



# Open Face

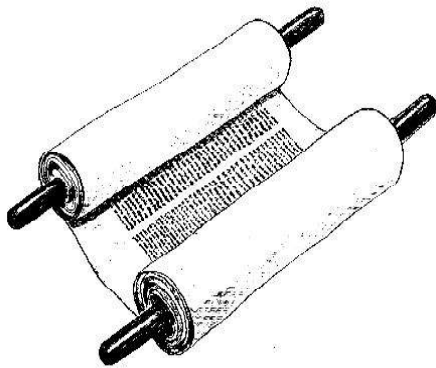
One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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## Is Feast-Keeping Wrong?

David Clayton



### INTRODUCTION

The Worldwide Church of God was a feast-keeping church which also kept the Sabbath. It was founded by Herbert W. Armstrong. When he died in 1986 the church abandoned many of his teachings and many of its disillusioned members looked for somewhere else to worship. Some of them found refuge in the Adventist community and the widespread outbreak of feast-keeping in Adventism roughly coincides with this period when there was this fracturing of the Worldwide Church of God.

Over the years quite a number of groups have arisen, both within and outside of the organized Seventh-day Adventist church, which have embraced feast-keeping. These groups have attempted to give feast-keeping an "Adventist flavor" by trying to justify feast-keeping with statements from Ellen White and other Adventist pioneers. Of course, it is difficult to understand the reasoning in such an approach when we consider the fact that neither Ellen White nor any of the SDA pioneers were feast-keepers!

The critical question however, is this: Is

feast-keeping wrong? Is there something about the practice which makes it inherently wrong for Christians to observe these times today, and if so, what exactly is the reason why it is wrong?

I have watched the growth of feast-keeping within the Adventist community over the past twenty years and at first, I viewed it as a harmless peculiarity which people were free to practice if they so chose. I didn't believe it was something which was a *necessity* for Christians to practice, but I saw no harm in people doing it if they felt like doing it. I believed this and I said as much in earlier statements.

However, as time passed I had reason to examine the gospel more carefully and to look at the principles underlying feast-keeping. I gave closer study to Paul's writings especially, and it was not long before I changed my mind about feast-keeping. Today, I no longer believe it is a harmless practice. Careful study of the principles of the gospel has led me to the conclusion that feast-keeping is a denial of the work and ministry of Christ and is a practice which indicates that a person has not fully accepted what God did for us in Christ.

### IMPORTANT IDEAS AND PRINCIPLES

In His work of saving the human race, God's plan moves along a timeline. This timeline is very clearly shown in the Bible and it is demonstrated in the fact that the Bible itself is divided into two sections, according to time periods, the time before Christ and the time after Christ.

Even these two divisions have further time divisions within them. For example, there was the period before the flood.

That entire world was destroyed and a new beginning made afterwards. Then there was the period from Noah to Abraham before God called a particular family group to be His special people. There was the period from Abraham to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, from Sinai to the coming of Christ, then from Christ to the present time.

Some have referred to these time periods as "dispensations," and there are some religious groups which teach that God has had different methods of *saving* people during these different dispensations. This is clearly a false teaching. There has never been more than one way of saving men, and that one way has always been by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son. However, this is not to say that God has not *related* to people in different ways in different ages. Although God has had only one way of *saving* men, He has related to them in different way at different times. Some have rejected this idea because they associate it with the error that God saves men in different ways. But it is unreasonable to deny what is true, simply because somebody has taken that truth and associated it with error. It is not possible to read the Bible through honest eyes, without recognizing these changes which took place over the ages.

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*Open Face* is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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How does all this relate to the issue of feast-keeping? In order to understand where feasts fall in this picture, we must first understand the two great divisions of time, the two major ages in God's timeline. These two ages are the age of the law and the age of the kingdom. I refer to these as the two major ages because almost the entire Bible deals with these two ages and the very divisions of the Bible into the Old Testament and the New Testament is an acknowledgment of the significance of these two ages. The Old and the New Testament represent two great systems by which men interacted with God. These Testaments or covenants did not represent two different ways by which men could be saved, but rather, two different ways by which God interacted with men.

This Old Covenant system was often referred to as "the law," or the "law and the prophets. It was the system of government based on the law given at Mount Sinai. This relationship with God was defined by this law of Sinai and the relationship was referred to as "the Old Covenant." (2 Cor. 3:4-6; Gal. 4:24-26)

The apostle Paul tells us that the Old Covenant system was a "shadow," or a representation, designed by God to be an illustration of a greater reality. This was its entire purpose.

*For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. (Hebrews 10:1)*

This was not speaking only of some aspects of the law; it was the entire system which contained only "a shadow of good things *to come*." Everything in it was representative of future realities. It is important that we understand this, the system of the law was a complete package, it was a system of government as well as a teaching tool, designed to be a means by which God interacted with His people during a certain period of time. The law was limited to that period and no part of it was intended to continue to be in force after that time period passed. When the new system began, the old system ended. Conversely, as long as the old system was in force, the new system was not applicable. Paul says,

*The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: (Hebrews 9:8)*

*In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8:13)*

#### HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS ISSUE?

This is by no means a minor issue. If God's work moves along a timeline then it is critical that we understand how God operates at each point in time. A failure to understand this means that we will fail to fulfill His purposes for us in our age, and ultimately that we will misrepresent Him and possibly jeopardize our salvation.

It is easy to demonstrate this point: At one time physical circumcision was a sign of a saving relationship between God and His people. Everybody knows

that there is no virtue in circumcision itself and that this is a practice which God does not require today. In fact, if one practices circumcision today as a religious obligation it is a sign of apostasy. Yet at one time it was absolutely imperative that God's people should demonstrate their relationship with Him by practicing circumcision. The Bible tells us that Moses' life was even threatened by an angel of God because he failed to circumcise his son (Exodus 4:24-26).

