Pleading for a complete return to Christianity as it was in the beginning.

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# 'Prove all Things'

LAST month we wrote of the Bible as being the standard by which the teaching and practice of the Church are to be weighed and measured. Indeed, the whole case is summed up in one short passage of scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:21. A clear understanding of this verse is given by comparing various translations, for example:

Authorised and Revised Versions: 'Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.'

American Rev. Standard: 'But test everything; hold fast what is good.'

Twentieth Century: 'Bring everything to the test; cling to what is good.'

Weymouth: 'But test them all [prophetic revelations] and hold fast to the good.'

Moffatt's and Godspeed's translations: 'But test them all, retaining what is good.'

Two questions arise from this text: (1) What is the meaning of 'prove' or 'test'? and (2) how are we to 'prove' or 'test'?

### What is meant by Prove?

The answer is found by examining the word used by Paul. It is the Greek dokimazo. This is defined by Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexikon as meaning 'to assay, prove, test, esp. metals; to approve, sanction; to hold as good, pure after trial.' Without doubt what the Apostle has in mind is the assaying, proving, refining of precious metals carried out by metalworkers from very ancient times. In what is thought to be the oldest book in the Bible, Job (28:1) makes mention of refining of gold by separating the gold from the earthy material. To-day assaying is applied in metallurgy to find the amount of gold or silver in ores and alloys. Thus, in proving all things, we are to test them, to cleanse away the dross, the worthless, the rubbish, and determine what is pure and lasting.

#### How are we to Prove?

By human wisdom, keenness of reasoning, intellect? None of these can show us 'that which is good.' Following them we are led in many different ways and would reach widely different ends. Boasting reason's

'weak directions leave the mind bewildered in a dubious road.'

To prove is to test or ascertain by experiment or a standard. To what other standard could Paul refer than to the Word of God, whether written (the Old Testament) or spoken (the New Testament)?

Remembering that in the passage we are studying Paul is speaking of revelations of the Holy Spirit, prophecies in the Church, we marvel that he commands that even such utterances be tested. It would be near to blasphemy to suggest that such test could be made by any other standard than the Scriptures. And indeed we find that this very test was made in Paul's time. Recall how the people of Beræa, after hearing Paul and Silas preach, 'received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so' (Acts 17:10-11). They tested even the words of apostles to find if they were the teaching of scripture. This was not arrogance but a proper use of the Scriptures. Did not Paul himself, who had received his revelation of the gospel direct from Christ, say 'though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach any gospel unto you other than that . . . let him be anathema' (Gal 1:8).

#### The Test applied to Modern Movements

If the words of angels and apostles are to be tested by the Word of God, what becomes of the *ex cathedra* infallibility of the Pope, 'the voice of the Church,' the pronouncements of Ecumenical Councils, the decisions of conferences, or any other utterances of men? Submit them to the divine standard and they do not measure up; they are 'weighed in the balances and found wanting'; they do not ring true.

Let modern popular crusades or revivalist campaigns be tested by the Scriptures. The reason why such sensational and widely heralded results are achieved is that no standard is adopted by which to judge the apparent success. It is a tragedy that so few Christians are equipped with knowledge of the New Testament sufficient to test the 'conversions' in these campaigns. And it is a tragedy that those who do question these 'conversions,' on the authority of God's Word, are looked upon as enemies of good, fighters against God, almost infidels, when simply pleading that the Bible be given its rightful place. Without fear of contradiction it can be said that such 'conversions' are unknown in that 'Book of Conversions,' the Acts of Apostles, and are even opposed to plain scripture example.

It is sometimes said, 'You must admit that these revivalists preach the gospel, except for baptism.' Except for baptism! Is baptism then some trivial detail to be observed or not, as we wish? Except for baptism, when baptism is set forth in the New Testament as the leaving of the old life of sin, being born again to the new life of the righteousness of God through faith, being joined with Christ, the door to every blessing in Christ Jesus, and the entering into the glorious privileges of the children of God.

