

FEAST OF TABERNACLES – Day 2 – 2004

Fred Coulter – October 1, 2004

Greetings, brethren. Welcome to the Feast of Tabernacles, Day 2, 2004. Today we're going to ask the question: What do we need to do to prepare to rule and reign with Christ? Perhaps you haven't thought of it but maybe let's look at it this way: to do the most important work and the most important job in the entire world. Now we need to think big because the kingdom of God is going to be fantastic and marvelous and great, and we have an active part in it. And that's why God has called us. And that's why God has given us the knowledge and understanding that He has. So we are here to be educated, to be trained, to be taught of God. And any teaching that comes has to come from God because it's through His Holy Spirit, through His Word, and the living that we do. So not only do we have to be trained and educated (which is an ongoing thing so we can be prepared to rule and reign with Christ), but we also, as we will see, have to have the character. Because if there's any one thing that is missing in this world today, it is character, and especially in the field of politics, and in the field of religion, and in the field of economics. It is all run today by those who are inspired and who, hence whether they know it or not, are agents of Satan the devil.

Now God has called us out of this world so that even though we live in the world we are not a part of the world. And He has separated us, given us His Holy Spirit, and now He's in the business of training us, of getting us ready. Because know this for sure: God is not going to give the government that He has and the kingdom that He brings to this earth to a bunch of people who know nothing, who do not have character, and who are incompetent. Now that would probably get you a pretty good government job in the world today, but not in the kingdom of God. I mean just look at what's happened this summer with Bill Clinton running around selling his book. Corrupt, liar, even admits he's double-minded because he says his life is on two tracks. And so when the bad track goes bad he can dismiss it and say, "Well, you know, that's just the way that it is, and I'll get back on the good track." Well you see, it's a perfect example of how one is unqualified to serve and rule the people. And that's why things were so bad when he was President. And it's just like the proverb says: "When the king is corrupt, all of his counselors are wicked" (Prov. 29:12; 12:5, paraphrased). And so you look back and see what has happened. You can apply that to kings, you can apply that to presidents, you can apply that to leaders of business, you can apply that to friends because it is a living true principle. What God is doing, He is preparing for us. And we are to be prepared. And now we have the time to be prepared. Now we have the time with God's Word and with the things that we have now to be prepared to serve, to learn, to grow, to be ready so that we be wise rulers.

Now let's first of all come to John 14. And we're going to see that there are many things in preparation. All the prophecies that have been given will come to pass in the time that God says. God the Father and Jesus Christ in heaven above are active and they are working. They are working as Jesus said here, John 14:1: " 'Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many

dwelling places [mansions]; if it were otherwise, I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again...’ ” (John 14:1-3, *FV*). And so all of this has to do with the kingdom of God. God is busy working and preparing, so likewise we need to be busy working and preparing. We need to do the things that God wants us to do. We have two very important things that we need to do. We need to prepare through study. We need to prepare through character. And we need to prepare in the ways that are going to help us grow in grace and knowledge.

So let’s look at the example here. Let’s come back to the book of Ezra. Ezra was used of God very mightily, very powerfully. And as a matter of fact, Ezra is the one who is credited with canonizing the whole Old Testament. Because you see, the whole Old Testament was written over a period of many hundreds of years (thousands of years), and then these documents had to be edited and put together, and Ezra was the one that did it. And as you read in the Old Testament it talks about different books which are not in the Old Testament, which God inspired Ezra not to put in there. But he was able to do that, and did that for this very reason. Let’s come here to Ezra 7:10. And this gives us a good example of what we need to do. “For Ezra had prepared his heart...” Now how do you prepare your heart? By prayer, by repentance, and also by study. By loving God. By loving His word. We’ll see all of these things apply. So he “...prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD...” And as we saw yesterday, we ask God to open our eyes to see marvelous things out of His law. “...To seek the law of the LORD and to do *it*, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.” So Ezra is a good example. He was ready. He was prepared. Yes, God worked with him. Yes, God gave the Holy Spirit to him, obviously so he could do the whole Old Testament for us. And this is the standard that we have today. So he prepared.

Now let’s look at a couple of other things on how we need to prepare. Let’s come to the very first psalm. This has to be our attitude, our lifestyle. Our way of thinking is all summarized here in the very first psalm. And it’s interesting that the Book of Psalms opens with this. We’re going to see it’s going to be character, it’s going to be knowledge, it’s going to be spiritual preparation.

Psalm 1:1: “Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly...” So you’re not mixing the ways of the world, the thoughts of the world the way the world thinks. And that’s why the book that I did a three part series on, *The Death of Truth*, is so important. Because the way that people think today is so askew, and so (how shall we say) not based on facts but based on emotion, opinion, and innuendos. And we’ve got to get away from that kind of thinking that’s in the world. “...Nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night” (Psa. 1:1-2). Now we can take that and we can also apply that to the New Testament, because the New Testament is the new spiritual application of the laws that God gave in the Old Testament. And a lot of people don’t realize that’s why not every law is reiterated again in the New Testament. It doesn’t have to be because Jesus Christ, Who is the Lord of the New Testament, was also Lord of the Old Testament. So He came to show us how to live these things in a spiritual way

from the inner part of our hearts. Now notice in doing that: meditating on that means you think on it, you live by it, you act upon it. All of that goes with it, you see.

