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**A0647 – November 19, 2006 – Rev 21:24-27 – The New Jerusalem
& The Lamb's Book Of Life**

Question: If verse 8 of Rev 21 refers to believers, then what is the second death? Death of all the lost rewards? Loss of intimacy? “Separation” from what?

Well, **the second death** is the lake of fire as per Rev 20:14. Death means separation so this is the second separation. Rev 20:14 refers to the eternal separation of the unbeliever from God. But in Rev 21:8 it is the separation of the sorcerer, idolater, etc...from his “part” which is the Greek word *meros* and refers to his Experiential Inheritance. The promise to the overcomer in Rev 2:11 implies that the believer who does not overcome will be hurt by the second death. This does not mean he will be in the lake of fire. There is no purgatory for believers. The hurt is not defined there. However, in Rev 21:7-8 the hurt is defined in the context as related to inheritance. So, the separation has to do with the separation of the persistently carnal believer from his Experiential Inheritance. As one author wrote, “the believer can never be harmed by the second death but he may be hurt”.

There are two inheritances. The first is Positional Inheritance. This inheritance is received by all who are justified by means of faith alone in Christ alone (Gal 3:29 – by justification; Eph 1:14, 18 – by faith; 1 Pet 1:3-4 – by the new birth; Tit 3:7 – by justification; Heb 9:5 – by calling). We will be with God forever. The second is an Experiential Inheritance. This inheritance is received by all who learn obedience through suffering. Believers who overcome are co-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17 – by suffering; Jam 2:5 – by those who love; Heb 11:7 – by faithfulness; Col 3:24 – by good works; 1 Cor 6:9-10 – not by unrighteous works; Eph 5:5 - same; Gal 5:21 - same; 1 Pet 3:9 – by good works not bad; Heb 6:12 – by faith and patience; Rev 21:7 – not by

unrighteous works). This inheritance is said to be a reward (Col 3:24). A simple overview of these passages clearly indicates two inheritances. Contextually, almost everywhere you find “inherit, inheritance, heir” there is the presence or absence of work or character quality as a condition for obtaining or forfeiting inheritance.

The questioner also asked if there will be **loss of intimacy**? Since the intimate Father-son relationship in Rev 21:7 is a part of the inheritance promised to the overcomer and is a part of the Experiential Inheritance then the answer is “all will not have the same intimacy”. While all will have intimacy with God and Christ those who have overcome will have more intimacy. All will have a full cup of joy but not all will have the same size cup. Therefore, what I’m saying about Rev 21:8 is that it is describing the character quality of believers who will not inherit. They persevered in carnality and as a result they will be separated from their potential Experiential Inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Okay, picking up where we stopped last week in Rev 21:24 we ran into a new group of people called **the nations**. This is the Greek word *ethnos* and it refers to Gentiles in contrast to Jews. So, who are the nations? It seems probable that

1. They are not part of the first resurrection which was pre-millennial
2. They are Gentiles who believed during the Millennium and lived till the end
3. They are translated to the new earth and given bodies like Adam and Eve’s (Seiss, Larkin, Thomas)
4. They may carry out God’s original dominion mandate on the new earth (Seiss, Larkin, Thomas)
5. They may procreate since they are like Adam and Eve before the Fall (Seiss, Larkin, Thomas)
6. They need the leaves from the tree of life for good health
7. They will never be able to fall because there is no tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Three Reasons the Number of Millennial Saints is Relatively Small in Comparison to Millennial Unbelievers and How this Relates to Why the New Earth May Have to be Populated

First, Revelation 20:7-9 indicates that the number of millennial saints living at the end of the Millennium is relatively small in comparison to the millennial unbelievers.

Revelation 20:7-9 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. ⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

Now, I take it that the camp of saints here are primarily Jewish and Satan, the author of anti-Semitism, is leading the final crusade against these Jewish saints in the land of Israel. During the Millennium this area of the world will be lifted up like a broad plateau. Now notice the number of people from the nations that come up against them in verse 8, “the number of them is like the sand of the seashore”. Surely this is the vast majority from the nations on earth indicating that the vast minority of the nations stay home and do not join the battle against the Jews. The reason? Because they have believed in the Jewish Messiah! But their number seems relatively small.