Another example is the way we relate to the offering of animal sacrifices today. It was God who required the offering of animal sacrifices, but if a Christian were to practice this today, it would not only demonstrate a terrible ignorance of God's purposes, but would be a direct insult to Jesus Christ and an indirect assault upon the Christian faith.

Many of those who advocate the keeping of feast days, deny that there is this timeline in God's program. They insist that God has always interacted with human beings in the same way from the days of Adam until today. They believe that God's relationship with humanity has never changed and that His method of interacting with men has always been the same throughout all ages. This idea is so contrary to the Scriptures that it is difficult to follow the reasoning which leads to this conclusion. The Bible clearly teaches that there was a time when men were given a promise that God would bless the world through Jesus Christ. It teaches very clearly that this blessing was not to be fulfilled until a certain *time*. This blessing could not come to the world until God's *appointed time*. The Bible also teaches clearly that four hundred and thirty years after God gave this promise, He gave the law to the Israelites at Mount Sinai. This law was not given before then, and even when it was given, it was limited to a certain *time period* only. It was to last "till the Seed (Christ) should come." Gal. 3:19.

So before the law was given, God related to His people in a certain way. After the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, that relationship was different. Now the relationship included many rules, ceremonies and rituals which men

of God in previous times had never had to practice or observe. But this was to last, "till the Seed should come," so clearly, when the Seed arrived, the relationship of God to His people would go through another change.

This can be compared to the relationship of parents to a child as he goes through the different stages of development. When he is a baby he has to stay in the crib and sit on a high chair while he is having his meals. Later on he will be allowed to walk around but he is limited to his own yard and cannot go out the gate unless he has a guardian. As he grows older, things change. Now sometimes he may even be left at home alone and the time comes when he is mature enough so that he does not need his parents interfering in his life at all.

This is an illustration which explains why God's method of interacting with His people changed from age to age. It had to do with the spiritual maturity level of the people God was dealing with. He designed programs to meet their state of development at each point in time.

#### UNDERSTANDING THE LAW

As we view the timeline along which God's program has progressed in His work of saving mankind, we see that everything falls into two packages: As we saw earlier, these two packages are referred to as the Old and the New Covenants. However, the distinction between these covenants is not simply a matter of different time periods, there are more critical differences. First there was an age of illustration and promise, and then there was the age when the illustration became reality and the promise was fulfilled.

These two packages are separated by one great event which completely changed the history of the world. That great event was the life of Jesus Christ. The age of illustrations falls on the side, before Christ. Since Christ came He brought the reality which had been illustrated in the former system. This brought an end to these rituals. It was not simply the end of some of the rituals, but the end of the complete **system of ritualism**. It was a great change to the very way we approach God. We no

longer come through illustrations, but directly through Christ Himself. The days of illustration and type have passed away forever.

So it is not a question of what is already fulfilled and what is not, it is a question of whether we accept that through Christ, God's method of interacting with humanity has reached its highest point. In other words, the relationship has been perfected. We are no longer at the place where we interact with God through illustrations and symbols, through second hand devices. Today we come to God simply by means of the living union which we have with Him, through our integration into the very life of Christ.

*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; (Heb 10:19-20)*

This issue is important and cannot be ignored because the continued practice of the illustration at this time is a denial that Christ is the fulfillment of the promise and therefore it is diametrically opposed to the truth of what God did in Christ. It is not a harmless practice which should simply be ignored. Consider the rite of circumcision as an example: Circumcision may be a harmless practice and in fact, it may even be a good health practice. In the age of the Old Covenant it was a necessary part of the religious practice of God's people. However, after the establishing of the New Covenant at the death of Christ, the outward ritual of circumcision was replaced by the inward reality of the new birth, or the circumcision of the heart. Those who continued to practice circumcision as a religious ritual after that point were in actual fact, rejecting the reality of the new birth. The apostle Paul warned against this in the clearest language:

*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (Gal 5:1-2)*

This was true not only of circumcision, but of every aspect of the system of the law, so Paul continued by saying,

*For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (Gal 5:3)*

This is because the illustrative system called "the law," has been entirely and without reservation, totally abolished by God. God no longer interacts with His people by that method. Jewish believers continued to practice the ceremonies of the law for many years after Christ had died and been resurrected and this was accepted by the early Christian Church, because the practices of the law were deeply ingrained into the culture of the Jews. However, the practice of the rituals of the law among the Gentiles was seen as an evidence that Christ was being rejected. This is why Paul was so stern in his rebuke to the Galatians.

#### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The law gave the basic outline of great principles, great truths, but only in symbols, shadows and representations. The representation cannot equal the truth which it represents, neither can it produce the effect which the truth produces. Therefore the law was *representational*, nothing else! every aspect of it represented something greater and this was true even of *the Ten Commandments!*

The ten commandments represented the character of Christ, which is imparted to Christians by the spirit of Christ. This spirit of Christ is what governs them and produces righteous behaviour in them. In Christ, we are not governed by ten legal statements. For us, that system of government has been abolished. This is exactly what the apostle Paul tries to explain in the following passages:

*Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of*

*Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? (2 Corinthians 3:6-8)*

The Ten Commandments are not equal to the character of Christ. They are a *basic description* of morality, but are by no means equal to the height and the depth and the breadth which is in Christ. This is why Jesus said (quoting the ten commandments):

*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)*

The ten commandments say, “thou shalt not commit adultery,” which simply means, “don’t have sex with a person who is not your spouse.” This is basic morality, but is it good enough to represent true righteousness? No, of course not. True righteousness is the nature which does not even have the desire to do such a thing. Can the Ten Commandments produce this? Does it even describe this? The obvious answer is, no, so when a person is governed by a system of ten rules, he can never rise above basic morality. Conformity to the rules becomes the cloak to cover inward corruption and hypocritical legalism is the inevitable result. This is why the ministry of the letter has to be rejected in favour of the ministry of the spirit.

