## **Epistle of First Peter V**

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Let's continue on in the series in the First Epistle of Peter, and these seven general epistles are perhaps the most neglected books in the New Testament. The reason we're going through and studying them in depth is to show how vitally important that these are for understanding the Gospel. And let me remind you once again that the original, inspired order of the New Testament runs this way:

- Matthew
- Mark
- Luke
- John
- Acts
- James
- 1 & 2 Peter
- 1, 2 & 3 John
- Jude

Then comes Romans and goes all the way on out to Hebrews and then after that comes the book of Revelation. Now if people had the proper order of the Bible, James, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude would be right there after the book of Acts. These are very basic epistles, which then would help people understand the Epistles of Paul.

But the Roman Church, in order to make Rome have the preeminence, put these seven general epistles *after* the book of Hebrews instead of before the book of Romans. So that's why even in the *King James* you have: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans. But that's the improper order. So, when people start reading the book of Romans, which is quite complicated, and they haven't read and studied James; 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Peter; 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> John and Jude, then they assume the things that Paul is talking about is doing away with the commandments of God. But as we will see, it does not.

In going through these, one of the main things that I want to do is to show the basis of the Gospel, especially here in 1-Peter, as we're getting into it. And we know it's a book of *hope*. James is the book of *faith*. 1-John is the book of *love*. So we have *faith*, *hope and love*—the same sequence that we have as Paul wrote of those things in 1-Cor. 13.

Now let's come down here, let's finish off chapter one—we got through v 21 last time. [transcriber's note: the tape (#4) was cut off for verses 17-20] So, let's pick it up in v 22 and we'll read all the rest of it and then we'll go back and show how all of this ties in with the rest of the Scriptures and the New Testament.

1-Peter 1:22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth unto unfeigned brotherly love

through *the* Spirit, be loving one another fervently with a pure heart. *For* you have been begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by *the* living Word of God, *which* remains forever. For all flesh is like grass, and the glory of man is like the flower of the field; the grass has withered, and its flower fell away. But the Word of God remains forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel" (vs 22-25).

Let's take these verses and let's get into them just little bit more. Let's see also some of the other preachings of Peter, how this ties in and really brings the Gospels all together for us to understand them. Let's go back to v 2 about "obedience." We'll focus in on *obedience*. 1-Peter 1:2: "*Who have been chosen* according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father, by sanctification through the Spirit, <u>unto the obedience</u>..."—not lawlessness.

When I was talking to this girl who called on the telemarketing for Pat Robertson and she was wanting money for Pat Robertson and all this sort of thing, when I sprung on her saying, 'Well, you know, I wouldn't mind contributing to Pat Robertson if he would preach the ^Truth of the Sabbath.' *Oh, you mean the seventh day*? I said, 'Yes, why does he preach Sunday? Doesn't he know that Christmas and Easter are also pagan. Why does he preach that?' So she said, *Oh, that's not important for Christians*. 'Well, if obedience is not important, why do we find it here in the book of 1-Peter?'

Now let's look at some of the other preachings of Peter; let's go to Acts 5, and we will see that Peter is consistent all the way through. And this becomes the heart and core and the central thing concerning the Gospel, and also concerning the Holy Spirit. We'll see how all of these things just tie together so absolutely wonderfully.

Acts 5:28—this was after they were arrested and brought before the priests and the Sadducees and Pharisees: "Saying, 'Did we not order... [severely command] ...you by a *direct* command not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, with *the* purpose of bringing this man's blood upon us.' But Peter and the apostles answered *and* said, 'We are obligated to obey God <u>rather than men</u>. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus Whom you killed *by* hanging *Him* on a tree. Him has God exalted by His right hand *to be* a Prince and Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins to Israel. And we are His witnesses of these things, as *is* also the Holy Spirit, which God has given to those who obey Him.'" (vs 28-32). Here we have:

• obey God rather than men

- the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey
- Peter writing in v 2, sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience
- the same thing back here in 1-Peter 1:22— "...your souls have been purified by obedience to the Truth..."

Of course, we know the Truth is the Word of God.

What are we to do with every thought? speaking of obedience. We covered this just recently. How are we to overcome mentally? *By bringing every thought into obedience unto Christ!* That's the tough challenge—isn't it? We have obedience; we have obedience to the Truth.

Let's look at some other things concerning obedience and obedience to the Truth. Let's go to Romans, the first chapter, and here's a very interesting verse for those who like to say, 'Well, you don't have to obey.' Just like this woman said of the Sabbath: 'Oh, that's not important for Christians today.' And I said, 'Well, if you consider murder of unborn babies important; if you consider homosexuality is an invasion of breaking the commandments of God is important; why don't you consider the Sabbath important? That's part of the Ten Commandments.'

Romans 1:5: "Through Whom we have received... [Now, he's talking about his preaching and so forth] ...grace and apostleship... [to do anything we want to because the laws are no longer important. *No!*] ...<u>for obedience to the faith</u>..."

Compare that with obedience (1-Peter 1:22) to the Truth; and obedience to the faith and, what is the faith? Yes, faith in Christ—that's correct. But in this sense, what is the faith? It's a broader term. Not only having faith in God, that's part of it—you have to be obedient to that. But obedient to the faith then it's really saying all of the Truth of the Gospel that's what it's saying. What did Jesus say? 'When the Son of man comes, will He find faith?' The faith 'in the earth.' And I tell you, as quickly as some of these Churches of God are getting rid of doctrine, it's scary. It is scary how quickly they're getting rid of things and calling it 'new truth,' but it isn't!