#### The Bible wider than Man's Mind

But it is said that God is too big to be confined within the pages of a book; that His Holy Spirit works in many ways apart from the Bible; that it is a narrow view of God which limits Him to such a revelation as the Bible contains. Yet what possible test of the workings of God's Holy Spirit can there be outside of the Bible? How can we 'prove the spirits, whether they be of God' (1 John 4:1) by any other measure or standard?

Such reasoning treats the Bible as a narrow sectarian treatise rather than as the word of Him who fills all space and all eternity. God 'confined in the Bible'? We need not fear. The Bible is far too wide and deep, and high for us ever to compass it, or search its depths or read its heights. Because it is the word of Him who is from everlasting everlasting, who changes not, who was before all things, the fulness of

Him that filleth all in all, the eternal I AM, this Book is the word of the Lord, which abideth for ever.

O make Thy Church, dear Saviour, a lamp of burnished gold, To bear before the nations Thy true light, as of old. O teach Thy wandering pilgrims by this their path to trace, Till, clouds and darkness ended, they see Thee face to face.

EDITOR.

# "Ye are ... A Holy Nation"

(Notes on the third lecture, given at Hindley Bible School, June 1st, 1955, on 1 Peter 2:9. By L. H. Channing)

THE statement we are to consider is a simple one, yet it contains some profound truths. We propose to confine ourselves to the consideration of the main thought, namely that of holiness, which we will consider from four aspects.

#### A Holy People

Of whom was Peter speaking when he used the term 'ye are'? The same people to whom this letter was written: the 'strangers and pilgrims' (compare 1 Pet.1:1 with 1 Pet. 2:11).

'Strangers and pilgrims' was a typical Jewish expression often applied to those Jews who were scattered throughout the ancient world. But Peter deliberately used this expression in order to denote that all those in Christ, Jew and Gentile alike, had now come into the favour and privileges that the Jew alone had once enjoyed.

This too is the force of the expression, 'ye are . . . an holy nation.' This title was given to Israel in one of its most hallowed moments, on Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:6), and therefore was one of its most jealously guarded privileges. But now Peter, by divine inspiration and authority, confers this title on the Church. The 'holy nation,' therefore, is no longer Israel after the flesh, but Israel after the spirit, the Church.

# A Holy Calling

- A. What holiness does not mean. It does not mean perfection. The word is sometimes used in this special sense in the Old Testament, when it applies to God. But Peter was certainly not using it in this sense, for in both his epistles he is urging Christians on to perfection. (See 1 Pet. 1:13-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-12). It does not mean proof against sin. If this were so, Peter had no need to exhort that same 'holy nation' to 'abstain from fleshly lusts' (1 Pet. 2:11). It does not mean sanctimoniousness. This is not holiness but hypocrisy.
- B. What holiness does mean. The original word for 'holy' used by Peter, and to a large extent throughout the New Testament is the Greek hagios. It is associated with a group of words which includes such words as 'hallowed,' 'saints,' 'sanctify,' 'consecrate.' All come from the same root. All have the primary meaning of 'separation.' Peter, therefore, was literally saying, 'ye are . . . a separate nation.'
- C. The principle of holiness in separation runs throughout the Bible. It is illustrated in the Old Testament. Thus we find: holiness of place: the burning bush (Ex. 3:5); holiness of time: the Sabbath Day (Ex. 20:8); holiness of things: Aaron's garments (Ex. 28:2); holiness of persons: the Jews (Deut. 7:6). The principle is extended in the New Testament. The idea of outward and ceremonial holiness almost disappears, except in such

cases as 2 Pet. 1:18. Separation must be actual and spiritual. Thus a member of God's 'holy nation' in the New Testament' must be separated from sin (Col. 1:13); separated from self (Matt. 16:24); separated from the world (Gal. 5:24).

