**Those who overcome are out-resurrected without hurt at the Judgment Seat.**

**Those who overcome are also granted the privilege of partaking of the tree of life.**

**An evident connection between man’s rule and his partaking of the tree of life can be seen by noting the appearance of this tree in the beginning when man was in a position to rule, the absence of this tree during the entire period when man is not in a position to rule (aside from the tree being referenced in Proverb), and the reappearance of this tree in the book of Revelation when man will be brought back into a position to rule (cf.** [**Genesis 1:26-28**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Genesis+1.26-28&t=NKJV)**;** [**Revelation 2:26-27**](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Revelation+2.26-27&t=NKJV)**).**

**The Out-Resurrection and The Tree of Life**

**By Arlen Chitwood of** [Lamp Broadcast](http://lampbroadcast.org/)

**The Out-Resurrection**

If, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection [out-resurrection] from the dead. ([Philippians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.11&t=NKJV)).

In [Philippians 3:10-14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.10-14&t=NKJV), the “resurrection [lit., ‘out-resurrection’]” in verse eleven appears in connection with “the prize of the high calling [NKJV: ‘upward call’] of God in Christ Jesus” in verse fourteen.

“A prize” necessitates a conflict, which has to do with the present conflict between Christians and the world-rulers of the darkness of this age ([Ephesians 6:12-24](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Ephesians+6.12-24&t=NKJV)); and the reception of this prize requires victory in the conflict. Consequently, the “out-resurrection” of [Philippians 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=Philippians+3.11&t=NKJV) cannot be the resurrection of Christians to which Paul refers in [1 Corinthians 15:51-57](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Corinthians+15.51-57&t=NKJV) and [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/search/preSearch.cfm?Criteria=1Thessalonians+4.13-18&t=NKJV), for all of “the dead in Christ” — both the overcomers in the conflict and those who have been overcome in the conflict — will be raised from the dead at the time referred to in these verses.

The regular Greek word for “resurrection” appearing throughout the New Testament is *anastasis*. This is a compound word comprised of *ana*, which means “up,” and *stasis*, which means “to rise,” or “to stand.” Thus, *anastasis* means “to rise up” or “to stand up.” When used relative to those who have died, the exact meaning of the word would be, “a resumption of life, allowing one to rise up or stand up from the place of death.”

The Greek word appearing in Philippians 3:11, erroneously translated “resurrection” in most English versions of Scripture, is *exanastasis*. This word is made up of three parts (*ex-ana-stasis*). The latter two parts of the word (*ana-stasis*), as has been shown, mean “to rise up,” or to stand up.” But the preposition *ex* (from *ek*) prefixed to *anastasis* adds further meaning to the word. *Ex* (the form “*ek*” takes when prefixed to words beginning with a vowel) means “out of,” making *exanastasis* mean “to stand up out of [‘out-resurrection’].”

The resurrection (*anastasis*) of Christians will be a separation of “*the dead in Christ*” from the remainder of the dead, whether Old Testament saints or the unsaved dead. The out-resurrection (*exanastasis*) will be a further separation beyond this point. It is the “standing up” of a particular group “out of” all those previously raised from among the dead (“out of” *all Christians*).

At the time of the resurrection (*anastasis*), Christians will be separated from non-Christians; but at the time of the out-resurrection (*exanastasis*), certain Christians will be separated from other Christians. A smaller group will be separated from the larger group. *The called out* will be removed from *the called*, *from the complete body of Christians*.

Understanding *exanastasis* in the light of its context in Philippians 3:11 will clearly reveal that a resurrection *per se* (a rising from the dead) is not what is in view at all. The subject at hand is “overcoming,” “winning a prize in a conflict”; and these things are associated with the issues of the judgment seat and the coming kingdom. *Exanastasis* has to do with certain Christians (the overcomers) being elevated to a status above — “a standing up out of” — the status occupied by the remaining Christians (the non-overcomers).

At the judgment seat of Christ, certain Christians will be shown to have overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil — the three great enemies presently confronting every Christian. And the remaining Christians will be shown to have been overcome.

Overcoming Christians will then be elevated to a standing above Christians who were overcome and, in this manner, will be set apart for the distinct purpose of occupying positions with Christ in the kingdom. They will realize the “*prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*” (Philippians 3:14). The overcomers will “stand up out of” (*exanastasis*) the entire group that had previously “stood up” (*anastasis*) from among the dead.

These are the ones who will realize *life* during the Messianic Era, as opposed to those who will not (Romans 8:13). And this *life* will be in connection with *a new order of sons* (comprising *a firstborn son*, following the adoption) that God will bring forth at that time (Romans 8:14ff).

**The Tree of Life**

*And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food*. *The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden . . .* (Genesis 2:9a)

*He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*. *To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life*, *which is in the midst of the Paradise of God*. (Revelation 2:7)

The promise concerning those who overcome being granted the privilege of partaking of the tree of life is the first of seven overcomer’s promises in Revelation chapters two and three (Revelation 2-3). These promises pertain *to Christians alone*, and the realization of these promises awaits *the future Messianic Era*.

The time when Christians will enter into the blessings associated with these promises *must* follow the time set forth in chapter one — Christ appearing as Judge in the midst of the seven churches. The Church *must first* be brought into judgment. *Then* overcoming Christians will realize that which has been promised.

