

In verse 20 the Lord tells the seventy-two disciples not to rejoice in their recent spiritual victories, but to rejoice that their names are written in heaven.

His audience would already be acquainted with the idea of a celestial record in heaven. In Exodus 32, Moses begs the Lord after the people have sinned, “But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.” Psalm 69:28 goes the opposite way and invokes a curse upon David’s enemies, that they be blotted out of the book of living. Daniel 12:1 promises that in the time of the end, “Your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book.” And Malachi 3:16 tells us of a book of remembrance of those who feared

the Lord and esteemed His name.

A heavenly book seems to be a compilation of human destiny. It enrolls people in heaven during their lifetime. And, as we read in Revelation 20, that destiny unfurls when the book is opened. Believers in Jesus Christ can be sure their names will never be blotted out from the Book of Life.

The destiny of the Lord Himself is engraved in a book. Hebrews 10:7, citing Psalm 40, quotes Christ as saying, “Behold, I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.” How appropriate that this book records obedience to the Father as His destiny on earth.

Questions:

1. What could be the significance of Jesus saying He saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven?
2. What does verse 20 identify as our ultimate source of joy?
3. Find other verses that reinforce 10:21-22.

4. Read 10:24. What have the disciples been given the privilege of seeing?

5. What is the attitude of the lawyer to whom Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan?

6. Does this story tell us anything about the law?

7. In what ways can I be like Martha when I should be like Mary?