

"Meditate
upon these things;
give thyself
wholly to them;
that thy profiting
may appear unto all"

I Timothy 4:15

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THE FAITH OF ENOCH*

The 11th chapter of the letter to the Hebrews contains a demonstration, gathered from past history as evidence for the truth already expounded in the first 10 chapters of this Epistle, that the true religion of all times was the Christian religion, that from the very beginning the way to salvation was that of the Christian faith. This is shown first of all by the example of pious Abel as a man who through faith in Christ had pleased God and was saved. Indeed Abel, the first to be called a believer, brought a sacrifice, a work, which the self-righteous Jews could praise as belonging to work-righteousness. But Cain also brought a sacrifice. Nevertheless the Holy Ghost declares through Moses: "The Lord had respect" -- unto whom? unto what? -- "unto Abel" and then "to his offering," Gen. 4:4. That is the order of grace, as it has existed from the very beginning of the Church, after Adam's fall. First the person must be pleasing, and then the work of this person is also pleasing in the sight of God. But what makes a person pleasing in the eyes of the Most Holy God if works are not able to do this? It is not a person's birth, for Cain had the same parents as Abel, and he was even the first-born to whom his mother Eve had attached such high hopes. It is faith which reunites with God those who are separated from Him and which snatches the heart away from the deceitful promises of Satan and guides and rules that heart through the truth of the eternally faithful God.

After Abel, a second example is introduced to show that the just live by faith and not by works, in the person of Enoch, whom the Lord through faith translated, took away, that he should not see death. Hebr. 11:5. Enoch was the seventh member in the generations of the "sons of God"

* Translated from Lehre und Wehre, Vol. 39 (1893), pp. 11-17.

descended from Adam. The generations originating through Cain, the people who fell away from God and His promises, are simply called "men," that is, sons of Adam, standing under the dominion of inherited sin.

Adam had died 57 years before the carrying-away of Enoch, for this occurred in the 987th year of the world. Adam had thus been a contemporary of Enoch for 308 years. The following patriarchs were still alive: Seth, 882 years old; Enos, 792 years old; Cainan, 729 years old; Mahalaleel, 662 years old; and Jared, who was 500 years old. Methuselah, Enoch's son, was already 113 years old, when the wonderful event took place. These dates are therefore not without significance, for one can recognize from them that God in good time, even before the corruption had reached its peak on account of which He finally allowed the water of the Flood to break loose, spared no pains to give friendly reminders and exhortations to godliness, one of which took place through the removal of Enoch.

"And it came to pass, when men (descendants of Cain) began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God (the descendants of the pious patriarchs; we reject the old-Jewish fables and the detestable fiction of moderns -- Delitzsch, Kurz and others -- that by "sons of God" we are to understand angels, who were supposed to have mingled in a fleshly way with human wives)" saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose," Gen. 6:1-2. Thus begins the story of the fearful judgment of the Flood, without any further dates. Yet the time is hinted at. Men did not first begin to multiply in the age of Noah. Already in Gen. 4 there is presented a whole line of generations of "men," Cain's descendants. In Gen. 5 it is reported concerning every patriarch: "He begat sons and daughters." At the time of Enoch the number of "men" and also the number of descendants of the believers was no doubt very great. The human race was divided by basic views which mutually excluded one another. Although both groups had inherited one thing in common, original sin, yet Scripture emphasizes

that this force drove the descendants of Cain not merely to make the natural gifts and faculties subservient to an enjoyable life (there were among them "such as handle the harp and organ," Gen. 4:21), but also to live in all sorts of manifest sins. Lamech already "took unto him two wives," Gen. 4:19, and boasted: "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt," Gen. 4:23. Only in announcing the judgment of the Flood is it said concerning the descendants of the believers: "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose," Gen. 6:2. Among them the inheritance of grace, the blessed Gospel of Him who would bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15), was active for a long time and restrained the power of original sin. And yet we read that every one of the long-lived patriarchs did not consider their great old age to be a distinct blessing. Lamech, the grandson of Enoch, said upon the birth of his son Noah: "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed," Gen. 5:29. He repeated the error of Eve who also thought she had "the man, the Lord" when she gave birth to Cain, Gen. 4:1. But we should not apply the "work and toil of our hands" chiefly to physical work, sickness, and the like. Those devout people were not reluctant to work and bear their cross. The real work and toil which tormented and distressed the sons of God is the unceasing battle against the ever-spreading sin, a battle which often seemed so futile, and the many injustices suffered at the hands of the ungodly which they must endure, as the Psalms and the Apostles lament.

One sin which, on the one hand, was manifest as a sign of the corruption which was spreading also among the sons of God and, on the other hand, hastened the spread and increase of this corruption, was the union between the world and the Church, the breaking-down of the bounds between believers and people of the world. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair." To be sure, these words do not say that the physical characteristics of the daughters of the sons of God were inferior to

those of the daughters of Cain; but these words tell us rather that the daughters of the world emphasized their charms by jewelry, plaiting their hair, exposing their bodies, intoxicating the mind with pleasures, etc.; also that their fleshly way of thinking manifested itself in actions and thereby captivated the eyes of the "sons of God" since their heart was already inclined to serve the flesh. The daughters of the sons of God soon learned to imitate their sisters who were descended from Cain, which has happened at all times and happens extensively also today, so that the sons of Cain likewise found the daughters of the Sethites to be very desirable and a general mingling of the two classes of people took place, in which the true faith was placed in great danger. In the Flood the descendants of the pious patriarchs finally perished in the same manner as the sons and daughters of "men." Faith was thus largely extinguished as a result of the union between the world and the Church.