Of course, we do not deny that the Ten Commandments tell the truth. It may be only in a basic way, but it is still the truth. This is why the spirit of Christ is not contrary to the Ten commandments, even though it is far superior to the ten rules.

It is the same with the feast days and all aspects of the system of the law. Everything represented a greater reality. Each feast represented some event in the *Ministry of Christ*. These feasts were only symbols of something real, they themselves were not the reality. This is why they had to be repeated year after year, because they never accomplished any real change in the people.

Thank God, Jesus is the reality and He fulfills the true meaning of the feasts, so we do not deal with the symbols anymore, because now, we have the reality in Christ.

But feast-keepers want to retain a relationship with the form and the illustration, even though Christ has come as the reality. They attach themselves to the government of the Ten Commandments and use this as a hook by which to attach themselves to the feast days. They hold to the idea that the rules of the Ten commandments are still the means by which God governs Christians and then they try to link the feast days to the ten commandments. On this basis they conclude that we are still obligated to observe the feast days of the law. But with the feast days, as with the sacrifices and circumcision, and in fact the entire system of the law, including the ten commandments, we move from symbol to reality.

But let us consider an important fact: Moving from symbolism to reality with the sacrifices and feast days means that we stop practicing them. We no longer carry out the rituals commanded in the law, instead we involve our lives with the reality, that is, the true sacrifice, Jesus Christ, and the true feast days, the ministry of Christ in heaven.

But with the Ten Commandments it is different. When we experience the greater principle behind the Ten Commandments this does not cancel the practice of the ten, instead, it takes us to a greater height than the rules, while still carrying out the practices commanded in the rules. What do I mean by this? I mean, the commandment says, “thou shalt not kill.” I no longer deal with this limited definition, but I move on to something greater in Christ. This greater thing is the inborn principle of selfless love. Now, will this lead me to *kill* others? No, of course not! The result of this new system of government is that I rise above the rule, way above it, I live by higher motivations and morals, but this does not lead me to walk contrary to the written law, it leads me to walk in perfect harmony with it, but at a much higher level.

So it is clear that *morality* never

changes even when we deal with a limited expression of it. It is also evident that morality is not involved with ritualism or ceremonialism, but has to do with behaviour which is good in itself and which is good in all ages and in all circumstances. So even though the Ten Commandments are a limited expression of morality, they are still a *true* expression of morality, and therefore the reality in Christ will always produce behaviour in harmony with the Ten Commandments.

There is only ONE moral principle which is not naturally produced in a person by the coming of the spirit of Christ and it is the morality of Sabbath observance. A person will not know that God invites His people to a special appointment on the seventh day of the week unless he is taught, and because of this, the morality of the Sabbath is not as easily established as the other Ten Commandments. Nevertheless we need only ask ourselves a few questions to demonstrate that Sabbath observance is a moral principle.

Is Sabbath observance something which is eternally good, or is it something which is limited to the time of the existence of sin? Was the Sabbath introduced after sin came into the world or was it instituted before? Was the Sabbath command placed with the laws which were limited to time and place, or was it included in the laws written on stone, which are eternal in nature? The answers are obvious. God is the only one who knows what is eternally good and He chose to unite the Sabbath command with a set of other rules which are clearly eternal in nature. So God’s own actions as well as His commands, demonstrate that Sabbath observance is a moral behaviour and is therefore something which lasts forever.

#### THE APPEAL OF THE LAW

Finally, let us ask the question, why is the observance of the ceremonies of the law so appealing to so many today? The answer is a simple one, but also a troubling one.

It is an indisputable fact that we only keep on searching if we have not found what we are looking for. The apostle

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# Facts About The Spirits

David Clayton

One issue which continues to challenge believers is the question of, what is the spirit? This question becomes even more important when we recognize that the answer to this question affects how we view the spirit of God. The apostle Paul demonstrates that there is a clear parallel between the spirit of God and the spirit of man, so however we define the spirit, it will affect our understanding of both man and God.

*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. (1Cor 2:11)*

There are certain fundamental concepts which we need to clarify before we can understand this issue. One of them is that there are two different biblical understandings of what "spirit" is.

The first understanding is that the word, "spirit," refers to a being who is not made of flesh and blood, and who dwells in a realm which is invisible and inaccessible to human beings. In this understanding, God is a spirit and angels are spirits. So are Satan and his angels. (John 4:14; Heb. 1:24)

The second understanding is that each intelligent being in the universe possesses a "spirit." Note carefully, beings who are said to be spirits also *possess* a spirit. They are spirits (spiritual beings) but at the same time they possess a spirit. So we may say that a spirit is within a spirit. Human beings also possess a spirit. In this sense the "spirit" refers to a part of the individual which is invisible and intangible, but which is very real. In a broad sense it refers to the mind, the personality, the character, the identity of the person. (Dan. 2:1; Luke 23:46; Job 32:8; 1 Cor. 2:11).

