the Bible is Exodus 32.32. Very famous. We saw it when we went through Exodus.

Moses up on the mountain. God says, Stand back, Moses, and I'll wipe out the Israelites, golden calf, and so on. I'll start over with you.

I'll make a nation out of you. Moses says, If you're not going to take these people in, if you're not going to fulfill their promises, blot me out of your book which you have written. Blot me out.

This would be Moses, Moshi written down there, and he's blotted out. What kind of book is that? We'll talk about it. But that's a reference where it's clearly a list of names.

The very next verse, when God responds, he says, Moses, whosoever has sinned, he's the one I will blot out of my book. Now, this wouldn't just be your ordinary, Oops, I got angry, or Oops, I told a fib. This is a special kind of sin, isn't it? This is a particular type of rebellious sin.

This would be the equivalent, perhaps, of the New Testament sin unto death. Remember, John says, Pray for the guy who's erring and falling, and if you can restore him, great. But if he's committing a sin unto death, I do not say that you should pray for that.

There are people who put themselves in a category of rebellion where they're beyond prayer and they're beyond hope. There's nothing that God can do to restore them and bring them back. Whosoever has sinned, him I will blot out of my book, God says in 32-33 of Exodus.

David, I already referred to this, Psalm 69-28, Let them, i.e., the enemies, the adversaries, be blotted out of the book of the living. Some versions, like the New American Standard and the New Incomplete Version, say the book of life. But it's the book of the living.

Blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. We'll return and study that one in some detail here shortly. Isaiah 4-3, He that is left in Zion shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living.

Or, everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. Isaiah 4-3. Ezekiel 13-9, we saw this not too terribly long ago, talking about the false prophets.

They shall not be written in the writing of the house of Israel. They will not be written in the record of the house of Israel. And then our final Old Testament passage is our passage, Daniel 12-1.

People will be delivered, everyone is found written in the book. We have some New Testament passages that go along with this. One that people tend to forget, but we saw because we did

the gospel of Luke, is Luke 10-20.

Remember when Jesus sent the disciples out two by two? And they went about healing and casting out demons. Jesus said, oh, I saw Satan falling from heaven like lightning. But what else did Jesus say? He said, they said, boy, even the demons obey us.

When we tell them to get out, they get out. And Jesus says, don't rejoice that you're able to cast out demons. Rejoice, why? Luke 10-20, because your names are written in heaven.

Rejoice because your names are written in heaven. People have had all kinds of ideas, going back to those nine different definitions of the books. What does it mean when Jesus says your names are written in heaven? Rejoice because you're saved? Rejoice because you've done something noteworthy or righteous? What does it mean? Philippians 4-3.

Paul is talking about co-laborers and fellow workers for the cause of the gospel and so on. And he talks about his fellow laborers whose names are in the book of life. How does that distinguish them? It would seem to be a little bit redundant or unnecessary if they are co-laborers in the gospel, if the book of life is just the book of the saved.

And he says, well, my fellow laborers whose names are in the book of life, well, so what? Everybody else you're talking to in the churches, their names are in the book of life also. So what does it mean when he says their names are in the book of life? Hebrews 12-23. You have not come to the Mount Sinai smoking and quaking and thunder and lightning, but you have come to this, that and the other.

You have come to the General Assembly and the Church of the Firstborn whose names are written in heaven. What is the Church of the Firstborn? What does it mean to have your name written in heaven in that context? Revelation 3-5. You have the church, I believe, if I remember right, that's the church at Sardis.

He that overcomes, I will not blot out his name from the book of life. That's one of your blot out passages in Revelation 3-5. Revelation 13-8.

All shall worship him, worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. And depending on how you parse and construe that sentence, you could say everyone's going to worship the beast whose names are not written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain. And at first you would think, well, I think I'd rather have the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world than have these names written down before history ever begins.

How can God write down names when people haven't lived yet? But, it removes all doubt when you go to Revelation 17-8 where almost the same phrase is found. Everyone is going to wonder whose names are not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. And there is no reference to the Lamb being slain at that point.

Then, of course, we have our passages in Revelation 20. Revelation 20-12, the book is open, which is of life. 20-15, whoever is not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

And you have two other passages in Revelation 21-27 talking about the New Jerusalem. There shall in no wise enter anything that defiles us, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. They are the ones who are qualified to go in.

And 20-19, if anyone takes away part of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life. And there is a little textual problem in 20-19 where some of the manuscripts say God shall take away his part out of the tree of life. It muddies the water even further.

So, those are, I have just given you, all of the passages, all of the major passages that refer to the writings in heaven. And you can see the variety and you can see how important context is to these writings. There is a lot.

Most believers, if you say, well, does the Bible talk about the book of life? They say, oh yeah, Revelation 20, the books are open. And you're either in it or you're not. You're either going to hell or you're going to heaven.