It was not God's fault that this happened. Even at that time He had no pleasure in the death of the sinner (Ezek. 33:11), and Enoch too could serve as an eloquent witness of the gracious will of God to the hearts of both the sons of God and the children of the world, in his own times and after his removal into salvation, if they would not make light of God's faithful appeals and exhortations which were bestowed upon them in such obvious ways.

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God," Hebr. 11:5. This Scripture passage suggests the following facts of Christian knowledge:

1. Through faith Enoch had become so pleasing to God that He took him to Himself without tasting death; for nothing is said about any particular works. His conduct with God was the fruit of his faith, as the following verse emphasizes.

2. God had given him the testimony before his translation, that through faith he pleased God.

The proof for these statements is shown thus:

1. "Without faith it is impossible to please (God)";
for
2. "he that cometh to God must believe
 - a. that He is
 - b. and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."

Those are the ingredients of true faith: knowledge of the one true God and of His will, approval by the heart and mind of that known truth as of "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," Hebr. 11:1.

It does not require much searching to answer the question concerning the exact content of the faith which was in Enoch. Although God no longer walked among men as He did in Paradise, and no longer spoke audibly to the external ear; although sins that were hostile to God were spreading so greatly that it appeared as though Satan was much mightier than God -- Enoch nevertheless continued to say: The Lord is my God and none other. He will not forsake me. And this believing confidence that God was not his angry judge, but rather his gracious Father, he took from the Gospel: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," Gen. 3:15. From this he knew that in spite of the fall into sin God was minded to be gracious and wished to create a wonderful deliverance. That was his confidence in the midst of the great distresses of his time.

This true faith produced its genuine fruit. Enoch walked with God, reproached the godless world fearlessly and faithfully by his words and life, and remained unentangled by the fleshly activities of many of his fellowmen. He also suffered much because of this, until in a wonderful and (to us) completely unknown manner God removed him from this sinful life and took him to Himself. This happened through faith, and that is what the holy writer wishes to emphasize.

Now clear answers can be given to the following questions, which flow from ignorance of Scripture or from a false teaching on works.

Was Enoch's God-pleasing conduct, which indeed grew out of faith but developed into a special purity, the reason why God was moved to take him to Himself without seeing death? Very definitely -- No! Enoch was not only conceived and born in sin like all other sons of Adam, but like them he also bore the Old Adam within himself, and therefore could not remain without sin in his daily life. Surely he led a holy life dedicated to God, but it flowed from the faith which God worked in him and preserved in him through His power. To assume that God took Enoch to heaven because of his exceptional holiness would offend against the doctrines of original sin, of the righteousness of God, and of faith. The letter to the Hebrews therefore says, "By faith," not by works, God had translated Enoch.

Or was Enoch's faith possibly much purer than the faith of the other patriarchs, so that the expression: "By faith Enoch was translated" really means: Because he had a faith which was so much better, inflexible, and courageous than all of the other sons of God, therefore God treated him with such distinction that he could enter into heavenly glory without seeing death? -- It can and dare not be denied that faith differs in strength and clarity in the children of God. In one an insignificant little flame flickers, in another a bright glowing fire of faith is blazing. For that reason they also differ externally in their lighting effects. But while the faith of the one is small by its own fault, the strong faith of the other is alone a work of God's grace. And faith concerns itself only with the promises of God's grace. The small faith takes hold of these promises just as surely and completely as the strong faith. The great faith can lay hold on no more than what God has promised, and that is what the hand of the small faith receives also. Yet the strong faith makes more use of the promises of God, as we learn in the centurion at Capernaum and the woman of Canaan (Matt. 8 and 15). But that which Enoch experienced -- removal into eternal life without tasting bodily death -- God had not promised to His children with as much as one word, nor does Holy Scripture otherwise offer the least evidence that an especially strong faith can obtain this pre-

ference. Noah, whose conduct is described just as accurately as that of Enoch, nevertheless had to experience the "and he died" (Gen. 9:29), as was the case with all others beloved of God. On the Last Day many believers will be taken to the Lord without seeing death in order to enter into eternal life. And it cannot be said of those believers, on the basis of Scripture, that they will have an especially strong faith. Enoch's better faith was therefore not the underlying reason why God took him to Himself.

Finally, whether like as the virgin Mary was given a special announcement that God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son, so Enoch may have received a special revelation and knew thereby what God intended, we do not know, for Scripture says nothing about that. But we do know that Enoch believed, for Scripture tells us that, and also that his faith as genuine faith had produced its fruits, was active in confession and in works of love, whereby he had the witness of being a believing child of God. To this testimony God now added an extraordinary testimony, which would be especially pleasing to one's eyes, which would enlighten and be effective in two ways. Enoch's wonderful removal was for the severely afflicted Church of that time a gracious revelation of the faithfulness and power of God, in order to strengthen the weak faith, even as did the removal of the prophet Elijah in his time when faith was so scarce and temptations so abundant. As soon as this event became known, the light of eternal life with its reward radiated overwhelmingly into the wearisome lives of the patriarchs, strengthening their faith and making their walk more certain.

But also for the godless world of that time this momentous event was a reproachful, although at the same time intended to be a gracious revelation of God. Nothing remained hidden from them. The patriarchs searched for the vanished Enoch, just as the sons of the prophets at the time of Elijah searched the mountain (2 Kings 2:16-18). And behold! "He was not," Gen. 5:24, "and was not found," Hebr. 11:5. They might possibly have declared their suspicion that perhaps the murderous children of the world had

removed this powerful witness out of the way, until God revealed to them what He had done. And the pious patriarchs did not keep it a secret. Believers have at all times been witnesses of God in the world. So it was made known to the apostate world of sinners, according to God's gracious will, exactly what had happened to Enoch. They were chastized and appealed to thereby.