D. The application of this principle of separation means that we are not our own (1 Cor. 6:19-20). The implications are therefore farreaching, and soul-searching. Our bodies are not our own. Therefore such things as marriage to an unbeliever are not only undesirable but sinful. Read such passages as 1 Corinthians 6:16;7:3-6,14,39;2 Corinthians 6:14, and understand the principle behind them. Our time is not our own, and therefore not to be frittered away on useless pursuits (Eph. 5:16). Our property is not our own. What we give to the Lord will be determined by how far we realise what the Lord has given us (1 Cor. 16:2). Our faculties are not our own. They are given to serve the Lord (Matt. 25:14-30). Our life is not our own. Christians are re-created in Christ that they might glorify Him (Eph. 2:10).

Most apostasy, indifference, worldliness, and therefore lack of power in the Church comes from failure to understand, and to hold fast to the divine principle of separation (2 Cor. 6:14-18).

#### A Holy Character

Even in the Old Testament ceremonial holiness was not sufficient. For instance, the priests were hedged around with restrictions above those of the ordinary people, not because God delighted in making their lives a burden, but with the purpose of seeing that their characters matched their calling. How much greater is this need with the people of the New Testament. A Christian's character must always be consistent with his calling. It is not only what we profess, or what we do, or with whom we associate, but it is what we are that matters. This will in itself control our profession, our actions, and our associations. Peter clearly makes the distinction between being holy, and merely professing holiness, for some of the most scathing words found in the New Testament are used by him of those whose characters were not consistent with their calling (2 Pet. 2)

A holy character grows through effort. Hebrews 12:14 tells us to 'Follow . . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.' Note the word 'follow.' It is not a question of merely being passively led, but the word means 'to urge forward,' 'press,' and implies effort. Similarly. Peter shows that the growth and development of the Christian character mean work (2 Pet. 1:5-11). Note the word 'diligence.' Many fail to lead holy lives because of spiritual indolence.

God depends on the holiness of His people. The Israelites were chosen to bring enlightenment to all nations. God has now chosen the Church for this purpose (Phil. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:9).

# A Holy Ideal

God's ideal for us as individual Christians. Man will assimilate the character of the god he worships: hence the corruption of idolatry, for pagan gods having no attributes of their own the worshipper heaps upon them his own sinful nature. This in turn becomes his ideal. If this principle can be used for evil, it can also be used for good. God uses this principle, for it is the basis of His appeal to His people (1 Pet. 1:15-16). Man, made in the image of God, is alone among God's creatures capable of reproducing the divine likeness. Our practical ideal is Christ (John 1:14) 18; Heb. 7:26; 2 Pet. 1:3-4).

God's ideal for His Charch. That she should become like her Savior (Eph. 5:25-27).

May our prayer be that we shall daily see the glorious vision of God's holiness more clearly, daily seeking both as individuals and as a Church to emulate it more faithfully, that we might be truly 'an holy nation,' not only in name and calling, but above all in character and ideal.

# 'What's in a Name'

THERE'S nothing in a name! How often that is said, and yet how untrue. It is true enough that one's character or behaviour does not depend upon one's name. It is equally true that names are often very significant. Indeed in the Bible every name, whether of place or person, is full of meaning. Before the Saviour was born, the angel of the Lord said to Joseph, 'And she [Mary] shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins' (Matt. 1:21). Jesus is a compound noun, being a combination of Jah (Jehovah) and the Hebrew verb 'to save.' How wondrously apt this name! The babe to be born, though truly human, was just as truly divine—that is the significance of Jah. Why was this divine one to enter human life? 'To save'—to save His people from their sins. How true the poet's words:

"There is a name I love to hear, I love to speak its worth; It sounds like music in mine ear, the sweetest name on earth. It tells me of a Saviour's love, who died to set me free; It tells me of His precious blood; the sinner's perfect plea."