Now spiritually speaking, here's what it's going to do. And also perhaps in many ways physically speaking. But we're not to look to the physical blessings and say, "Oh we have these physical blessings therefore we must be in right standing with God." Because you see, that's the problem that happened in the past, and that's why the church had to be scattered. Another thing about scattering a church that I thought of here recently, which we need to realize is this: Since the church is like the body of Christ, how does the body keep itself in maintenance and repair? By splitting and dividing the cells and getting rid of that which is waste, toxic, and old. So likewise we can apply that to us spiritually. We have to have, like it is here, "the rivers of water" that's likened unto the Holy Spirit. And when you have a tree that's in the desert that's planted by the rivers of water, it's green and it produces. And of course when you look to the conclusion of God's plan we have what? We have the tree of life that bears twelve manner of fruit, and the water comes out from underneath the throne of God, etc. So here we have a fore type of what's in the New Testament.

Now continuing it says: "...that bringeth forth his fruit in his season..." So we have to bring forth fruit in season and also out of season, but this is a way of saying that it takes time for you to develop the character to produce the fruit. Now you look at any fruit trees – God says (that those trees) the fruit is not ready for consumption until the fifth year. And the older that a tree gets to a certain point, and the older that a vine gets with grapes, the better the fruit and the better the product; and especially with wine, the better the wine. And if you have ever seen vineyards where they have the stalks of the grapes – if they are big and round those are old stock and they produce the best grapes and the best wine. And that's the way it should be with a lot of us. A lot of us who are old-timers (spiritually speaking), we ought to have a big stalk because we are part of the vineyard of Christ, and Christ says that He is the true vine. And of course, there we get our spirituality from Him. But it produces fruit in it's season. And now is the time for us in the church of God to really produce the fruits of God to show as evidence. Not to demonstrate to show off. I don't mean it in that sense at all. But to show that we are prepared, that we are growing, that we are changing, that we are overcoming because we have the greatest calling to rule and reign with Christ that has ever been. So we need to be busy preparing, studying, growing.

Now notice: "...his leaf also shall not wither..." And that's regardless of what happens. You see that's why we have the trials that come upon us, to see whether we are going to maintain, whether we are going to be right with God, whether we are going to believe God, trust in God and so forth. "...And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (verse 3). And we want that to be, especially spiritually. Now contrast it with the world and here is the dividing line. That's why there are going to be a lot (as Jesus said) when they come before the judgment seat and they say, "Lord, Lord, haven't we done many wonderful works in Your name, and haven't we cast out demons in Your name, and haven't we prophesied in Your name?" And Jesus will say, "I never knew you, you workers of lawlessness and iniquity" (Matt. 7:22-23, paraphrased). No, of course not. There is a

dividing line. And the dividing line for the church is that we need to not be like the world, but that we need to be learning from the things and the events in the world, and in our lives, and so forth.

But notice the dividing line, verse 4: “The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish” (verses 4-6). And that’s what has to happen when the millennium begins – to do away with the ungodly and institute the righteousness of God.

Now let’s come over here to another psalm, Psalm 15. And let’s look at this in the way of character, if we could put it that way. Remember Jesus said that He went to prepare a place. God is preparing. Christ is preparing. And I’m sure the angels are working and preparing too to make sure that all the prophecies are fulfilled in the right way at the right time according to the plan of God. So here is another psalm which shows us how we are to prepare.

Psalm 15:1: “LORD, who shall abide [or that is, dwell] in Thy tabernacle?” Now we have to look forward to something greater than a tabernacle, but that is new Jerusalem. “...Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?” Which also has reference to taking part in bringing the government of God on the earth. And as we saw yesterday, the government rests on the shoulders of Jesus Christ.

So here are the qualifications now. You can write them down. Verse 2: “He that walketh uprightly...” That means walking in the commandments of God, walking in the Spirit of God, doing the things that God wants you to do. “...And worketh righteousness...” Now righteousness then means mercy, justice, forgiveness. And all of those things are equated with righteousness. “...And speaketh the truth in his heart.” Now that’s an important thing. We have to have our deceitful nature changed from within so that we learn to speak the truth from the heart. And because we are going to administer the truth, we are going to administer righteousness, so therefore these things have to be part of our very character.

Verse 3: “*He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.” Now there is an awful lot here for us. This has to do with neighbor but let’s apply this to brethren. How many churches have been destroyed by backbiting? How many peoples lives have been ruined because of a tongue flapping in the breeze? And how many evil things have been done to brethren within the church, not just your neighbor? And you have to ask the question: “Well why does God allow this to happen?” So that we can see that we need to change. These things are not going to be when we are ruling and reigning with Christ, so we have to learn and grow and overcome now.

Verse 4: “In whose eyes a vile person is contemned [you are not going to put up with evil and vileness]; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to

his own hurt, and changeth not. *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved” (verses 4-5). In other words that’s how you’re going to be in the kingdom of God. So these here show us some of the character things that we need to do, and, because you cannot have true righteousness and true government that is going to be run in a way that is going to inspire and help people unless it is righteous, unless it is good. Look at any of the governments that we have. Look at any of the presidents that we have. There are varying degrees of good and evil. And those who have a higher degree of good succeed more, able to inspire the people. Those who do not, they may inspire the people to corruptness and so forth. So it’s something that we need to understand that we need to learn.

Ok, now let’s see the whole foundation (the heart and core) of being able to meditate in God’s Word and God’s law and to make it applicable in our lives in the way that God wants. Let’s come to the New Testament to the book of Mark, please.

Now let’s come to Mark 12, and we are going to see the whole basis and foundation of what we have here in meditating in God’s law and His way, and it all has to do with the basis of it. Mark this and know this: law without love is tyranny. Law without love is tyranny. And that’s why when evil dictators get into power and they have laws and they have decrees, it is tyrannical and it kills and there is no mercy. We’re told mercy triumphs over sacrifice. We need to keep that in mind.