What if Jesus were not obedient? In other words, what if Jesus sinned? We wouldn't have any salvation, there wouldn't be any faith—correct? How important was His obedience? Well, it shows us right here:

Romans 5:19: "For even as by the disobedience of the one man [Adam] many were made sinners, in the same way also, by the obedience of the one *Man* [Jesus Christ] shall many be made righteous." That's how important the *obedience* is.

How far did Jesus have to go? What did Jesus have to be obedient unto? *He had to be obedient to His Father!* And what else? *To the laws!* How far did this obedience have to go? *To death!*. *He had to be obedient to death!* What death? It says, Philippians 2:8: "...[He] became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross." That's pretty obedient. None of us have been obedient to that point, yet. Oh, we've had our own troubles and difficulties, but not like that.

How does our obedience have to be? Romans 6:16: "Don't you realize... [in other words, don't you know; isn't this a basic thing that you know?] ...that to whom you yield yourselves *as* servants to obey, you are servants of the one you obey, whether *it is* of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

And, of course, there's the contrast: Sin is what? *Transgression of the law*! The wages of sin is what? Verse 23: "For the wages of sin *is* death..." We find the same Gospel being preached by Peter, being preached by Paul, all the way through.

1-Peter 1:22: "Having purified your souls by obedience to the Truth... [which is the Word of God] ... unto unfeigned brotherly love..." That is the new commandment that Jesus gave: 'A new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you.' That is a very high pinnacle to reach for, brethren. And it's very difficult. I tell you what. One of these days you pray that God will give you more love. And I guarantee you're going to end up with more trouble. And I'll tell you why: because the only way you understand love is to see how bad it is without it. The first thing you have to come to know is how bad things are without it. And I'll tell you what, having this kind of love and love to God is really a struggle (as we will see) because there are a lot of things that interfere with it.

But how is that accomplished? "...through *the* Spirit... [That's the only way it's going to be accomplished.] ...be loving one another fervently [unremittingly] with a pure heart.... [Not a political heart. Not a one-sided heart. Not to serve yourself.] ...*For* you have been begotten again... [Which is the earnest of the Holy Spirit, as we have seen.] ...not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible *seed*, by *the* living Word of God, *which* remains forever" (vs 22-23).

Now we're going to cover a couple of things here concerning this, and see some things. Let's go to Luke, the eighth chapter. Here's a parable; it tells us what the Word of God is; it tells us what happens in people's lives; and it tells us just how things are in the world, too.

Luke 8:4: "And as a great multitude was

assembling, and those who were coming to Him from every city, He spoke a parable: 'The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some *seed* fell by the road; and it was trampled upon, and the birds of heaven devoured it. And other *seed* fell upon the rock; and after it had sprung up it withered because it did not have *any* moisture.... [or as it said in Matt. 13: 'It had no root.'] ...And other *seed* fell among the thorns; and after springing up together, the thorns choked it. And other *seed* fell upon the good ground, and after springing up produced fruit a hundredfold.'....'' (vs 4-8). That means *as much as a hundredfold*. The account there in Matt. 13 says: 'Some some 40-fold, some 60-fold, some 100-fold.'

"...And when He had said these things, He cried aloud... [spoke loudly] ...saying, 'The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.' Then His disciples asked Him, saying, 'What might this parable be?' And He said, 'To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to the rest *it is given* in parables, so that *in* seeing they may not see, and *in* hearing they may not understand" (vs 8-10). And boy, that is sure true.

That poor little gal that called me on that Pat Robertson telemarketing was so flustered. I just said a couple of innocent, little things, a couple of real, basic truths. She couldn't see it. She couldn't understand it. Now granted, a little bit of Truth is better than no Truth. A little more than a little bit is better than a little bit. But salvation requires ALL of the Truth—not part of it. What's the best way to sell a lie? *Tell as much Truth as possible*.

Verse 11: "'Now this is the parable: The seed is the Word of God... [Doesn't that tie right in with what we read here? That you are 'begotten again, not from corruptible seed, but from incorruptible by the living Word of God, which is abiding forever'? *Yes!*] ...The seed is the Word of God; and those *that fell* by the road are the ones who hear, but the devil comes and takes away the Word from their heart, lest they should believe *and* be saved" (vs 11-12).

I had another interesting thing happen. I had to take the car up and get some service. On that gray car we have 15,000 on it already, because of the commuting that Delores is doing. So, at 15,000 you have to take it up and get it looked over; but I took care of all the servicing before it got there and it had a couple of things that needed to be done to it. While I was spending the four hours there, I said, well I didn't bring a book. I should have brought a book, because I would have just sat down and read a book—I didn't have a book to read. John—the fellow we bought the gray car from—introduced me to Greg, who is a salesman. Because maybe in the future, if things go real well, because Rachelle is going to confiscate the red one—I had the gray one confiscated. Then if Rachelle confiscates the red one, then I may be looking for another car down the road. So, he said, 'three cars.' I said, 'Yeah, we're taking care of our auto transportation for the rest of our lives—at least the next ten years.' So, we went out and was test-driving. So, we test-drove one that had the next engine up from this red one. And man that thing had so much power the speedometer went up to a 150 miles an hour. You step on the gas and you go VARoooooom! Boy, I don't need that! I mean it was something! It would take your breath away. So he said, 'We're going to sell these Stanzas and we're changing model, so you can really buy one of these Stanzas really cheap—like a \$16,000 car for somewhere around \$9,000.' So I said, 'Let me drive that.' I took it out and test-drove it. It had a lot of road noise in it.

I said, 'You probably want to know why we have so many miles.' He said, Yes! I said, 'Well, my wife commutes and I commute and also just doing church work takes 1600 miles a month.' So, he says, *Oh, I've been reading the Bible* and all this sort of thing. I told him that I wrote this book and I'm writing this one and I do cassette tapes. *Oh, send me some*. So I'm going to send him some! But I know what's going to happen!