I want to draw your attention to one name applied to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as Lord; but first consider some of the terms used by members of the Church among themselves. They are called

Believers (1 Tim. 4:12). Why are the Lord's people called believers? Because they have accepted and submitted their lives to a great fact. They believe 'that Jesus Christ is the Son of God' (Acts 8:37). That is why no man should pretend to 'baptize' new-born babes. All who yield to Jesus in baptism are required to affirm whole-hearted belief in Jesus as the Son of the living God. They are also called

Disciples of the Lord (Acts 9:1). A disciple is a pupil, student or learner; and notice, the saved ones are said to be disciples of the Lord. They are those who sit at the feet of the divine Teacher. They seek in all that they think, say and do, to conform to the doctrine of the Son of God. That is why no man has the right to require the acceptance of any human theory or theology in religion. Members of the Church are disciples of the Lord: they accept a faith once for all delivered by the Lord Himself. Moreover they are sometimes designated

Brethren (Acts 11:29). This includes brothers and sisters, and tells that the Church is a family. This family is entered only by the new birth, a spiritual re-birth of water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). Every member of the heavenly family is a child of God. That is why no man may wear the title 'father' religiously and have God's approval. The children of God have but one Father spiritually—and He is the one who has begotten them by His Spirit, through water. They must call no spiritual teacher 'Father' (Matt. 23:8-10). The Church of the Lord is composed of those also called

Saints (1 Cor.1:1-2). This tells of the disciples' relationship to God. It is the noun form of the word 'holy,' and could be translated 'holy ones.' It witnesses to the fact that believers are those who have been called out by the gospel—separated from worldliness and fleshly lusts—called to holy living. That is why it is utterly wrong to use 'saint' as a title, and to apply it to a few, long since dead. Every faithful child of God is a saint. There is one term by which disciples of Jesus are known to the world. It is

#### The name Christian

When Paul made his noble defence before Agrippa, the king said—no doubt sneeringly—'With but little persuasion thou wouldst fain make me a Christian' (Acts 26:28, R.V.). To the world, then, the followers of the lowly Nazarene were known as Christians.

#### What does this Name Mean?

'Christian' may be understood by considering other words that have the same suffix 'ian.' For example, a musician is one who is devoted to music—we could properly say: one who has given himself to music. A magician is one devoted to magic. A physician is one devoted to physic (the old English word for medicine). Likewise a Christian is one who is devoted to the Christ—who has given himself to the Saviour. The term means, literally, 'one belonging to the Christ.' This means that no-one can be a Christian unless he make a deliberate surrender of himself to the Lord Jesus. Such may truthfully sing:

'All that I have is now no longer mine And I am not mine own, Lord, I am Thine.'

#### Who Gave this Name?

'And the disciples were called Christians first in Antroch' (Acts 11:26). Some suggest that the designation was first given by the enemies of the Cross—as a term of contempt—but this is unlikely. There is nothing derisive in the term. Further, it most certainly has divine approval. It is written: 'But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name' (1 Pet. 4:16, R.V.). This name has divine approval. By wearing it the disciple of the Lord glorifies God. It is reasonable to conclude that it is a name divinely given.

Some religious names glorify men, such as Wesleyan, Lutheran, Calvinist, etc.; some glorify systems, such as Episcopalian, Presbyterian; and some an act, as for instance Baptist. None of these names has the approval of the Lord. The name 'Christian' gives glory to the one who alone deserves it, the one who purchased the Church with His own lifeblood, the Saviour Himself. Martin Luther well said to the people of his day:

'I pray you to lay aside my name, and no longer call yourselve Lutherans, but Christians. Who is Luther, or what? My doctricomes not from myself. I have not been crucified for the world.... How... would it become me, poor scum of the earth, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, dear friends, to assume these paranames; let us lay them all aside, and call ourselves Christians, after thim from whom our doctrine proceeds.'

# Who may rightly Wear this Name?

'If you're born in a Christian country, then you're a Christian; and you're born in a Hindoo country you're a Hindoo.' So said a friend the writer. As I said to him: 'One could with equal logic say that if you're born in a stable you would be a donkey!' In truth, there is no suthing as 'a Christian country.' Further, the birth that makes one a Christian is not natural birth but spiritual re-birth. Jesus said, 'Except a man born again [born anew, or from above] he cannot see the kingdom of God He went on to explain this by saying, 'Except a man be born of water of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God' (John 3:3-5). So may only enter the kingdom by being reborn spiritually; and in spiritual transformation water and the Spirit each play a part.

