

## The Flowing of the Triune God within the Believers

- 1 Spring up, well, with water;  
Dig Thou, Lord, completely;  
Dig away all barriers  
That Thy stream flow through me.
- 2 Christ, the Rock, is riven;  
Living water's flowing;  
But within my heart now  
It is blocked from going.
- 3 I will dig by praying,  
Dig the dirt entirely,  
Thus release the Spirit,  
Let the stream flow freely.
- 4 There's no need again that  
Christ, the Rock, be riven,  
But unto the digging  
That I should be given.
- 5 What I need most deeply  
Is the Spirit's filling,  
That the living water  
From my heart be welling.
- 6 Dig till there is nothing  
Left to block the passage;  
Dig until the stream flows  
With the living message.
- 7 Spring up, well, with water;  
Dig Thou, Lord, completely;  
Dig away all barriers  
That Thy stream flow through me. (*Hymns*, #250)

The singing of hymns and spiritual songs both in our personal fellowship with the Lord and in our participation in the meetings of the church is an essential component of our Christian life and testimony. Hymns of private praise and fellowship with the Lord Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit develop and maintain our intimate contact and build up our faith. Hymns sung in times of mutual enjoyment and exhortation may be for the expression of worship, for the offering up of corporate praise and thanksgiving, or for the teaching and instruction of one another in the principles, beliefs, doctrines, and practices of our Christian faith and living. The hymns of the church are one of the foremost means of pursuing, enjoying, and exulting in our Lord. Regrettably, too many times we become habitual, even dull, in our times of

singing—failing to understand, realize, and enter into the revelation of the truth and the experience of life conveyed through many of the hymns. The full enjoyment of our heritage requires that every part of our being attends to the things that are conveyed through singing concerning our personal and corporate life and experience. We must learn to actively exercise our spirit and to maintain an alert and attentive mind in order to grasp every opportunity to gain Christ and to worship the Triune God in all of His marvelous attributes, principles, and ways. We can also receive fundamental and vital perfecting in truth, life, and practice for our living of the proper church life.

The fertile and powerful hymns of the church are full of the divine truths expressed through poetic utterances that are rich in revelation and expression. One hymn may call forth our deep appreciation and adoration of our Father God. Another may express joyful gratitude to the Lord for His salvation, redemption, life impartation, and transforming grace to us. There are hymns that require a sober consideration, a contemplative thought processing through prayer and consecration, in order to fully grasp, appropriate to our own situation, and apply to our life and living the fruitful messages that are conveyed through perceptive and often profound words. The above hymn by Witness Lee requires that we open our heart and mind to reap the benefits to our spiritual growth and experience in life.

### Spring Up, O Well

We may consider this hymn as a commentary on the Christian experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit and the flowing out of the divine life from within. The unveiling of this theme is based on an event in the wanderings of the children of Israel when they were passing through the wilderness on their journey from Egypt toward the promised land as recorded in Numbers 21:16-18:

From there they journeyed to Beer; that is the well where Jehovah said to Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water. Then Israel sang this song: Spring up, O well! Sing to it! / The well, which the leaders sank, / Which the nobles of the people dug, / With the scepter, with their staffs.

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In order to understand and appreciate this hymn, we must first consider it in terms of the historical record. Then we need to recognize the types signified by these events. Finally, we can examine the applications made by the writer, drawn from his Christian experiences, reflected in the biblical incident, and explained in the light of the New Testament revelation.

The historical event is described as taking place at “the well where Jehovah said to Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water” (v. 16). There are two other occurrences in which Moses, under the direction of Jehovah, brought forth water from the rock to meet the needs of the children of Israel; both took place when the people were restless and dissatisfied because of the lack of water during their journey. Exodus 17:6 says, “I will be standing before you there upon the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it so that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” On this occasion Moses was told to “pass on before the people” to the rock and to strike it (v. 5).

On the second occasion Jehovah instructed Moses, saying, “Take the rod, and gather the assembly, you and Aaron your brother, and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water. Thus you shall bring forth water for them out of the rock and give the assembly and their livestock something to drink” (Num. 20:8). On both occasions water came forth from the rock in abundance. On the first occasion, water flowed from the rock after Moses struck it with the rod as Jehovah had directed him; the second time, however, Moses was told to take the rod and *speak* to the rock rather than to *strike* it. In his frustration and anger with the people, Moses struck the rock twice with the rod. Although water came from the rock to meet the needs of the people, Moses and Aaron were rebuked and disciplined by Jehovah, who said, “Because you did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me in the sight of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (v. 12).