It was also Dr. Luther's opinion that Enoch was a gracious sign of God to the Church of that time. He says in his Commentary on Genesis (St. L. Ed. I: 417): "Why then did Moses give preference to Enoch over them?" (the other patriarchs, who also had "walked before God"). He gives a two-fold answer in the following words. "From this we conclude that a special challenge of the Holy Ghost and a remarkable good courage was given to Enoch, so that he alone applied himself with greater trust and boldness against the church of Satan and the Cainites than the other patriarchs." He was thus "blessed and adorned by the Holy Ghost, that he should be a prophet above all prophets and a saint above all saints in the first world. Thus Enoch was great first of all because of his call and office of the ministry." "Secondly, he was extolled above the others also for this reason, that it was God's will that he should be an example to the whole world in comfort and strengthening of faith in the future life." (I: 418f.) "Thus God very soon in the first world wanted to testify and demonstrate with a public example, that He has prepared another life after this one for His saints in which they shall live with Him." (I: 421) "For this is the comfort which made death easier and softer to the holy patriarchs, that they also are departed this life with joy." (I: 424) "Therefore this is for Enoch a special thing, that he does not die but without death is moved into a spiritual life." (I: 425)

"Therefore this is a noteworthy and excellent history, through which God wanted to assure the first and beginning world and make certain the hope of a better life after this one. Afterwards in the second world, which had had the Law, He gave the example of Elijah who, in the presence and view of his servant Elisha, was likewise taken

away by the Lord. But we are in the New Testament as in the third world, and have a much clearer example in our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Himself, who has gone to heaven with many other saints." (I: 426)

That Enoch was to be a witness also to the godless world is stated by Jesus Sirach: "Enoch pleased God, and was translated into paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations," Ecclesiasticus 44:16. So also he says of Elijah: "Thou art ordained in the judgments of times to appease the wrath of the Lord, to reconcile the heart of the father to the son, and to restore the tribes of Jacob," and he then adds: "For all this the people repented not, neither did they depart from their sins," Ecclesiasticus 48:10, 16.

These demonstrations of God's grace brought about a fundamental conversion of multitudes neither at the time of Enoch nor at the time of Elijah, as is shown by the great Flood and the exile of the Israelites in the 70 year captivity.

There remains yet one question of importance in considering the experience of the blessed Enoch. What happened to his body? Did it participate in the eternal glorification, or did it wait like the other blessed ones whose bodies slumbered in the grave?

Many commentators believe in regard to 1 Cor. 15: 20, 23 ("Christ is become the firstfruits of them that slept," "afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.") that we must assume that he was not glorified, but is in the same condition in which he walked on earth, beholding God in blessed rest. The same would apply also to Elijah. But this explanation gives rise to the absurd thought, that a human body still subject to original sin, can be in the immediate proximity of the glory of God. A body which is still mortal in eternal life! Keyl says rightly: "Not in the glorification is Christ the firstfruits, but in the resurrection." And I would add to this that Paul expressly says: "Christ is become the firstfruits of them that slept," that is, of them whose bodies rested in the grave. Therefore we assume, without offending against one word of God, that Enoch and later on Elijah, by a special favor of God, came instantaneously into the full consummation of heaven accor-

ding to soul and body.

And that happened, as the holy writer testifies, "by faith." Blessed comfort! We have all the promises of grace as they are fulfilled in Christ and through Him given to the whole world. Therefore the Holy Ghost exhorts: Believe, for then sin, death and hell lie under your foot. God is faithful that promised, and will also perform it. (Hebr. 10:23; Rom. 4:21.)

Arthur Schulz



ST. PAUL'S "CUSTOMS"
IN I CORINTHIANS 11.

In these days of increased emphasis on "woman's liberation" it seems to require a certain amount of temerity to approach the subject taken up by St. Paul in the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, specifically in the first sixteen verses. In brief summary, these verses have to do with St. Paul's instruction to the Corinthian Christians that the man, having Christ as his head, should indicate this by uncovering his head when he prays or prophesies; and that the woman, on the other hand, having man as her head, should indicate this by covering her head when she engages in similar activity.

Paul calls this arrangement a PARADOSIS, a tradition or custom passed down from one to another. The KJV inserts a thought that is a bit stronger when it translates "ordinance." By using this term, St. Paul indicates that he is not here giving a divinely inspired precept or command of God. A tradition or custom is, by definition, simply a habitual or usual course of action, generally accepted practice, or a socially accepted convention. Many customs that people follow have been in use for such a long time that it is impossible to determine their origin. However, that is not the case in the present context. St. Paul not only indicates what customs should be followed, according to his instructions, in Corinth, but also declares the reasons for them.

The pertinent question is: are these customs binding on us today, and on the church for all time to come?

It is our contention and belief that what St. Paul is here urging is not binding, as custom, but is binding, as attitude. Customs followed at various times and places in history may follow different practices, but they may, at the same time, have developed from the same basic attitude. Among the Corinthians a man did not cover his head before his superiors if he was a free man. It was in no way, therefore, an indication of a lack of humility before Christ, his Head, if he were to stand in the public assembly praying or prophesying with his head uncovered. In fact, it was proper for him to do so. The covered head represented slavery, as well as unwilling servitude. If Paul had written these instructions to Hebrews, or perhaps to Germans, he no doubt would have given the opposite instructions regarding the man. For Jews, Germans, Romans and perhaps others were accustomed to cover the head when praying or when assuming an attitude of showing honor to a superior, an attitude expressing reverence, unworthiness before God. If a man of those nationalities would appear in the public worship uncovered, he would be thereby demonstrating his unwillingness to recognize the headship of Christ as his Lord.

What is vital in St. Paul's words, then, is not the custom itself, but the attitude that is demonstrated by the custom; in other words, the significance of a custom is important, rather than the custom.

