

Psalm 69:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

Analysis

Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous. This final imprecation in the series invokes the "book of the living" (מְשֻׁרֶּת חַיִּים/missefer chayyim)—God's register of those alive before Him, those who belong to His covenant people and have eternal life. "Blotted out" (יִמְמַקֵּה/yimmakhu) means erased, deleted, removed from the record. David prays enemies be permanently excluded from God's people and from eternal life.

The parallel "not be written with the righteous" (עַמְ-צַדִּיקִים אֲלֵיכֶם/im-tzaddikim al-yikkatevu) reinforces the exclusion—they shouldn't be enrolled among God's redeemed people, either temporally (in Israel's register) or eternally (in heaven's book). This distinguishes between merely biological descendants of Abraham and true spiritual children of God—a distinction Jesus, Paul, and John the Baptist all made (Matthew 3:9, John 8:39-44, Romans 9:6-8).

Revelation develops this imagery: the "book of life" contains names of all who are saved (Revelation 13:8, 20:12-15, 21:27). Those whose names aren't written face eternal judgment. This imprecation, therefore, prays for what Scripture elsewhere warns is the sinner's natural destiny apart from divine grace.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern kingdoms maintained citizen registers, and Israel maintained genealogical records crucial for tribal identity, inheritance, and priestly

service. To be blotted from such records meant losing covenant standing and benefits. Moses interceded for Israel's sin by offering to be blotted from God's book (Exodus 32:32-33). God responded that only the guilty would be blotted, establishing that the "book" wasn't merely civic register but divine record of covenant membership.

Prophets warned that covenant-breakers would be cut off from Israel's register (Ezekiel 13:9). Paul taught that not all ethnic Israel belonged to true Israel (Romans 9:6-8). Hebrews distinguished between names enrolled in heaven versus merely earthly citizenship (Hebrews 12:23).

Revelation's consistent theme is that only those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life enter the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:27). Those not written face the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the imagery of names being written in or blotted from God's book shape your understanding of election and salvation?
2. What assurance does Scripture provide that believers' names are permanently written in the book of life?
3. How does this verse's distinction between ethnic Israel and true spiritual Israel inform your reading of Romans 9-11?

Interlinear Text

אֵל	בְּרִיתָם	בְּשָׁמָה	מִתְּבָרֶךְ	מִתְּבָרֶךְ	מִתְּבָרֶךְ	מִתְּבָרֶךְ	מִתְּבָרֶךְ
Let them be blotted	out of the book	of the living		H5973	with the righteous		H408
H4229	H5612	H2416			H6662		

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 4:3 (Parallel theme): And I intreat 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.

Luke 10:20 (Parallel theme): Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.

Hebrews 12:23 (Righteousness): To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

Revelation 13:8 (Parallel theme): And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Ezekiel 13:9 (Parallel theme): And mine hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies: they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel, neither shall they enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

Revelation 22:19 (Parallel theme): And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Revelation 3:5 (Parallel theme): 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.

Isaiah 65:16 (Parallel theme): That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org