The comment was made—when I said I know what's going to happen—he's going to raise the price on the car. Yeah, probably. But I know what's going to happen, and it isn't in raising the price on the car. I know what's going to happen! People want 'religion' to live a better life—which is commendable. *They don't want religion to obey God unto salvation.* They want to be saved *their* way. But God says, 'You're going to be saved *My way.*' When he gets that he's probably going to say, 'Oh, this is good.' But if he really had to quit his job, from the best sales day of a car salesman being Saturday, to obey God—it'll be interesting to see what'll happen.

Too many are like this: "...'lest they should believe...'" (v 12). There's an article in the San Jose Mercury News this morning about they're building a big homosexual, gay and lesbian church, for guess how many people, in Dallas, Texas? Three thousand! They're going to build a huge, gigantic thing. And they are going to have love with no strings attached. Now, you think about that. That sounds like a wonderful statement—doesn't it? But the Protestants are the ones who have planted the seeds for that because they say that God's love is without condition! Wrong, wrong, WRONG! What are the conditions of God's love? Obey My voice! What are some other conditions? **Repent!** What are some other conditions? **Belief!** 

John 3:16—let's read this because they quoted this, saying, 'We're going to have love with

no strings attached.' No conditions! "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who **believes** in... [*into*: is that not a condition? Yes! And what does belief require? It requires a lot of effort! Doesn't it? Yes, indeed! So it IS conditional! Now God knows we all sin, but there has to be repentance. There has to be belief.] ...that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life." The thing is

- you cannot have the love of God unless you believe in Jesus
- you cannot believe in Jesus unless you believe in the Truth
- you cannot have salvation unless you believe the Word and obey it

Luke 8:12: "And those *that fell* by the road are the ones who hear, but the devil..." How's the devil going to come? He's going to come and say, 'Well, that's not important. Oh, that's really not necessary.'

"...but the devil comes and takes away the Word from their heart, lest they should believe *and* be saved. And those *that fell* upon the rock *are* the ones who, when they hear, receive the Word with joy... [Like our car salesman there. He was happy to hear it. 'Oh, wonderful, send me this.'] ...but these do not have any root, who believe *only* for a while, and in time of trial fall away. And those that fell into the thorns are the ones who have heard, but are choked *while* pursuing *the* cares and riches and pleasures of life, and do not bring *any fruit* to [perfection] maturity" (vs 12-14). Notice, they bear some fruit, but 'bring no fruit to perfection.'

Verse 15: "And those that *fell* on the good ground are the ones who, in a right and good heart, hear the Word *and* keep *it*... [which is: *obey it*—right?] ...and bring forth fruit with [patience] endurance" (v 15)—obviously, fruit that is ripened. As you all know, green fruit is miserable. Try a green cantaloupe some time. Try a green apricot some time. Green apples are okay if you cut them up and put a lot of sugar and honey in it and make apple pie. That's sort of like the re-shod Christian—at least we get something out of it. So it has some consequences to it.

The living Word of God—living and abiding in us—has an awful lot to do with how we respond to the Word of God. And I'll tell you this, brethren, right now—and I'll just say it straight out, straight forward for whatever it is—those who are staying in the Worldwide Church of God are having someone steal their crowns, because they are taking away the Word of God out of their heart, and it's the doctrines of Satan getting in there to change it. I mean, you won't believe it! **You won't believe it!** And the first thing they did to start changing the Passover was to plant the seed by saying the new day does not begin until dark. It's not true. You shall keep your Sabbaths from what? *Sunset to sunset!* Not from dark.

Revelation 3:7—we need to go through this. We're not proclaiming that we are this, because this is a message to *all* of the churches. "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia... [the 'brotherly love' church, because that's indeed what Philadelphia means.] ...write: These things says the Holy One, the one Who *is* true; the one Who has the key of David, Who opens and no one shuts, and Who shuts and no one opens. I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no one has the power to shut it because you have a little strength, and have kept My Word... [keeping, obedience] ...and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan..." (vs 7-9).

We're living in a time unique in history that the synagogue of Satan is there, through everything that there is in the world. This New World Order that's coming. *And it's coming!* It's closer than we think. What do you think this 'trade pack' between Canada, Mexico and the United States is? That's part of the regionalizing to bring the whole world together.

I'm reading a book now which ties in everything—the Federal Reserve, the Trilateralists, the Bilderbergers, the Club of Rome, the Rockefellers—all together. Anyone who says they don't believe in a conspiracy is daft in the head. The name of the book is *En Route to Global Occupation*. We're all being told now we need to be 'citizens of the world'—correct? *Yes, indeed!* Who's the one that is making war? *The United Nations!* Yes, indeed!

One of the next steps that's going to happen is taxation on a worldwide basis. You wait and see! And how are they doing all of these things? Bring in the religion last. You bring in the economics first. Get them all dependent in a non-religious, secular way on the vitals of life and you've got 'em! And right at the same time that that is happening, the Churches of God are:

- running around throwing away doctrine
- throwing away belief
- throwing away faith
- getting rid of Christ
- blending into the world

No wonder Jesus said that when He returns, will He find faith in the earth? The synagogue of Satan is busy—busy, *busy*, *busy*! That includes more than the Jews. That includes everything under the umbrella of the operation of Satan. All of those who come together to do Satan's work.

"...who proclaim themselves to be Jews and

are not, but do lie..." (v 9). A Jew is the one who's supposed to have the way. A Jew is the one who's to be circumcised in the heart. A Jew is the one whom Christ is to have the way to God. And Jew is one who is one inwardly so these are those who say they have the way, but don't. And they're lying.