If the Corinthian woman appeared in the public worship with her head uncovered or unveiled, she was thereby indicating that she was not accepting the headship of her husband. St. Paul points out that this is contrary to God's clear indication that the woman is to be subject to man, for she was second in the order of creation, and was made from man to be a help-meet for him. Although, as in Gal. 3:28, Paul wants all to know that in the order of redemption the woman is the equal of man (as, after all, she, too, had been made in the image of God), yet in this life on earth she is subject to man, and subservient to him in the Lord. If she

defies her husband, or indicates by a refusal to cover her head in public that she does not have this proper subordinate relationship to him, she is dishonoring not only him but herself, and might as well have her head shaved.

St. Paul's strongest argument for his custom is the divine principle: man's head is Christ; woman's head is Christ and man; both should follow a custom which clearly demonstrates their acceptance of this principle. However, he also points to nature as showing the way. In verse 14 he asks: "Doth not nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." In reading these words, one is struck with the question: is there a difference in the hair of men and woman? does the hair of a female, for example, grow differently from that of a man as to thickness or as to length? how long will a man's hair grow if it is never cut? or that of a woman? If nature is to teach us, then we should look at nature!

One commentator states very bluntly, "... woman's hair grows quite long by nature, much longer than a man's even if he never cuts it..." * Modern medical textbooks, however, indicate that there is inherently no difference between the thickness and length of the scalp hair of men and that of women. The hair of both sexes will grow normally to a length of two to three feet and has approximately the same average number of hairs per square inch. Experiments with male and female hormones, on the other hand, have shown striking differences. For example, giving female hormones to a normal male will cause his body, face and leg hair to thin out and have caused his scalp hair to become more luxuriant. Giving male hormones to normal females has caused typically masculine effects: growth of hair on the face and body.

Therefore, this verse seems best understood by simply recognizing that it has been the natural thing in nearly all civilizations throughout history that men have

*R. C. H. Lenski, Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Letter to the Corinthians, p. 449.

usually cut or barbered their hair (with some exceptions, such as Spartan warriors, Nazarites, certain tribes of American Indians, or Japanese Samurai), whereas woman have, for the most part, allowed their hair to grow longer, recognizing it to be an adornment, a fitting natural PERIBOLAION, a covering. A confusion of these distinctive natural features has often come about as a result of less than wholesome influences, particularly on the young. One can not, however, on the basis of this passage, judge it morally wrong, in itself, for a man to have long hair or a woman to have short hair. It is not our custom, as St. Paul points out (and here he uses the term SYNEETHEIA, habit or usage, rather than PARADOSIS, indicating that he is not intending the same meaning), to be contentious over such adiaphora. As he wrote to Timothy, Paul also recognized the temptations that women have with their glorying in their hair!

What we need to explore, it seems to this writer, is not whether or not we have succeeded in maintaining the same traditions that Paul advised for the Corinthians; rather, we need to examine the meaning of the customs we have. In the days of our youth, the custom in many of our Lutheran congregations was not only that women covered their heads in church, but that they also sat apart from the men, on the opposite side of the church's center aisle. (This latter custom goes a great deal farther back in history, to Old Testament times, than the customs among the Corinthians). Truthfully it must be said that very frequently the custom of wearing a hat to church has provided the women with an opportunity not so much of modestly covering her head in deference to her husband as of wearing an adornment. Such a custom might be more likely to set forth a woman as being vain than to reveal her modesty and subservience to her husband.

Does the fact that perhaps the majority of women attending our public worship services today do not wear hats or other head coverings indicate that they do not accept the headship of Christ and their men? Someone from an earlier generation declared that it was his belief that women began

to cut their hair and go without head coverings in this country about the same time as they were emancipated and got the vote. (He believed that to be wrong, too!) His judgment is not necessarily true nor valid, however. The present writer, for one, does not accept it. It may be that our customs have changed for an altogether different reason, and the reason for the change may be quite unimportant.

It is easier to maintain a custom than to maintain a proper attitude. The first can be done by constraint, whereas the latter can be done only by the Holy Spirit's convincing the heart through the Word of God. We are not often given easy ways in which to work out our salvation (in the proper sense of that wonderful expression). We must resist any attempt to deprive ourselves and our members of the marvelous attitudes of reverence which St. Paul was encouraging the Corinthians to practice. However, we must beware of making laws out of customs that have not retained the same meaning as in former times.

John Lau

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PREACHING THE WORD

CHAPEL ADDRESS*

Text: Psalm 118:8

"It is better to trust in the Lord
than to put confidence in man."

A few short months ago the people of the state of Illinois were shocked at the discovery of certain mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of one of our state's long-time and apparently highly respected public officials. Shortly after his death, the alleged embezzlement of thousands and thousands of dollars was uncovered. And while a final verdict is not yet in, it was most interesting to note public reaction. There were those who felt that they knew the man quite well, who trusted him implicitly, and who simply refused to believe such a thing could ever happen. There were others, somewhat more realistic, who realized that even men who have gained such a degree of trust from their fellow men, even those who have been placed into positions of power and authority, still remain human beings - composed of flesh and blood, susceptible to weakness, vulnerable to temptation - in short, no different from you or me. It only points up what the hymnwriter observed centuries ago: "Trust not in princes; they are but mortal."

From time to time we expect to hear of such unprincipled and unscrupulous behavior among the children of this world, those who know not the Lord Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, those who do not even claim to be guided by Christian principles of decency and honesty. But we do not expect to find such conduct prevalent among children of God, among those who claim to be disciples and followers of the Lord Jesus.

