

Psalm 87:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah.

Analysis

The psalm continues: "The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there" (Hebrew YHWH yis-por bikh-tov amim zeh yullad-sham). God "counts" and "writes"—maintaining a register of citizens. "This man was born there" is recorded for each individual. The image is the book of life (Exodus 32:32-33, Psalm 69:28, Philippians 4:3, Revelation 20:12-15). Citizenship in God's kingdom is documented, permanent, secured. The verse assures believers their names are written in heaven.

Historical Context

Ancient cities maintained citizenship rolls. Roman censuses recorded citizens (Luke 2:1-5). But God's register is ultimate—determining eternal destiny. Jesus told disciples to rejoice that their "names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). Hebrews 12:23 describes believers as enrolled in heaven. The book of life determines who enters New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:27). This census matters eternally.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What assurance does having your name written in God's book provide?
2. How does divine record-keeping emphasize the personal, individual nature of salvation?
3. On what basis are names written in the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 13:8), and how does this secure salvation?

Interlinear Text

יְהִי־הָרָב־בְּכָתְבָן־עַמּוֹן־עַמּוֹן־יְהִי־הָרָב־בְּכָתְבָן־עַמּוֹן־עַמּוֹן
The LORD shall count when he writeth up the people H2088
H3068 H5608 H3789 H5971

תַּלְמִיד־שְׁלָמִים־סְלָה
that this man was born there Selah H5542 H8033 H3205

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 4:3 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:

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.

Revelation 20:15 (Parallel theme): And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Psalms 69:28 (Parallel theme): Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.

Ezekiel 13:9 (References Lord): 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.

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.

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.

Psalms 22:30 (References Lord): A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.

Jeremiah 3:19 (Parallel theme): But I said, How shall I put thee among the children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of nations? and I said, Thou shalt call me, My father; and shalt not turn away from me.