#### How Can a Man be Born Again ...?

What part does the Spirit of God have in making men Christians? His work is to 'convict the world of sin . . . righteousness and judgment' (John 16:8). He does this through the gospel, the Word of God, 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God' (Eph. 6:17). Thus, when sinners believe that the crucified Jesus is the Son of God, they are pricked (i.e., cut or stabbed) to the heart (Acts 2:37). The Spirit has then used His What is the place of the water in this transaction? believed the gospel cried out and said, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' They were commanded to 'repent, and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:37-38). The new birth, begun by the Spirit when a hearer believes the gospel, is completed when the believer obeys the gospel in baptism (immersion). (Compare Rom. 6:3-4: Col. 2:12). Baptism separates us from the old, worldly life; in it 'the old man' of carnality is crucified; from it we 'rise . . . to newness of life.' One who has been born of water and of the Spirit has the grand privilege of wearing this name: he is a Christian.

#### What about You?

When Agrippa sneered at his impassioned words, Paul the prisoner replied, 'I would to God, that . . . not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds' (Acts 26:29, R.V.). Reader, the finest service I can do for you is to urge you to yield heart, mind and will to Jesus; to be, as I am, a Christian. Eternity will not exhaust your gladness if you do, nor your regret if you don't. 'And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved' (Acts 4::12, R.V.). Decide now!

# Notes on my Life

By WALTER CROSTHWAITE

# My Early Days

THERE was nothing remarkable about my boyhood. Like most lads, I was in mischiefs oft. During schooldays, much time was lost by long and serious illness. When about nine years old I had brain fever, and was off school for about a year, and by doctor's orders was only allowed to attend half-time for a period after. Evidently, I had some brains once, but probably the fever wasted them.

Opportunities to make up for loss of schooling came later, but these were let slip.

# Training for Preaching

In the year 1890, Alexander Brown, a true man of God, mighty in the Scriptures, came to work with the Churches in the Furness District. Young men of ability and promise were sent to him for periods of training to fit them for further usefulness. In those days, young men had to give evidence of ability before being accepted for training. In January 1891, Albert Brown, of Nottingham, came for training; and for six months spent the Lord's Days preaching at Ulverston. During that period, I decided to take a stand for Christ, and with four others was baptized at Lindal on March 1st,

1891. We had our first fellowship with the Church at Ulverston the same day, my father giving us a welcome. Usually very fluent, when he took my hand he found it difficult to speak and, with tears of joy, just managed to say: 'This is the happiest day in all my experience.' It has been a source of great comfort to me to know that I helped to bring joy to one who had laboured long and hard for his Lord amidst much discouragement and disappointment.

Alexander Brown was conducting Bible Classes in the district, and also by correspondence giving valuable help to those who availed themselves of the opportunity. I attended all the classes I could, and also took up his correspondence course. As he was judged by some (misjudged) to be a harsh man, a hard taskmaster, the following letter is of interest:—

Prospect Cottage, Kirkby in Furness, March 24th, 1891.

'Dear Walter,—I expected to manage to write to you earlier. Enclosed two papers will now give you something to do. One will tell you the kind of work expected, and how to do it. The other contains the first set of questions for you to answer. Some of the questions will give you a bit of work, some others are easy. Do the best you can with them. The more you work at them the better for yourself. If you cannot quite satisfy yourself on some points send on always whatever you think, and I will do all I can to help you. Try to send in your first answers by April 15th, and once every two weeks after that.

With best wishes for success in this correspondence work, and in the whole of your Christian life.

A. BROWN.

#### My First Address

At the time I joined the Church, week-night cottage meetings were being held. One of the elders, Thomas Glossup, who had been my teacher in the Sunday School, a man of the Book, a real walking Bible, prevailed on me to try to speak at one of these meetings; and insisted that I should speak on "The Second Coming of Christ." What a theme for a beginner! But fools rush in where angels fear to tread. When David King had the training work in hand, one of his young students preached on a Lord's Day evening. When he went for his lesson the next morning, Bro. King, fixing his piercing eye on him, said: "There were some things in your address which I have studied for many years, and they remain a mystery to me, but you seem to know all about them." After a few questions, the young man found himself in a maze. When we were young we knew, or thought we did, far more about some subjects than we do now after many years' study of them.