How is it that such a relatively small number of the nations have believed in Jesus as Messiah, especially when we consider that all will see the King reigning in glory from Jerusalem and peace will reign from sea to sea for the entire 1,000 years? I have two suggestions for this anomaly. *First*, it may be hard to believe that this great King died on a cross. Imagine if you saw a great King, infinite in wisdom and strength. It would be hard to believe that a few thousand years ago He was sentenced to death on a cross and died for you. *Second*, with an environment so good and suffering and death the exception and not the norm they may not sense a need for Christ’s salvation! So, there are some good reasons for thinking that during the Millennium there may not be a tremendous amount of Gentile salvation as we normally expect in the KING’s presence! So, when the believers from the Millennial nations are transformed into bodies like Adam and Eve’s without sin natures and transferred over to the new earth then there may be a lot of space to fill on the new earth. And I suppose that they will be able to procreate and have children until they have filled the earth, that is, at which time they would

have fulfilled the dominion mandate. Mathematically there would have to be an end to procreation because if the people of the nations do not die in the new earth and they are procreating forever then eventually every square inch of the new earth will be filled (assuming the earth is of finite size). So, ecologically speaking, whatever the carrying capacity is of the new earth the population will likely grow to that size and then the dominion mandate of Genesis will be accomplished. So, this thing is amazing no matter how you cut it and I'm convinced that on the new earth there will be advancements in agriculture and technology and it's going to be more than you can imagine, more than you ever dreamed of with the Lamb of God at the center of the greatest metropolis ever.

Now, I should note that the reason we don't have a lot of details about the new earth (and I've speculated quite a bit about it) is because it's not the central thing. The new Jerusalem is the central thing and so most of the text focuses there. Just like in Gen 1-2 we don't have a lot of details about the earth outside of the garden of Eden and that's because Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden is the central thing, not the surrounding earth.

Okay, but we do know for certain that **the nations** will be living out on this new earth and most likely in bodies like Adam and Eve's and they will need these leaves from the tree of life which is inside the city to promote their health. When we compare this with Gen 1-3 we see that Adam and Eve had access to the tree of life, probably for this precise reason, to promote good health and live forever. Turn over there now to Gen 3:26.

Genesis 3:22-24 "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever "-- ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

See, this tree of life has the capacity to enable those who eat of it to "eat, and live forever" and since after the Fall Adam and Eve had a sin nature "living forever" would be a horrible thought. That's why the end of verse 22 has a dashed line. That dashed line means that, in the Hebrew it's not a complete

sentence. God's just talking and all of a sudden He stops mid-sentence. One of the reasons for stopping mid-sentence is because the thought is too horrible to even utter and so here, most likely, that is the reason. Living forever in sinful bodies is a terrible thought. That's why Christ came, to reverse the terrible effects of sin upon the world and spiritual death (Rev 21:4). So, because Adam and Eve were sinful, in a state of spiritual death, God drove them eastward outside of the garden and stationed cherubim, angels, at the gates of the garden, to keep them from "the tree of life". If they continued to have access they could have eaten and lived forever in sinful bodies. When we read now in Rev 22:2 that the nations will need the leaves of the tree of life for good health in the future new earth you have to wonder "Why?" And it seems impossible for them to need these leaves if they have resurrection bodies and eternal life. The resurrection body is immortal and imperishable (1 Cor 15:53). If you have one you have no need for the leaves or the fruit of the tree of life. But if you don't have a resurrection body and you don't have eternal life but are like Adam and Eve then sense can be made out of their need for the tree of life. I suppose that since the Bible is silent on what will happen to the millennial saints that there will be future revelation during the millennium which will answer this question. So, what a millennial saint is promised at the moment of faith alone in Christ alone seems to be something different than what we have as a part of the Church. This further explains why the tree of life is a reward for the overcomers of Israel, the Church and Tribulation saints since we will all have resurrection bodies it is not necessary but its choice fruits are a reward.

Some notes about the new earth. We don't know how large the new earth will be. We don't even know if the new earth will be a sphere or not. We don't know if there will be new planets in the new heaven or not. One author, Clarence Larkin in his book on Dispensational Truth claimed it is silly to think that God created all the planets just to adorn the heavens. Surely God originally designed them to be full of the offspring of Adam and Eve. In the new heaven He may also create other planets to be populated by the offspring of the nations! I'm not sure about that because God told Adam and Eve to fill the earth and subdue it. He didn't say anything about other planets. But it's not impossible. All we know is that these nations are out there on the new earth and most likely, since the first resurrection was complete before the Millennium, they will be translated into bodies like Adam and Eve before the Fall. It will be amazing to see new children born into the new heaven and

new earth without sin natures. Robin and I have always wondered what it would be like for a woman to give birth without pain since that was the curse upon women at the Fall. Well, most likely we will find out and we will be astonished to see it happen. It will also be astonishing to see man labor without toil or exhaustion (in Rev 21:4 the Greek word translated “pain” is actually “toilsome labor”). I mean, how did God intend these things to work. Wait and see. When God created this heavens and earth “it was very good” (Gen 1:31) and when He creates the new heaven and new earth it’s going to be “very good”. God made man to be great and to rule and I’m convinced He will accomplish His original design and plan for man, the only kind made in His image.