According to Numbers 21:16-18, there was also water at “the well.” In verses 17 and 18 the children of Israel were instructed to sing and to dig. Singing and digging are matters of our heart (Col. 3:16), and both are needed to release the flow in our spirit.

The rock in [Num.] 20:8 and Exo. 17:5-6 typifies Christ crucified (smitten) on the cross by God so that living water, the consummated Spirit of the processed Triune God, might flow out into us, whereas the well at Beer typifies Christ within us (John 4:11-12, 14). The digging of the well (v. 18) signifies the digging away of the “dirt.” The barriers in our heart—our mind, emotion, will, and

conscience—so that the Spirit as the living water may spring up within us and flow freely. (Recovery Version, Num. 21:16, note 1)

At the well the people needed to remove the debris and uncover the spring in order to satisfy their thirst. With this particular event in the journey of the children of Israel as his inspiration, Witness Lee penned the first stanza of his hymn, applying it to his experience: “Spring up, well, with water; / Dig Thou, Lord, completely; / Dig away all barriers / That Thy stream flow through me.”

As the hymnist reflects on the events related to the well in Beer, he realizes that just as with the well in Beer, it is possible for the divine life within us to be hindered by inward barriers from flowing. His prayerful utterance is that these barriers would be dug away so that the divine stream of living water could flow freely. To enter into the burden and practical revelation of the hymn, we must consider what the water signifies, what the obstructions are, and what it means to dig away these barriers in our own experience.

### Streams of Living Water Flowing in the Believers— the Spirit in Our Spirit

The burden of the hymn focuses on the streams of living water flowing within the believers; this suggests that the thirst for physical water encountered by the children of Israel points to the greater need of living water in the spiritual life of a Christian. We are immediately reminded of the cry of the Lord Jesus on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem:

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7:37-39)

The Christian life begins when a new believer receives the Spirit of God into his human spirit; this Spirit then becomes a dynamic flow within the believer’s regenerated human spirit. The Old Testament prophesied that Jehovah God would give the believers a new spirit and a new heart and that He would also put within them His Spirit:

I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols I will cleanse you. I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you

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to walk in My statutes, and My ordinances you shall keep and do. (Ezek. 36:25-27)

The clean water of which the prophet spoke is related to the cleansing from filthiness and from idols; hence, it must refer to the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God (John 1:29). God's precious redemption through the Son is a marvelous initiation of our salvation. But after being emancipated from sin and its penalty, we must realize that we have received something deeper and more surpassing in value and significance—every believer has received a new heart, a new spirit, and the Spirit within, constituting him to be a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

*A new spirit* suggests—in the light of the New Testament revelation—that our human spirit has been made alive by the enlivening of the Spirit of God. According to the New Testament there is a dynamic relationship between our new spirit and the Spirit. John 3:6 says, “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit”; John 4:24 says, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit”; and Romans 8:16 says, “The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.” These verses directly link the Spirit with our human spirit. It is by the Spirit that our spirit is regenerated and made alive. And it is by the Spirit in our spirit that we are constituted with the divine life to become children of God.

**A**ccording to the revelation in the Word, God became a man, entering into His own creation and becoming a part of it with the purpose of redeeming man from the filthiness of flesh and from the worship of idols. But the goal of His redemption was not merely to rescue man from eternal damnation. The marvelous goal of His redemption is the new birth issuing from His divine regeneration; Christ, our Redeemer, enters into our human spirit as the divine Spirit and enlivens our spirit with the eternal life of God. Now from our human spirit, rivers of living water—the streams of the Spirit of life—can flow. This extraordinary flow begins when we believe into the Lord Jesus Christ.

### Barriers to the Living Flow— Problems in the Human Heart

In the eternal purpose of God every genuine Christian receives the divine Spirit into his being at the time of his rebirth. The Lord Jesus promised the Samaritan woman, saying, “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life” (John 4:14). It is possible, however, for this fountain to become congested, obstructed, and even blocked completely. When this occurs, there is a need to dig away the barriers. Hence, the cry in the first stanza of the hymn: “Dig Thou, Lord, completely.” Every

hindrance to the flow of the Spirit within must be diligently removed. In stanza 2 this petition continues and opens further revelation related to the source of the blocked condition—the human heart: “Christ, the Rock, is riven; / Living water’s flowing; / But within my heart now / It is blocked from going.”

