

Attaining to the Kingdom

Phil 3:7-14 will eventually eliminate¹ thousands who claim to be His, but do not know Him. These kinds of pseudo-disciples are those in Mt 24:9-12, who won't be able to endure so as to be saved (verse 13). One can't endure apart from truly knowing Him (1 Jn 2:4). Knowing Him not only means experiencing the power of His resurrection, but also the fellowship of His sufferings, and being conformed to His death, in order to attain to the first resurrection (Rev 20:4-6; 2:11; 3:5; Dan 12:1-3; Mal 3:16).

To *attain* indicates achieving, an accomplishment, to arrive at, but with great effort or great exertion, to finally reach, or to grasp and to obtain what one attains to (i.e., the Kingdom, Acts 14:22). It means reaping what one sows (Gal 6:7-9), completing the course or race of Heb 12:1-2.

Paul is not talking about the eternal age, but the next age, the reign of Messiah over the earth (Lk 19:13-19), as he said in Phil 3:11, "if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead," speaking of the millennial reign in Rev 20:4-6.

Rev 20:4 speaks of two types of disciples: "...and I saw thrones and *they* sat on them and judgment was committed to *them*." "*Then...*" it speaks of the Male Child, who were beheaded for not taking the Mark of the Beast (Mt 25:31-46). They were sent out in the world when the mother fled to the wilderness (Rev 12:5; 6:9-11). But those who were not worthy (Rev 3:4-5) to sit on those thrones were not worthy of the first resurrection. They did not attain as Phil 3:10-11, as Paul says in verse 12 that it's an ongoing struggle to attain to that rulership. Those of us who do not attain will go to the second death for believers (Jn 8:51; Rev 2:11; 3:4-5). We are either on the road to attainment to the first resurrection or to the second death after judgment (2 Cor 5:10; Rev 19:7-8).

¹ Eliminate — get rid of, eradicate, expel, send away, remove or take out

Phil 3:12 — “Lay hold of” indicates attaining to, apprehending, reaching forward, pressing toward the goal. Verse 13 — You can imagine a runner on the course, straining every muscle as he presses toward the goal, his hand stretched out to grasp it, as Rev 20:6.

The second death for us is as Rev 20:5 says about “the rest of the dead.” The second death for the nations has nothing to do with us. Our eternal destiny is sealed (Eph 1:13), but only the overcomers will be worthy of Rev 3:21 — *as He overcame*. All who follow Him walk as He walked. 1 Jn 2:6 is to overcome all things that will disqualify us from being worthy of Him (Rev 3:4,5,21), which is the significance of the victory cup each week. An overcomer is a normal, wise disciple, one with understanding (Dan 12:1-3,10).

So in light of Phil 3:7-16, let us not slide back or drift (Heb 2:1,3) from whatever we have presently attained to — as long as we have been saved from the second eternal death and are on the road to the kingdom reign of Messiah in the next age, the 1000-year age. That is the goal set before us all (Phil 2:12-15), to be blameless on the Day of Judgment (verse 15), so that, as with Paul we will find that we did not run the race in vain, since it was a race for the Kingdom (Rev 3:21).

In view of the goal in Phil 3:10-11, we are in the process (as with Paul, verse 12) to take hold of it (verse 13), which we will do only by forgetting what lies behind in order that we can run without extra baggage/weight the race set before us all.

So Phil 3:9-14 is our goal after Eph 1:13. We must first be sealed with the Holy Spirit, and only with Him can we attain to this goal. First of all, Eph 1:13 is essential and necessary before trying to attain to anything, for otherwise it will only be in the flesh, in one’s own strength, which is “certainly works salvation” (1 Pet 4:10-11; Eph 2:8-10; 4:16; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 19:7-8).

Can you imagine trying to do Phil 3:10-11 without being sealed with the Holy Spirit in our spirit? And unless He takes up His residence in our soul, it will be

impossible to do this even if we are sealed with the Holy Spirit. We can only be in fellowship with Him in our soul. Only in our soul can He release His strength to enable us to attain to His reign, to overcome as He overcame (Rev 3:20-21), to walk or live as He lived, keeping His communion with His Father. He never drifted back from where He had attained, all the way until they nailed Him to the cross, and along through death until His resurrection (Act 2:24).