The Seven Epistles

Overcoming in each of the seven promises is related to existing conditions in the particular church to which the promise is given. One promise though is not to be looked upon as standing alone and being peculiar to only one church.

There are seven promises given to seven churches. “Seven” is a number showing *the completeness of that which is in view*. In this particular instance, the seven churches show *the complete Church* of Matthew 16:18 and the seven overcomer’s promises show *the completeness of that which has been promised to all Christians*.

The seven churches viewed together, as seen in these chapters, comprise an indivisible unit; and the seven overcomer’s promises viewed together, as presented in connection with Christians comprising these seven churches, are indivisibly related in such a manner that one cannot be realized apart from the other.

And viewing the overcomer’s promises in this manner, that which is seen throughout each epistle, would have to be looked upon the same way. Different facets of truth, *applicable to all Christians throughout the seven churches*, are shown through the Lord’s comments on things that have been singled out in each epistle concerning a particular church.

1) Applicable to All

Viewing one facet of truth after this fashion, in the epistle to “*the church of* [‘in’] *Ephesus*,” reference is made to *a departure from* “*your first love*” (Rev. 2:4). The command is then given, “*Remember therefore from where you have fallen*; *repent and do the first works*.” This is followed by the warning that if *remembrance*, *repentance*, and *first works* do not follow, the “*lampstand* [church in Ephesus; *cf.* Rev. 1:11-13, 20]” will be removed from its place.

And this removal of the lampstand [KJV: candlestick] — this removal of the church in Ephesus, the Christians in Ephesus — is, contextually, *millennial* in its scope of fulfillment. This removal will occur at the judgment seat; and it has nothing to do with eternal verities, with one’s eternal salvation, etc. Nor do the warnings in the other epistles in Revelation chapters two and three. Rather, *millennial verities alone*, *as they relate to saved individuals*, are in view by that which is stated in these warnings.

The time element involved in the warnings would have to be the same as that seen in the overcomer’s promises, for the latter has to do with overcoming or being overcome relative to the former.

And *millennial verities alone* are clearly revealed to be in view by that which is stated in several of the overcomer’s promises. Conditions seen in several of these promises will not exist beyond the Millennium, during the eternal ages (*e.g.*, Rev. 2:11, 26-27; 3:5, 21).

Following the warning to the church in Ephesus, reference is made to the “*Nicolaitans*” (an Anglicized form of the compound Greek word, *nikolaites* [from *nike*, “a victor,” “a conqueror”; and *laos*, “people”]). Thus, the word “*Nicolaitans*” means, “to conquer [be victorious over] the people.”

Within Church history, there is no record of a group of individuals known by the name, “*Nicolaitans*” — in the church in Ephesus, or in any other first-century Church (note that a reference to the “*Nicolaitans*” is also repeated in the epistle to the church in Pergamos [Rev. 2:15]).

And, when coming across a reference of this nature, there is only one thing that can be done in order to understand that which the Lord meant by using this word (whether by Christians during the first century, or by Christians today). The use of “*Nicolaitans*” would have to be understood as a reference to *the actions of a group of individuals*, *described by the meaning of the word itself*.

From the meaning of the word, a reference to the “*Nicolaitans*” could only be understood as a reference to *individuals forming a hierarchy within the Church*, *ruling over the people*. And these individuals were undoubtedly responsible, at least in part, for the existing conditions in Ephesus near the end of the first century, as well as the conditions subsequently seen existing in Pergamos (and possibly in one or more of the other five churches, though this is not mentioned).

And the entire matter leads into the promise for those who overcome, *i.e.*, for those who *remember*, *repent*,and *do the first works*. These are the ones who will be allowed to partake of the tree of life during the Messianic Era (Rev. 2:5-7).

All of these things, though directed to those in the church in Ephesus, would be applicable to those in any of the other six churches as well. And the inverse of that is equally true. The things written to those in each of the other six churches would be applicable to those in the church in Ephesus, or to those in any of the churches. That is, the things recorded in each of these seven epistles would be applicable to Christians everywhere.

2) The Dispensation

It is also evident that these seven epistles, by the manner in which they have been divinely arranged and structured, set forth truths within another realm. Viewed together, beginning with the church in Ephesus and ending with the church in Laodicea, it is evident that these epistles set forth a divinely revealed, overall view of Church history, covering the entire dispensation.

In this respect, the message to the church in Ephesus would reveal things concerning the Church at the beginning of the dispensation; the messages to the next five churches would continue from that point and reveal things concerning the Church throughout at least most of the remainder of the dispensation; and the message to the church in Laodicea would reveal things concerning the Church during the closing years of the dispensation.

(Revelation chapters two and three present one of only two places in Scripture where an overall view of the history of Christendom throughout the dispensation is given. The other was also given by Christ, but years earlier during His earthly ministry, preceding Calvary.

The earlier history of Christendom can be seen in the first four parables in Matthew chapter thirteen [*ref.* the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Mysteries of the Kingdom, Ch. 3,](http://bibleone.net/MK03.htm) [Ch. 4](http://bibleone.net/MK04.htm) [Ch. 5,](http://bibleone.net/MK05.htm) [Ch. 6](http://bibleone.net/MK06.htm)]. And interestingly enough, both of these accounts center around a history of Christendom as it pertains to the Word of the Kingdom — something that Church history books written by man *never even mention*, *much less center on*.

