

God's Peculiar Nation

Let us look unto the Lord.

Dear Heavenly Father, precious and almighty Lord, thank You for giving this wonderful opportunity today to come unto Thy throne of grace, to exalt and adore Thee, and to remember Thee around Your table. What a joy it is, Lord, to come as a group of blood-bought believers, to rejoice in You, to remember You, to worship You. Lord it is a privilege that Thou hast granted to us. Thank You, Lord, for drawing us under Your loving wings, carrying us under Your mighty wings until now. We are unwise and foolish people, so as we meditate upon Thy word, speak to us, Lord, individually. You know where we are in our lives. You know, what we need to see and hear. So, Lord, I submit myself into Your loving hands and everyone under the sprinkling blood of the Lamb. Lord, teach us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Let us turn to Exodus, 19:1-10. This is a very old scripture.

“In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.”

May the Lord bless this word.

Introduction

I was meditating on the word of God to determine what I should share. Then in my daily portion, I was reading this chapter in Exodus, and somehow, I could not leave this chapter. This is the first time I have seen that the Lord wants to talk with His people personally.

The Journey in the Wilderness

There is some kind of transaction or commitment between the people of the Lord and the Lord Himself. Always the Lord said, “Do this, do that,” but He wants Moses to go

and tell them something. He was waiting for Moses to come back and tell Him something. This kind of transaction shows the purpose of the Lord, because in Exodus, when the people were in Egypt, the Lord was always saying to Moses, "Let My people go so that they may worship Me." He never disclosed His eternal purpose to Israel.

So, I was thinking, when the Lord delivered them from Egypt and they went to the Red Sea, they came into the wilderness of Shur. They were three days without water and were thirsty. In Exodus 15:23-26 they came to Marah and found water. They were regular people like us, and they were thirsty. Then the Lord advised Moses on what should be done, we all know that story, and the water became sweet there.

Once the water became sweet, when they drank the water, Moses preached one thing to them in verse 26: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight." It is such a generic statement. These people do not know what is right in the sight of the Lord because they were slaves. Then they came to Elim. They had those twelve wells, and that is in Exodus 15:27, and there were some trees and they rested.

Then they were traveling again, and they lacked bread. They were asking for food like normal people. At this time, in Exodus 16:4-7, they were all murmuring against the Lord. They were murmuring, but the Lord was gracious, the Lord wanted to show His glory to them. So, He rained bread from heaven, called manna, which they ate. Moses said to them, "ye shall see the glory of the Lord; for that he heareth your murmurings against the Lord." Sometimes it looks like our own story, the story of our own life.

It does not end there, because our story never ends there. Then they came to Horeb in Exodus 17:2-7. The Lord said, "Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb: and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." The word of God says Israel tempted the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" What a journey of the Israelites! Although they have seen the wonders in their life, how they have been delivered, it is a natural story of any human, of mankind. We are not different from them. In fact, we have been worse than them walking in the wilderness. How dangerous that would be. But it is very important that Israel tempted the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us, or not?" What a situation they were in! You know, water is so important when you are in the wilderness or when you are traveling through desert areas. So, they questioned whether the Lord exists. But the Lord brought them to worship that same Lord.

Then in Exodus 17, Amalek attacked them and they won the war. All this process the Lord is taking them through, the Lord is trying to find the right time: "when should I deliver My will to them? When should I talk with them in a proper way? And explain for what purpose they were brought out?" So, this is the first time in this chapter when the Lord wanted to speak to them about why He brought them out of Egypt.

If you look at the physical condition of Israel, for four hundred years they were slaves. There was no honor for them. I do not know how the living style was, how their clothing

style was, what food they had, or where they slept. Most likely in very, very, meek conditions! And above all, now they are running around in the desert. But the Lord wants to convey to them His purpose for why they are brought here. So, when meditating upon this word, in Exodus 19:3-4, the Lord is saying, "Moses, go and tell the children of Israel, how I brought them on My wings out of Egypt."

Peculiar Treasure, Kingdom of Priests, Holy Nation

The Lord is introducing Exodus 19:5-6. These are two powerful verses. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."

From these words, I could not move forward. Here the Lord is trying to tell them that they are not brought out of their former state into liberty and honor. The Lord wants them to be brought into the covenant and into communion with Him, which is a new idea to them. They were thinking that they wanted liberty, they wanted honor, just like the world. But the Lord has something else, something more than that. He wanted to bring them into the covenant and the communion. He is saying, "This is what My desire is. Are you okay with it?" In the fifth verse, the Lord wants to hear whether they will obey or not.