Mark 12:28: “And one of the scribes who had come up *to Him*, after hearing them reasoning together *and* perceiving that He answered them well, asked Him, ‘Which is *the* first commandment of all?’ ” Well now, that’s kind of a leading question. But what we need to understand is that Jesus is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega. And so when you ask “What is the first commandment,” what you really get, you get the statement of what makes all the commandments work.

“Then Jesus answered him, ‘*The* first of all the commandments *is*, ‘ “Hear, O Israel...” ’ ” And in this I always like to put my name there because you see, one of the things that we do for Bible study (which is very important), you study the Bible – let the Word of God speak to you personally because these are the Words of God. So if you let it speak to you personally so that you can grow, that you can change, that you can overcome. Don’t study the Bible to see how you can condemn other people, or how right and good that you are. See, as we will see, part of the character that we have is overcoming our human nature as we have already pointed out and shown.

So the first of all commandments is: “ ‘ “Hear, O Israel: *the* Lord our God is one Lord. And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” ’ This *is the* first commandment.’ ” (Mark 12:28-30, *FV*). So what we have to understand and realize is just like the first psalm said, we meditate in God’s law day and night. And what we have here is a full time occupation that God has given us. It’s with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our mind, and with all our strength. So therefore we are not to have one day we go to church

and we learn about God, and the other six days are just ours, nothing to do with God. Now that's the way much of the world works. Not all of it, but much of the world works.

And the other day I got a letter from a man who said, "Well, where would you Sabbath keepers be without all of us Sunday keepers?" Well, he has a point. But also there is another point to be made. Sunday keepers can have the Word of God and understand a certain amount of it. And as we know, anyone who teaches in sincerity the truth of the Bible, God will make that be a blessing because He stands behind His Word regardless who says it. And as we know from Jeremiah 23 that God said, even if the false prophets that He didn't send would make the people stand by His Word, He would honor it. But you see, God has used the Sunday keepers to get the Word out. But let's go back and analyze something concerning the translation of the New Testament. Who did it? William Tyndale. And everything that they have done has been building their own religion upon what the original Greek was and what William Tyndale did. And yes, God used them to get the Word out, but what has happened in doing that? Well today, there are fifteen million Sabbath keepers around the world. So we need to keep that in mind.

Let's understand this: it is a fulltime thing. In other words, "in your heart" you have no room for any other god. "In your soul" (that is in your body) you take care of your body, you follow the laws that God has given for it and you try and keep it in the best shape you can. And "with all your mind" so the heart and mind go together here that you are thinking on the Word of God, meditating on the Word of God and so forth, "with all your strength." This is the first commandment.

" 'And *the second is* like this: ' "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ' " (verse 31, *FV*). These are going to be the things that we will use to help bring in the kingdom of God to this world. Because as we saw yesterday "the law shall go forth from Zion." And the law shall go forth in love for those who love God; go forth in power and destruction for those who will not love God and submit to Him, because the judgment of God is going to be coming.

Now then for us today (and here's the big challenge for us today), Jesus said we are to love each other as He loved us. And that is the big challenge for us within the churches of God. And as we have shown and pointed out before: you must have the love, the forbearance, the patience, the kindness that comes from God's Spirit in order to love each other as Christ has loved us. So that's another part of it.

Then the fourth part of love, which Jesus said. He said, "You have heard it said in past time that you shall hate your enemy and love your neighbor. But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who despise you, and hate you, and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you unjustly." And He says, "Great is your reward in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:43-45, paraphrased). So you see, those are the parameters of the character that we need to build. And that's going to qualify us to be in the kingdom of God through the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Now along with this comes the next thing that we need to do. We need to seek. Let's come here to Hebrews 11:6. There's a very important and profound thing. It has to be done by faith. We'll back up a few verses here to Hebrews 11:1, and then we'll work up to verse 6. Now this is important for us to realize. What we have here brethren, is this, is that the Word of God gives us the guide - tells us what to do. The Holy Spirit gives us the power of how to do it. And with that power of God's Holy Spirit comes the fruits of God's Holy Spirit, which are love, and joy, and peace, and faith, and longsuffering, and kindness, and goodness, and gentleness, and meekness. But the three are faith, hope and love. And as I've said before, we are to walk in faith, we are to believe in hope, and we are to live in love.

Now Hebrews 11 tells us about faith. And it is part of the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the substance, the power that God gives to us. So this is why Paul writes it this way. Hebrews 11:1 (FV): "Now faith is *the* substance of *things hoped for, and the* conviction of things not seen." We have to have that conviction. We have to believe in hope and know that Christ is going to do it. We have to have the faith that God will perform it. And this is what sustains us. You know it says in one of the Proverbs that "if you faint in the day of adversity, you have little strength" (Prov. 24:10, paraphrased). Now faith is what is to sustain us.

Verse 2: "For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the* word of God, so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible" (verses 2-3, FV). And true to this day, very profound and tremendous scientific statement. Because you see even those who deal in the finite of examining the creation also understand this, though they don't have faith in God. Because you see, through this God is manifested to them.

Now let's come here to verse 6. "Now without faith *it is* impossible to please *God.*" So our seeking and approaching God has to be in faith and belief. "For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists..." And if you believe that He exists then you believe that His word is true; and you believe that all of His laws and commandments are right, and just, and good; and you believe that you are to meditate in it day and night. Then you are going to be pleasing God. Now notice what He says: "...and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." So if we love God and seek Him this way... And guess when our reward is coming? When Christ returns. So that He can say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord." And it lists out the rewards. And what is it? Ruling over cities, right? Yes. Ruling over countries. Bringing judgment. You see, God has laid out for us great and fantastic things to accomplish His will, and to be prepared to rule in the kingdom of God.