And that's the book of life. But there's quite a lot of material in the word of God about what is written in heaven. So, we really need to figure this out, I think.

So, that's what we're going to do. Now, you have the idea that there are Old Testament usages that all seem to kind of be of a piece. And then there's New Testament passages that seem to be of a piece.

And if you look up book of life in a Bible dictionary, I'll give you, for example, the concept given in the New Bible Dictionary, which is one of my little library books here. They say under book of life, they say, well, there are two definitions. Number one and number two.

Number one, it is used of natural life. As in Psalm 69, 28, where David's talking about his enemies. He says, let them be blotted out of the book of the living.

And that this means let them die. Same thing, and they put Exodus 32, 32 in that category where Moses says, if you're not going to save the people, blot me out of your book, kill me. Kill me, kill me now.

If they're not going, strike me dead because I have no further use for my life. That's their view. Psalm 139, 16, you or I saw my substance being yet unformed in your book.

They were all written. The days fashioned for me or the parts fashioned for me when as yet there were none of them that this would be the course of life. The fact that he's alive.

They put that under that same category. And Daniel 12, 1. They say everyone who's found written in the book will be delivered. Everyone who's still alive will be delivered.

And you have this idea popular in dispensational circles that those who are still staggering around at the end of the tribulation period because they were obedient, they escaped the wiles and the snares and the assaults of the Antichrist and went to the hills and the flood that came out of the dragon's mouth didn't get them and they've survived to the end. They're going to be delivered. Michael will stand up and everyone who's still alive will be delivered.

That's how they view it. So that's a convenient lump that kind of mashes down the meaning of the book and just says, well, you're alive, natural life. Then, number two, they say, well, in later Judaism in the New Testament it is the life of the age to come.

And so this would be like Isaiah chapter 4. He who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy. Everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. Some people would put that under the first definition.

Others would say, you're written down for future blessing in the next life. You're going to be qualified to live in Jerusalem. So, Paul in Philippians chapter 4, I urge you, help those women who labored with me in the gospel with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers whose names are in the book of life.

Future blessing. They've excelled. They've been faithful.

They've been obedient. And so they are in line for blessing. Well, you're going to find that there is not much distinction if you go to the Bible dictionaries and so on.

Well, let's take a look in a bit more detail here at these books. And then, specifically, we'll be able to come back to Daniel chapter 12 and verse 1 and figure out what is going on. Well, the difficulty is in realizing that most of the time when you find these references to being written in a book, there's also some moral dilemma.

There's a moral aspect. There's righteousness is somehow in view. When David says, block them out, what's his next line in Psalm 69? He says, block them out of the book of the living and let them not be recorded with the righteous.

And there is a link between life and righteousness. This is what we're seeing in the book of Job. The friends, the four friends who speak, all assume that if you do well, your life is extended.

Long life will be yours. Proverbs talks about those who embrace wisdom will live a long life. And that departing from wisdom, departing from God's word, being unfaithful, will ultimately result in a shortening of life.

So there is, even when you talk about just the book of the living, there is this aspect of, well, you're alive because God favors you. And God's going to strike you down if you are no longer deserving of that favor. And this Exodus 32 passage would fall under that.

But you have the idea that the New Testament view is looking forward to the next life. And that

the not being blotted out in Revelation chapter 3 and verse 5 and so on, and certainly in Revelation 20. Well, we say all of that to say this.

You and I are living right now. So, and if we weren't living, we would be at the resurrection. So the book of the living, if there's just a list of people who are alive on the earth, that would not really be a big concern for us, right? We would assume, well, I'm alive and I'm written down.

When I die, I won't be in it. Great-great-grandma was written in it, but now she's not. My children, my friends, my spouse, they're written in it, but if they die, they won't be.

None of those things really impact the way that we live our life. But, when you think about righteousness and you think about the record that God keeps of the works in our life, the fear of God that occurs in our life, now that is important because we can affect what is being written in that book today. The fact that we made a priority out of the word of God this morning and out of assembling with fellow believers in accordance with the command of Scripture, that makes a difference.

Now, if you assemble because, well, I don't want somebody to think I'm not a good Christian, that's not going to get you written down in the book for faith. But if you genuinely, as I am sure everyone here is, are interested in the word of God and want to grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior, that's the fear of God. That gets written down in God's book.

That is part of what goes into that eternal record of our life. And it makes a difference. Every decision, every thought that we take captive for Christ is recorded.

It is written down. And that certainly ought to motivate us and it ought to encourage us that even if nobody sees our faithfulness, they don't see the battles that we fight and win in our soul, God sees it and it's written down. Well, we're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we'll sort these passages into the bins into which they fall and we'll find out exactly what is being written in heaven and why it makes a difference to us. But let's pause here and take our break.