Who are the **kings of the earth**? They are clearly rulers over **the nations** and they clearly live on the new **earth** and not in the new Jerusalem but they certainly have access. They will **bring the glory of the nations into** the new Jerusalem. The word **bring** refers to a schedule of coming into the city with the **glory of the nations**, probably they will bring the produce of their labor, wonderful things that have come forth from the gardens of the new earth.

Revelation 21:25 and her gates may never be shut (3PAPSubj) a day, for there will not be (3SFMI) night

Revelation 21:26 and they will bring (3PFAI) the glory and the honor of the nations into her.

There is no night there, no light-dark cycle, it will always be **day** and the reason is because of the Shechinah Glory and the Lamb who illuminate the city and earth and heaven. **And they**, that is, the **kings of the earth...will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into her**. They will bring the produce and worship of the **nations into** the city. 22:2 indicates that the nations will be able to come into the city in order to get to the tree of life.

Revelation 21:27 And he will never may come into her all unclean and the one's doing abominable things and lying, if not having been written (PerfPassPart) in the book of life of the Lamb.

This verse could be taken three ways. First, it could simply be saying that no unbeliever will come into the new Jerusalem. No doubt that is true but the question is whether this verse is teaching that or not. Second, it could be saying that no believer will come into the new Jerusalem unless his reputation is written in the Lamb's book of life. Third, it could mean that no believer will come into the new Jerusalem unless his new name is written in the Lamb's book of life. I opt for either view two or three.

One interesting observation is that although the phrase "book of life" is used several times in Scripture the phrase "the Lamb's book of life" is only used here.ⁱ This could indicate a distinction between this book and the "book of life". This is a Bible difficulty. The book of life is a complex topic. Some think there is only one book, some think there are multiple books. There are about five views.ⁱⁱ We're not going to go through all that but I do want to present two viable options.

First, if "the Lamb's book of life" is distinct from "the book of life" then it is possible that all believers' names are recorded in "the book of life" but only the new name of the believer who overcomes is recorded in "the Lamb's book of life". We know that the overcomer is promised a "new name" (Rev 2:17).

Revelation 2:17 To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

There are several occasions in the Bible when God gave someone a new name based on their reputation or foreseen accomplishments (e.g. God changed Abram's name (exalted father) to Abraham (father of a multitude) (Gen 17:5); Christ changed Simon Barjona's name to Peter (Matt 16:17-18); Christ re-named the apostles James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder (Mark 3:17). Receiving a "new name" is something like receiving a "nick-name". Nick-names are often given because of some defining event in our lives. For example, since I got burned a few months ago some have called me "Sparky". It's also important to realize that Jesus received a new name as a reward for overcoming (Phil 2:9; Rev 3:12). In Rev 2:17 we learn that the believer who overcomes will also be rewarded with a new name. Whatever this new name is it will embody the overcomer's reputation (e.g. Thunder, Courage, Faithful, etc...) and will serve as an

everlasting memorial to the character of that overcomer. It's a totally unique name given to you by Christ. This would be a very special and exciting moment to have the King of kings give you a new name that somehow summarized your life as a believer.

In the Bible a name means a lot because it denotes one's reputation or character. For example, God's name is YHWH and this is His everlasting memorial name (Exod 3:14-15, from the verb HAYAH "I Am" comes YHWH). This name denotes who He is. In the same way the believer who overcomes will receive a new name that denotes who he is and it will be an everlasting memorial of his reputation. So, it is possible that "the Lamb's book of life" is different from "the book of life" and in it is recorded the new name of each believer who overcomes. Because it is written there he will have access to the city by the gates.

A second possibility is that "the Lamb's book of life" and "the book of life" are the same book. But in this book two things are written. First, the name of each believer (e.g. Joe Don Smith) and second, the reputation of each overcomer (e.g. Thunder, Courage, Kind, Gentle). If we turn to the letter to Sardis in Rev 3:1-5 we can see how this is a possibility.