Now let's look here in the book of Luke since we're in the New Testament, and let's see how we do this on a day to day basis. Because this is something that we do every single day. Now you see, that's why we need the weekly Sabbath to inspire us and to uplift us. And that's part of God's educational program to teach us and train us and prepare us to enter into the kingdom of God. And likewise all the feasts of God that He gives to us, they all prepare us and we are to be inspired with it. But on a day to day basis

here's what we are to do. Let's come here to Luke 12:22: "And He said to His disciples, 'Because of this, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life...'" He just got done with the parable of the man who said, "Oh boy, look at all I have. I'm going to build new barns and I'm going to store it up, and I'm going to say to my soul, 'Soul, just enjoy everything.'" And God says, "You fool. Your soul is required of you tonight. And then what are you going to do with everything you've stored up?" (Luke 12:16-20, paraphrased). So then He says: "'Because of this, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life...'" See, you have to seek (as we'll see here in just a bit) the kingdom of God first. "'...What you shall eat; nor about your body, what you shall put on. The life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing.'" (verses 22-23, *FV*). See we need to understand that. And if we have faith in God, living in His way; meditating in His laws day and night; loving Him with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and being, don't you think that God is going to provide for you? Of course. Because you love Him and He loves you. And you are trusting in Him to provide. You are seeking Him and He says that if you seek Him with a true heart, you're going to be rewarded. So Jesus is saying the same thing here.

Verse 23: "'The life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing. Consider the ravens [you look at any of the birds that are out there in the world in what is called the first heaven]; for they do not sow, nor reap; neither have they a storehouse or granary; but God feeds them. *Of* how much greater value are you than the birds?"' Now look if God does that for them. Then He asks the question: "'And which one of you, *by* taking *careful* thought, has the power to add one cubit to his stature?"' (verses 23-25, *FV*). And of course many people are trying to do that. All you have to do to understand that is true is go to two stores. Number one: your supermarket, and you just look at all of the magazines that are there posted on your way out. Who's it geared to more than anything else? Women. Now let's take a hit on the men. Go to any body building supplement store, or what they call "power-max" store, where you can get all the things to build the muscles. So then you have men who are infatuated with their bodies to get them bigger and stronger and so forth. That's not to say it's wrong to take care of your body and build it up. Of course it's right. But you look at some of these weightlifting freaks with all of these muscles and everything. If you don't believe me, when it comes time to surf the channels and you don't know what to watch and they have a body building contest on, well you just go and click on that and watch that and just see how much vanity that is. And they're all trying to get bigger. And they're all trying to get stronger. And when they work out in the gym they've got all these mirrors so they can look at their poses and look at their muscles and all of this is vanity. So if you can add a few inches on your bicep, what big deal is that?

Verse 26: "'Therefore, if you do not have the power *to do even the* least [Now that tells you how much power God has and He's going to give us, right?], why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow; they do not labor, nor do they spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these. But if God so adorns the grass that today is in the field, and tomorrow is cast into an oven, how much more *shall He clothe* you, O *you* of little faith?"' (verses 26-28, *FV*). And of course we are told to be thankful with food and raiment. Let's ask the question:

Remember Imelda Marcos, wife of the former president of the Philippines? When they finally got through all of the corruption, and she had this great huge closet, and closet, after closet, after closet of dresses, and dresses, and dresses, and dresses, and over 3000 pairs of shoes. But the truth is, she could only wear one pair at a time, and only wear one dress at a time. But did that not show an obsessive passion for the physical things? Yes, it does. God says don't be that way.

Verse 29. Let's look at it. It gets even a little more closer to physical life and living and so forth. "Then do not be seeking what you shall eat or what you shall drink, and do not be anxious." In other words, if you tend to your business and do what God wants, He's going to bless you regardless in it, and you will have enough to eat and so forth. Verse 30: "For all the nations of the world seek after these things; and your Father knows that you have need of these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you" (verses 29-31, *FV*). Not only in this life but also in the life to come. And as it says there in Matthew 6, it says: "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33, paraphrased). See, those things then are what qualify us. But being motivated by the Holy Spirit of God it's actually God in us who is qualifying for us. So that's a tremendous thing to know and understand.

Now notice what else He says here. He says, continuing on verse 32: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father delights in giving you the kingdom." So it's going to be a tremendous day. That day of resurrection on the Day of Pentecost and then coming back to this earth to destroy all the armies of Satan, and the beast, and the false prophet; and to have Satan bound by that strong angel; and to begin to rule and reign with Christ is a tremendous and marvelous thing. And it's God's delight to give the kingdom to us. Why? Because He knows that we are going to do it right. He knows that we, as spirit beings, are now going to have the power and the capacity because we have also developed and built the character that God wants us to have, and that we will be able to rule and reign with Christ and able to carry out the plan of God, and able to bring peace to this world. So this is a tremendous thing that God has given us, and this is all part of God's plan in preparing us, you see. And we are part of that preparation.

(Turn Tape)

Ok, let's continue on. Let's go back to Psalm 119, because this tells us the whole approach on seeking God and seeking the kingdom of God. And this is a tremendous thing in our lives because even psychologists know this: that people in the world, if they don't have goals, if they don't have something worthwhile to work for and keep their minds on, that they deteriorate, they lose interest, fall into sin, fall into corruption, and so forth.

So here is how we are to seek God, Psalm 119:1. And there's a blessing that comes with it. Tremendous blessing. And the result of that blessing will be realized at the resurrection and when we are in the kingdom of God. That's why we keep looking forward. That's why we keep looking to the kingdom of God and seeking the kingdom of God.