Christ, the Rock, has been smitten on the cross resulting in a life-flow that can perpetually stream into and through the believers. The crucifixion of the Lord was accomplished once for all. The writer of the book of Hebrews elucidates the folly of the Hebrew believers’ crucifying Christ again in an effort to renew themselves unto repentance after they have “once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit” (6:4). The dilemma among the Hebrew believers was that the flow of the living water, which had been fully and eternally given to them, was blocked.

**C**hrist has been crucified; we have received all the divine provisions of His salvation through faith in Him. There is no need for us to be saved again because Christ the rock has been struck, put to death on the cross, once for all. His life has been released through His death, and now as the Spirit this life flows within us through our believing into Him. In stanza 4 we read, “There’s no need again that / Christ, the Rock, be riven,” an unambiguous allusion to the two striking of the rock carried out by Moses. In Exodus 17:6 Moses was clearly told to “strike the rock.” Striking the rock with the rod is an unmistakable reference to the crucifixion of Christ:

In this type, Moses signifies the law, and the staff represents the power and authority of the law. Hence, the striking of the rock by Moses’ staff signifies that Christ was put to death on the cross by the authority of God’s law (cf. Gal. 2:19-20a; 3:13). (Recovery Version, v. 6, note 2)

When Christ was put to death, the Spirit of life was released from within Him to become a flowing river of water of life within His believers. This was confirmed when one of the Roman soldiers pierced the Lord’s side as He hung on the cross, and “there came out blood and water” (John 19:34). The blood refers to the blood that was shed for our redemption, and the water points to the Spirit as living water that the Lord promised to His seeking and thirsty believers (cf. 4:10, 14; 7:37-39; Rev. 21:6; 22:1) This interpretation also explains why Paul says that the water from the spiritual rock, Christ, is a spiritual drink (1 Cor. 10:4).

### The Connection between the Cross and the Flowing Stream

We need to realize also the connection between the cross

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and the flowing stream. Jehovah instructed the prophet Moses to “take the rod...and speak to the rock” (Num. 20:8). The rod in Numbers 20 signifies the killing of the cross which was accomplished in type in Exodus 17. Although there is no need to smite the rock again, there is the need to “take the rod,” to identify with the Lord’s achievement through His death on the cross and to speak to the rock so that it will yield its living water anew. Taking the rod suggests the application of the death of Christ to ourselves. In Romans 8:13 we read, “If you live according to the flesh, you must die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the practices of the body, you will live.” Putting to death the practices of the Body is an act of cooperating with the Spirit within us:

It is by the Spirit that we put to death the practices of the body. This means that we must hand ourselves over to the Spirit. We cannot crucify ourselves, but we can hand ourselves over to another One. This One is the one closest to us because He is within us. He is in our spirit, and to some degree He is also in our mind. He is within us, He is one with us, and we are one with Him. If we say, “I hand myself over to You, dear Lord,” He will crucify us. This is not to be religious; it not merely to pray and repent. By handing ourselves over to the crucifying Spirit, the killing Spirit, we are terminated. (Lee, *Experience* 46).

**T**he flowing Spirit has been released and supplied; we do not need to ask that He be released again. We need only to speak to the rock and ask the Lord to flow. Nevertheless, even though the water can flow freely, in our experience we may still be thirsty. This problem is not related to the source of the flow, but rather to the channel through which the flow must be carried—the human heart.

### **Tripartite Man in Creation, Fall, and Redemption**

Man was created in a very particular way. The Bible tells us that God formed man from the dust of the ground and then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. When the breath of life, the human spirit, entered into the formed and lifeless creature, man became a living soul (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:7; cf. Prov. 20:27; Zech. 12:1). Man is the unique creature in all of creation, who consists of three parts—a body (physical), a human spirit (spiritual), and a soul (psychological). The soul consists of the mind, emotion, and will. Created beings in the animal realm have souls; they can think, feel, and decide. All animals also have bodies as the outer container of the living organism, but only man possesses a spirit. The angels are spirits, but they do not possess a body (they may appear in bodily form, but this form is not a constitutional part of their being). Only man has three parts. He was created in this way for a specific and precise purpose; man is made with

the capacity to contact, receive, and express God. He is the created counterpart of God Himself, bearing His image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). The fulfillment of man’s purpose depends on his eating of the tree of life, which indicates a continuing organic relationship with his Maker. The tree of life represents God Himself to be received by man in the way of food as his unique life source.