And until man understands the true nature of Church history, from the standpoint revealed in Matthew chapter thirteen and Revelation chapters two and three, *he can never properly understand Church history*. He can never properly understand why the Church, after almost 2,000 years of existence, has ended up in its present decadent state. And, as a result, he can do little more than approach the whole matter from a position other than how it is handled in Scripture.)

Near the beginning of the Church’s existence on earth, as shown by the first of the seven epistles in Revelation chapters two and three, there was a departure of Christians from their first love. And this revealed something with far-reaching ramifications that would occur in Christendom during the early years of its existence. The time element is not given in the epistle, but it would have to be seen in conjunction with a general deterioration of spiritual conditions in Christendom, occurring over the first several centuries.

Christians during the early years of the Church were busily engaged in the Lord’s work as they waited, anticipated, and longed for His return. They *loved His appearing* (*cf.* 2 Timothy 4:8). But as time went on and the Lord remained in heaven, the leaven that the woman placed in the three measures of meal in Matthew 13:33 began to do its damaging work, resulting in Christians gradually losing their first love. And the end result of the loss of this first love was the onset of what is known in Church history as “The Dark Ages.”

Although Christians departing from their first love emanates out of a sequence of events that fit into a framework of early Church history, this is not something peculiar to that period. Rather, this is something that has continued to exist since that time; and the attendant warning to Christians concerning the possibility of the lampstand being removed must extend throughout the entire period.

The retention or removal of the lampstand is contingent on overcoming or being overcome relative to the matter at hand (Rev. 2:7). Eternal verities are not in view at all. The thought set forth in this passage projects the matter out into that time when Christ will deal with the Church in *judgment*, and retention or removal of the lampstand anticipates the Church as it will appear *following* the issues of the judgment seat of Christ.

3) Called, Called Out

The word *church* in the Greek text is a compound word (*ekklesia*, from *ek* and *kaleo*) which means “called out.” And the word is used in the New Testament in two senses:

a) As the Church appears *preceding* the issues of the judgment seat (which would be during the present dispensation [Revelation 2-3], or as the Church is seen before the judgment seat [Revelation 1-3]).

b) As the Church will appear *following* the issues of the judgment seat (which would be as the Church is seen in Revelation 19:7-9, as the bride of Christ [*cf.* Hebrews 12:23]).

Only the “called” (all of the saved) can comprise the Church today (as it is looked upon in Revelation 2-3), for the “called out” are yet to be revealed and removed from the called. The Church will appear in the true sense of the word itself (*ekklesia*,“called out”) only after the “called out” have been removed from the “called,” which will occur following Christ dealing with all Christians at His judgment seat (note that all those being addressed in Revelation 2:1-7 are in the Church [as the Church presently appears], but some are in danger of being removed [as the Church will one day appear]).

Christ’s warning concerning the removal of the lampstand in Revelation 2:5 — the removal of the church in Ephesus, the Christians in Ephesus — must be understood in the light of the two ways in which the word “church” is used in Scripture. The message is to individuals in the Church as it appears today, which comprises all of *the called*, *all of the saved*, not just *the called out* (for the Church in the latter sense is yet to be revealed).

And any of the called who leave their “*first love*” and do not “*repent*, *and do the first works*,” cannot be among *the called out*. They cannot comprise the Church as it will appear in that coming day. Rather, they will *be removed*, spoken of elsewhere as *being disqualified/disapproved* (Greek: *adokimos* [*cf.* 1 Corinthians 9:27; 2 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:16; Hebrews 6:8]).

These two appearances of the Church present a sharp contrast in Scripture: The Church on earth immediately *preceding* its removal to appear before the judgment seat is described as “*wretched*, *miserable*, *poor*, *blind*, *and naked*” (which includes only those Christians alive at that time [Revelation 3:14-18]); but the Church *following* the issues of the judgment seat is described as the “*glorious Church* [the Church in her glory (the bride of Christ)], *not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing*” (which will include overcoming Christians from throughout the dispensation [Ephesians 5:25-32]). And it is the Church in her glory, the bride of Christ (Revelation 19:7-9), which will be extended the privilege of partaking of “*the tree of life*, *which is in the midst of the paradise of God*” (Revelation 2:7).

The Church as it will exist in that coming day is referred to in Hebrews 12:23 as the “*Church of the firstborn*.” The thought has to do with *a called out group of firstborn sons*. This moves matters beyond the adoption (the placement of firstborn sons) and presents the Church as being comprised only of individuals *called out of the body*, not individuals called out of the world (so to speak), as the Church is seen during the present day and time.

(Paul, in his Church epistles, though he wrote to all of the saved in a particular locality, often worded matters more in keeping with the thought of the Church as it will appear in that coming day [as presented by the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 12:23; *e.g.*, Romans 1:7-8; Ephesians 1:5-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 5:1-9]. And this would be in complete keeping with Paul’s central message [pertaining to *the mystery*], which was *the central message* proclaimed throughout Christendom during the first century.)