“Blessed *are* the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.” And of course whatever Jesus said in the New Testament, is that not the law of the Lord? Whatever the apostles wrote, as the apostle Paul said: “The things that I write to you, these are the commandments of the Lord” (I Cor. 14:37, paraphrased). Yes, indeed. So there’s a great blessing. “Blessed *are* they that keep His testimonies, *and that* seek Him with the whole heart” (Psalm 119:1-2). So that’s how we are to be. Wholehearted just like we read. We are to love Him with all our heart. And that is translated into seeking God, into seeking His way.

Now verse 3: “They also do no iniquity: they walk in His ways.” Which is true. If we are seeking that, if we are building character, if we are growing in grace and knowledge, if we remain under the grace of God we do know iniquity. That doesn’t mean that we don’t have sins that come along, it means we are not living in sin because we are repenting, we’re changing, we’re growing, we’re overcoming on a day to day basis.

Verse 4: “Thou hast commanded *us* to keep Thy precepts diligently.” Now then He makes this statement which is true to show the weakness of the flesh. “O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all Thy commandments. I will praise Thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned Thy righteous judgments” (verses 4-7). There it is, it is all learning. You see, that’s why God gave us the minds that we have so we can learn. Learn the things of God. And with God’s Spirit added to us, how great and how marvelous that is.

Now let’s see also some of the things we are to do in seeking the way that God wants us to do. Now in the New Testament it says: “Seek and you will find, knock and it shall be opened.” And so with that then it also means: “Seek - keep on seeking; knock – keep on knocking.” And then it finishes up by saying: “Ask and you shall receive” (Matt. 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-10). So you see whatever the challenge is that is ahead of you, remember that God has given it to us that every day is a new day and we can grow in grace and knowledge. If we have problems and difficulties we can change and repent and grow and overcome. If we have trials come upon us, God is with us and will see us out of it. See, all of those things work together for good. That’s why it says there in Romans 8:28 (FV): “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.” So this is a tremendous thing. And brethren, we just need to realize how great it is that God has given us this and has called us.

Ok, since we’re here in the Book of Psalms let’s come to Psalm 69 and let’s see again how we are to be seeking God and seek His ways. Psalm 69:22. Now it talks about (for those in the world here) what’s going to happen in the world. No, that’s not the one that I want. Let’s bypass Psalm 69 for the time being. We’ll go to Psalm 63. And this shows us again, how we are to seek God’s way.

Now, as I gave a sermon recently showing that David had the ark in a special tabernacle in his own house, or in a building right next to his own house. And he would

go out and he would worship God and pray to God, and he would also play all of his psalms right before that little tent, that little tabernacle that housed the ark of the covenant. And of course God's presence was there with the ark of the covenant, which is reflected here in Psalm 63:1: "O God, Thou *art* my God; early will I seek Thee..." Now this is what is important to remember: "early will I seek You." And constantly we need to be doing that. Don't wait until you're in trouble. Don't wait until everything is falling apart. Don't wait until disaster hits and you have to seek God when you really don't have time to seek God. The time to seek God is when you have the time, which is now. And of course the way things are looking in the world, we don't know how long we have to go. Could be a long way down the road. Could be not so far down the road. But we're certainly entering into treacherous times. But never the less, this has to be the way that we do it. "...Early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is..." Now you can trust this with the attitude of the Laodiceans. That's why God commands the Laodiceans to repent and be zealous. And here's the kind of repentance and zeal that needs to be put in place of complacency and lukewarmness.

Now notice he said: "To see Thy power and Thy glory, so *as* I have seen Thee in the sanctuary." So apparently David saw some sort of form of God, or the presence or essence of God in the sanctuary. And that motivated him with great zeal and great desire, and also looking forward to the kingdom of God. Now notice, here's what to understand about God's way: "Because Thy lovingkindness *is* better than life..." That's what we need to receive of God – the lovingkindness of God through loving Him with all our hearts, and mind, and soul, and being. And that is better than life – physical life, because that is spiritual life. "...My lips shall praise Thee. Thus will I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in Thy name" (verses 2-4).

Now down here to verse 6: "When I remember Thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on Thee in the *night* watches. Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after Thee: Thy right hand upholdeth me. But those *that* seek my soul, to destroy *it*, shall go into the lower parts of the earth" (verses 6-9). So there on the other hand we have it when the evil ones seek to come against us, there is their destiny. So God is given us this. That's a tremendous thing, brethren.

Now let's come over here to Psalm 84, which also shows part of the emphasis on the Feast of Tabernacles and seeking to be with God. This ties in with Psalm 15. "How amiable *are* Thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Psalm 84:1-2). So that's the attitude we need to have. Brethren, please understand this: as the Feast of Tabernacles pictures the kingdom of God on earth, it pictures our preparing for it as well. And it pictures the things that we are going to be doing.

Now let's come down here to verse 4: "Blessed *are* they that dwell in Thy house..." And as Jesus said, He's going to prepare a place for us. "...They will be still

praising Thee. Selah. Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in Thee; in whose heart *are* the ways *of them*” (verses 4-5). Or that is, the ways of God, as it should be and so forth.

Now let’s see what else he says here. Verse 9: “Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine anointed. For a day in Thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” And that’s the attitude we need to have. Now we know for sure we’re not all going to be doorkeepers, but what David is saying here – even the lowliest job in the kingdom of God is greater than all the riches of the wicked. “For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusteth in Thee” (verses 9-12). And that’s the kind of character that we need to develop as we’re constantly seeking God.

Now let’s come to Romans 2 and let’s see what God promises to give us. This defines for us how we need to be seeking, and how we are going to be serving and loving God, and what God is going to give to us. Now here, what it does, it compares the wicked with the righteous. So here again is that dividing line. You see, whether we know it or not (but we need to realize that it is so) there is a dividing line between those people who are the people of God, and the world. God deals with the people of God the way that He’s outlined in the Bible, and He deals with the people in the world the way that He’s outlined in the Bible for them. And that’s the way that God works.

