



The Greatest Gift

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MERRY
CHRISTMAS
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Marsha Medders

The Greatest Gift

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The Greatest Gift

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Chapter 4 - Angel of The Lord

Chapter 5 - Our Greatest Gift

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7

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Chapter 1 - Best Gifts

When I was in first grade my parents bought a piano for my sister, my brothers, and me to learn to play the piano. That started my love of music. By the time I was in fourth grade I started playing the saxophone. My sister was playing clarinet by that time and my brothers trumpet and tuba. There were a lot of instruments to buy so my parents understandably started us on used instruments. Mine played and sounded just fine but looked like it had seen better days. It would not shine up much but it never bothered me; I just really enjoyed playing and no one ever had to tell me to practice.

One day my father said, “let’s go to the music store and get you a new saxophone.” I was thrilled! We drove the thirty miles and arrived at the music store. I had never seen so many shiny new musical instruments. I was absolutely amazed! We looked at several saxophones and then my dad said, “lets look at the one hanging on the wall up really high.” So the salesperson went to get a ladder and brought that saxophone down. I had never seen a musical instrument that shiny and beautiful. It stood out among all the instruments in the store. It had designs engraved on it and was even a little different color of brass.

My parents were not wealthy so I really did not expect that they would get me that instrument. But when I played it, I think that sold everyone. It even sounded better than the other instruments; a much richer mellower sound. So off I went with that new saxophone. I shined it after every practice and just loved playing it. At concerts, people would come up to me afterwards and say what a beautiful sound. I played in a school band so I could never figure out how they could distinguish my playing from the others but they said they could. Without a doubt, as a child that was one of the best gifts I received.

Exercise 1 - Your Best Gift as a Child

What was the best gift you ever received as a child?

Chapter 2 - Mary Did You Know

There is a song, *Mary Did You Know?* By Mary Lowry, and it asks Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water, that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters, that your baby boy has come to make you new, that He will deliver you, that He will give sight to the blind, He will calm a storm with His hand, that He has walked where angels trod, when you kiss Him you will kiss the face of God, that He will rule the nations, that He is heavens' perfect Lamb, and that He is the Great I Am.

It is a beautiful song but it has always bothered me a bit because I think Mary did know many things about her baby Jesus. She would have known because she knew the Scriptures. God chose Joseph and Mary, to be Jesus's earthly parents because Joseph was in Jesus's royal right to the Davidic throne and Mary was also in Jesus ancestry. Luke's genealogy of Jesus records Mary's lineage, which includes her descent from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Boaz, and David. Luke's genealogy also traces Mary's lineage back to Adam. Jesus's legal title to the throne of King David was through Joseph, but His blood title to the throne was through Mary.

Chapter 3 - Jesus in the Old Testament

Why do you think Mary would have known about Jesus? As usual, let's go the Scriptures to find our answers. We are going to review some Old Testament Scriptures using the method many Jewish teachers use by dividing Old Testament Scripture into three sections: The Law, The Prophets, and the Writings. Read the Scriptures and write in what the Old Testament prophecy says about Jesus.

The Law

1. _____

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”
Genesis 3:15

Seed of the Woman refers to Christ, the Messiah, and the seed of the serpent will be the Antichrist. This is a prophecy of salvation and that the Messiah would be born of a woman and the Messiah's descent or genealogy will be after a woman, not a man. Messiah is to come from humanity.

The bruising of Messiah's heel took place at Jesus' crucifixion and the crushing of the serpent's head began with Jesus' death and resurrection. (Hebrews 2:14-18) Salvation through Christ and Messiah would come from the line of Abraham. The Messiah is to be a Jew. New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 1:20; Galatians 4:4; Hebrew 2:14-18

2. _____

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Genesis 49:10

The Seed of the Woman and the Seed of Abrahamic covenant is now limited to being specific to the Tribe of Judah, Messiah will be a king, and Messiah had to come

before 70A.D.

The scepter, referring to the future Messiah or King, would come from the tribe of Judah. Judah will not lose their identity and right to rule until the one (Messiah) comes who has full rights to the scepter. This means that the Messiah has to come before 70 A.D. when the Tribe of Judah lost its pre-eminence and identity with the destruction of Jerusalem. New Testament Fulfillment: Revelation 2:27; 5:5; 12:5; 19:15

3.

"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. This is according to all that you asked of the Lord your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.' The Lord said to me, 'They have spoken well. I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. Deuteronomy 18:15-19

Moses was a prophet (Numbers 12:6-8), a redeemer (Exodus 3:10), a mediator (Exodus 20:18-21), and an intercessor (Exodus 32:7-35). Moses was also the only one in the Old Testament to be in the presence of God.