"...-behold, I will cause them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the time of temptation [trial or tribulation] which is about to come upon the whole world... [this is happening at a time when there is globalism] ... to try those who dwell on the earth.... [the Greek there is the whole earth]...Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown" (vs 9-11). Believe me there are a lot of people out there wanting to take it from you. Wanting you to believe things that are not true. Wanting you to accept doctrines that are not right. Any way, any way to get the wedge in! or The seed in to change you!

I know some of these people out there who are sitting in the Churches of God wanting to know, 'Can this be real? That I'm hearing all of these things? Is this true?' Well, just like we read in Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies, that Satan's greatest work is done not in witchcraft, it is not done in séances, it's not done in those overt things, but it is done on the doctrinal committees, where Satan presses well-founded arguments upon the minds of reasonable men-and then is able to take away the Truth that people have. So when it warns here, "...hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown"-brethren, that is happening right now in the Churches of God. And I hear from more than just Worldwide. Church of God Seventh Day, as I mentioned, a Sunday-keeping movement in the Church of God Seventh Day. I mean, how blatant can you get? That is unreal! And they start out with clever, little arguments.

- it's not required for salvation to tithe
- this thing of clean and unclean meats is really not so
- the Passover really doesn't mean that
- the wine doesn't mean wine; the wine means grape juice
- the 14<sup>th</sup> doesn't mean the 14<sup>th</sup>, it means the 15<sup>th</sup>

Try it with a pair of shoes. You wear size eight, you go in and have a salesman try and sell you a pair of seven. Squeeze them on your feet and say, 'Oh, that's just nice that these are size eight. Well, they're a little tight, they don't fit right.' Okay, so then instead of an eight, he brings nine and they're like gun-boats and you're slopping all over the place. If shoes are supposed to be the right fit, with the right number, how about the right day for the Passover?

That's how it starts, because if you destroy the covenant relationship, you destroy your contact with God—and that's what's happening. They are even having socials and boatings and outings *on the Sabbath*! Once you start, once you start down that road of giving up the living Truth of God, someone's going to take your crown, and someone is going to undress you, and someone is then going to have to declare your nakedness, and that's exactly what's happening.

1-Peter 1:24: "For all flesh *is* like grass..." Now you think about it for a minute. That is literally true, literally true. What is wheat? *It's a grass*. But out of it, we get what? *Bread, the staff of life*. What is oats? but a grass; barley? but a grass. What are your vegetables? but just another form of vegetation—right? *Yes!* What about all the meat that you eat from the animals, what do they eat? *Grass!* What are animals made of? *Grass!* What are we made of? *Grass!* All flesh is as grass.

"...and all *the* glory of man *is* like *the* flower of *the* field; the grass has withered..." (v 24)—and it sure is around here—we were commenting coming up here, Delores said, 'Look at that grass, can't get any dryer.' Well, it could, it could burn and be really dry. All of these eco-freaks: 'Let's keep the forest as it is.' It's going to burn! You either use it or it's going to burn. We have big fires going around here in California again, just burning up. Terrible!

Yes, they are now realizing they should have small fires burn. My theory is they should have all kinds of goats. Run them through the forests, clean it out there, and then have the teenagers follow behind and get all the broken branches and things like this and clean it up. And then every once in a while cut everything down, start all over again. Yeah, that's something! And just think of all that good goat meat. We'll have to get some goats and try that. We had goats meat once, oh it is good! Like lambs, lambs will do the same thing. Get sheep and go out and do the same thing. That would take care of all that.

"...and its flower has fallen away" (v 24). In the spring you get out there and see all these beautiful flowers and what did Jesus say to of the lily of the field? *That even Solomon and all of his* glory was not arrayed as God arrayed the lily of the field! They're beautiful! They're gorgeous! But BAM! they're gone!

Verse 25: "But the Word of *the* Lord endures forever; and this is the message that was preached to you through the Gospel."

Let's see some things concerning grass. Since we're right here in 1-Peter, let's go to James, the first chapter, because what I want to do is show how James ties right in with 1-Peter. And the final production of this book, with James; 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter; 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, I'm going to try and make it in parallels like the *Harmony*. And I think it will really be interesting how that is.

James, the first chapter, talks about the flower. James 1:9: "But let the brother who is in humble circumstances rejoice in his elevation... [God calls the rich, He calls the poor, He calls the high, He calls the low] ...and *let* the one who is rich *rejoice* in his humble condition... [in the congregation, they're all equal before God] ...because, as *the* flower of *the* field, he himself will pass away; For the sun rises with *its* burning heat and dries up the grass, and its flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance perishes. In the same way also shall the rich man wither in his pursuits" (vs 9-11).

Let's see where they get this; let's go back to Psalm 37:1—now, this so true for us today, because this is so easy to do: "Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity, for they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb" (vs 1-2). Of course, it's always there to cut, and it always grows. You put some water on it and it grows, you got to cut it. Keeps the house cleaner than having all that dirt and everything around, but boy, there's a lot of work in a lawn. And that's the way the evil-doers are going to be—they're going to be cut down like the grass.

Here's what we are to do, 3: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and cherish faithfulness.... [you have to live by faith and trust God to provide.] ...Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart" (vs 3-4). What should be the greatest desire of our heart? What should that be? *To make it into the Kingdom of God*—shouldn't it?

We would all like to have nice, wonderful, pleasant things today—correct? But what does the Bible say? *The last shall be first, and the first shall be last*! If you store up treasure in heaven, that's where your reward is—right? That should be the desire of our heart.