Now, let’s come over here to Romans 2:4, and let’s see again the comparison between the wicked and the righteous. “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?” And continually with the Spirit of God and the grace of God, He leads us to repentance. And the more that you know about God and the closer that you get to God, and the more that you are seeking God, and the more that you see and understand about your nature and the nature of the world and the greatness of God’s plan, the smaller that we become in our own eyes and the more grateful that we become and the more understanding we have of the awesomeness of the plan of God that He would choose us. You and all that God has chosen to be in the kingdom of God and to serve Him. That’s an awesome thing. You consider all the billions that are on the earth. Truly we are the few. Truly we are the scattered. But truly we are the called of God and He deals with us and leads us.

Now He talks about the wicked who don’t repent. “But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart [that is to the wicked], are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God’s righteous judgment [we are closer to that than we’ve ever been], who will render to each one according to his own works: on the one hand, to those who with patient endurance in good works are seeking glory and honor and immortality...” That’s our goal. What is God going to give us? “...Eternal life; on the other hand, to those who are contentious and who disobey the truth, but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the* Jew first, and of *the* Greek...” But

verse 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the Jew* first, and to *the Greek*, because there is no respect of persons with God” (verses 5-11). So that’s the dividing line that God has set out there.

Now let’s see some other things that we need to do. Let’s come to II Peter 3, right at the end. And here is the whole key. And this gives us the plan, the overall scope, as it were. You have to have an overall goal. Then you have to have a plan on how to get there. Then you have to have the details that work with that plan, which come down to our daily living. And God has given all that for us in His Word. That’s fantastic.

Ok, let’s pick it up here in II Peter 3:14: “For this reason, beloved, since you are anticipating these things [that is again, the coming Day of the Lord, the kingdom of God], be diligent [there’s the key – seek and be diligent], so that you may be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless. And bear in mind that the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation, exactly as our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has also written to you; as *he has* also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them concerning these things; in which are some things *that are* difficult to understand, which the ignorant and unstable are twisting *and distorting*, as *they* also *twist and distort* the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction” (II Peter 3:14-16, *FV*). So here shows again the separation between the righteous and the unrighteous; the brethren of God and the world.

Now verse 17: “Therefore, beloved, since you know this in advance [we already know and understand this, don’t we], be on guard against *such practices*, lest you be led astray with the error of the lawless ones, *and* you fall from your own steadfastness...” Now here’s the key to overcoming. Verse 18: “Rather, be growing in *the* grace and *the* knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (verses 17-18, *FV*). That’s what we need to be doing.

How do we do this? God also lays this out for us as we will see here in Colossians 3. Ok, Colossians 3 tells us what we need to do. It tells us what we need to seek, and how to do it. Verse 1: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ [that is through the operation of baptism], seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth” (Col. 3:1-2, *FV*). Because you see that is likened to what it says “where your treasure is that’s where your heart is.” Or, “where your heart is that’s where your treasure is.” It works both ways. So if you’re doing that then that’s going to be a tremendous thing.

Now verse 3: “For you have died, 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.” And there again we have the goal. We’ll talk about this just before we conclude a little bit more. “Therefore, put to death...” So then here are the things we are to get rid of: sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection and all of those things and idolatry. And then we are also to put off the character flaws of wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language out of our mouths. And then it says

we are to be: "...renewed in knowledge [verse 10] according to *the* image of Him Who created him..." (verse 3-5, 8-10, *FV*).

And then it says that we are therefore to develop the kind of character and compassion and understanding that God wants us to have, which we could say and just summarize in heart. Verse 12: "Put on then, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should forgive*." And then it says: "And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection" (verses 12-14, *FV*). So that tells us how. There are other sections in the New Testament that tell us how to do it. In Ephesians, in Philippians, in the book of Romans – all of it is there for our growing and overcoming.

Now we are going to be sitting on thrones and judging. Now several years ago I gave two sermons during the Feast of Tabernacles: "Judge Righteous Judgment". Now if you don't have that printout and the two tapes that go with it, just write for it and we'll be happy to send you that. But we are to judge righteous judgment, as Jesus said. Now as we see in John 7, during the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus made that one of the themes that He told the religious leaders. He said, "None of you are keeping the law of Moses." And He says, "You come and condemn Me and yet even you agree that a man can be circumcised on the Sabbath." And He says, "And you can't discern what I'm telling you." He says, "Judge righteous judgment" (John 7:19-24, paraphrased). And that's what we're going to have to do. How can you judge righteous judgment? You have to have righteous character first. So that's why God is preparing us, and training us, and giving us the experiences so that we can judge.

Now what did He tell the Laodiceans? He says, "Overcome and I will grant with you that you will sit in My throne [and judge] as I have overcome and sat down in My Father's throne." (Revelation 3:21, paraphrased).