The Church as it will exist in that coming day will appear in complete keeping with the type in Genesis chapter two — Eve formed from a part of Adam’s body, which had been removed from his body. The bride of Christ, in the antitype — synonymous with the Church as it will appear in that coming day — will be formed from a part of Christ’s body, which will have been removed from His body. All Christians together form the body of Christ, but all Christians cannot form the bride of Christ. *Only those removed from the body can form the bride*.

The type has been set, and the antitype *must* follow the type in exact detail. There can be no variance between the two. And the called out, in that day, forming *the bride*, will be placed as *firstborn sons* (*i.e.*, be adopted), with a view to their occupying positions with Christ in the kingdom.

(Refer to [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's The Bride in Genesis, Ch. 1](http://bibleone.net/BiG_01.htm), for a more detailed discussion concerning the bride being removed from the body.

Note that the Church is looked upon in that coming day in two respects in Scripture — as *a bride*, and as *a firstborn son*. These are simply two ways in which Scripture presents the matter. On the one hand, Christ must have *a bride* to reign as consort queen with Him; then, on the other hand, only *firstborn sons* can rule.

None of this is true in the angelic realm, only in the human realm. Angelic rulers are all *sons*, but not firstborn sons; and there can be no thought of marriage within the angelic realm itself, for all angels are of the same gender, referred to in a masculine respect.)

In Genesis, Proverb, and Revelation

The “*tree of life*” is mentioned nine times in Scripture, in three different books — three times in Genesis (Gen. 2:9; 3:22, 24), four times in Proverbs (Pro. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4), and twice in the book of Revelation (Rev. 2:7; 22:2). But what was *the original purpose* for the tree of life (seen in Genesis), which will be realized yet future (seen in the book of Revelation)?

The *tree of life* was one of the numerous trees in the garden in Eden. And Adam, with Eve, was commanded to eat of all these trees, with the exception of one — the “*tree of the knowledge of good and evil*” (Genesis 2:9, 16-17). Adam, the first man, had been created for the specific purpose of assuming *the rulership over the earth*, and the fruit of the tree of life was singled out as *a specific provision* for man as he exercised this rule.

An evident connection between man’s rule and his partaking of the tree of life can be seen by noting *the appearance of this tree* in the beginning when man was in a position to rule, *the absence of this tree* during the entire period when man is not in a position to rule (aside from the tree being referenced in Proverb), and *the reappearance of this tree* in the book of Revelation when man will be brought back into a position to rule (*cf.* Genesis 1:26-28; Revelation 2:26-27).

The period during which man has been barred from eating of the tree of life *began* following Adam’s fall, resulting in his disqualification to rule; and this period will *end* following the issues of the judgment seat, at which time man will once again find himself in a position to rule.

Adam, following the fall, was driven from the garden to prevent his partaking of the tree of life. Adam could not be permitted to eat of this tree in a fallen condition, for had such occurred, Adam, in a fallen state, would have realized that which fruit from this tree was meant to provide. Thus, not only did God remove Adam from the garden, but He placed a “*cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden*, *and a flaming sword which turned every way*,”[to prevent fallen man from reentering the garden and partaking of this tree]” (Genesis 3:22-24).

Studying Genesis 3:22-24 apart from the context and related Scripture could lead one to believe that the purpose for the tree of life in the beginning, in Genesis, was to provide perpetuity of life for Adam in his unfallen state. However, such could not have been the case at all. “Death” *did not* enter into the picture until *after* Adam’s sin (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:6ff; *cf.* Romans 6:23), at which time he was barred from the tree of life.

Adam had lived in an *undying state* prior to his sin, as he continued to live in an antithetical *dying state* following his sin; and to say that the tree of life was given to Adam in his unfallen state to provide perpetuity of life, preventing death, cannot possibly be correct. Nor could it possibly be correct to say that the tree of life would have had anything to do with providing *physical life* (keeping Adam alive physically) following the fall. A tree can produce *only* “*after its kind*” (Genesis 1:11-12). In this respect, *fruit* from the tree of life simply *could not have produced one result before man*’*s fall and another following man*’*s fall*.

In Revelation 2:7, partaking of the tree of life has been promised to the overcomers from among those *already possessing* *eternal life*. Consequently, in this passage, the tree of life can have nothing whatsoever to do with perpetuity of life; and it is the same in the Genesis account when man was first brought upon the scene to rule and to reign.

The tree of life in both Genesis chapters two and three (Genesis 2-3) and Revelation chapter two (Revelation 2) appears in a different setting entirely. The tree of life reserved for Christians in Revelation 2:7 is associated peculiarly with a provision *for those who will rule and reign as co-heirs with Christ*; and viewing Adam’s position in the Genesis account — created *to rule and reign*, in possession of an unending life, with the fruit of the tree of life at his disposal — the same thought concerning *regality in connection with the tree of life* would hold true. Thus, Adam in a fallen state, *no longer in a position to rule*, could not be allowed to eat of the tree of life, for fruit from this tree would provide “life” in relation to *regality*.