Verse 5: "Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.... [What happens when God brings it to pass? *It's not necessarily the way that you would bring it to pass.*] ...And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself because of him who prospers in his way; because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil, for evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait

upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. It is but a little while, and the wicked shall be no more; yea, you shall diligently consider his place, *but* he shall not be *there*" (vs 5-10). That's what's going to happen to the wicked.

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Psalm 92:5 "O LORD, how great are Your works; Your thoughts are very deep. A brutish man does not know, nor does a fool understand this. When the wicked spring forth as the grass... [when there's wickedness on every side] ...and when all the workers of iniquity blossom, it is that they shall be destroyed forever" (vs 5-7).

That's what makes it so hard. What is the parable of the tares? *You have the wheat which was sewn* –right? The tares are sewn in among it. And angel came along and said, 'Lord, should we take up the tares right now with it?' He said, 'No, lest you root up some of the wheat. Let them all come to the harvest. And then we'll harvest the wheat. We can put it in my barn and the tares you can throw to be burned.' So that is the wicked that's going to be cut down.

Verse 7: "When the wicked spring forth as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity blossom, it is that they shall be destroyed forever; but You, O LORD, are on high forever. For, lo, Your enemies, O LORD, for lo, Your enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be scattered" (vs 7-9).

Now, let's go to Isaiah 40—and here's exactly where Peter is quoting from. I often wondered in compiling of the New Testament—I can see and understand why it had to be done quickly, and it had to be done by the apostles, and it had to be finalized in a very short period of time and then given to John. Then John would preserve it and watch over it until the books of the Gospel of John,  $1^{st}$ ,  $2^{nd}$ ,  $3^{rd}$  John, the book of Revelation to finish it. Can you imagine what would happen to the Word of God if it took 300 years to be compiled and put together? It would look just like a Catholic Catechism.

Isaiah 40:4—the *Messiah* is straight out of this: "'Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low... [Is God going to destroy this society when He returns? *Absolutely!* He's not going to repair it.] ...and the crooked places shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see *it* together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry!' And he said, 'What shall I cry? .... [What's the main message of all humanity?] ....'All flesh *is* grass, and all the beauty of it *is* as the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people *are* grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the Word of our God shall stand forever.""" (vs 4-8).

Notice that is almost word for word what Peter wrote back here—1-Peter 1:25: "But the Word of *the* Lord endures forever..."—living forever—*it's the living Word of God*. Now, how important is the Word of God? What did Jesus say of the Word of God? *How long would it live and last*. What did Jesus say about the Word of God? To show you how sure the Word of God is; how sure the words of Jesus are:

- all the *good* words of God
- all the *warning* words of God
- all the *prophetic* words of God
- all the *words* of Jesus Christ

Matthew 24:35 "The heaven and the earth shall pass away, **<u>but</u>** My words shall never pass away." It's the living Word of God which abides forever.

Here the other two parallel columns with it. Mark 14:31—says the same thing. If you've got a marginal reference in your Bible you probably have a little a, b, c, d or a number 1, 2, 3, whatever it is, that'll refer you to it—and Luke 21:33. That's how long the Word of God is going to be. This will burn in my brain for a long time: that telemarketer from Pat Robertson's said, 'Oh well, that's not important for Christians today.' That's part of the Word of God—isn't it? Isn't the Sabbath part of the Word of God? Yes, sure it is! I just couldn't believe it when I heard it.

Let's look a little bit about the Word of God here that's important for us to understand. We know, as we've covered before, the Word of God is manifest how? 'In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, the Word was God.' Jesus is the living Word of God. That's why it's important that we have the Word of God in us—abiding in us! Because if don't, if we don't constantly add the Word of God to us and if we don't do it in such a way that we grow thereby, what's going to happen? The devil's going to come along and take it out! Is that not happening in the Church today? That once used to be staunch for the Word of God? Yes, indeed it is!

John 5:39: "You search the Scriptures... [the Bereans did—didn't they? (Acts 17:11). They 'searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so.'] ...for in them you think that you have eternal life; and they are the ones that testify of Me. But you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.... [Because Jesus is what? 'I am the way, and the Truth, and the life.'] ...I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; *but* if another comes in his own name, you will receive him" (vs 39-43). That was a prophecy. They rejected Christ, but when Bar Kockhba came along, Rabbi Akiva said, 'this is the Messiah.' They all followed him. They did chase away the Romans for a short period of time, and then it ended up in the total, absolute destruction and the scattering of the Jews with the infamous Masada. God sent the Romans to crush them. In absolutely rejecting Christ and accepting that, that was the disaster that caused the Jews to be scattered and so painfully treated this last 2000 years or 1900 years.

Verse 44: "How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and do not seek the glory that *comes* from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is *one* who accuses you, *even* Moses, in whom you have [believe] hope" (vs 44-45).

The reason I'm doing this is because there's a movement again, it's nothing new under the sun is there? A movement again what? *That you don't have to keep any of the laws that Moses gave!* What did Jesus say?

Verse 46: "But if you believed Moses, you would have believed Me; for he wrote about Me. And if you do not believe his writings... [first five books of the Bible: Gen., Exo., Lev., Num. and Deut.] ...how shall you believe My words?" (vs 46-47). So, it is the living Word of God. Absolutely, the living Word of God.

Revelation 19:11—and this carries right on down to the second return of Jesus Christ: "And I saw heaven open; and behold, a white horse; and He Who sat on it *is* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He does judge and make war. And His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns; *and* He had a name written that no one knows except Him" (vs 11-12). So there's a special name for Christ—which we don't know!

Now, just as an aside. If you want to use a sacred name for Jesus Christ, would this not be the most sacred name? Because God the Father gave it to Him—right? But no one knew but Himself.