But when man ate of another source, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, all three aspects of his tripartite being—spirit, soul, and body—were severely damaged (2:16-17). The body was infected with death—the sentence of death came upon the body, and this sentence is being carried out upon all flesh until this day. The body was also transmuted into the flesh, having received the sin element into its nature and falling subject to all the lusts and desires of its corrupted nature. Paul laments the fallen aspect of his body, calling it “the body of this death” in Romans 7:24.

The soul was damaged as well. The mind was captivated by the thoughts of the enemy, becoming involved in murmurings and reasonings, full of natural concepts and opinions, and submerged in a morass of satanic darkness. The emotions were corrupted into unimaginable lusts and appetites. The will was misdirected toward fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and of the thoughts. The result of the tragic effect of sin on man’s soul was a creature under condemnation, darkness, and death.

**T**he ultimate aspect of the fall of man was the deadening of his spirit in its functions of fellowship and intuition. While the function of his conscience was retained in order to provide a means to return to God, it is still possible for the conscience to become hardened so that man is unable and unwilling to be regulated by the righteousness of God. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul accurately diagnoses the spiritual condition of every fallen man:

You, though dead in your offenses and sins, in which you once walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit which is now operating in the sons of disobedience; among whom we also all conducted ourselves once in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. (2:1-3)

Into such a pitiful and hopeless scene, the Bible suddenly inserts the beautiful interjection:

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) and raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ

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Jesus, that He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. (vv. 4-7)

By means of our regeneration, we were made alive with Christ in our spirit with His resurrection life and power. We have been lifted up from the tomb of darkness, death, and shame into the marvelous light, life, and glory of God, even being seated with Christ in His celestial position of victory and honor. This was accomplished when our spirit was joined to and mingled with His divine Spirit. Now we are being transformed in our soul by the Spirit's spreading from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will. Our mind is being transformed, our emotion is being balanced and supplied with the divine life, and our will is becoming one with the will of the Lord. At His return, even our bodies will be transfigured to be conformed to His glorious body in resurrection (Phil. 3:21). Then we will be like Him, because we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). What a great and marvelous salvation we have received in Christ Jesus our Lord!

### The Issues of the Heart

We are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and we are regenerated through receiving Him as life into our human spirit. Through His Spirit in our spirit the life of God is now flowing into, through, and out of our innermost being. Hallelujah for this stunning, superb, and awe-inspiring deliverance from sin and death and recovery to life! But this salvation, although it was fully accomplished by the Lord once for all through His incarnation, human living, death, and resurrection, is progressive in our experience. We need the growth in the divine life and the transformation through the divine nature: "Christ, the Rock, is riven; / Living water's flowing; / But within my heart now / It is blocked from going."

The living water of the Spirit has been set free to spring up and gush forth, but the channel of this flow is the human heart. It is in the heart that the stream of living water may slow to a trickle and eventually become fully "blocked from going." The heart of man, as revealed in the Scriptures, consists of the combination of the three parts of the soul (mind, emotion, and will) with the conscience in the spirit. The flow is blocked in the heart, the most comprehensive part of our being. Christ the rock has been struck, living water is available to flow, but there is an obstruction, an impasse that restricts, hinders, or completely stops the flow. According to the hymn, and according to our experience, the source of this blockage is in our hearts.

The heart is crucial for us to enter into and carry out God's economy. The Lord's desire is to make His home in our hearts, to permeate and saturate every part of our

inner man, bringing us into oneness with Him in our thinking, feelings, and decisions. The heart is the focus of the battle between God and Satan. Paul writes of this warfare in terms of taking captive every thought:

The weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, as we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:4-5)

The thoughts of our heart occupy a central position in everything that we think and do. In particular, the mind may be taken over by reasonings, which are the consequence of Satan's manipulation of the thoughts in our mind. Watchman Nee affirms that the taking captive of our thoughts is crucial to our life and living:

For man to know authority, he must first break down reasonings. When man sees God as He is presented in Romans 9, all reasons are shattered. When Satan's stronghold is torn down, there is no more reason, and the thoughts are taken captive unto the obedience of Christ. It is not enough for man to meet authority in his speaking. It is not enough to remove all reasons. His thoughts must be captured unto the obedience of Christ. Only when his thoughts are captured can man truly submit to Christ...