Revelation 3:1-5 "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars, says this: 'I know your deeds, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. ² 'Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain, which were about to die; for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God. ³ 'So remember what you have received and heard; and keep *it*, and repent. Therefore if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come to you. ⁴ 'But you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. ⁵ 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

In verse 1 the word "name" (Gk *onoma*) is used and it clearly refers to their "reputation". We would render the idea, "you have a reputation that you have many good deeds but you do not." BAGD lists "name" here as meaning

“reputation”. In verse 5 Christ promises He will not erase the overcomers “name” from the book of life. BAGD notes that most likely “name” here also means “reputation”. What Christ would be saying is that the believer who overcomes will not have his reputation erased from the book of life. In this view all believers will have their name written in the book of life but only the overcomer will have his reputation written there. This will mean he has access to the city.

Either view you take is functionally equivalent. Entrance into the city is conditioned on being a believer who overcomes and not simply on being a believer. You have to be a believer to be in the new heaven and new earth but you have to be an overcomer to be in the new Jerusalem. Like YHWH’s name is an everlasting memorial name so believer’s who overcome will be rewarded with a new and everlasting memorial name that captures their unique character as a believer. It will be given to him by Christ Himself and engraved on a white stone. Turn back to

Revelation 2:17 To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it.'

On the basis of the overcomers good reputation Christ will give him a “new name” engraved on a white stone. Whatever this new name is it will embody that believer’s reputation (Thunder, Courageous One, Faithful, etc...) and will serve as an everlasting memorial to the character of that overcomer. It’s a totally unique name given to you by Christ and this is a very exciting thing.

Why will it be engraved on a white stone? In the Greek and Roman world a white stone was given to victors in battle or in athletic contests as a ticket or pass to enter into special events. For example, the winner of an athletic contest would use his white stone to enter other athletic contests on his way to the Olympic Games. If you didn’t have a white stone you couldn’t enter. Special banquets were also held and entrance was conditioned on whether you had a white stone with your name on it (a lot like an invitation). It seems that John has this historical background in mind and that the white stone with a new name written on it will be given to the overcomers so they can show it to the angelic watchmen and enter the victory arches of the gated city. There were many ways into Rome in the ancient world but only victors

in battle or special honorees such as the Caesar passed through the victory arches.

In conclusion, verse 27 seems to be saying that only those whose names are in “the Lamb’s book of life” will be permitted access into the city. This book may be different than “the book of life” and may hold the new names of the believers who overcome. So, while all believers’ names are in “the book of life” and this ensures they will be in the new heaven and new earth, not all believers’ will have their character memorialized with a new name recorded in “the Lamb’s book of life”. But those who are will be honored with a new name engraved on a white stone which can be used as a ticket or pass into the gated city.

ⁱ Ps. 69:28; Phil. 4:3; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27. Except possibly Rev 13:8 but “Lamb” there seems to modify what follows and not what precedes.

ⁱⁱ One solution which has been proposed is to understand *God’s book, the book of the living* (Ex. [32:32-33](#); Ps. [69:28](#)) as being a different book than the [Book of Life](#). Proponents of this view hold that this book records those who are afforded a full life due to righteousness. The sinner is then “blotted out” of the book by judgment resulting in his *physical* death. The remaining passage which indicates names may be blotted out (Rev. [3:5+](#)) is seen as a literary device—coupled with a strong adversative—intended to illustrate the impossibility of being blotted out from the other book—the Book of Life.

Another solution holds that the *Lamb’s Book of Life* differs from the *Book of Life*. The *Book of Life* contains the names of every person who ever lived. Those who believe have their names retained in the book (Rev. [3:5+](#)). Those who are unsaved are blotted out of the book (Ps. [69:28](#)). Another book, the *Lamb’s Book of Life* contains the name of every individual who is born again, and *only* those who are born again (Rev. [13:8+](#); [21:27+](#)). Names are never blotted out of this book.

Another proposed solution is to understand Revelation [17:8+](#) as merely indicating that the [Book of Life](#) has existed from the foundation of the world and that the names of the beast worshipers “are not written” in the book *at the time of their worship of the beast*. Their names were previously recorded, but they had *already been blotted out*. Therefore, the names blotted out are the beast worshipers not the redeemed.

Another possible explanation is to understand the references to *God’s book* (Ex. [32:32-33](#)), *the book of the living* (Ps. [69:28](#)), *the book* (Dan. [12:1](#)), the [Book of Life](#) (Php. [4:3](#); Rev. [3:5+](#); [17:8+](#); Rev. [20:12+](#), [15+](#); [22:19+](#)), and the *Lamb’s Book of Life* (Rev. [13:8+](#); [21:27+](#)) as all describing the same book.

Analysis of these views comes from Tony Garland on the following website: http://www.spiritandtruth.org/teaching/Book_of_Revelation/commentary/htm/04040304.htm#95575. My view is most like the second solution offered above by Arnold Fruchtenbaum but is still different.

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