We see that fulfilled here in Revelation 20. Now we've already read this verse, but let's read it again and let's see, beginning here in verse 4, the actual reality and fulfillment of when this is going to be at the beginning of the millennium. "And I saw thrones; and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded..." and so forth. We've already covered that. "...They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." But there it is - "throne" which means authority, which means rulership. "...And judgment was given to them..." In other words because you have the character of Christ; because you have grown in grace and knowledge; because you have learned to keep the commandments of God; because you love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being, God is going to give the judgment to you because you can be trusted. That's important. God isn't going to give the judgment to anyone who can't be trusted. And anyone who cannot be trusted (let's put it this way) are not going to be in the kingdom of God because God is not going to have a repeat in the millennium of what is happening in the world today. See, because it's going to be righteousness, and judgment, and goodness, and mercy. And we are going to be

able to dispense these things, and teach these things, and help the people, and help them grow and overcome. See, because not only is that given to us to do, but it is also so that we can teach them (who are going to come into the millennium, live during the millennium, have salvation given to them), so that we can teach them that they can also enter into the kingdom of God. So you see this is a tremendous thing, a tremendous calling that God has given us. And all of this has to do with the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now let's come to Matthew 25. Let's understand something as we're going to Matthew 25. Now remember that God has had the kingdom planned from the beginning. And since Adam and Eve failed, then He said, "Ok, I'm going to deal with men individually one at a time." And that's what He's been doing. But the kingdom has been prepared for us. That's what Christ is preparing.

Now let's see here. Let's pick it up here in Matthew 25:31: " 'Now when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon *the* throne of His glory...' " So not only is there going to be the throne of God the Father in heaven above, there's going to be the throne of Christ on the earth. The throne of His glory. " 'And He shall gather before Him all the nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at *His* left. Then shall the King say to those at His right hand, ' "Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from *the* foundation of *the* world.' " ' " (Matt. 25:31-34, *FV*). Now if you've never thought of it wrap your mind around this, if I could use that phrase. Think on this. You are part of what God has planned from the foundation of the world. Think on that. That makes you important to God. Loved of God, called of God. That's why we're not to get exalted in our own eyes or anything like that. How silly and vain and stupid that would be. But see, "prepared for us." They didn't know it. Why? Because they had the character to do the things that were here.

Verse 35: " ' "For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; *I was* naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me [or we could say, "in the hospital..." today, "...and you came to me"]." ' " Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, ' "Lord, when did we see You hungry, and fed *You*? or thirsty, and gave *You* a drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and took *You* in? or naked, and clothed *You*? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and came to *You*?" ' " Now why would they ask these questions? Very simple: because of loving God and loving their neighbor and walking in the ways of God, and everything that we've covered up to this point, just fill in that slot. You automatically do these things without thinking of self. And you do it because you love God. And you do it not for personal gain or aggrandizement. You do it because you love God. So Jesus answered: " 'And answering, the King shall say to them, ' "Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done *it* to one of the least *of* these My brethren, you have done *it* to Me." ' " ' " (verses 35-40, *FV*).

And then the opposite for those who are the wicked. And what do they get? I tell you, verse 46: " 'And they shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into

eternal life.’ ” Now, back to verse 41: “ ‘Then shall He also say to those on *the* left, ‘ “Depart from Me, *you* cursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” ’ ” (vs. 46, 41, *FV*). Isn’t that something? The lake of fire. In other words the dividing line will be permanent then, won’t it? You’ll either be in the kingdom of God living in glory doing the things that God wants, helping to reach out in whatever God has in the expanse of this universe, because if God created this little old Earth for all that He’s doing on the Earth, think of what He’s created the vastness of the universe for. And that’s part of what God is preparing for us, you see. We need to understand that. You see, the problem is too many of those who call themselves Christians think little. Christ thinks BIG – HUGE. He’s got a great and a fantastic plan. So in the final analysis it’s going to be this: either you’re going to be in the kingdom of God and live forever, or you no longer exist. Now that’s quite a huge dividing line, isn’t it? We’ll see that a little bit later.

Let’s come here to I Corinthians 6. Let’s see about some of this judgment. I already mentioned about sitting down in the throne of Christ and judging. But let’s come to I Corinthians 6 and let’s see what God is going to give us a responsibility for doing. Now maybe you’ve never thought of this. This is why we are to have understanding and wisdom and judgment, you see. And the more that you live by God’s way, and the more that you understand His laws and commandments, and the more that you walk in grace and knowledge and apply yourself to the Word of God, the more you’re going to be able to make righteous judgments.

Now here I Corinthians 6:1 where Paul is saying here: “Does anyone among you who has a matter against another dare to go to *a court of* law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Don’t you know that the saints shall judge the world?” And of course that’s all during the millennium, right? Thrones were put down, the judgment was set, as we read yesterday. Absolutely, without any problem whatsoever. “And if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of the most trivial of judgments?” (I Cor. 6:1-2, *FV*). See, when God calls us we’re sinners, we’re foolish, we’re stupid. And the whole situation is to take us from being a child of the world and a child of the devil, and to change us, and convert us, and transform us into the image made like unto Jesus Christ. And from becoming sinners and nothing, to becoming the sons of God to rule and judge the world. And then he says here, “And if the world is to be judged by you ... can’t you make even the most trivial judgments?” (paraphrased)

“Don’t you know that we shall judge angels? *How* much more then *the* things of this life? So then, if you have judgments *concerning the* things of this life, *why* do you appoint *as judges* those who have no standing in the church?” (verses 3-4, *FV*). In other words there has to be a certain amount of character and truth and understanding. So likewise during the millennium there’s going to have to be that character, and there’s going to have to be that truth, and there’s going to have to be that understanding that God gives us.

Now let’s look at Psalm 122 and let’s see where there is a prophecy of these thrones and judgment that is going to be given. So God has a tremendous plan for us.

God is preparing the kingdom for us. Isn't that something? God is preparing a place for us. A specific thing for each one of us. I tell you the plan of God is so great, pictured by the holy days and the Feast of Tabernacles and the things that we are doing.

Psalm 122:1: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." Just think what it's going to be like to enter into the kingdom of God. So let's expand this in our thinking. What's it going to be like to walk in to the Jerusalem that Christ is going to renew on the earth, which then looks forward to the new Jerusalem which comes down out of heaven?