Verse 13: "And *He was* clothed with a garment dipped in blood; and His name is The Word of God." *The Word of God abides forever*. In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God and the Word was God. Ties it all together.

Let's go right into 1-Peter 2—let's begin with the first three verses. And this is what is so good and so exciting about the Word of God. When you constantly put it together, it builds a beautiful, beautiful picture—doesn't it? Remember: Before any composer composed beautiful music, before *The Messiah* was composed, all the notes of the scale were already in existence—correct? Yes, indeed! Before we understood the Word of Truth, the Word of Truth was already here—wasn't it? When we put it together, rightly do so, it builds a beautiful, beautiful picture—doesn't it?

1-Peter 2:1: "Therefore, having put away all wickedness, and all deceit, and hypocrisies and jealousies, and all slanders, as newborn babes, yearn after the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow... [I added the words] ...in character... [because obviously, you're not going to grow in body. Obviously, your head is not going to get any bigger. And we won't do as Rush Limbaugh and 'tie half our brain behind our back' and put it up on a shelf to gather dust. That won't work either.] ...If you yourselves... [This is that middle verb: you, yourself—so it's a self experience with the Word of God. You can't have someone else do it for you.] ...have indeed tasted that the Lord is gracious" (vs 1-3).

Now we're going to focus in on those first three verses. Back to verse one: "Therefore..." It's an interesting word, right there. Because it means *the light of everything I've said up to this point*—all of the first chapter. 'Consequently, in the light of everything I've said up to this point.' How are we supposed to act on the Word of God?

"...having put away all wickedness..." Wickedness could also be translated *malice*. I think in the *King James* it's translated *malice* and *guile*. Those are deliberate things. "...and all deceit..." (v 1)—so we have to put out. In the Bible, you have two things you do. You put out the way of human nature and you put in the way of God. Let's see how this works:

Let's go to James, the first chapter, let's see how this ties right in with it. James 1:21—the same thing; the same Greek word. "Therefore, having rid... [set aside, put out, put away] ...yourselves of all filthiness [superfluity of haughtiness or naughtiness] ...and all *the* abounding of wickedness around you, then in meekness accept for yourselves the implanted Word, which *is* able to save your lives." Agrees a hundred percent with Peter—no conflict at all.

We will see this whole operation of the put out and the put on; or remove the clothing of sin and put on the clothing of righteousness, because the word *put off/put on* has to do with the same word which is used for garments. Let's see the motivation behind it, and it's a constant thing. We all wish we were perfect. I wished I was! So does my wife. I wish she were perfect. And isn't it true? Whenever we try and want to do something good, what happens? We don't do it—isn't that right? I was thinking this morning—I was going over this sermon—I would like to have it in such a way that I'd never have to say I'm sorry, or that I would do things where I would never have any regrets, that I could hold my tongue perfectly, that I would not snap back with a sharp word or do something stupid at the worst possible time. Right? *Right!* So, we all have to re-group all the time—don't we?

Here's how to regroup, because you've got to have a goal. Remember what they were saying about the Republican nominating convention for Bush? *He didn't give us a vision!* Well, he can't because he's got the wrong vision. The vision is Christ and we all have to have that goal. And we don't realize how important that is unless we have this human nature—which is here, where we do things we don't want to do. So that we understand how good the good things are and how great God's way is. We have to have this focus.

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ... [and that is obviously through the operation of baptism] ...seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God." Brethren, you can't have any higher goal! You cannot have any greater vision in your life than this. This is what it needs to be. What did Jesus say of the way? He didn't say it's wonderful, it's easy, it's nice. He said, 'Straight is the way (which is difficult) and narrow is the gate (which leads to life) and few there be that find it.' But how do we find it?

Because of this—where Christ sits at the right hand of God, v 2: "Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died... [through the operation of baptism] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory" (vs 2-4).

What a day that's going to be! I tell you, when all the saints are resurrected, be raised out of that grave, that's going to be absolutely something! One of the first ones I want to see is Christ, but I know I won't be the first one, so aside from that, one of the first ones I want to see is going to be Esther Grisinger. That's one of the first ones I want to see and meet.

Verse 4: "When Christ, *Who is* our life... [that's the very reason for being. That's the very reason for living, because of Christ shall appear] ...is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory.... [With that vision, with that goal, with that oversight, let's get down to the nittygritty, nasty little work of working on human nature.] ...Therefore, [mortify] put to death... [slay, crucify, kill, mow down; get rid of, therefore] ...your members which *are* on earth—[fornication] sexual immorality... [they had problems and difficulties with that—didn't they? Now, he's talking to Christians, mind you. He's not talking to the world] ...uncleanness, inordinate affection... [in that he's probably referring to converted people who, in the past, were homosexuals.] ...evil desires [concupiscence, licentiousness]... [Those evil things which make you transgress the law of God] ...and covetousness, which is idolatry" (vs 4-5).

He's talking to Christians. Oh, how nice it would be if all Christians were perfect. But we're not; we're imperfect. That's why God has called us. But that doesn't mean that we go out and sin. 'What, should we sin that grace may abound?' Paul said. 'God forbid.'

Verse 6: "Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience." Who are the children of disobedience led by? *Satan the devil—the 'prince of the power of the air!* That spirit which is inner-working in the children of disobedience' among whom also we all had our conduct in the lust of the flesh and the lust of the mind and the pride of life, etc.

Verse 7: "Among whom you also once walked..." Notice how tactfully that Paul corrects them. He showed them first what they needed to do. He showed them second what they ought not be doing and putting these things to death. And then he tactfully says, 'In these things you walked in them sometimes—that is before you were converted.'