The Prophets

4.

Then he said, "Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:13-14

Messiah would be born of a virgin, the Messiah would be both God and Man, and must appear prior to 70 A.D. because of the requirements of the David Covenant and the destruction of the Temple. New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 1:22-23

5.

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7

6.

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11:1-2

Messiah would be born into the House of David. Messiah would not be born until the House of David had once again returned to the state of poverty which it was during the days of David's father, Jesse. Messiah will be born into a house of lowliness. Messiah would have the sevenfold fullness of the Holy Spirit and act accordingly.

7.

A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness; Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God. "Let every valley be lifted up, And every mountain and hill be made low; And let the rough ground become a plain, And the rugged terrain a broad valley; Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, And all flesh will see it together; For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Isaiah 40:3-5

8.

"Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. "He will not cry out or raise His voice, Nor make His voice heard in the street. "A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.

“He will not be disheartened or crushed Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait expectantly for His law.” Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it And spirit to those who walk in it,

“I am the Lord, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, Isaiah 42:1-6

9.

Listen to Me, O islands, And pay attention, you peoples from afar. The Lord called Me from the womb; From the body of My mother He named Me. He has made My mouth like a sharp sword, In the shadow of His hand He has concealed Me; And He has also made Me a select arrow, He has hidden Me in His quiver. He said to Me, “You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory.” But I said, “I have toiled in vain, I have spent My strength for nothing and vanity; Yet surely the justice due to Me is with the Lord, And My reward with My God.”

And now says the Lord, who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, so that Israel might be gathered to Him (For I am honored in the sight of the Lord, And My God is My strength), He says, “It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”

Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and its Holy One, To the despised One, To the One abhorred by the nation, To the Servant of rulers, “Kings will see and arise, Princes will also bow down, Because of the Lord who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen You.”

Thus says the Lord, “In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation I have helped You; And I will keep You and give You for a covenant of the people, To restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages; Saying to those who are bound, ‘Go forth,’ To those who are in darkness, ‘Show yourselves.’ Along the roads they will feed, And their pasture will be on all bare heights.

“They will not hunger or thirst, Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He who has compassion on them will lead them And will guide them to springs of water. “I will make all My mountains a road, And My highways will be raised up. “Behold, these will come from afar; And lo, these will come from the north and from the west, And these from the land of Sinim.” Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people. And will have compassion on His afflicted. Isaiah 49:1-13

The Messiah's first coming would be rejected by Israel. For a time, the message of salvation through Messiah will go out to the Gentiles. Eventually, Israel will receive Messiah; He will become their New Covenant. Israel's acceptance of Messiah will herald the re-gathering of all Jews to the Land of Israel.

10.

The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple.

The Lord God has opened My ear; And I was not disobedient Nor did I turn back. I gave My back to those who strike Me, And My cheeks to those who pluck out the beard; I did not cover My face from humiliation and spitting. For the Lord God helps Me, Therefore, I am not disgraced; Therefore, I have set My face like flint, And I know that I will not be ashamed.

He who vindicates Me is near; Who will contend with Me? Let us stand up to each other; Who has a case against Me? Let him draw near to Me. Behold, the Lord God helps Me; Who is he who condemns Me? Behold, they will all wear out like a garment; The moth will eat them. Isaiah 50:4-9

Messiah would receive spacial training from God the Father. Messiah's First Coming would be characterized by suffering. Messiah would be obedient in submitting Himself to physical abuse.

11.

Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Messiah would be born unnatural circumstances with no unusual characteristics. Messiah's First Coming would be characterized by suffering, rejection, a legal trial with the death penalty. Messiah would be executed, buried in a rich man's tomb, and resurrected. All of Messiah's sufferings and His death were to be substitutionally. He died so that we many have life, that our sins may be removed from us, and so that we may enter into a new relationship with God. Messiah would bring justification to all who believe in Him.

12. _____

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Because the Lord has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, Isaiah 61:1-2

Messiah would be anointed by the Spirit for His mission. Messiah would have a prophetic preaching ministry of salvation, healing, comfort and judgment.

13. _____

“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord, “When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The Lord our righteousness.’ Jeremiah 23:5-6

The Messiah would be a God Man. The Messiah would be Jehovah Himself; Jehovah would become a man. The Messiah would be a descendent of David and a king. Jeremiah reaffirms the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.

14. _____

“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.” Micah 5:2

Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the city of David. Messiah would be divine as well as human, having existed from eternity past.