"Our feet shall stand within Thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David" (verses 2-5). Now let's understand something about that. That is referring to the reward of the church, which ties in with Revelation 20:4 that we just read.

Now let's come to Acts 15 and let's see where the churches... No, we won't turn there, we'll just tell you. Just make a reference there that the prophecy was that God was going to raise up the Tabernacle of David, which has fallen down (Acts 15:16-17). And the tabernacle of David, then, refers to the church. And the Tabernacle of David refers to that tabernacle that he had at his house where he had the ark temporarily until the temple could be built. And so that's referring to us and to all of those who enter into the kingdom of God. So that's really a tremendous thing. The thrones are set. The thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. And that's what we're going to do. And that's the part that God has given us to do.

Now let's see how absolutely overwhelmingly important that this is. Now I'm going to tell you something that maybe you have never thought of, which is this: the fulfilling of the prophecies in the world today are waiting upon us. And the bringing of the kingdom of God into this world is waiting upon us.

Now let's come back to Romans 8. And here again we are going to see the recipe of growing and changing and overcoming (or the outline of it if you want to put it that way), and how important that is for us and what this is for the world. Verse 14: "For as many as are led by *the* Spirit of God, these are *the* sons of God. Now you have not received a spirit of bondage again unto fear..." That's why there is the dividing line between the church and the world. Though we live in the world, we are not of the world. Though we have to exist in the world and work in the world, we are not a part of the world. And we haven't "...received the spirit of the world, which is the spirit of bondage again unto fear but you have received *the* Spirit of sonship, whereby we call out, 'Abba, Father' " (Rom. 8:14-15, *FV*). So in this relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ in growing and overcoming and being prepared by the Spirit of God, by the Word of God to rule and reign with Christ, you see, we have this intimate relationship with God.

Verse 16: “The Spirit itself bears witness conjointly with our own spirit, *testifying* that we are *the* children of God. Now if *we are* children, *we are* also heirs...” And what did Jesus say? “It is the Father’s delight to give you the kingdom that He has prepared for you from before the foundation of the world.” (Matt. 25:34, paraphrased). “...Truly, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ...” Now what did He inherit? He inherited the whole universe (Hebrews 1). You see, what God has called us to, and what the Feast of Tabernacles pictures, and how we are going to work and function in the kingdom of God all during the millennium and then on out into eternity is fantastic, brethren. It is absolutely marvelous. Now he says: “...—if indeed [now there’s a catch] we suffer together with Him, so that we may also be glorified together with Him” (verse 16-17, *FV*). So when He returns in glory and the first resurrection takes place and we are clothed with glory and majesty and honor. That’s something. That’s what it’s talking about – glorified together with him.

Now, how then, as Paul shows here, how then do you keep that dividing line of the world and sin away from you? Verse 18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory that shall be revealed in us.” You keep your mind on the goal. You keep your mind on God the Father and Jesus Christ. And you keep your mind on the hope that He set before us.

“For the earnest expectation of the creation...” Now I want you to let this verse 19 (as Jesus told His disciples one time), let it sink deep into your ears. “For the earnest expectation of the creation [the whole creation of God and this world] itself is awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God...” That’s how important you are to God. The whole creation of God is waiting for that. Isn’t that something?

Verse 20: “Because the creation was subjected to vanity...”, which we will talk about tomorrow. And even though human life, as great as the creation that God has made of the human body and the reproductive capacities of human beings and so forth, without the plan of God it is vain. So it was made subject to vanity. “...Not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected *it* in hope...” Now let me tell you what this verse is talking about. You go clear back to the Garden of Eden and Adam and Eve and their sin, and though God judged them, though they were cursed for their sin, He gave them the hope of the sacrifice of Christ in verse 15 of Genesis 3. So that’s what God is portraying here. Since from the time of Adam and Eve on down to the return of Christ, mankind has been subject to vanity. But He has subjected it in hope in order, verse 21: “...that the creation itself might be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.” And that’s what this Feast of Tabernacles pictures. When that will be a reality on this earth. “For we know that all the creation is groaning together and travailing together until now” (verses 20-22, *FV*). See, it’s waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. It is waiting for the kingdom of God and they don’t know it.

So brethren, that’s the calling that God has given us. Really quite a tremendous thing and fantastic opportunity. So what I want you to do with this Feast of Tabernacles, and continue on down even when we go back to our homes when the feast is over, is to grow in grace and knowledge, to grow in understanding, and let this be as we could say, a

goal or a vision to keep you growing and overcoming. Because like the proverbs say, “without vision the people perish,” and God has given us this vision and the whole world is waiting for you.

(End of Tape)

Tabernacles – Day 2 – 2004	
Scriptural References	
1) Proverbs 29:12	17) Matthew 7:7-8
2) Proverbs 12:5	18) Luke 11:9-10
3) John 14:1-3	19) Romans 8:28
4) Ezra 7:10	20) Psalm 63:1-4, 6-9
5) Psalm 1:1-6	21) Psalm 84:1-2, 4-5, 9-12
6) Matthew 7:22-23	22) Romans 2:4-11
7) Psalm 15:1-5	23) II Peter 3:14-18
8) Mark 12:28-31	24) Colossians 3:1-5, 8-10, 12-14
9) Matthew 5:43-45	25) John 7:19-24
10) Hebrews 11:1-3, 6	26) Revelation 3:21
11) Proverbs 24:10	27) Revelation 20:4
12) Luke 12:22-32	28) Matthew 25:31-41, 46
13) Luke 12:16-20	29) I Corinthians 6:1-4
14) Matthew 6:33	30) Psalm 122:1-5
15) Psalm 119:1-7	31) Acts 15:16-17
16) I Corinthians 14:37	32) Romans 8:14-22

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