"...when you were living in these things.... [he's saying that you've done all of that] ...But now, you should also put off... [The same word that's used there in 1-Peter 2] ...all *these* things: <u>wrath</u>..." (vs 7-8). That's the first one—isn't it? *Anger!* Just like when we were going through James: the daggers and self-inflicted wounds of correction. There it is right there.

"...indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth. Do not lie to one another..." (vs 8-9). That's hypocrisies and deceits. Christians lying to each other! Paul said, 'Lie not to one another.' If they were perfect and weren't lying to each other, why would he have to say it? So it's there.

"...seeing that you have put off the old man together with his deeds... [the old self, the old person]: ...and have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him; Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* all things, and in all" (vs 9-10).

Everyone gets all excited about that and says, 'Look at the liberation that Christ gave us.' No, He's saying you're all responsible—male and female. Under the Old Testament, if the husband did it, the wife could say, 'See, God is going to hold you responsible.' If she made a vow and the husband didn't approve of it, God would not bind her to it. So, this elevates women up to a level of responsibility, too—doesn't it? *Yes, it does!* So it means far more than a lot of people think.

Here's what we're to do, v 12: "Put on then... [be clothed with these]: ...as the elect of God, Holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness and long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another... [That's the hardest thing to do. Hardest thing in the world is to say 'I'm sorry.' It is, I know from experience, I can tell you.] ... if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you should forgive. And above all these things put on love... [It says 'charity' in the King *James*, but it should read *love*—'agape.'] ...which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... [notice how that comes full circle back to the last verse in 1-Peter] ...in all wisdom..." (vs 12-16).

Let's go to Hebrews, the twelfth chapter, and see what else we are to put aside. Again same thing, 'put aside and keep your vision on Christ.' Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses, let us [put] lay aside... [put off, put out, put away] ...every weight, and the sin that so easily entraps us; and let us run the race set before us with endurance... [Who are we to look to?]: .....having our minds fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured the cross, although He despised the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds" (vs 1-3). That's exactly what's happening with people in the Church of God today. They're getting weary and fainting in their minds.

Let's put a couple of other Scriptures here for you. Put in there, Eph. 4:24-31—that shows the whole same thing: put out/put on, put out/put on; the new man renewed inwardly.

Romans 13:12—here again we have the same thing. "The night is almost over, and the day is drawing near... [that's sure more true today than ever before] ...therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.... [it's all the way through: put off/put on, put off/put on] ...Let us walk decently, as in *the* day: not in reveling and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and emulation.... [the ultimate]: ...But *let us* put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and not make any allowance for the flesh, to fulfill

its lusts" (vs 12-14).

1-Peter 2:2: "As newborn babes..." now this is not a condition of fact. Nor is this a statement of reality. This is an analogy or a metaphor, and in some cases it might be a simile, but it's more of an analogy and a metaphor. Who are to be the newborn babes, as it were? *New Christians*—as newborn babes—in other words this is a comparison.

As I showed before, v 5 says: "...as living stones..." So, if you're a newborn babe in fact, then you're also a stone in fact, so then you are carved little baby cherubs—is that correct? *No! No! No!* It is a comparison.

Here's the thing, v 2: "...yearn after... [Why is it so important[:...the pure spiritual milk..." Guess what they found out—just came out what, two weeks ago-about breast-feeding vs bottle-feeding. That those babies who have been bottle-fed are more pre-disposed to diabetes when they get in their teens and early twenties, than those who are breast-fed. Breast milk is for babies. The pure, perfect nutrition for the baby aside from the pollutions that come. So it's the proper thing. What is breast milk the best for? You have proper digestion; you have proper assimilation; you have proper building of bone; of flesh; of fat; of mind! All of those come from breast-feeding. And how does a baby crave? Well, all those mothers who have breast-fed their babies know how long does it last from feeding to feeding. It's very easily digested and assimilated. So all of these things are true. So, it's for new converts.

Let's go to 1-Corinthians, the third chapter, and we will see that we are not to continuously be on milk. But I'll tell you what, brethren, we're going to see that the prophecy in Heb. 5 is sure true.

1-Corinthians 3:1—showing that this is for new Christians: "And I, brethren, was not able to speak to you as to those who are spiritual, but as to those who are carnal—*even* as to babes in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, and not meat; for you were not yet able *to receive spiritual meat;* and neither are you able now" (vs 1-2). This is sure true. There are so many Christians going backwards. Instead saying, 'Pass the meat and the potatoes""—the strong meat and strong doctrine and loving God—they're saying, 'Pass the bottle. Let's have some milk. Don't tell me these hard things. Don't tell me God says I got to do this. Oh, No!'

Verse 3: "For you are still carnal. For since envy and contention and divisions *are* among you, are you not carnal? And *are you not* walking according to human *ways*?"

Let's look a couple of other Scriptures that go along with this. We're not to continue on the

breast milk. You can take that analogy and draw whatever you would like with it. But I tell you one thing, it sure would be a terrible sight to see a teenager and ask his mother to be breast-fed because it's time to eat—let alone an adult. Isa. 28 shows us how we are to be taught the true doctrines of God beyond the basics. That's what he's talking about here—this ties right in with 1-Cor. 3.

Isaiah 28:9: "Whom shall He teach knowledge?.... [the true knowledge of God, the deep knowledge of God, the true understanding of God] ...And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk... [They have all the basics down. They understand all of those things.] ...*Those* who are weaned from the milk... [able to *eat strong meat*] ...and drawn from the breasts, for precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little" (vs 9-10).

In this whole thing, the way you get a lie across is tell enough of the truth to make it sound plausible. But when you go ahead and compare truth with truth, and word for word, and line upon line and line upon line, precept upon precept, the lie won't stand up!