This whole overall thought concerning the tree of life in Scripture *would have to hold true*, for that which is seen relative to this tree *in* Revelation2 is drawn from that which was *first* seen relative to this treein Genesis chapters two and three. The fruit of the tree of life *was in the past* (seen in the book of Genesis) and *will be in the future* (seen in the book of Revelation) *a provision for the rulers in the kingdom*. *This is an evident fact that must be recognized*.

And, in that coming day following the Millennium, the tree of life will be for “*the healing of the nations*” (Revelation 22:2). The Greek word translated “*healing*” is *therapeia*, from which the English word “therapy” is derived. This is a medical term that has to do with *restorative healing*. In that day, God will *restore all of saved mankind to the original place that man occupied at the time of his creation*. And, consequently, *the whole of saved mankind*, *with regality in view*, *will have access to the tree of life*.

During the preceding Messianic Era, the tree of life will have been made available to overcoming Christians (Revelation 2:7), those ruling and reigning as co-heirs with Christ. And this tree will probably be made available to certain others at this time as well, others occupying regal positions with Christ in His reign from the heavens over the earth (*e.g.*,certain Old Testament saints, Tribulation martyrs [Matthew 8:11-12; Revelation 20:4-6]).

But following the Messianic Era, in the eternal ages, this tree is seen being made available to the nations of the earth, something that would have been completely out of place during the Millennium. And this will be an apparent end result of Israel’s evangelistic endeavors during the Millennium, along with Christ’s rule with a rod of iron during this time.

Man was created in the beginning to *rule and to reign*. And though only a part of saved mankind will have been brought back into a position to occupy the throne at the beginning of the Millennium (with the tree of life made available to them at this time), at the end of the Millennium the whole of saved mankind will be brought back into this position (with the tree of life made available to them at this time).

Wisdom, Understanding

*Happy is the man who finds wisdom and the man who gains understanding*;

*For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver and her gain than fine gold*.

*She is more precious than rubies and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her*.

*Length of days is in her right hand*, *and in her left hand riches and honor*.

*Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace*.

*She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her*, *and happy are all who retain her*. (Proverb 3:13-18)

Following the introduction to the “*tree of life*” in the opening chapters of Genesis, there are only *four references* to this tree throughout Scripture until one arrives at Revelation 2:7. Solomon used the expression, “*a tree of life*,” four times in the book of Proverb (Pro. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4); and it is within this revelation given through Solomon that one finds the connection between the tree of life in the books of Genesis and Revelation. And by putting all of this together, the reason then becomes apparent why this tree, with its fruit, was among the trees provided for Adam and Eve to eat in their unfallen state, and why fruit from this tree is being reserved for overcoming Christians to partake of during the Messianic Era.

(Then, there is also a connection between this tree and the complete restoration of the nations of the earth beyond the Messianic Era, with all of mankind realizing the purpose for man’s creation in the beginning [Revelation 22:2]. For additional information on this subject, refer to the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's The Time of the End, Ch. 36](http://bibleone.net/TOTE_36.htm), “The Eternal Ages.”)

In the first of these four passages, *wisdom* and *understanding* are said to be “*a tree of life*.” Viewing this in the light of the wisdom and understanding possessed by Solomon as he ruled over Israel is the association provided by Scripture to correctly understand *one facet* of the tree of life. *Solomon possessed wisdom and understanding as he ruled*; *and Christians must*, *in like manner*, *possess wisdom and understanding as they rule*, *as would have been necessary for Adam had he ruled*.

1) Solomon Properly Equipped

Shortly after Solomon ascended the throne following the death of David, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “*Ask!* *What shall I give you*?” Solomon, recognizing that he was but as a “*little child*” in understanding the affairs of state within the kingdom over which he ruled asked for *wisdom* and *knowledge*. Solomon asked God for the ability to judge the people of Israel in equity, justice, and righteousness.

Such a request pleased the Lord, and Solomon was granted not only “*wisdom* and *knowledge*”but also “*riches* *and* *honor*.” His ability to rule, his material wealth, and the respect which he commanded — all coming from the hand of the Lord — would later be shown to exceed that of any king upon the face of the earth (1 Kings 3:5-15; 2 Chronicles 1:7-17).

Solomon’s ability to judge among his people in a unique manner through the wisdom and knowledge that the Lord had bestowed began to be displayed through a decision which he rendered concerning two women and a child. These two women dwelled alone in the same house, and both had given birth to sons, one three days before the other. The son born last died one night because his mother lay upon him; and as the other mother slept with her son at her side, the mother of the dead child took the living child from his mother’s side and placed the dead child in its stead. However, upon awakening, the mother now in possession of the dead child realized that the child was not hers and found that her child was still alive and being claimed by the other mother. Not being able to resolve the matter between themselves, their case was brought before Solomon.

Solomon was told what had allegedly occurred; and as he listened to both women claiming the living child, he was unable to ascertain which one was the true mother. He then called for a sword and commanded that the child be divided into two parts, giving half to each woman. Solomon, in his wisdom, knew that the true mother would be revealed by the actions that each woman would take when they heard his decision.

And that is exactly what occurred. The true mother pleaded for the child’s life, telling Solomon to not harm the child but to give him to the other woman. The other woman, whose child had died, on the other hand, insisted that the child be divided. Solomon then knew which of the two women was telling the truth, and the child was returned to his true mother (1 Kings 3:16-27).