So to be sealed with His Spirit in our spirit is one thing, but to be filled with the Spirit is another. Receiving eternal life is one thing, but receiving approval to rule with Him in the Millennial Age is another. Believing as Jn 3:16 is one thing, but Rev 3:4 is another, as to overcome as in Rev 21:6-7 is one thing, but attaining to Rev 3:21 is another. But to *not* overcome in Rev 21:7 results in verse 8.

To overcome is what the rich young ruler didn't do. He wanted eternal life, but not as much as he wanted to keep his own life. He was a coward, for the water of life was offered to him, but he refused it due to his cowardice and his unbelieving heart. He did not trust the Son of God to give eternal life to him if only he had the faith to obey. Obviously, he acted as if he were willing (Jn 7:17), but "when push came to shove" he turned out to be a coward, unwilling to do what he had to do to have what he asked for. He would not do what he must do to have it. Our Master wasn't telling him to obey the Law in order to have eternal life. He told him to obey *Him* to have it, which he would not do.

In our presentation of the gospel we must explain the whole sacrificial system as in Isa 53:1-10, in order to attain to verse 11. Verse 11 is what He wants, the result of the suffering of His soul (verse 10) in death. Our Father made Yahshua's soul an offering for sin in death on our behalf (2 Cor 5:21), putting all our sins on Him, and Yahshua took them into death on our behalf. He was the perfect and spotless Lamb of God.

So where has the nation been all these years to bring about the fruit of the Kingdom (Mt 21:43; Isa 53:11)? Who will be that living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2) to bring

it about, as Paul strove to do (Phil 3:7-21)? Anything less than what he did, or what was the required obedience of the rich young ruler, and there is no sealing of the Spirit due to unbelief and cowardice. Belief is Jn 3:16 *and* Acts 2:44; 4:32.

The restoration of all things began with the restoration of the gospel and the sealing with the Holy Spirit. To be joined to the true Yahshua is to be one Spirit with Him (1 Cor 6:17). To be able to know Him as Phil 3:10 in order to attain to verse 11 takes the gift of the Holy Spirit (Rev 22:17). You have to receive Him without anything that would hold you back, without a cause to refuse to follow Him (Lk 10:16; 14:26,33; Mt 10:37). Jn 3:36 — You have to obey the Son (2 Ths 1:8), as the rich young ruler would not do.

Obey (#5219) is to heed to a command of authority (Mt 28:18-20). Jn 13:20 — To receive a sent one or a disciple is to obey all he says to do in order to be brought to the man Yahshua to be reconciled to the Father (1 Tim 2:5). Mt 10:40-41 — It takes a member of the royal priesthood who presents the good news to someone, the water of life. Jn 4:13 — How many times did I get thirsty again? But since verse 14, I have never been thirsty again.

To be sealed with the Spirit is a one-time event, but to be filled with the Spirit is a daily event. To be kept in communion with the Spirit in our souls, we are to do what Lk 9:23 says to do. When we first died, we were sealed with the Spirit, and were given eternal life. Our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life, never to be erased. This was in our baptism (Gal 3:27; 1 Cor 12:13). This was when we drank the water of life without a cause to refuse it (Jn 7:37-39; Rev 21:6-7; 22:17).

When we overcame all things and drank freely, without a cause to refuse it (Rev 22:17), the course for the Kingdom began that day, not for eternal life, but to be worthy of Him in the life we live with our brothers and sisters, in the things we do and say, the way we see and hear. This reveals our inner worth (Jn 17:22), where His Spirit dwells (Rev 3:4-5).

So if we took a survey and everyone was honest, could they declare that Phil 3:7-14 was also their hope and goal (verse 10-11), admitting verse 12, but pressing on as verse 13-14? Are all of us pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Yahshua? Verse 14 — The prize of the high calling, the upward call, is like the prize of the runner in a race, who is crowned due to his prevailing, overcoming to succeed, to triumph, to attain, to ascend to the throne in Rev 3:21, just as He overcame.

That high (#507) calling (#2821) is above all others. There is no comparison. *High* or *upward* is the opposite of average or below. *Calling* (#2821) is employment, occupation, vocation, as in Eph 4:1-3. We are called (#2564) to a destination, invited to do the works prepared for us (Eph 2:10) to build up the Body of Messiah (Eph 4:16). We are called to do what no other people has been called to accomplish in Messiah (Dan 2:44-45; Jn 13:35; 17:23; etc.; Isa 49:6,8; Mt 21:43; Gen 15:18; 18:19).