Let us take careful note of the fact that when we say a person possesses a spirit, we are not referring to the spirit of God or the holy spirit. Let us make that point very clear because there are some who believe that the only spirit which dwells in a person is the spirit of

God, or the spirit of Satan. They also believe that Jesus did not possess a spirit of His own, but that the only spirit in Him was the holy spirit of God the Father. But this is not what we find in the Bible; in the Bible, every intelligent being possesses *his own spirit*. This includes God the Father, Jesus Christ and the angels. If God and Jesus possessed the *same* spirit, then it would mean that they were actually the same person, because, as was pointed out before, a person's spirit is His identity.

It is true that the spirit of God the Father dwells in His children and that His spirit is also united with the spirit of His Son Jesus Christ. However, this does not cancel the reality that the Father and the Son are two *different individuals* and therefore each possesses His own spirit.

Now it is important that we understand that there is a difference between the brain and the spirit. The brain is a physical thing made up of atoms and molecules, flesh and blood. The spirit is a non-physical thing. Nobody but God can tell what it is made of, but God tells us that it exists and it is something which is just as real as our flesh and blood brain. It is true that the spirit of a man cannot operate independently of his body, but it is the only part of a person which may be translated from this world to the next. Every part of us which is physical, made up of flesh and blood is subject to corruption and the Bible tells us that either we will be resurrected with different bodies, or these bodies will be changed in the blink of an eye at the coming of Jesus (1 Thess. 4:17). But the spirits within us will not change at that time. Our identities will be the same, we will be the same persons, even though every single *physical* component will be changed. This makes it very clear that the spirit is not something physical. It is a part of our being which is not made up of flesh and blood. The body will go back to the dust, including the brain, but the spirit will be preserved by God, in an unconscious state, to be

placed in a new body in the resurrection. The critical component which survives both existences is the spirit.

## SEVERAL VIEWS

The Bible presents several views of the makeup of human beings. At times, the terminology of the various writers is not as precise as we would like it to be, because often, they were not dealing with the same kinds of debates and questions which we are. In one place the Bible gives the simple view of man as being made up of body and soul. In another place as body and spirit. In another place as body, soul and spirit, and in still another instance as heart, soul, mind and strength, and there are still other views.

However, the picture of the body and spirit is the most simple and the most consistent representation of man's makeup in the Bible. This is how we explain the incarnation as well. Jesus was the same person as Michael, not a copy, even though all His power, His knowledge, His memories, His glory, His bodily form, were gone. He was the same person, because it was the same spirit which was in Michael which was placed in the body of Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary and as we already showed, a person's spirit is what constitutes the person's identity.

Some regard the spirit as simply being a person's character. However, when a person is born he does not yet possess a character, but he already possesses a spirit. The Bible tells us in more than one place that this spirit within the person is placed there by God (Eccl. 12:7; Zech. 12:1). As a person lives his life he begins to develop a character, and it is true that this character becomes an aspect of his spirit or his mind. A character is the sum of all life's experiences, what we learn, what we do, our environmental influences etc.

## NATURE VS CHARACTER

A person is not born with a character,

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# Is Feast-keeping Wrong?

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Paul applies this truth and tells us that the only reason why the people of God continued to offer sacrifices over and over, year after year was because the sacrifices never provided what they needed. When the one great sacrifice arrived which supplied their need, then they were done with those sacrifices forever.

*For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. (Heb 10:1-2)*

*But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb 10:12-14)*

This same principle applies to the observance of feast days and to any of the other practices of the law. The only reason why a person would want to observe feast days is because he has not received the reality of those feasts, which have been fulfilled in Christ and provided for us in Him. Therefore feast keeping is an indication that one has not received the benefits of the ministry of Christ! This is the inescapable conclusion.

Feast keeping is acceptable for those who have not yet found Christ. Understandably the Jews still practice it along with most of the other rituals and ceremonies of the law. They are still looking for the Messiah so of course, they are still dealing with the symbols and not the reality. However, for those who profess to be Christians, feast keeping

# The God – Man

A noble race, once sons of God, was cursed and doomed by Adam's vice,  
as scoundrels black, and hopeless scum, with everlasting death their price!  
The pawns and serfs of devils black, and evil hearts their bane at birth,  
Corrupted seed, in chaos lost, the scourge and woe of fallen earth!

They stood alone, no hope to claim, condemned upon the edge of doom,  
Rejected, universal dross, timelessly lost in endless gloom.  
In horror watched by holy beings, aghast and grieved by mortal strife,  
They quaked and wept when shown the true depravity of godless life!

But Angels great and cosmic lords, stood helpless watching man's disgrace,  
And cherubs sweet and seraphs brave, unable all to aid this race!  
No mighty being of earth or sky, could raise a hand nor save one soul,  
As devils danced, and demons pranced, and bound their prey in hell's control.

But One was found, a light, a hope, The Lord of Highest heaven bright,  
The Prince of Peace, and Source of Life, with pity moved by mortal plight!  
The Way, The One, The Only chance, the Hope of ages, sworn to man,  
The Oath of God, The Covenant, Life Giver and The Master Plan!

And down to earth, oh wonder great, Creator came in mortal frame,  
The Son of God, The Cosmic King, constrained and bound in human shame!  
To walk the earth and forge a life, which conquers sin and breaks the chain,  
Of Adam's curse, and makes the way to love and light and life again!

Oh child of man, redeemed and blessed, a creature new from Hades bought,  
From slaves to princes, serfs to kings! The greatest wonder ever wrought!  
The God-man conquered, Saviour great, Salvation to a perished race,  
He gave it freely, not a cost, and raised them to the highest place!

No conqueror, no hero strong, no haughty king nor prelate proud  
Can match this feat, surpass this deed, nor best the gift which He endowed.  
He stands forever, girt in might, the Second Adam, God and Man,  
His children now a race anew, exalted to The LORD'S right Hand!