Solomon’s *wisdom* in this matter spread throughout all Israel, and the people “*feared the king*, *for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice*.” Not only did God give Solomon wisdom to judge in all matters, but Solomon possessed wisdom of such a nature that it spread throughout the entire known world. His wisdom “*excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt* . . . *and all the wisdom of Egypt*. *For he was wiser than all men* . . . *and his fame was in all the surrounding nations* . . . *And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom*, *came to hear the wisdom of Solomon*” (1 Kings 3:28; 4:29-34). The queen of Sheba came “*to test him with hard questions*” (1 Kings 10:1ff), and in the end stated,

*It was a true report that I heard in my own land of your acts and of your wisdom.*

*Howbeit I believed not the words*, *until I came*, *and my eyes had seen it*: *and*, *behold*, *the half was not told me*: *your wisdom and prosperity exceeds the fame of which I heard*. (1 Kings 10:6b-7)

2) Christians Properly Equipped

The wisdom and understanding that Solomon possessed as he ruled in the kingdom of Israel (associated with “*a tree of life*”) provides the central reason why the tree of life is found in association with Adam’s rule in Genesis and with the Christians’ rule yet future.

The fruit of this tree *would have provided* (for Adam) and *will provide* (for Christians) the necessary wisdom and understanding to govern in equity, justice, and righteousness.

God’s bestowal of *wisdom*, *understanding, riches*, *wealth*, and *honor* upon Solomon typifies that which He will bestow upon overcoming Christians during the coming age.

Through the fruit of the tree of life, God will provide the necessary *wisdom* and *understanding* to rule in the kingdom; by being co-heirs with God’s Son, Christians will come into possession of unlimited *riches* and *wealth*, for all the Father’s possessions will belong to the Son; and in these positions, Christians will realize a status of *honor* and *glory* befitting those elevated to such noble rank (Genesis 24:10, 36, 53; John 16:13-15; 1 Peter 1:9-11; 4:12-13; Revelation 4:11; 5:12).

The tree of life in Eden was a literal tree with literal fruit, as will be the tree of life in the new Jerusalem following the Millennium (Revelation 22:2). However, there is a possibility that the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God, reserved for Christians during the Millennium, may not be a literal tree as such. There is a sense in which Christ Himself is the Tree of Life, a Tree upon which Christians will one day feed, similar to the feeding upon Christ as is seen in John 6:48-56.

But, a feeding upon Christ in relation to the tree of life could only be at *a future time alone*.Scripture associates a present feeding in this respect with “manna,” not with a “tree.” The tree of life is located in *the paradise of God* and is connected with *regality*, something from which Christians are presently *estranged*.

This is *not the day* when Christians are to rule and reign. *That day* lies in the future. Thus, any feeding upon Christ today could not be associated with the tree of life. Rather, it would have to be associated with manna.

(As previously seen, in Genesis 1:12, God introduced something concerning trees that is *unchangeable.* Trees that yield fruit will *always* yield their fruit “*after its kind*.”

The tree of life is located in *the paradise of God* and associated with *regality*;and fruit born by this tree must be viewed accordingly. The tree will bear fruit “*after its kind*,” associated with *the paradise of God* and with *regality*; and this fruit can be eaten by man *only after he finds himself exercising regality in the paradise of God*, *during the Messianic Era.*)

Insofar as a feeding upon manna with respect to Christ, note the third overcomer’s promise (Revelation 2:17) The Israelites fed upon literal manna in the wilderness, but Christ is the Manna upon which Christians feed. Christ is “*the bread of life*”; and we “*eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood*.” Through this process, we acquire that *wisdom* that comes from above; or, as Scripture states, “*Christ* . . . *became* [‘has become’] *for us* *wisdom* . . .” (John 6:48-58; 1 Corinthians 1:30; *cf.* 1 Corinthians 2:6-10; Ephesians 1:8; Colossians 1:9, 28).

Christ is the Living Word that came down from heaven; and feeding upon the Living Word is accomplished through feeding upon the inseparable Written Word. In Christ are “*hidden all the treasures* of *wisdom* *and* *knowledge*” (Colossians 2:3); and feeding upon Him, through the Written Word, allows us to develop and grow, becoming more and more like Him by acquiring this wisdom and knowledge.

Wisdom and knowledge acquired during the present time though *is not for the purpose of equipping Christians to rule and reign*. We are living during the time Christ is in heaven, with the present existing kingdom under the dominion and control of Satan. Wisdom and knowledge presently being acquired is for *the sole purpose of equipping Christians to carry on the Lord*’*s business during His time of absence*.

Wisdom and knowledge of a nature that will equip Christians to rule and reign will be acquired only from the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God. If this is a reference to Christ Himself, such a feeding upon Christ can only refer to something that is not available today but reserved for the overcomers during the coming age.

Christians allowed to partake of the tree of life in that day will, by partaking of this tree, be properly equipped for carrying on the Lord’s business following His return when He is revealed as “*King of kings and Lord of lords*”; and Christians carrying on His business then will do so through reigning as co-heirs with Him.

