

Book of Remembrance

*“They that feared
the LORD spake
often one to
another: and the
LORD hearkened,
and heard it, and
a book of
remembrance was
written before him
for them that
feared the LORD,
and that thought
upon his name.”
—Malachi 3:16*

THIS IS NOT THOUGHT TO

be a literal book, written on parchment or paper, and bound in cloth or leather, wherein someone writes the names of all those who fear, or reverence, the LORD, and speak often one to another. Nevertheless, we believe that God has a record of all those faithful to him in times past, present, and future, and that this constitutes a ‘book of remembrance’ for

the time when rewards are to be bestowed, and those who are worthy specially remembered.

THOSE WHO FEAR GOD

Reference is made to a ‘book’ in Exodus 32:31-33. “Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people [Israel] have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of

thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.” God punished Israel for their sin, but did not consume, or blot them out; Moses interceded on their behalf.—vss. 7-14

Another book is referred to by the Revelator, chapter twenty, verse 12—“the book of life.” In the millennial reign, when mankind in general come forth from their graves, they all will be placed on trial. Every opportunity will be theirs to attain life everlasting on the human plane, by obedience to the kingdom requirements. The incorrigibly wicked (during the future reign of Christ and his church), having refused the blessings of the “way of holiness,” and not having their names written in the ‘book of life,’ will be cut off from life. (Isa. 35:8; Acts 3:23; Rev. 20:15; 21:8) God will not permit any such blot in his glorious kingdom.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

The foregoing paragraphs refer to three books—a ‘book of remembrance,’ ‘thy book’ or ‘my book,’ and a ‘book of life.’ Regarding the first mentioned book, recorded in Malachi 3:16, while this had special application to natural Israel, it is also of deep significance to spiritual Israel, the church of the Gospel Age. The nation of Israel was in a state of apostasy; and a somewhat similar condition exists with mankind in general today. Men have very largely forgotten God, or have not the required reverence for him. But, there are some who do revere him, think upon his name, and talk to each other about him. These are the ones to whom he hearkens, and with whom he is pleased. It is our great

joy to reverence our Heavenly Father in literal fulfillment of Malachi's words, speaking 'often one to another' as we meet together, whether our number be only two or three, or in large assemblies. If we continue to be faithful, reverencing our Father from the heart, eventually we shall be with him when he makes up his jewels.

A SPECIAL TREASURE

"They shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels [special treasure, *Marginal Translation*]; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." (Mal. 3:17) Our Father here promises to 'spare' us, or, according to *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, 'to have pity.' How wonderfully gracious and patient! "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear [reverence] him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." (Ps. 103:13,14) He knows we cannot speak and act perfectly; but because of our faith and full consecration to him we have a righteousness from him, on account of our faith.—Phil. 3:9

We are now "accepted in the beloved." (Eph. 1:6) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:1) Now we are to "walk in newness of life," striving to be conformed to our perfect pattern, God's dear Son. (Rom. 6:4; 8:29) Unintentionally, we at times stumble and come short of our heart's desire because of our fallen physical frame; but we very gratefully approach the heavenly throne of grace for cleansing from all unrighteousness.—Heb. 4:16; I John 1:9

A FAITHFUL CLASS

Our Father indeed has a 'book' in which are the names of all his faithful children of the Gospel Age, and Jesus referred to this record, but did not call it a book. Jesus, at one time, sent forth seventy disciples. He gave them power to heal the sick and say unto the people, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." (Luke 10:1,9) Then, in verse twenty, we read, "In this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." Here was a privilege and honor in which to indeed rejoice.

CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN

The writer to the Hebrews also refers to this record that God has—"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23) This church, when complete and glorified—the heavenly Zion—will be God's dwelling place. "The LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." (Ps. 132:13,14) God, then looking at the names in his book of remembrance, will say of various members of the church, "This and that man was born in her [Zion]."—Ps. 87:5,6

Another reference to this book is recorded in Philippians 4:3. "I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." The Apostle Paul shows us here that the sisters have exactly the same privilege in this connection as the brothers.

Through the Revelator, the highly exalted Lord Jesus Christ sent messages to the seven churches; and a part of one of these communications reads, “Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.”—Rev. 3:4,5

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

In order that our names shall remain in the book of life—the book of remembrance—we must be faithful unto death. (Rev. 2:10) To all such, the words of the risen Lord Jesus again are very encouraging—“They shall walk with me in white robes because they are worthy. The conqueror shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will by no means blot out his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name in the presence of my Father, and in the presence of his angels.”—Rev. 3:4,5, *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott* ■