15. _____

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth. Zechariah 9:9-10

16. _____

Zechariah 11:1-17

Messiah's First Coming would be rejected, especially by the Jewish leaders. A small remnant of believing Jewish people would accept Him. He would be sold out for thirty pieces of silver. Results of Jewish people rejecting Him: God's protection would be removed leaving Israel vulnerable to Gentile attack which occurred in 70 A.D. and Israel would be scattered. Second devastation of the land in A.D. 135. Messiah is the Good Shepherd.

17. _____

"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. Zechariah 12:10

The Writings

18. _____

For You will not abandon my soul to Sheol; Nor will You allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Psalm 16:10-11

19. _____

Psalm 22

Messiah would cry out for God's help when He is in extreme agony. He would be despised and rejected. As He is in agony, Messiah would be stared at and mocked. His bones would all be pulled out the His joints. His heart will rupture, He would

suffer extreme thirst, His hands and feet would be pierced. His clothing would be divided by the casting of lots. He will trust in God at the point of death. Messiah would be resurrected.

20. _____

Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand, Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself. Psalm 80:17

21. _____

The Lord says to My Lord: "Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." The Lord will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies." Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew.

The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at Your right hand; He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. He will judge among the nations, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country. He will drink from the brook by the wayside; Therefore He will lift up His head. Psalm 110:1-7

The Messiah would be both a priest and a king, after the Order of Melchizedek. He will be both God and man; to be priest He would have to be a man, but to sit at God's right hand He must be equal with God.

22. _____

Who has ascended into heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has wrapped the waters in His garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name or His son's name? Surely you know! Proverbs 30:4

23. _____

Daniel 9:24-27

Messiah would be present 483 years after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem. Messiah would be legally executed and His death would result in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. Messiah's birth and death, must both have happened prior to 70 A.D.

It is amazing how many times in the Old Testament Jesus' first and second comings are prophesied. It is obvious that God wanted His people to know that even in the midst of their sin, He was sending a Messiah for their salvation.

The details that are given and the ones that were fulfilled at Jesus' birth are incredible leading us to know that they are the truth and to know that those not yet fulfilled at His Second Coming will be fulfilled also.

These prophecies occurred progressively, meaning that during the period of the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, the people living during that time period would not have known what the prophets such as Isaiah would reveal about Jesus. But they knew that a Messiah was to come. With the passing of time, God continued to reveal more and more about the coming Messiah until Jesus was born. Then in the New Testament more is revealed about His Second Coming.

Chapter 4 - Angel of the Lord

In the Old Testament we see the reference to the angel of the God, the angel of Jehovah, and the angel of the Lord. Who are they? According to Dr. Fruchtenbaum, in his book *Messianic Christology* the words are typically used in Hebrew grammar as a proper name and not a title.

Let's look at some Scriptures to determine who the angel of the Lord is. Here are some of the Scriptures where we see the "angel of the Lord."

- Genesis 16:7-16 - There are at least 4 references to the angel of the Lord in these Scriptures. The angel of the Lord gives instructions to Hagar to return to her mistress Sarai. He also tells that he will greatly multiply her descendants. Hagar then calls him God and she names the place "You are a God that sees." The Scripture also refers to this same person as LORD which in Hebrew is Jehovah.
- Genesis 22:9-16 - Here we see the angel of the Lord calling out of heaven to tell Abraham not to sacrifice his son. Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh because the Lord provided a ram for the sacrifice instead of his son. Also mentioned in those passages is the angel of Jehovah (vs 15).
- Genesis 31:10-13 - Jacob says the angel of God called his name in a dream. Then the same person appears to speak and call themselves the God of Beth-el.
- Genesis 32:24-30 - Jacob wrestles with a man until day break. Jacob asked him his name but Jacob never got an answer. Jacob called the name of the place Peniel as he had seen God face to face and his life was preserved.
- Exodus 23:20-23 - God tells the Israelites that He is sending an angel before them to guard them along their way and to bring them to a place that He has prepared for them. He tells them to obey his voice and not be rebellious because he will not pardon their transgression since His name is in him.
- Joshua 5:13-6:5 Joshua is at Jericho and a man appears standing opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand and Joshua asks him, are you for us or for our adversaries. His

response is that he has come “as the captain of the host of the LORD. Joshua falls on his face and the captain of the Lord’s host tells him to remove his sandals because he is standing on holy ground. Joshua does as he is told. Then the captain of the Lord’s host tells him exactly what to do to gain the victory.

There are a number of other Scriptures in the Old Testament where the angel of the Lord appears. Due to the time limit we have for this study we will not be able to study these together but I encourage you to look them up and see for yourselves what they say. The Scriptures are: Genesis 19:15-17; Exodus 3:1-5; Numbers 22:22-35; Judges 2:1; Judges 6:11-24; Judges 13:2-24; 2 Kings 1; 1 Chronicles 21:18, Psalm 34:7; Isaiah 37:36; Zechariah 1-6; Hosea 12:3-5; Isaiah 63:17-14; Daniel 3:13-30; Daniel 6:19-22

There appears to be some things that stand out in the above Scriptures that would typically be out of character for angels to do. What are some of these things?