John, in two of the books that he wrote — the gospel of John and the book of Revelation — deals with the entire matter of saved individuals partaking of manna during the present time and partaking of both the tree of life and hidden manna yet future. Six of the eight times that John deals with man partaking after the preceding fashions have to do with man partaking of manna during the present time, during man’s 6,000-year day. And the seventh and eighth times have to do with man partaking of the tree of life and hidden manna during a future time, during the Lord’s 1,000-year day, during the Messianic Era.

(For more information on “the hidden manna,” refer to the author’s book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Judgment Seat of Christ, Ch. 7](http://bibleone.net/JSC07.htm).)

The six partaking references occurring during man’s 6,000-year day are seen in John’s gospel:

1) *Life —* spiritual life, a passing “*from death to life*” *—* derived through the One who said “*I am the resurrection and the life*” (John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25).

2) *Food —* the “*bread of life*” (John 6:35).

3) *Water —* the “*living water*” (John 4:14; 7:37).

4) *Breath* — a continued breathing beyond the Spirit breathing life into the one having no life at the beginning (John 20:22).

5) *Light* — the “*light of life*” (John 8:12).

6) *Dwelling Place* — abiding “*in the vine*” (John 15:1-5).

But the Lord’s 1,000-year day will follow Man’s Day; and John dealt with man eating during this day through reference to both *the tree of life* and *hidden manna*, providing a seventh and an eighth partaking reference of Christ within that which he later wrote, recorded in the book of Revelation:

7) The Tree of Life — related to regality and a future inheritance in Christ’s kingdom (Revelation 2:7).

8) The Hidden Manna — also related to regality and a future inheritance in Christ’s kingdom (Revelation 2:17).

Then, as previously seen, a reference to *the tree of life* in association with the ages beyond the Messianic Era is also seen at the end of this same book (Revelation 22:2).

Fruit of the Righteous

*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life*; *and he that wins souls is wise*. (Proverb 11:30)

The second mention of the “tree of life” in the book of Proverb is in connection with *righteousness* and *soul-winning*. This is the identical connection one will find in the New Testament when studying the Christians’ association with the tree of life.

The “*righteous*” in Proverb 11:30 are the ones who will be *allowed* to partake of the tree of life. With respect to Christians, such a righteousness cannot be looked upon as synonymous with the imputed righteousness of Christ received at the time one was saved, for every Christian possesses this righteousness. But, as is plainly revealed in Revelation 2:7, not every Christian will be allowed to partake of the tree of life. The righteousness in this verse can only have to do with “*the righteous acts of the saints*,” which form the wedding garment. The “*righteous*” are those Christians who will be properly clothed at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9, ASV). These are the Christians who will comprise the Church consisting of firstborn sons (Hebrews 12:23) and subsequently enter into the kingdom in positions of power and authority with Christ (Matthew 24:45-47; *cf.* Mat. 24:48-51).

Soul-winning in the New Testament is largely misunderstood in Christian circles today. This common terminology, which is not correct at all, is to equate soul-winning with carrying the message of salvation by grace through faith to the unsaved. In fact, equating soul-winning with the message of salvation by grace through faith serves only to obscure both issues, leaving one hopelessly mired in a sea of misinterpretation. Soul-winning is one thing, and proclaiming the message of salvation by grace through faith is another.

The former has to do with the saved, and the latter has to do with the unsaved. The messages involved in both issues MUST be kept separate and distinct, which necessitates Christians understanding proper distinctions in these two realms.

Salvation by grace through faith, carried to the unsaved, is the presentation of the simple gospel message. The unsaved are to be told “*that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures*” (1 Corinthians 2:1-2; 15:3). Christ has paid the penalty for sin. The work of redemption has been accomplished on man’s behalf, and God is satisfied. Provision has been made for unredeemed man to be saved through receiving that which Christ has done on his behalf. And he does this through simply *believing on the Lord Jesus Christ* (Acts 16:31).

Redeemed man, on the other hand, is to hear an entirely different message. He is to be taught *the reason* for his salvation. He is to be told that Christ has *gone away* “*to receive for Himself a kingdom*”; he is to be told that *during the time of his Lord*’*s absence* he is to be busy with the talents and pounds that the Lord delivered to and left in charge of His servants (Christians); he is to be told that *a day of reckoning* is coming; he is to be told that *the Lord will return to judge His servants* on the basis of their faithfulness in carrying out His business during His time of absence; and he is to be told that *the outcome of this judgment* will determine every Christian’s position in the coming kingdom (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27). It is within this overall message to the saved that one finds the salvation of the soul taught in Scripture, not within the message of salvation by grace through faith, proclaimed to the unsaved.

“Soul-winning” has to do with *winning those who are* *already saved* *to a life of faithfulness to the Lord*. “Soul-winning” is *winning one*’*s life*. This involves winning Christians (those possessing “life”) to be occupied with the Lord’s business during His time of absence, anticipating His return. And more specifically, this involves winning Christians to be occupied in this manner with that portion of the Lord’s business delivered to them personally.

Illustrated in the parables of the talents and the pounds, one servant was responsible only for bringing forth an increase in the talents or the pounds *that had been placed in his possession*, not in those that had been placed in another servant’s possession. Issues and determinations resulting from the judgment seat will be based strictly on *the evaluation of works performed by Christians in complete keeping with that which is set forth in these two parables*.