At this point in time, Moses went and told these words to them. They might have been surprised, "What are these words? Holy nation and priesthood?" They want liberty, they want honor, they want a good life, to eat well. Maybe they want to dress like Egyptians? Ride horses? I do not know. Have a respected, dignified living? But He is talking about something new. He is saying that they are a peculiar treasure. He is saying, "I want to make you a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." I do not know whether they even knew what a priest was at that point in time. They might have seen the priests of the Egyptians far away. What they were doing, shaving their heads, and doing all those things.

We will Do

But still, when Moses took these words to them, in the eighth verse they all responded, "We will do." It is not because they understood what it is. This is true with us too. Really, we do not understand everything. If I say, "royal priest," many of the kids do not know what a priest does, especially young people.

Many times, they heard the word "royal priest," but they do not see priests around there. When this was written, few people understood what this priest looks like and what their duties were. Later the Lord gave them instructions. So, it is not because they understood what the Lord said completely, but they said, "We will do," because they understood who they were under Him. They understood who they were under Him, because they have seen how mighty is that Person who delivered them from the mighty hands of Pharaoh. In those people's eyes, Pharaoh is the greatest, and they were under him. So, they understood this God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is greater than Pharaoh. He wants to do something with us, and we will do. This is the heart that the Lord

looks for. Because many times we do not understand all that the Lord wants to do with us, how He is to transform us. But the Lord only wants to hear whether we can say, “We will do” wholeheartedly.

This word reminds us of our salvation, and when the children are baptized and say, “We will do, we will follow the Lord.” Even at this time we never know what our life will be, what we will do. Many times, as young children, we heard the words royal priests and holy nation. But these young children remind us when they are baptized and say, “We will follow the Lord, we will do,” that there are many such promises we have made in the presence of the Lord. When we get married, we say, “I will do, we will do.” These are very great things because we are agreeing that we are in the great presence of the Lord and we will do, I will do.

This is what the Israelites have done. We all know the Lord knows the hearts of the people. When the Lord heard this, in Exodus 19:9, He said unto Moses, “Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever.” This is the Lord's heart. He wants to speak with them. Moses might have thought, “You tell me, I will go and tell them every time.” But the Lord wants to show forth His greatness to the children because now He wants to have a direct conversation with them.

Three Things

So, I was thinking about these three things: what about this peculiar treasure? this royal priesthood? and this holy nation? We have heard these messages many times. This echoes in Titus 2:14. Brother Mac also shared a message on this recently. Titus 2:14 says, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”

It also echoes in I Peter 2:5, which says, “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” In the ninth verse, you again see, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.” You see how strong is this desire of the Lord.

This is the desire of the Lord before laying the foundation of this earth, that we should be a peculiar treasure and a holy nation and a royal priesthood. In Revelation 1:6, when He talks about the Lord Jesus Christ, when He is introducing Himself, He says, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.”

This is a term which this world does not understand. The Lord is saying, “I want you to be like a nation.” There are so many races here in this world, but the Lord is talking about a new race, a new nation which we are all looking for. So, I was thinking, let me go into these three things for the benefit of the young people. I will very simply define it, so that we can understand the heart of the Lord, so that we have the mindset of this new kingdom. We are drawn away from this mindset, the mindset of the Lord that He wants us to be a different nation.

Peculiar Treasure

I was looking at a few of the Bible tools, and for a peculiar treasure one of them said, “a treasure is kept under lock and key.” In other words, we can say the rest of the world is trash in comparison. Have you ever felt that you are a peculiar treasure? Unfortunately, we feel that we are trash and feel others are a peculiar treasure. For the young people who are growing, you are a peculiar treasure; and the brothers and sisters who are in mid-life, we are a peculiar treasure. The Lord has prepared us for Himself.

God Gave all in Making His People a Peculiar Treasure

When the Lord said “peculiar,” He never left them saying that, “you are peculiar and you can go now.” When the Lord said a peculiar treasure in Exodus chapter 19, going forward, for this peculiar treasure, God has given divine regulations. For this peculiar treasure, God has given divine ordinances. For this peculiar treasure, He gave the promise of eternal life. For His peculiar treasure, He poured out His Spirit. You know, this is not given to everyone, it is only for a peculiar treasure. God sees you as a peculiar treasure. That is why He is pouring out everything He has on us.