There often seem to be two persons in the whole world who know everything—one is God and the other is myself. I am the counselor. I know everything. When this is the case, it clearly shows that the thoughts are not captured and that there is no knowledge of authority. A person whose stronghold of reasons has been broken by God's authority will have his thoughts captured by God; he can submit to Christ and be free from expressing opinions. In fact, he will not be interested in expressing his opinions. His thoughts will become the slaves of God, and he will no longer be a free man. The natural freedom is a prey for Satan. Such freedom has to be given up. We would only be obedient ones. There are only two ways in which man's thoughts can be used. One is being under the control of reasons, and the other is being under the control of Christ's authority. Actually, there is no such thing as freedom of choice in the whole world. We are captured either by reasons or by the Lord. We are either Satan's slaves or God's slaves. (93-94)

Dealing with our heart involves the casting down of reasonings and the taking captive of every thought to the obedience of Christ. It also involves turning our heart to the Lord. Second Corinthians 3:14-16 says,

Their thoughts were hardened; for until the present day the same veil remains at the reading of the old covenant, it not being unveiled to them that the veil is being done

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away with in Christ. Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart; but whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

**M**any believers, who zealously and sincerely care for good deeds and who engage in religious practices, still may have a heart that is turned away from the Lord because the focal direction of their heart's pursuit is wrong. Nevertheless, when the heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Whenever we turn to Him, the veil ceases to block our view, and we are able to behold and reflect Him. In reality the veil is our unturned heart. As we behold Him, we are being changed into His very same image in an ongoing process of transformation (vv. 16-18).

If a believer has a problem in his conscience, his heart will suffer the consequences. If we become distracted, perverted, or tainted and unregulated in the thoughts of our mind, our heart becomes contaminated with these influences. In the same way, if we love anything or anyone more than God Himself in our emotions, it will also damage the flow of life in our heart. A stubborn will, holding on to opinions or to decisions that have not been brought to the Lord in prayer will harden the heart, and once again, the flow will be stopped. Our heart represents our entire being. If our heart is right, life will flow—if not, the flow will be stopped.

### The Distinctive Way of Digging—Prayer

Stanza 3 says, “I will dig by praying, / Dig the dirt entirely, / Thus release the Spirit, / Let the stream flow freely.” Not many believers have the realization that prayer is not, first and foremost, asking the Lord to do things for us. Prayer is the primary means for us to contact the Lord, to maintain, and to restore our fellowship with God. The issues of our heart that separate us from God and block the flow of the river of water of life within our being can be dealt with only through much and thorough prayer. Resolutions to change our ways are pointless. Efforts to find and practice new ways or methods with a view to improving our relationship with the Lord are useless. Self examination, self effort, and subjection to ordinances and forms of asceticism not only fail to renew our enjoyment of the Lord, but they also harden our hearts and deaden our spirits (cf. Col. 2:8, 18-23). We need to dig away the barriers in our being, and the unique way to dig is by praying.

There are many admonitions in the Bible directed toward the rescue from the satanic darkness of this world and our fallen condition. We must put off the old man, be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and put on the new man. We are urged to put on Christ. We are called upon to put on

inward parts of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, long-suffering; bearing one another and forgiving one

another, if anyone should have a complaint against anyone; even as the Lord forgave you, so also should you forgive. And over all these things put on love, which is the uniting bond of perfectness. And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful. (3:12-15)

**A**ll these virtues are simply God Himself in Christ Jesus as the Spirit flowing within us. If we try to practice these highly desirable qualities apart from Him, we will inevitably find that the rich flow of life within has stagnated. The flow is Christ. The unique way for us to enter into this flow is to contact Him in prayer. We have no other source, and we have no other way.

Paul the apostle tells us that the mind set on the spirit is life and peace (Rom. 8:6). He also tells us that since we are raised together with Christ, we need to seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God (Col. 3:1-2). We should set our minds on the things above, not on the things of the earth. We are also appealed to by the apostle John to love God and to love one another: “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God” (1 John 4:7).

How can we set our mind on the spirit? How are we able to love the fellow believers? How can we escape the corrupted thoughts, the damaged emotions, the stubborn mind, or the condemned conscience? Such virtues and such freedoms proceed out of God Himself; our part is to contact Him in prayer so that we may “know” Him. I will dig by praying. I will not dig by renewing my efforts to unstop the flow. I will not dig by introspection, hoping to remove the barriers in my heart. I will not dig by resolutions. The irreplaceable requirement for the water to flow forth is to cultivate an intimate and continual fellowship with the Lord through contacting Him in prayer. In this way we afford Him the opportunity to make His home in our heart, to clear away all the accumulated rubble, wreckage, and debris from our inward parts so that the well will spring up, the Spirit will be released, and the stream will flow freely.

by Gary Kaiser

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