The Watchers gasp and angels bow, in holy heaven, cherubs swoon,  
For though they search the stars, and worlds, and galaxies and sun and moon,  
No tale so wondrous can be told, no greater epic can be read,  
Than God in man, came down HIMSELF, to save a race once lost and dead!

*Daniel Clayton*

is a blatant contradiction of the faith of Jesus Christ. It is a statement that what Christ has provided is not good enough and that we need to continue to interact with the forms and illustrations. The tragedy is that maybe this is the absolute truth. Perhaps people feel more comfortable relating to God in the Old Covenant way simply because they have not experienced the reality of the New Covenant.



# Facts About The Spirits

*Continued from page 5*

but he is born with a nature. In fact, he is born with two natures: He possesses a *physical* nature and he possesses a *spiritual* nature. The physical nature is what we inherit genetically from our parents and this nature has a strong influence on how we live our lives as we begin to grow up and to develop character. The spiritual nature on the other hand is not a physical part of us and we may well ask, where does this spirit come from? The Bible does not give a very clear answer except to say that it is God who “forms” this spirit in man (Zech. 12:1).

Because of the sin which Adam introduced into the human family we suffer both a physical and a spiritual consequence of sin. The physical consequence is this: Our bodies are degenerate from the moment we are born and we have inherent physical tendencies and desires to do the things which are bad for us and others and are contrary to the will of God. We are born with very strong desires to overindulge the flesh.

The spiritual consequence is this: We are born alienated from God, without the indwelling holy spirit of God and in this condition, we are naturally selfish having only the desire to please and benefit ourselves. God is the only Person in the universe who is good in Himself. Every other being who is good, is good *only* because his spirit has been united with the spirit of God. This is what happens when a person is born again, but until someone has that experience he cannot be good in the true sense of the word, even though he may do things which seem outwardly to be good.

In other words, physically we are born with a degenerate nature, and spiritually we are born with a carnal nature.

When we speak of a person’s “nature,” we are referring to the qualities which are built into the person as a result of the kind of being he is. So a dog has a dog’s nature and a human being has a human nature. Nature has to do with

the qualities which we possess because of how we are born. When a person or an animal is born, he will automatically begin to behave in the way his nature dictates, whether or not he has learned anything. Nature has to do with the in-born instincts, not the character which begins to develop as an individual learns from life’s experiences. But notice that a person is born with a spiritual nature, as well as a physical nature. Our behaviour is determined by the fact that we possess both a physical and a spiritual nature. As we have seen, all the descendants of Adam are born with a sinful, fallen nature, both in the physical and the spiritual of their makeup.

Does sinful nature dictate that a person should behave in a sinful way, even from the moment of birth before he learns anything? God alone is good. Therefore any other being in the universe who is without God cannot do anything which is truly good. He does not need to have a history of sin, he does not need to have a sinful environment or sinful influences around him. Born without the holy spirit, his nature is evil and the only answer to that condition is that he must be born again of the holy spirit, or in other words, the life, the spirit, the mind of God must come and unite with his spirit, or mind.

## THE NATURE OF CHRIST

“Jesus was fully man and yet He was fully God.” This statement has been made by some of the most respected Bible teachers and commentators and even by some who were considered to be divinely inspired. Yet there seems to be a clear contradiction in such a statement. How can a person be fully man, if, at the same time he is fully God? Such a contradiction does not seem reasonable.

The truth in the statement becomes evident as soon as we begin to understand the truth about the two natures which all intelligent beings possess. Jesus also possessed these two natures. He possessed a physical body, received from Mary (Gal. 4:4) and He also pos-

sessed a spirit, His true identity, which is what came from heaven and dwelt in that body.

In terms of his physical abilities (powers), Jesus was totally human. In this respect He was exactly like us, he possessed no powers or abilities superior to other men and so it is clear that *physically*, He was “fully a man.” In other words, He did not have a mind capable of mental achievements far superior to ours. All that He was capable of doing in terms of his memory, His mental capacity and His physical abilities, was exactly the same as we are capable of. He laid His divine POWER aside. He was not in Himself capable of reading the mind, performing miracles, seeing the future etc. All these miracles were performed by God, through Him (Acts 10:38), just as with all the other prophets. In addition to this, Jesus possessed a humanity which was weakened by the effects of 4000 years of degeneracy. Some refer to this as “sinful nature.” So in terms of His abilities and powers, Jesus was exactly like all other human beings and possessed a fallen nature.

But let us not forget that there was another side to Jesus as there is to every person. There was a *spiritual* nature and in this nature, Jesus was *not* like other men. All men are born with a carnal spirit, a spirit which is self-centered and antagonistic towards God’s principles. Jesus was not like this. The spirit in Christ was the spirit of the only-begotten Son of God, the one who was brought forth from God in the exact image of God. This spirit was a divine spirit which means that it possessed all the qualities of the divine mind, just like God the Father, so, as God was good, so Jesus was good *by nature* from even before He was born. In terms of His spirit, Jesus was fully God, even though in terms of His powers and abilities, He was fully human. This is the answer to the mystery as to how He could have been fully God and fully man at the same time. He was fully God, but only in the sense of being perfectly good. This is the true mark of divinity.

Many people hold to the erroneous idea that the mark of Godhood is *power*. They believe that supreme power is

what makes God, God, and so they conclude that if Jesus was fully God then He must have possessed the same almighty power as God the Father, even when He was a man. This is not correct. If Jesus possessed supreme power as a man, then He could not have been fully man. The truth is that the great mark of divinity, the element which separates God from all other beings is the fact that He is completely good, while no other being in the universe is this way, except His Son.