That is what He wanted to do for this generation, this Israel generation. He brought them out of Egypt, not just to wander, or just to give them one kingdom so that they can rule and enjoy their life. The Lord wants to give the special thing that no humankind was given. That is the reason the Lord has drawn them out of Egypt. For Israel going forward, He gave so many laws on how to become a peculiar treasure, how to walk as a peculiar treasure. But for us, we could not go through all the law. The Lord knows that.

So, He gave Christ for us that He would make us a peculiar treasure. That is what we read in Titus 2:14, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people.” Peculiar people are not like weird people. Kids may think peculiar is weird. It is not weird. The Biblical definition of peculiar is not weird. The biblical definition of peculiar is like a special treasure, kept under lock and key. You should remember that you are a peculiar treasure.

Wholehearted Commitment

So, when Israel said, “We will do,” their statement reflects a sincere, wholehearted commitment in that moment, even though they did not grasp the full meaning. And even though you do not fully grasp its meaning, you need to accept that you are a peculiar treasure. We know that it is not within our hands to become a peculiar treasure, but it is in the hands of the Lord to make you a peculiar treasure. It is not enough that we come here every Sunday and worship the Lord and go to the meetings. This peculiar treasure is outside the church, outside this church. When you live a life outside this church, do you feel this? Are you a peculiar treasure of Christ?

Or do you realize that Christ gave Himself to make you a peculiar treasure? There are so many complaints in today's world. We forget that we are different and the whole world is different. The Lord has separated you to be a peculiar treasure. There may be issues in

life. There may be issues with the government. There may be issues with the office. There may be issues with the family. Somedays with the news of the world you feel hype, and somedays you feel down. But when you understand that you are a peculiar treasure in the Christian life, you know where you are walking, you know what you are.

Often the news of the world and the situation of the world make you forget that you are a peculiar treasure. We only feel peculiar when we come to the church and participate in the Lord's table. Once we go out of the church, we forget that we are a peculiar treasure. There are many races in the world, but the Lord wants to make a peculiar race that is you and me. This race where we were born, one day we will be losing this flesh, one day we will be losing our authority.

One day we will be losing the houses also. Many people are so happy when they buy a new home. Within no time, they know they need to downsize and move to other homes. I did not see anyone not downsizing within 10,000 days of their life. That is how many years? 30 years? So, whatever we are standing on now, saying "mine," this all will be gone in 10,000 days. But you know, God has made us to be a peculiar treasure that is for eternity. Things of the world may disappoint you. And the world will divert us from the truth that we are a peculiar treasure. The world always makes our concentration and our thoughts on something else to be happy, on something else to be sad. The world always diverts us so that our eyes are not on the thought of Christ saying that we are a peculiar treasure.

Kingdom of Priests

The second thing I was looking at is the kingdom of priests in Exodus 19. A priest is employed to serve the Lord; a priest is employed in immediate service. When we are born again, we are employed to serve as priests; and when these Israelites were brought out of Egypt, the Lord brought them out of the servitude attitude and the bondage that they had in Egypt to serve Him.

God is King

God wanted them to be erected into a kingdom, a free state governed by His own law. He wants to make this peculiar people a free state. Although there are many free states in the whole world, people in every part of the world are fighting free state vs. free state. But God's idea for redeeming us is to erect us as a kingdom and make us a government which is governed by His law.

This kingdom should be His Kingdom, and want Him to be their immediate King. This kingdom should be a people that have access to God, serving and offering sacrifices to Him. When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, He said, "this is Mine." He does not want this kingdom to be a kingdom that is not recognized by anyone. He wants this kingdom to be erected a kingdom that everybody should see, "This is a special kingdom made up of a peculiar people." And this kingdom should take a victory over neighboring kingdoms or other kings who come against the work of the Lord.

And this kingdom's work is to offer a spiritual sacrifice. Like in the priesthood, when we read I Peter 2:9 it says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness..." The purpose of the kingdom is to show forth His praises.

Distraction from the Kingdom

But we know how tactically the enemy has taken Israel away from this vision. Instead of becoming erected as a kingdom, they went under Babylon's rule. They have been ruled by many, many kings. That was not the Lord's desire, but they forgot the things they said they would do. They went away from the real desire of the Lord. The kingdoms of this world so attracted them that they forgot for what purpose the kingdom was erected by the Lord. You know this is so true today. The kingdoms of the earth, the kingdoms of the world, can easily draw us from the kingdom of the Lord.