And yet, isn't this one of the most startling and revealing lessons of the entire Passion Story - the disappointing behavior of men? Never have so many let some-

* Delivered at Immanuel Lutheran College, April 13, 1971.

one down so often with so much at stake. It was not only the Jewish religious leaders, the notorious scribes and Pharisees, the supposed experts of Scripture and trustees of the Jewish religious heritage who denounced their Messiah, viciously undermining Him and everything He had come to do, and who in the end were the ones most responsible for His death. It was not only the fickle populace, who were so quick to hail Him as their king on Palm Sunday, and five days later turn on Him and become part of that ugly and unruly mob that screamed, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Certainly these were sources of sorrow and disappointment to the Lord Jesus, but it must have been small indeed when compared to the actions of His own disciples. Here were men who had sat at His sacred feet for well nigh unto three years, who had listened and learned of the mysteries of His Kingdom, who had witnessed His power and majesty, His holiness and innocence time and time again. Here, one would think, would be men with faiths so strong, convictions so sure, that nothing could touch them; men who would be the last in the world ever to disappoint Jesus. And yet, each and every one of them, without exception, let his Lord down when He needed him the most. One by one, Satan succeeded in subduing them until there was no one left save Him Who must trod the winepress alone. Three could not watch with Him one little hour; one denied Him; one betrayed Him; all fled in fear for their lives when He was taken captive. We continue to be amazed at the behavior of the disciples after Jesus' death, as a cloud of gloom and despair seemed to hang over their heads. And even after news of His glorious resurrection reached their ears, they refused to believe it until they had seen Him with their own eyes. Can there be any sadder commentary on the disappointing behavior of men?

Small wonder that the Psalmist repeats a truth which needs to be engraved into each of our hearts: "IT IS BETTER TO TRUST IN THE LORD THAN TO PUT CONFIDENCE IN MEN."

Sometimes people tend to look at their religious

leaders through rose-colored glasses, refusing to believe that they, too, are human and capable of making mistakes. Please, don't misunderstand this! I am not saying that a person should not have confidence in his spiritual leaders, in his pastor, in the officers of his congregation, in his fellow Christians - he should! As students, you should respect and revere those whom God has placed over you; you should appreciate the dedicated efforts of those professors into whose care your spiritual welfare has been entrusted. But at no time and under no circumstances should you become so attracted to a man, to a personality, that it begins to color your spiritual judgment. At no time should a child of God follow his spiritual leaders so blindly that a man's word is placed above God's. How much danger and insecurity there is in those churches whose public proclamation depends on the whims and feelings of one man, rather than on a Scriptural confession! How many souls have been led astray because they listened to the voice of a man rather than the voice of the Lord!

When the Apostle Paul came to Berea on his missionary journey and preached to the Christians there, his preaching met with a rare and wonderful response. Not only did the people receive the Word with all readiness of heart and mind, but they also went home after the service and "searched the Scriptures-whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11). In other words, they checked up on Paul. They were not willing to take the word of any man, even if it be the word of such a faithful and trusted missionary, without comparing it with Scripture. From the fine tribute paid them, we can well imagine Paul's response - he did not feel hurt; he did not consider this an insult; he did not look upon this as disrespectful either to him or to his office. In fact, he commended them for their loyalty to Christ and His Word.

Within the last twenty years, the truth of the Psalmist's words has been vividly impressed upon our hearts. During this period many of us became personally and painfully aware of the doctrinal deterioration of fellowships to which we had belonged for our entire lives, fellow-

snips which we cherished dearly, fellowships which had a heritage of true confessional Lutheranism, but which had forsaken this precious heritage by allowing the leaven of error and false doctrine to creep in, first gaining tolerance and then acceptance. But by the grace of God we were made aware wherein our true loyalty lay - not to any man, not to any organization, but simply to Christ and His eternal Word. And we were also granted the courage of conviction to do what our Father had commanded us to do - separate from those who teach and confess otherwise than God's infallible Word, regardless of the personal consequences. And I pray that through all this we have learned that our real strength and security does not lie in men or organizations or numbers, but in a simple and trusting faith which does no more or no less than take the Lord at His Word, that Word which alone will endure both time and eternity, that Word which is the only thing that matters in life and in death.

In His own marvelous way, the Lord took us by the hand, guiding and directing our footsteps, bringing us together with those who share our Scriptural convictions to form our beloved Church of the Lutheran Confession, a church body whose unity of confession and purpose is a rarity in this day and age, a church body in which there is complete doctrinal agreement among all its members so that the same pure and wonderful message of Christ and Him Crucified fills every pulpit, every Sunday School room, every Bible Class, every school and seminary in our midst. For these blessings we offer our heartfelt thanks to the Lord of the Church.

Nevertheless, our loyalty remains first and foremost with our Savior and His Word. At our confirmations each one of us pledged faithfulness - faithfulness not to a man, not to an organization, not to a church body, but faithfulness to the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, faithfulness to the Scriptural foundation we had been taught. We promised "in faith, word, and deed to remain true to the Triune God, even unto death." And if we remain true to Him, we can rest assured that He will remain true

to us. For "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." He is One Whom we can trust in life and in death, One Who is eternally faithful, Whose words and promises are sure and will never be broken, Who will never disappoint us or let us down. "For all the promises of God in Christ are Yea and Amen, unto the glory of God by us." (2 Cor. 1:20). "Therefore let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for He that is faithful hath promised." (Heb. 10:23).

"Trust not in princes, they are but mortal;
 Earthborn they are and soon decay.
 Naught are their counsels at life's last portal,
 When the dark grave doth claim its prey.
 Since then no man can help afford,
 Trust ye in Christ, our God and Lord. Hallelujah!
 Hallelujah! (L.H. #26, stz. 2)

David Schierenbeck



FUNERAL ADDRESS*

Text: Revelation 7:9-17.

"Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." These are the words of all the angels in heaven gathered around the throne worshipping the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb Who is the light of the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem. These are the angelic voices which sound forth in answer to the exultant praise of a great multitude gathered from all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues who cry with a loud voice: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." These are they who with the harps of God in their hands are singing: "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy ways, thou King

*Preached at the funeral of Pastor Geo. Tiefel, Sr.,
 March 22, 1971.

of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." Last Thursday another voice was added to the heavenly choir which is singing its anthems in the eternal mansions of the holy city. It was a voice that had been singing these praises before, during eight decades of an earthly pilgrimage and sojourning here below. It had been singing these praises in the family circle, in the congregations he served, at conventions, at conferences and wherever he went. And as he sang so he preached, like an angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, saying: "Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

Now that voice of our dear brother, Geo. Tiefel, Sr., will not be heard any more in our gatherings here upon earth, but it will be remembered. We will still see him with the eyes of memory as a man who stood with the Bible in his hand, committed to its every Word, rejoicing in the power and grace which it gives, and refusing to give up a single dotting of the i or a single crossing of the t. While we shall miss this voice which sounded forth in a ministry which stretched from the first quarter to the third quarter of the 20th century, we rejoice in the belief that his voice is now joined to the voices of the white-robed choir which sings in the chambers of the eternal home where Jesus is the temple and where the Lord's Christ is the light. This we believe because we had the proof of his Christian confession which assures us even now that he was among those whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life.

These thoughts at the passing of Geo. Tiefel, Sr., have been brought to mind by the Word from the precious book of Revelation which we now read: Revelation 7:9-17.

As we view this heavenly throng we ask:

**WHO ARE THEY THAT STAND BEFORE THE THRONE
OF GOD?**

- I. They are the host arrayed in white with palms in their hands.
- II. They are the host whose anthems swell where God doth dwell.

I.

How can this be that creatures of God's hand who fell from Him in Adam's fall are now arrayed in white? Adam, indeed, was once arrayed in white as he came from God's creating hand and walked in the light of God's countenance, pure and clean. But, drawn by the tempter's voice, he chose to leave that light and join himself to a kingdom in which no light shines and where all is darkness and all is gloom. He chose to exchange the tree of life for the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that he might feel and experience things which he had not experienced or felt before. Thus he cast off the white robe of righteousness and purity and put on a filthy garment fashioned and designed by the evil one who himself had fallen away from God. And so it has come to pass:

All mankind fell in Adam's fall,
One common sin infects us all.
From sire to son the bane descends
And over all the curse impends.

How can it be, then, that one can speak of a white-robed host which now stands before the throne of God and sings? The answer is given in the cry of the multitude seen by John the Divine in his vision: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." There has been a washing and a cleansing and a bleaching. "They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb," says the elder when he is asked: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" Thus says our God: "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." All scarlet and crimson stains are gone. Our iniquity is pardoned, for we have received of the Lord's hand double for all our sins. Behold the lamb of God, which

taketh away the sin of the world. And thus we sing in the Lenten season:

There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

Those who through faith have put on Christ, are indeed arrayed in white. And these have palms in their hands in token of the victory which has been won by the Son of God. "Hosanna; blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." Swords have been beaten into plow shares. And as Isaiah has pictured it: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." Truly that is a beautiful picture of the peace that has come to sinful man through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. We have every reason to wave palm branches before the King of our salvation, Who has won for us such a glorious victory. This was the victory which Pastor Tiefel loved to proclaim in Jesus' name, through a long ministry, whether in larger or smaller circles. And now he is among those who cry with a clear voice in the heavenly temple: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." His ministry is finished, his course is run, but his praises continue as he stands at the throne.

II.

Yes, those who are gathered before the throne of God are those whose anthems swell where God doth dwell. Singing is well adapted to our life of faith; for the heart that has experienced the joy of salvation breaks forth in praise of Him Who paid the price, Who died and rose that we might live. Through the ages the Church has expressed itself in song. As the birds in the springtime warble and trill their joy, for the winter is past; so the child of God

expresses his joy over the gift of God by breaking forth into song. In Psalm 33 we read: "Praise the Lord with the harp; sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. For the Word of the Lord is right; and all his words are done in truth." When the Lord delivered the Israelites from Pharaoh and his hosts, Moses and the children of Israel sang a song unto the Lord: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation; he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." When God gave Israel water in the wilderness, Israel sang a song to express the joy of the people. We think of Mary's response to the coming birth of the Christ-child as a song: "My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." At the birth of Jesus we hear the heavenly choir singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Indeed, the child of God has much to sing about.

Those of you who had the privilege of visiting in the Tiefel home, or of having Pastor Tiefel as a guest in your home, will remember hearing him sing in the morning upon arising. Thus he welcomed the dawn with joy over each day the Lord gave him and those who were with him. It was a joy that welled up over the goodness and grace of God in Christ Jesus. And now we think of him as singing still with all the saints in the holy city: "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb." And all the angels answer: "Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen."

Behold a host, arrayed in white,
 Like thousand snow-clad mountains bright,
 With palms they stand, Who is this band
 Before the throne of light?
 Lo, these are they of glorious fame
 Who from the great affliction came
 And in the flood of Jesus' blood

Are cleansed from guilt and blame.
 Now gathered in the holy place,
 Their voices they in worship raise,
 Their anthems swell where God doth dwell,
 Mid angels' songs of praise. Amen.

C. M. Gullerud

A N N O U N C E M E N T

SUMMER SEMINAR AT ILC
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Dates: July 5 through 9, 1971.

Courses of study:

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 periods -- (Prof. R. Roehl).

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The Negro in American History -- 3
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Poetry of Robert Frost -- 2 periods --
 (Prof. J. Lau).

Pastors and Teachers:

"Leading Ideas" in Isaiah -- 5 periods --
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Book Reviews -- 5 periods -- (Prof. C. M.
 Gullerud and Pastor L. Schierenbeck).