When Jesus was on earth, He possessed only human abilities and in this sense was exactly like us and had no advantage over us. However, His spiritual nature, or His mind (not His brain, but His mind or His spirit) was far different from ours. Jesus was born with a hatred for sin. His mind was pure and selfless from the moment He was born. It was only human in its power and abilities, but it was divine in its nature. If I may put it another way, Jesus was a man who had a perfectly good mind from the moment He was born. That is the only difference between Him and all other men.

The temptations which we face were presented to Jesus, and in facing them, the only power available to Him is what is also available to us. Nevertheless, He hated sin by nature. His spirit recoiled from it. Ours do not, so there was a difference. This is why He never sinned because He had a divine mind, and divinity is totally opposed to sin.

#### **A DEEP ROOTED MISCONCEPTION**

One mistake which many people make is to suppose that Jesus came here to prove that man can live without sin. The truth is, man himself cannot live without sin. God was not trying to prove what was not true. What God proved in Christ is that divinity combined with humanity does not commit sin. This divinity and humanity were combined in Christ and this is the only means by which humanity may live above sin.

Even more significant however, this was a demonstration of what God was really like. In Jesus Christ God displayed His character and His true nature before the world and the universe as it had never been seen nor understood be-

fore. It was not a demonstration of the abilities of humanity, but of the true nature of God. Jesus proved that when you take away the power the glory, the knowledge, of God and you strip Him naked, remove every vestige of divine help from Him including the holy spirit, hang Him on a cross and put Him face to face with eternal death, He will still operate on the basis of selfless love. He confounded Satan's accusations that God was selfish and only good because He was almighty.

No other being in the universe could have done that. An angel in the same situation would have failed. Any other human being would have given in to the instinct for self-preservation in an instant, if faced with the same circumstances. In Jesus we saw the glory of God, but it was the glory "as of the only-begotten of the Father." Something which only a divine being could produce.

The idea that our way to victory is by emulating Christ is a concept which I embraced for many years of my life, but I came to realize that such an understanding creates many inconsistencies in the plan of salvation and has led to painful frustration in the experience of many sincere Christians. It is true that Jesus is my example of the life which God wants to see in man, an example of a perfect life. But He is not an example of the method by which I can live that perfect life. My way of living a perfect life is not to be by copying Jesus' methods, my way is to be by dying and allowing Jesus to live again. I cannot and never will be able to live a perfect life. But Christ did, and He will do it again in me. That is the secret of victory. Not emulation, but substitution.

We know He depended on His Father's direction at every step of His life. We know that He depended on His Father's spirit for performing His miracles. We know that He prayed as never man prayed, but this was not what sustained Him on the cross. There, the Father forsook Him, and every help and support was taken from Him. It really happened. If it did not, then He did not really bear my sins, He did not really take the place where the sinner deserves to be. But we know that He did and He obtained our salvation by this means.

But how was He able to remain faithful on the cross, abandoned by God's spirit, if He was not inherently divine and therefore totally good in Himself?

If we take the holiest man, let us say Enoch for example, who has been living in glory for the past five thousand years and we hang him on a cross, threaten him with eternal death and take away the spirit of God from him, will he remain faithful? Absolutely not, because there is no good in us apart from God and there never will be for all eternity. In all the universe there are only two Beings who are good in themselves. One is God the Father, the other one is His only begotten Son to whom He has given to "have life in Himself," who is the express image of His person. When we understand this properly we will see why it is so critical that we cling to Christ and put our hope in Him completely.

All who are born of Adam are born with sinful flesh and corrupt, depraved minds. Since nature is passed on by birth, it was impossible for any son of Adam to ever help the human race. All he could pass on was the same nature which he inherited which would be a sinful, corrupt depraved nature. To help humanity, a new element had to enter the life-stream of humanity. One had to be found who had a life to pass on which was not of the corrupt nature of Adam's life. One had to be found who could pass on divine life, the only hope of recovery for sunken humanity.

This is further evidence that Jesus had to be divine, the very Son of God and not merely another man. This is why Jesus is called the "last Adam." He is another man who is placed at the head of humanity, with another life to pass on to all men. A life which cancels the effects of the one which we received from the first Adam.

Humanity, by itself can never live without sin. Now Christ has given us His life and if we will receive it, He will live in us again and do what only divinity can do. He will live without sin again, but this time in us. What a wonderful salvation God has provided in Christ!





# The Two Baptisms

Wayne Sutherland

In Mark 16:16, Jesus told His disciples:

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16:16)*

Baptism in the name of Jesus is an essential step in the Christian experience, but the Bible teaches us that this in itself is not enough.

In Acts 8, after Stephen was stoned, many of the followers of Christ were scattered because the church was persecuted. Those who fled, went on to preach the good news about Christ in different places. The Scriptures tell us that those who accepted the message about Christ were baptized in the name of Jesus but It clearly teaches that, that was not sufficient. When the apostles heard of the baptism of the new converts Peter and John were sent to those in Samaria who had believed:

*Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) (Acts 8:15-16)*

This was not the only time the apostles demonstrated that water baptism in the name of Jesus was not enough. On another occasion the apostle Paul encountered some believers in Ephesus.

*He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul*

*had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. (Acts 19:2-6)*

Christ Himself was the first person who pointed out the necessity of being baptized, not only with water, but with the holy spirit:

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)*

Notice, not just water baptism, not just in the name of Jesus but we must also be baptized with the holy spirit of Christ.