Sometimes we are so happy with everything that is happening in the kingdoms of the world we forget that it is not our kingdom at all. If you are getting pulled into those things and feeling happy and sad, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, you have totally gone away from the purpose of the Lord. It is a very, very, skeptical thing that the enemy does. The enemy makes us think that the kingdom which is not visible does not exist; the invisible kingdom does not exist.

So easily, once we go out of this place, we are busy looking at the other things of the kingdom. We forget that we have been erected, and we are brought to be erected as a kingdom for Him, with a kingdom mindset. But unfortunately, the kingdom of the world easily draws us away from the kingdom of priests.

Remember Our Purpose

In this kingdom, in this priesthood, in I Peter 2:9 it says, "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness." You have so many things that need to be done. But my focus is not on all the things that need to be done. My desire is to remember ourselves: whether we have our eyes on that kingdom. Or have we gotten disconnected from the kingdom, or become another religious entity like Hinduism, Islam, or other religions. Do we have that kingdom mindset?

So, in Colossians 3:1-2, Paul reminds us about this. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." In another translation, it says in the second verse, "Set your mind." So, Paul is reminding them of the mindset of this kingdom.

The enemy wants to draw us away from the mindset of the kingdom which the Lord has erected and draw us towards the earthly kingdoms. Sometimes we are so sad, sometimes we are happy, because of the earthly kingdoms. But Paul does not want that. He wants our mindset to be the mindset of the kingdom which is above. If you are feeling joy or sadness, in anything other than Christ, then that is definitely not the kingdom that the Lord wants us to be in.

If you are sad, the Lord wants to bring those things unto His kingdom. If you are joyful, the Lord wants to bring that joy into His kingdom and ask, "Does it match the kingdom of My Christ?" That is the reason in II Corinthians, 10:5, the Lord said, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Otherwise, dear brothers and sisters, we would be lost in this kingdom so easily, thinking that we are Christians, which is true, but we have lost the connection with the kingdom for which the Lord has a desire.

The Lord's Desire: His Own Kingdom

The Lord had the desire before laying the foundation of this earth. He tried to explain it to the Israelites all the time. In Deuteronomy 7:6 He says, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God." We all know we belong to one nation. But there is a separation of holiness for the Lord. The Lord wants His own kingdom, not the kingdom erected by humans, not the kingdom erected by us or from anyone else. But the Lord wants His own kingdom. But unfortunately, we have our own kingdoms within this heavenly kingdom.

Have you understood that? We all have our own kingdoms within the heavenly kingdom. The Lord does not want that. The Lord wants you all to be part of that holy kingdom. The enemy's job is to draw you away from the thought of the holy kingdom, put you into the earthly kingdom, make you and me busy out of it. Then we will forget the purpose for which the Lord brought you and me out of Egypt. That is what happened with the people after coming out of Egypt.

The young boys and young girls are going to college. They do not understand they are a peculiar people. The Lord is trying to erect a kingdom, a holy kingdom through them. When they do not know what they are walking on, how do they know what is right and what is wrong? Every debate is so convincing that you are half sold on it anyway. It depends on the person who presents it. But for us, the Lord presented only one thing: He wants a nation for Him, He wants a people for Him. He wants a separated kingdom for Him, which is different from the earthly kingdoms.

In I Peter 2:9 we have seen the spiritual sacrifices. And we also saw how these spiritual sacrifices are there. But we are so fortunate because those people may have not known for them so much love was given to understand how the priest is. But for us, Christ Himself is our priest. He is not only our priest; He is also our sacrifice. So as young people, all we can do is hold on to Christ. "Lord, I want to be Your priest, but I do not know how to be. I want to be a peculiar treasure because You said I am a peculiar treasure. I want to be that kingdom, an erected kingdom. Lead me." And the Lord will take you through all the steps one by one.

If you are unable to bring all the thoughts and imaginations to the Lord, then very easily your thoughts and imaginations can start to work against the kingdom of God. Have you ever thought that how you examine your joy or your sorrow can work against the

kingdom of the Lord? Are your actions or your thoughts drawing you away from the real purpose of the Lord?

You know, when the Lord looked at His people, He was so joyful. He wants to talk with them. He wants them to hear His voice so they will see how powerful He is. The Lord is the same today; He wants to talk with His people. He wants to talk with each of you personally and convey to you what His kingdom means, what His kingdom is, and what His peculiar treasure means.