Now, let's go to Hebrews, the fifth chapter, which is not only a correction, but also you could say a prophecy—and it is happening today. I tell you what, there's some people who have been in the Church of God for years and years and years and years and then they walk away from the Holy Days, they walk away from clean and unclean meats, they're just walking away from everything—can't believe it!

Hebrews 5:7—talking about Christ Who's after the order of Melchizedek: "Who, in the days of His flesh, offered up both prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him Who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because *He* <u>feared</u> *God.*" There's a whole section in *The Christian Passover* book about the nature of the flesh that Jesus had, which I cover that very thoroughly.

Verse 8: "Although He was a Son, yet He learned obedience from the things that He suffered; and having been perfected, He became *the* Author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him, After He had been designated by God *as* High Priest according to the order of Melchisedec; Concerning Whom we *have* much to say and hard to explain, since you have become dull of in hearing" (vs 8-11).

That is sure true today. There are so many people that are dull of hearing, not only do they not want to hear, but they're dull of hearing and when you tell them these things, they say, 'Oh, I've heard that before! Give me something new.' That's when the slip of new, false doctrine comes in just so cleverly and they gobble it up.

Verse 12: "For truly, by this time you ought to be teachers... [and that has sure happened] ...but instead you need to have someone teach you again what are the beginning principles of the oracles of God, and have become those in need of milk, and not of solid food.... [going back to the status of babes] ...For everyone who is partaking of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness because he is an infant. But solid food is for those who are fully grown, who through repeated practice have had their senses trained to discern between good and evil" (vs 12-14). That's pretty powerful, brethren.

One of the reasons we've sent out so many tapes is because we're getting pretty close to the time where the bridegroom is going to call. And they're going to say, 'Give us oil.' And I think that's what we're trying to do with these care packages we're sending out. They're people who have been in the Church 20-30 years who are almost back to the stage of needing milk to start again. And *they ought to be the teachers*. When they get some of these care packages, it helps them. It's like a tremendous infusion. It's like sending food to all these starving people in Somalia.

How many have been watching that on the news. Those poor, pitiful little kids and people over there. What a sad thing that is. Do you know what it's a result of? Warring, fighting men that have come along and have destroyed the crops and plugged up the wells. Then they send them food and what do they do? They fight over it like ravening wolves. Terrible, terrible, pitiful! I tell you, we can be thankful for the second resurrection-God is going to undo all of that. Unfortunately, there are a lot of brethren of Christ who are out there, they are walking skeletons, ready to die, because they haven't been eating the Word of God. They haven't tasted to see that the Lord is good. They haven't been drinking the milk, let alone eating any of the meat. There in Heb. 5 is really quite a chapter there.

1-Peter 2:3: "If you yourselves have indeed... [It's a self-experience that you have to go through] ...tasted that **the Lord** *is* **gracious.**"

To show that this is an analogy, we talk about milk here—*taste the Lord*. You're not going to eat the Lord! Are you? *No, you're not*. How do you do it? Let's go to John, the sixth chapter; showing how it is done, and showing all the analogies of Christ. God is likened to milk, to bread, to meat, to food, to drink. All of those are analogies, metaphors or similes.

John 6:35: "Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life... [Here Jesus is likened unto bread. And bread is called? *The staff of life!*] ... the one who

comes to Me shall never hunger; and the one who believes in Me shall never thirst at any time" because he's constantly eating and drinking of Christ.

Verse 48: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread... [it is the *living word*, the *living bread*] ...which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh... [That ties right in with the Passover—doesn't it? Yes, it does!] ...which I will give for the life of the world" (vs 48-51). And you know what the Jews said? They didn't know about what He was saying there.

Verse 53: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood... [Now we're drinking blood. It's an analogy, a simile. But it shows that what it is. Your life must be so bound up and intrinsic with Christ that it's just like flesh and blood is to your own body.] ...you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food... [true meat] ...and My blood is truly drink.... [true drink that leads to eternal life] ... The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me" (vs 53-57).

There's a tremendous amount to this, but I think it's really important that we've gone into detail in many of these things. I know we haven't made the progress that we wanted to, but I tell you what, it really brings home the importance of the Gospel and how it is so well put together. *It's just incredible!* 

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order*, A *Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter

 Exception: 1-Peter, from *The Seven General Epistles* by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural references:

- 1) 1-Peter 1:22-25
- 2) 1-Peter 1:2
- 3) Acts 5:28-32
- 4) 1 Peter 1:22
- 5) Romans 1:5
- 6) Romans 5:19
- 7) Philippians 2:8
- 8) Romans 6:16, 23
- 9) 1-Peter 1:22-23
- 10) Luke 8:4-12
- 11) John 3:16
- 12) Luke 8:12-15

13) Revelation 3:7-11 14) 1-Peter 1:24-25 15) James 1:9-11 16) Psalm 37:1-10 17) Psalm 92:5-9 18) Isaiah 40:4-8 19) 1-Peter 1:25 20) Matthew 24:35 21) John 5:39-47 22) Revelation 19:11-13 23) 1-Peter 2:1-3 24) James 1:21 25) Colossians 3:1-16 26) Hebrews 12:1-3 27) Romans 13:12-14 28) 1-Peter 2:2, 5, 2 29) 1-Corinthians 3:1 30) Isaiah 28:9-10 31) Hebrews 5:7-14 32) 1-Peter 2:3 33) John 6:35, 48-51, 53-57

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 13
- Matthew 13
- Mark 14:31
- Luke 21:33
- Acts 17:11
- Ephesians 4:24-31

Also referenced: Books:

- Enroute to Global Occupation by Gary H. Kah
- Satan's Ten Most Believable Lies by David Breese
- Harmony of the Gospels by Fred R. Coulter
- The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

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