My first address at that cottage meeting is an indelible memory. A crowded room, with a big fire, gave the speaker a hot time in more senses than one; and the carefully-prepared speech was finished in about five minutes. As I look back to my early efforts I am amazed at the wonderful patience of the older brethren with us youngsters and our crude efforts.

I was soon doing a fair amount of preaching. My father took me with him on his planned appointments, the arrangement being that I should speak first and he would fill in the time that was left. I was put on the Furness District preachers' plan in September, 1892. My father was anxious for me to get some personal training under Bro. Alexander Brown, but unfortunately Bro. Brown's health failed early in 1892 and he was unable to render any further service.

#### My Father's Death

Then on September 26th of the same year my father suddenly fell asleep in Jesus. This was a stunning blow for us all. For him we knew that all was well; but to me the sudden loss of one who was dearer than life was

hard to bear. We received many letters from esteemed brethren, from clergymen and temperance societies in the town, all testifying to his worth and work. The following is from a letter written by Mr. Bell, the Congregational minister, with whom my father had many warm discussions on religious matters: 'His sudden departure came as a startling message to each of us. But like another who walked with God, he too had this testimony that he pleased God, and he was not, for God took him. Few indeed left behind so fruitful a record of work well done. He declined no duty, refused no service he could render. Outspoken and fearless, he sought to speak the truth in love, and thus became a succourer of many.'

The death of my father changed my plans. Being the only son, I had to stay at home and do all I could to keep things going there. I had served my time to the painting trade, and worked at that until I turned twenty-seven years old. Bro. Lancelot Oliver had taken over the training work after Bro. Brown's illness, and I commenced correspondence work with him and received much help and kindly encouragement.

(To be continued)

# How People were converted in New Testament Days

IT is our desire to point out the New Testament way of conversion, and please note that our remarks are limited to the words of the New Testament. Let us examine the representative conversions in the Book of Acts and study them as a whole.

### Day of Pentecost

The first example of conversion is that of the people in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, A.D. 33. In verses 14-36 of the second chapter of Acts it is easily seen that they heard Peter's sermon. Verse 37 states that they were 'pricked in their heart' and asked 'What must we do?' They were told to 'repent' of their sins. Verses 38 and 41 state that they were paptised. Thus the Pentecostians heard the gospel, believed it, repented of their sins, and were baptised for the remission of their sins.

#### Samaritans

The second case of conversion is that of the Samaritans recorded in Acts 8. Verses 5 and 6 declare that the people heard the preaching of the gospel by Philip. Verse 12 states that they believed the preaching and were baptised. This made them Christians. What had they done? They heard and believed the preaching of the gospel and were baptised for the remission of sins.

#### Eunuch

A typical case of conversion is to be found in the case of the eunuch in the latter part of the eighth chapter of Acts, the third example of conversion in the New Testament. What did he do to become a Christian? Here it is briefly. (1) Acts 8:35 states that the eunuch heard Philip's preaching of the gospel; (2) Verse 37 clearly teaches that he, the eunuch, believed what had been taught and confessed that he believed; (3) Verses 36-39 state emphatically that the eunuch was baptised and went on his way rejoicing. Why is the eunuch rejoicing? Now he is a Christian and he has a right to be happy and to praise God.

#### Saul of Tarsus

The fourth example of conversion in the New Testament is that of Saul of Tarsus found Chapters 9, 22 and 26 of Acts. When the Lord appeared to Saul, he was instructed to 'rise, enter into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do' (Acts 9:6). Ananias, the preacher, was summoned, and from his lips Saul heard what he must do to be saved. From Acts 9:8-11 it is clearly apparent that Saul had repented of his sins, and in Acts 22:16, Ananias instructed the sinner to 'Arise and be baptised and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' We have every reason to believe that Saul did just this. Now what did Saul do to be saved? He heard the gospel, believed it, repented of his sins, and was baptised.