Interested pastors, teachers and others are asked to cor-
 respond with the Seminar Committee, Immanuel Lutheran
 College, West Grover Road, Eau Claire, Wis. 54701.

==== PANORAMA =====

AN EDITORIAL POSTURE EXAMINED

In a recent editorial,* entitled "The Lutheran Quarterly and the 1970's: A Statement of Editorial Posture," Daniel F. Martensen has given present-day students of theology a great deal to think about. Recognizing that an era of "peaceful passivity" is over in the arena of theology, and aware that the future of theology will be turbulent, the article under consideration challenges its supporting church bodies, the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church, to be "severely self-critical and courageously constructive if they are to be faithful to the Reformation tradition." Well and good. It sounds, at first reading, like a trumpet call to a re-establishment of Lutheran theology on the foundation of the prophets and apostles.

Unfortunately, as the editorial gets down to defining its posture, it becomes increasingly evident that the theology to be offered in the Lutheran Quarterly's near future is not going to be presented from the standpoint of a single norm. Rather, the journal will attempt to serve as a forum, not altogether without direction, to be sure, for it will attempt also to provide a certain amount of tempering "by an internal system of mutual surveillance." What is anticipated is put this way: "This process involves engagement in polite warfare, or dialogue, in the hope that what we might mutually envision would emerge from our incomplete and fractured individual perspectives."

One is interested in determining just what the manner of "mutual surveillance" proposed might be, especially in view of the lament of the writer that "there is no obvious guide to tell us at the moment of deciding on the next step in publication what is truly prophetic and what is reckless;

* Lutheran Quarterly, Feb. 1971, pp. 3ff.

likewise, there is none for distinguishing between doubt which will curb recklessness and hence qualify as true caution, and doubt which cripples the prophetic and stands condemned as unimaginative dogmatism. It is evident that the theological consensus which might have produced such a guideline has suffered a breakdown." In the absence of such an "obvious guide," the editorial proposes that the task of the Lutheran Quarterly must be to assuage the ambiguity and lack of a genuine relevance to historical crises of much of current theology by obliging theological writers to prove their scholarship by demonstrating why their writing is important and meaningful. "When a commonality of theological assumptions has eroded within Lutheranism, the methodological assumptions of theologians must surface and be examined by others. This action would seem to be a prerequisite for the staging of a dialogical forum and for serious scholarship."

Again we might say: Well and good! And for the record, and just in case anyone from the Lutheran Quarterly might be listening, let us take this opportunity to restate our assumptions in this matter of theology.

What is the task of theology? Or, to become even more basic, what is theology? May we call it an -ology, in the sense of a systematized branch of study? Does it have the task of serving as a forum, providing an opportunity to offer in the public arena all opposing and varying forms of religious persuasion and thought?

Theology is, first and foremost, "knowledge of God." It is a systematized study, in the sense that it presents an orderly arrangement of parts or elements into an organized body of truth, and to this extent we may say that it has a harmonious purpose, for it collects Biblical truths and arranges them so that the teachings of God are presented in a unified fashion. However, the sole source of the parts or elements which it collects is Holy Scripture, since Scripture is the only source and norm of Christian faith and life. Hence, the only true author of Christian theology is God Himself, who speaks through His divinely inspired writers, so that the collected writings of the Old and New

Testament present the sacred doctrine of God.

The central teaching of God's doctrine is justification by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, His Son, and all other doctrines are closely related. As the theologian studies these doctrines, then, he finds that they have been laid out in such a way that they never disagree with the central teaching. Those matters which the so-called "new hermeneutic" would remove from the purview of theology by a humanizing and demythologizing process, because they cannot be comprehended by the rational mind of man, cannot and dare not be removed from theology because they are to be received according to the analogy of faith by men who see through glasses darkly into things which can be seen only with the eyes of faith and not reason. Therefore, true theology teaches only what Holy Scripture teaches, no more and no less. Theology as a system declares and states Scriptural doctrine.

Thus theology cannot and dare not claim as its due the privilege of adding or detracting from Scriptural doctrine. If this were to be done (as is done by many theologians of today, who seek new approaches and new symbols and systems), it is obvious that nothing could be added or detracted except what human opinions (profound though they may be) have to offer. When the true theologian considers the problems of the day, with their attendant philosophies, he is satisfied with what the Scriptures have to say on the matter (not resting until he has thoroughly learned all that Scripture has to offer), and goes no farther, for if Scripture offers no answer in particular, he still has its central teaching.

The task of the theologian is not so much to philosophize about the Word of God, but rather to proclaim it, since theology is actually a science prepared by God and presented to men in a form that is perfect and altogether adequate.

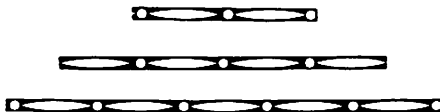
Perhaps what we have said is not what the editor of the Lutheran Quarterly had in mind when he asked for our "methodological assumptions." Put that way, however, it does make clear how we view the task of a journal of the-

ology, in strong contrast to the editorial posture of the Lutheran Quarterly. There is a true theology and a false theology. The false has forum enough and to spare in this world; its opinions and ideas throng about us on every hand. If a journal of theology had as its real purpose to be scholarly as well as to be "faithful to the Reformation tradition," then its pages would be used to present only the revealed truth of sacred Scriptures, applying that truth to point out errors that arise. When it comes to theology, scholarship is genuine only in direct proportion to its being scriptural.

In setting forth the principles of editorship of a theological publication, in the first issue of our Journal of Theology (February, 1961, just ten years ago), its first editor, Professor E. Reim, invoked the rule, "Quod non est biblicum non est theologicum - whatever is not Biblical is not theological, . . . not so much for sake of keeping out a type of material which is appearing with increasing frequency in so many modern religious publications -- articles on psychology, sociology, economics -- as for the need of checking on ourselves, lest we let our publication become an instrument for giving expression to our personal feelings (either of individuals or the group), our own pet ideas, our particular wishes and desires. The 'biblicum' must always remain our clear point of orientation, lest this present project cease to be truly 'theologicum.'"