Direct references to the salvation of the soul are found in New Testament passages such as Matthew 16:24-27; Hebrews 10:38-39; James 1:21; 5:19-20; 1 Peter 1:9-11 and are always spoken of in a future sense within a context dealing with those who are already saved. Soul-winning is associated *with the righteous acts of the saints*, *with overcoming,* and *with* *one day being extended the privilege of partaking of the tree of life*. This is the reason that soul-winning is found within a context of this nature in Proverb 11:30. It is *the wise* who win souls (win lives).

*And they that are wise will shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever*. (Daniel 12:3)

Hope Realized

*Hope deferred makes the heart sick*: *but when the desire comes*, *it is a tree of life*. (Proverb 13:12).

The third mention of the “*tree of life*” in the book of Proverb is in connection with *hope* that is realized. There is no tree of life as long as one’s hope is deferred. Only when “*the desire comes* [hope is realized]” does the tree of life come into view.

This thought from the book of Proverb is in perfect accord with the Christians’ present hope in the light of the two previous references to the tree of life in this book. Christians have been “*begotten*” from above to a “*living hope*” through the “resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” Christ lives, and Christians will live with Him. But this fact is not the object of one’s hope. Hope is described as “*living*” because of resurrection, but hope itself lies in things beyond resurrection. These things are revealed as an “*inheritance*” and a “*salvation*” (1 Peter 1:3-5).

“Hope,” “inheritance,” and “salvation” are inseparably linked in Scripture. It is only because we are saved (passive, salvation of the spirit) that we can possess a “hope.” And the hope that Christians possess looks ahead to the reception of an inheritance within a salvation (future, salvation of the soul) to be revealed.

The “*blessed hope*” in Titus 2:13 is one of the more familiar passages written to Christians in this respect. This hope is often said to be the return of Christ for His Church, but that’s not what this or any other passage in the New Testament dealing with the Christians’ hope teaches at all. *Hope*, as in Titus 2:13, is associated with the “*appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ*” (ASV).

The construction of the Greek text in Titus 2:13 actually makes *hope* synonymous with *the appearing of Christ*’*s glory*. Christians are the ones who possess this hope, as they are the ones who will be partakers of Christ’s glory when it is revealed. In this respect, participation in the coming glory of Christ will be the realization of one’s present hope, for one cannot be separated from the other.

Christians realizing their present hope, and the overcomers in Revelation 2:7 who will be allowed to partake of the tree of life, are one and the same. This is the reason Proverb 13:12 teaches that *hope realized* is “*a tree of life*.” Those Christians one day coming into a realization of their present hope will be the ones who constitute the rulers in the kingdom, the ones allowed to partake of the tree of life to equip them for service in their respective capacities in the kingdom.

A Wholesome Tongue

*A wholesome* ['tranquil'] *tongue is a tree of life*: *but perverseness in it breaks the spirit*” (Proverb 15:4).

The epistle of James in the New Testament forms the commentary for the fourth and last mention of the “*tree of life*” in the book of Proverb, demonstrating a number of things about the use of the tongue and showing the connection between Proverb 15:4 and the three previous references to the tree of life in this book. James is an epistle dealing strictly with the salvation of the soul, providing certain indispensable information necessary for a proper understanding of this all-important subject.

The tree of life, on the other hand, is reserved for those Christians realizing the salvation of their souls; and a proper understanding of the tree of life is integrally related to a proper understanding of this salvation.

James mentions the tongue in chapter one (James 1:26-27) and then goes into a lengthy discourse in chapter three concerning this small member of the body and what it is capable of doing (James 3:1ff):

*The tongue . . . boasts great things . . . is a fire*, *a world of iniquity . . . it defiles the whole body*, *and sets on fire the course of nature*; *and it is set on fire by hell* [*gehenna*] *. . . no man can tame the tongue*; *it is an unruly evil*, *full of deadly poison*. (James 3:5-8)

A Christian’s spirituality can be seen through the control of his tongue, for the tongue can be properly controlled only through the use of that *wisdom* and *knowledge* that comes from above (James 3:13-18). This thought from the epistle of James takes one back to Proverb 3:13-18, where *wisdom* and *knowledge* are associated with the tree of life. And, in this same respect, “*a wholesome tongue*” also finds its association with the tree of life. A wholesome (tranquil) tongue results from the proper use of divinely imparted *wisdom* and *knowledge*.

**Concluding Thoughts:**

Man’s rule over the earth must wait for that time when Revelation 2:7 will be brought to pass. He that “*overcomes*” will realize *the salvation of his soul* (life), will realize *that blessed hope*, will come into possession of *the required wisdom and knowledge* necessary to rule as a co-regent with Christ in the kingdom, and will be shown to have *a wholesome* *tongue* [a tranquil tongue]in this rule.

This is what Scripture teaches concerning *the presence* of the tree of life in Eden, *the absence* of the tree of life in the world today, and the coming inheritance of the saints, when Christians *will be allowed to partake of* “*the tree of life*, *which is in the midst of the paradise of God*.”

[Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's The Bride in Genesis, Appendix](http://bibleone.net/BiG_A.htm) and/or [**The Bride in Genesis by Arlen Chitwood**](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/TBG.pdf)