The great error many make is to assume that the moment we go under the water and the preacher says, 'I baptize you in the name of Jesus', this statement automatically means that we have also been baptized with the Holy Spirit of God there and then. Read Acts 8 again. It was **after** the physical baptism, that there was the spiritual baptism, and this was sometime later when Peter and John arrived. Nobody received the baptism of the spirit when Philip baptized them! In the case of Cornelius, he received the Holy Spirit before he got baptized, along with his fellow gentiles who received the Holy Spirit while Peter was sharing the gospel with them; for Peter said,

*Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? (Acts 10:47)*

We find the same sequence in the experience of the apostle Paul after he met Jesus on the Damascus road:

*And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And straightway there fell from his*

*eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; (Acts 9:17-18)*

It is very clear that water baptism is NOT the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Even at the baptism of Jesus Christ, Himself, there was a clear demarcation between the two baptisms.

*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; (Matt 3:16)*

First, He was baptized with water and then subsequently He received the holy spirit. Notice also that in all the cases mentioned in the New Testament, whenever a person received the baptism of the holy spirit, it was a very clear experience which was marked by unusual manifestations so that a person could know without question that at such and such a time he did receive the baptism of the holy spirit. It was not something he had to guess about or to simply assume.

But why is it so important to receive **both** baptisms? Why isn't it enough to simply be baptized with water?

It was Christ who said,

*.... Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (John 3:5)*

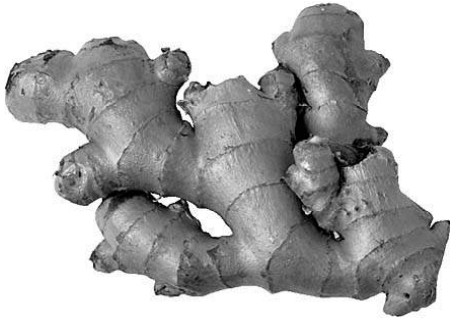
When Christ came to our world, one of His primary missions was to setup His Father's Kingdom - the Kingdom of **GRACE**. This is not the same as the kingdom of glory. When the bible speaks of the establishing of the kingdom of Glory, it presents it as a visible event, spectacular, with tremendous changes taking place in all aspects of life on planet earth.

Paul describes the beginning of this event in 1 Thessalonians:

**Continued on page 11**

# Ginger

Lenworth Frankson



Ginger is an herb. It is used as a spice and also as a medicine. It can be used fresh, dried and powdered, or as a juice or oil. Ginger also called ginger root has been around for a very long time. It is thought to have originated in the Himalayan foothills of Northern India. Today, it is widely grown all over the world as a major commercial spice crop.

The ginger plant grows to about a meter in height and features thin grass like dark-green leaves and small yellow flowers. Ginger is the underground stem of the ginger plant with a firm, ridged texture. The flesh of the ginger rhizome can be yellow, white or red in color, depending upon the variety. It is covered with a brownish skin that may either be thick or thin, depending upon whether the plant was harvested when it was mature or young.

It is a spice that should be kept on hand in your kitchen at all times. Why? Well not only is it a wonderful addition to your cooking but it also has many medicinal properties that are used to fight against inflammation, cancer, diabetes, upset stomach, flatulence (*gas*), nausea, headaches, muscle soreness, joint pain, sore throat, heart attacks, bacterial and fungal infection, just to mention a few. Ginger is easy to store and fresh ginger root keeps well in the freezer for quite some time.

## SOME MEDICINAL USES

Health care professionals may recommend ginger to help prevent or treat nausea and vomiting from motion sickness, pregnancy, and cancer chemotherapy. There is a long list of ginger

root health benefits that we can take advantage of. Let us look at a few.

## MOTION SICKNESS

In one trial of 80 new sailors who were prone to motion sickness, those who took powdered ginger had less vomiting and cold sweating compared to those who took a placebo. Ginger did not reduce their nausea, however. A study with healthy volunteers produced the same result.

However, other studies found that ginger does not work as well as medications for motion sickness. In one small study, people were given either ginger, “**scopolamine**”, a medication commonly prescribed for motion sickness, or a placebo. Those who took scopolamine had fewer symptoms than those who took ginger. On the other hand, conventional prescription and over-the-counter medicines for nausea may have side effects, such as dry mouth and drowsiness, but ginger does not.

## NAUSEA AND VOMITING IN PREGNANCY

Human studies suggest that 1g of ginger daily may reduce nausea and vomiting in pregnant women when used for short periods (no longer than 4 days). Several studies have also found that ginger is ideal for relieving morning sickness.

In a small study of 30 pregnant women with severe vomiting, those who took 1 gram of ginger every day for 4 days reported more relief from vomiting than those who took a placebo (*inactive substance*). In a larger study of 70 pregnant women with nausea and vomiting, those who got a similar dose of ginger felt less nauseous and did not vomit as much as those who got the placebo. Pregnant women should ask their doctor before taking ginger, and not take more than 1g per day.

## CANCER AND DIABETES FIGHTER

Ginger’s anti-inflammatory properties make it beneficial for many chronic inflammatory diseases including cancer. A research published in the *British*

*Journal of Nutrition* has shown the anticancer activity of ginger, suggesting it may be effective in the management of prostate cancer.

Other research shows it has anti-tumor activity that may help defeat difficult-to-treat types of cancer, including lung, ovarian, colon, breast, skin, and pancreatic. Because ginger helps prevent the toxic effects of many substances, including cancer drugs, it may be useful to take in addition to conventional cancer treatments if the individual decides to go that route. Regarding diabetes, ginger appears to be useful both as preventative and therapeutic.

According to one comprehensive review, a clinical trial that was performed found that after consuming three grams of dry ginger powder for 30 days, diabetic participants had a significant reduction in blood glucose, triglyceride, total cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol.