The Lutheran Quarterly has stated its editorial posture; now we have restated ours.

John Lau



THE MINISTRY --
GLORIOUS OR
INGLORIOUS?

There is no greater, no more exalted office in the world than that of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no greater responsibility in the world than that of feeding the Church of God which Christ has purchased with His own blood. There is no greater service that one can render in this world than that of binding up the broken-hearted, of proclaiming liberty to the captives, and of comforting all that mourn.

But this office has fallen into disrepute because many of today's clergy have brought dishonor upon it. Leaving the office of preaching the Word, they have not only entered fields where they do not belong but have aligned themselves with causes which will not stand up under the light of Holy Scripture. Some of the more recent examples of this are their advocacy of abortion on demand, their acceptance of women into the pastoral ministry, and their continuing support of situation ethics which has resulted in the so-called "new morality." The clergy have not improved the matter by the part they played, for instance, in the recent denial of the "Family of man" award to Bob Hope because he had been active in entertaining the Viet Nam troops and had given his support to the administration's position on the war-issue. By all of this and much more the clergy have made the headlines, but to the dishonor of the office.

There are a good many people, including so-called theologians, who don't know what this is all about -- this ministry of the Word. In this day when scholarship is linked with scientific investigation and deep philosophical thought, it is so easy to think of the study of the Bible along the same lines. And here the trouble starts. Who wants to be called unscholarly? Who wants it to be said that he is unscientific? Who wants to be represented as one who simply repeats what he reads without first subjecting it to all kinds of tests and investigations? It seems too easy and too pat simply to say, "Thus saith the Lord," and then to quote Scripture. This is all right for the uninitiated, but it is not fitting for one who wants to be called a theologian!

If our thinking runs along these lines, then may God help us! For then we are becoming wise beyond the Scriptures and we are forgetting that we are simply to speak as the oracles of God. We are becoming puffed up and wise in our own conceits. We are then far from knowing what an able minister is and who it is that makes of earthen vessels able ministers sufficient unto their exalted calling.

It is God Who makes able ministers. It is as simple as that. Consequently our trust will be through Christ toward God. It is all an act of mercy and grace through mediation of our substitute, Jesus Christ the Righteous. "We are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ." "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Thus while we are found in weakness, in fear and in much trembling, our speech and our preaching is not with enticing words of man's wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. We speak those things which God has revealed by His Spirit; the spirit which searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Now, where is there room to speak of man's glory? It is evident beyond question that the able minister is a creation of God. And this is our comfort and our joy when temptations and doubts regarding our sufficiency for the office of the ministry come. It is all a gift of mercy and of grace. This keeps a man humble as he should be and directs him continually to the inspired Word which is the power of God.

This glorious ministry is a ministry of the New Testament. It is a ministry not of the letter of the law that killeth, but of the spirit that is of the Gospel which giveth life. This does not mean that the preaching of the law is to be omitted, for the preaching of the law is necessary for the knowledge of sin. It is carried out, however, in the service of the Gospel; for every evangelical preacher presents the law in order that the Gospel may follow with its healing balm of forgiveness, life and salvation. That

which will stand out and shine will be the truth that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The greatest joy will be found in proclaiming this glorious message: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." These will be the marching orders: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received double for all her sins."

What wondrous assurance this gives to the members of the flock! Though they know that the pastor is human, subject to the same temptations as they are, yet they will know that the Word he brings is the Word of the Spirit which gives life, the Word which if a man believe he shall not perish but have everlasting life. They will know that the bearer of this Word is one to whom they may unburden their hearts in the deepest distress, knowing that they shall receive the oil of joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. They will know that they may come with the confidence that they will be directed to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, Who gave His life for the sheep, each one of whom He knows by name, as He makes them to lie down in green pastures and leads them beside the still waters. Knowing that it is God Who has made the able minister of the New Testament, they will know that they may call upon him when darkness descends and be assured that they will be led to Him Whose rod and staff will comfort them even when they will be called upon to walk through the valley of the shadow of death. And when admonition is given, they will know that it is being administered by a minister of the New Testament who wants nothing more than that the light of the knowledge of the glory of God should shine through. When warnings against false prophets and against unscriptural practices are issued, they will know that the end and goal of it is that the faith once delivered unto the saints may be preserved for them and for their children. Gladly they will give heed to the Word: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your-

selves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."

The purpose of all this, which may seem to have been very elementary and not very profound, is to emphasize the fact that the ministry this age needs is not the kind that is being offered by the inter-state demonstrators and banner-carrying preachers, but the ministry which tends to the glorious calling of feeding the flock which Christ has purchased with His own blood. May God preserve to us this kind of ministry, and the fruits will surely follow!

C.M. Gullerud



A N N O U N C E M E N T

Until the present time the editor-in-chief of our Journal of Theology has held the responsibility of handling all business matters, in addition to the usual tasks of editing and writing. For various reasons it has now been felt advisable that matters of maintaining the subscription list, the paying of bills, the work of getting the issues through the printer and into the mails, etc., should be assigned to another staff member. The coordinating Council of the CLC, meeting April 20-21, 1971, approved the arrangement whereby one of the members of the editorial staff will serve in the capacity of Managing Editor.

We therefore request that whereas correspondence concerning material published in the Journal should be directed as usual to Prof. E. Schaller, editor-in-chief, all correspondence regarding subscriptions, renewals, changes of address and other business matters should be addressed to:

Prof. John Lau
507 W. Grover Road
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

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