- To say that they could greatly multiply their descendants.
- To allow themselves to be called God.
- Angels in the book of Daniel and Revelation tell Daniel and John not to worship them.
- The name of God, Jehovah to be used interchangeably with an angel.
- Angels cannot pardon transgressions. Only Jesus can do that.

In addition this individual, the angel of the Lord, appears to be different from all the other angels and even acts unique to the other angels. Their speech is often more like how we see Jesus speak in the Bible. Then we see the angel of the Lord disappear and is not seen in the New Testament.

Many theologians believe the angel of the Lord is Christ who came to help the Old Testament individuals prior to His first coming. He was after all part of the Trinity and fully God. He was indeed eternal. His existence did not begin at Bethlehem. In John 1:2 we learn that He was “with God” in the beginning. So we know that He existed and was available for ministry during Old Testament times.

Is the angel of the Lord the preincarnate Son? Jesus was also fully man as He was born into this world. Since He would be born into this world was it possible for Him to be seen by the Old Testament peoples and not die? Of the three persons in the Trinity, Jesus, the second is the one most involved in manifesting God to man. Who do you think the angel of the Lord was?

Chapter 5 - Our Greatest Gift

“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which translated means, “God with us.” Matthew 1:23

The angel of the Lord, in the Old Testament, who ministered to the peoples in that time, has now become Immanuel, God with us. He is now seeable, touchable and knowable. Malachi 3:1 refers to Him as the Messenger of the covenant. A new dispensation is born, a new time period has arrived. The Spiritual Rock that Paul describes accompanying the Israelites has been born. We can know God.

The special grace that God provided to His people in the Old Testament through the angel of the Lord is now available for all; Jews and Gentiles

*In all their affliction He was afflicted,
And the angel of His presence saved them;
In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them,
And He lifted them and carried them all the days of old. Isaiah 63:9*

Christ could not have saved us as the angel of the Lord. To accomplish our redemption, He had to become flesh. He had to become one of us. (Hebrews 2:14-17)

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10-11

Jesus Christ, our Greatest Gift!

Answers to Exercises

Exercise 1 - Jesus in the Old Testament

1. Seed of woman, Comes from a woman, Humanity
2. From the Tribe of Judah, will be King, and will come before 70 A.D.
3. Prophet
4. Born of virgin, God-Man, House of David, Born prior to destruction of Temple in 70 A.D., Immanuel
5. King, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace, Justice and Righteousness forever
6. House of David, House of Lowliness, Seven fold fullness of Holy Spirit
7. There will be a forerunner to make preparations for His arrival
8. Anointed by the Holy Spirit. Meek and gentle. Appear to fail. Success will require His death. Salvation includes Gentiles.
9. Israel will reject His first coming. Salvation will go to the Gentiles for a time. Eventually Israel will receive Messiah as their New Covenant. At that time Messiah will re-gather all Jews to the land of Israel.
10. Training from God the Father. First coming characterized by suffering. Obedient in submitting to physical abuse.
11. Messiah born in unnatural circumstances, no unusual characteristics, suffering, rejection, trial and executed. Buried in rich man's tomb and resurrected. Death is substitutionary, removal of our sins, justification before God with a new relationship with God for us.
12. Anointed by the Holy Spirit for His prophetic preaching ministry.
13. Reign as King, the Lord our righteousness. Israel will be safe.
14. Born in Bethlehem, be divine and human, having existed from the beginning.
15. Riding on a donkey at first appearance as Messiah the King
16. At His First Coming Jews reject Him. Small remnant of Jewish believers. Messiah sold for 30 pieces of silver. Consequences for Jewish rejection. Messiah is the Good Shepherd.
17. Messiah will die by piercing.

18. Messiah would be raised back to life.
19. Despised and rejected. Calls out to God for help. Stared at and mocked. Bones pulled out of joints. Heart would rupture, extreme thirst, hands and feet pierced, clothing divided, trusts God and would be resurrected.
20. Messiah would be seated at the right hand of God the Father therefore He is equal with God and must be both God and man.
21. Priest, Ascend into heaven and sit at the right hand of God. Messiah will return when Israel accepts Him and rule over Israel in the Messianic Kingdom.
22. Messiah would uniquely be the Son of God.
23. Messiah's birth and death must both have happened prior to 80 A.D.

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