Holy Nation

The third thing I was looking at is a holy nation. I was thinking we are so busy in this world; we have so much discussion going around the world about all the nations of the world. The Lord's heart is different. He is thinking about some other nation. Every political view of all the countries is talking about the nation which is not the nation that the Lord is talking about. 90% of the time humans are in nations which they may not be the part of that nation after a few years, maybe 10 years, 20 years, or 50 years. Anyway, we will not be part of the nation. There are only two nations: one is the nation of the Lord; and the other one is not the nation of the Lord. There are only two nations.

The Worldly Nation

Everything in the world is speaking so much about the worldly nation. Few instances are left which speak about the holy nation. No one wants to talk about this holy nation. Nobody wants to debate about the holy nation. If you talk about the holy nation, people may think you are crazy. So, I want these young people to think about how you are the children of this holy nation. I do not want to say God dreamed about it, but this holy nation is what the Lord's desire is.

If you really examine us, our day-to-day life, what percentage of our day-to-day talk is about the holy nation and what percentage of our talk is not about this holy nation? You know, that is what the enemy wants to rob. The enemy wants to rob the original purpose of the Lord. For what purpose did the Lord save you and me?

Satan convinced Adam and Eve to reject God's rule in Genesis 3:1-2, and the other nation was formed. If Satan had not convinced Adam and Eve to reject the Lord's rule, maybe there would be only one nation, that is God's nation. And today also we are rejecting the Lord's rule in every one of our thoughts and actions. And we want our own nation built, a nation which is built on our feelings, on our emotions and our thoughts.

God's Chosen People

As we read in Deuteronomy 7:6, "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Until we recognize Christ, the very heart of Christ, you cannot desire for this holy nation. We all vote in this world, and voting is a very good thing because you want this nation to be good.

We all talk, we all debate, we all have our opinions. But dear brothers and sisters in Christ, in His still voice, the Lord is saying, "What about My nation? the nation which I wanted to build before laying the foundation of this earth?" If we have lost interest in this holy nation, we are no better than Adam and Eve being convinced by a serpent to reject the Lord's rule. Even after being saved by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, even after the Lord paying the price on the cross.

Demonstrate the Glory of the Lord

I mean, what could God do by the time of Adam and Eve? Although Adam was walking with the Lord, maybe he did not have so much understanding. Eve did not have so much understanding. I do not want to differentiate there, but they rejected it. Today also, knowingly, or unknowingly; with our actions and with our thoughts; we are rejecting the concept of the holy nation. In I Peter 2:9-11, it is asking us to demonstrate this holy nation if it is in you. If you are desiring to go into this holy nation, it says to demonstrate the glory of the Lord. In I Peter 2:9, it says, "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you."

In the 12th verse it says, "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, ... they may ... glorify God in the day of visitation." He is talking about this holy nation. If you are a part of the holy nation, the Lord wants you to demonstrate the glory of the Lord through your and my living. If you are not in the business of demonstrating the glory of the Lord; if you are not in the business of behaving in a way that people bring glory unto the Lord; we have lost the vision of the holy nation completely. The way the Israelites have lost, which the Lord restored to us, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many times we are so watchful about the earthly nations. If you are watchful of this nation, if you forget about the holy nation; if you are unable to demonstrate the glory of the Lord through your lives, you have fallen away from the Lord. The Lord produces all three things: peculiar treasure, royal priesthood, and holy nation. If we are unable to demonstrate one part of this through our lives, if we do not have even one clue what this means, then we are just talking about these things.

Conclusion

Somehow, I was not able to go beyond these verses. Why Lord? What is happening with this? What is happening with us? Why are churches becoming weaker and weaker, not able to influence others? How come others are influencing so strongly? Because the church has lost the thought of being a nation.

In the church, we think there are many nations. There is not; there is only one nation. The church has totally lost that we are a nation. There are no multiple races forever. Multiple races are only when you are born on this earth. There is only one race and that is a peculiar treasure race in the sight of the Lord.

It is a challenge for us, but the Lord did not leave us alone in this. He was a forerunner for us; according to Hebrews 4:14-15, He was a priest, He ran before us. He reminds each one of us that you are a nation, and you are a priest like Me. We are standing with Him;

we are not somewhere else. We are so habituated to praise the Lord with so many words we know, and we are habituated to bring all our things to the Lord, but we are unable to live the life or trying to be a nation that the Lord wants us to be. May the Lord bless this word.

Dear Lord, thank You for bringing this word, these simple verses. But it is Your purpose that is Your desire. When even Israel heard these words, they thought it was simple. And they said, "We will do." We have said so many times that we will do, but we are lost in the nations of this world. Lord, for what purpose have You drawn us out? You brought us to erect a kingdom for You, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Lead us according to Thy will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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