## OSTEOARTHRITIS

Traditional medicine has used ginger for centuries to reduce inflammation. And there is some evidence that ginger may help reduce pain from osteoarthritis. In a study of 261 people with osteoarthritis of the knee, those who took a ginger extract twice daily had less pain and needed fewer pain-killing medications than those who received a placebo. It might not be better than ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) in reducing symptoms of the sickness but its safer, healthier, all natural and has no serious side effects to worry about. It may take a while though for ginger to work.

## OTHER USES

Ginger is also a must-have if you struggle with indigestion, and it does more than simply relieve pain. Ginger helps to stimulate the emptying of your stomach without any negative effects. By improving digestion, ginger will naturally reduce the potential for intestinal gas and flatulence. But can it have a positive effect if you already have a problem with bloating? The answer is yes!

Ginger tea has muscle relaxant properties that can help relieve gases trapped in the digestive system. Bloating and intestinal cramps can be caused by tension and spasms in our gastrointestinal tract. By gently relieving these constrictions, ginger tea can help release trapped digestive gas and alleviate bloating.

This same calming, relaxing effect on our digestive tract is likely to be the reason why the tea is such an effective remedy for excessive flatulence. By stimulating the process of digestion and relaxing the smooth muscles of the digestive tract, ginger tea helps the food we eat pass through our system more easily.

The more smoothly and effectively our meals travel through our gastrointestinal tract, the less chance of blockages in our system that can lead to prolonged food fermentation and those really smelly gas releases.

Some health advocates believe that ginger constrains or inhibits the *H. pylori* bacteria, which may help prevent ulcers, while also protecting the mucus in the digestive tract.

Ginger is a metabolism boosting substance that may temporarily increase and assist the body's ability to burn stored up fat to create heat, with beneficial impacts on overall metabolism and fat storage. Research suggests that consuming ingredients like ginger may boost your metabolism by up to 5 percent, and increase fat burning by up to 16 percent.

Ginger may even help counteract the decrease in metabolic rate that often occurs during weight loss. This suggests ginger may be useful for weight loss. According to research compiled by **GreenMedInfo**, ginger may *also* be useful for the following:

- Improving cognitive function in middle-aged women
- Protecting against respiratory viruses
- Reducing vertigo (dizziness, unsteadiness)
- Enhancing fat digestion and absorption

- Protecting against toxic effects of some environmental chemicals
- Helping prevent heart attacks
- Relieving arthritis pain
- Preventing and treating nonalcoholic fatty liver disease
- Fighting drug-resistant bacterial and fungal infections
- Reducing damage and memory loss associated with small stroke
- Protecting against the DNA-damaging effects of radiation exposure
- Fighting bacterial diarrhea

There are some introductory studies suggesting that ginger might also lower cholesterol, as mentioned earlier, and help prevent blood from clotting. This could help treat heart disease, where blood vessels can become blocked and lead to heart attack or stroke. But more studies are needed to know whether ginger is safe or effective for heart disease.

#### MAKING GINGER TEA AT HOME

Here is a simple way to make fresh and fragrant ginger tea at home. Get a medium-sized ginger rhizome (*underground stem*) that looks fresh without wrinkles or too many blemishes. Scrub it under warm water and carefully cut 3 to 6 thin slices as thin as you can and put them in a large mug. If you are able to hand-grate about the same amount of ginger in the mug, then that should do as well. Add a small amount of honey and/or lemon if you like and pour very hot, but not necessarily boiling water over the slices (turn off the kettle just before it boils). Cover and let steep for 5 minutes. Drink and enjoy.

Ginger possesses numerous therapeutic properties including antioxidant effects and the ability to inhibit the formation of inflammatory compounds. Research has shown that ginger is very effective in preventing the symptoms of motion sickness as well as fighting inflammation, cancer, diabetes, upset stomach, flatulence (*gas*), nausea, headaches, muscle soreness, joint pain, sore throat, heart attacks, bacterial and fungal infection. It is definitely not an all cure drug but rather a plant that our

Creator made available to us for healing. Try making homemade ginger beer; you won't forget its taste and punch!

Ginger is definitely one of those herbs that we should keep handy at all times in our kitchens because of its wide use in treating so many illnesses.

## The Two Baptisms

**Continued from page 9**

*For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1Thess 4:16-17)*

Clearly this is an event which will be seen by the entire world. But when He speaks of the kingdom of grace He says,

*And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21)*

While one kingdom is set up with a great physical demonstration of power and glory, the other has none of that. Yet men may enter into this kingdom which comes, "without observation," for Jesus told us,

*The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it. (Luke 16:16)*

So even though this kingdom does not consist of outward demonstration it is a very real kingdom nevertheless and those who do not enter this kingdom of grace will not be permitted to enter the kingdom of

glory.

*Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in*

*the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last. (Luke 13:24-30)*

When one of the followers of Christ received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, there were marvelous events in the life of each individual. Healings, raising of the dead, thousands baptized in a day. The hearts of such converts were totally the property of God, their master. They were bold individuals, they feared God rather than men. The cares and desires for the things of this world were abolished. Paul said it perfectly,

*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, (Phil 3:7-8)*

Christ is calling us to a higher experi-

ence in Himself. Will we respond to the call or be complacent in our lukewarm, nominal lifestyle?

Trust the Lord dear friends. God has given us all things in Christ, the gift is ours for the asking if we will ask in faith.

*He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? (Rom 8:32)*

*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? (Luke 11:13)*

Oh may we ASK, "Not Wavering".



### **Open Face**

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