#### Cornelius

The fifth example of conversion is to be found in Cornelius and his household, recorded in Acts 10. What did he do? Verses 34-43 state that he heard the gospel as preached by the apostle Peter, and Verses 47 and 48 declare that they were baptised. Thus their faith in the Christ prompted them to put Christ on in baptism (Gal. 3:27).

#### Lydia

The next example, the sixth, of conversion is found in Acts 16—Lydia and her household. Without becoming involved in theological suppositions, here is what she did in order that she and her household might become children of the most High God. Verse 14 says that she heard the gospel as preached by the apostle Paul. Because of her faith already in God and her acceptance of the truths presented by Paul concerning Christ as the Redeemer, she and her household were baptised, as verse 15 shows.

#### Jailer

Next in order is that of the Philippian jailer and his household. Here is what they did in order to become children of God: first they heard the word as preached by Paul and Barnabas (verse 32); second, they believed it (verse 31); third, they were baptised (verse 33). Again their faith, which had been produced through the preaching, prompted them to put Christ on in the act of baptism. There lives not the man who can successfully contradict this conclusion.

#### Corinthians

The eighth example of conversion in the New Testament is that of the Corinthians. Their conversion is set forth in this fashion: 'And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptised' (Acts 18:8).

Thus, my friends, in every case of conversion in the New Testament there is special mention of baptism. In many cases faith is implied. Why? Because faith is the first requirement to one's salvation and baptism is the last step in the process. In several instances there is no mention of repentance whatever. Repentance is turning to God. Faith and repentance are both demonstrated by baptism. Where there is no special mention of faith or repentance, there is always an unmistakable inference of both in the willingness of the person to be baptised.

Therefore, we can readily see the process. They HEARD the gospel: BELIEVED that Jesus was the Christ the Son of God; CONFESSED their faith; and were BAPTISED into Christ. Note the simplicity of the divine plan of becoming a child of God.

The apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel and baptise in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It must be agreed that they fulfilled the commission.

This is how Christians were made in the days of the apostles, and if people do the same things to-day will they not also be Christians? Preacher friend, how can you afford to preach less than this?

# 'The Great Remover'

CHRIST is infinitely fair in dealing with men. It is expensive to follow Christ. He wants men to sit down and count the cost of being His disciples. It will mean self-denial, hardships, and cross bearing. But regardless of what it costs to follow Him, in the end it will cost a great deal more not to follow Him. On the other hand, Satan endeavours to conceal the price those who follow him must finally pay. He endeavours to hide the certain consequences of sin. He makes strong drink appear attractive, but he does not feature its ruinous results. An exchange carries the following interesting observation:

'Alcohol will remove stains from summer clothes. This is correct. Alcohol will also remove—

The summer clothes
The winter clothes

The spring clothes
The autumn clothes

not only from the back of the man who drinks it, but from his wife and children as well.

Alcohol will also remove-

A good reputation

A man's business

A man's friends

A happy look from children's faces

A prosperous man to a pauper grave

A man from respectable society to the penitentiary

A man from the highway of heaven to the road to hell. And will make a devil out of an otherwise inoffensive citizen.

As a remover of things ALCOHOL HAS NO EQUAL.'

'Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it sparkleth in the cup, when it goeth down smoothly: at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder' (Prov. 23: 31,32).

# Gospel Meetings in Haarlem

Haarlem, Holland: July 2nd-15th.—A party of twenty adults and three children journeyed to Holland on July 2nd, returning thirteen days later. The purpose of the visit was two-fold: it was meant to be a holiday, but, more important, it was for the purpose of conducting gospel meetings in English in Haarlem.

Time would fail to tell of the experiences of the brethren, of the places visited, things seen and done. Members of the party soon adapted themselves to their surroundings, even eating raw herrings in truly Dutch fashion! No tribute is too high to pay to Sisters Worgan and Richardson, who catered for the party, and did a truly magnificent job. Brothers Worgan and Richardson were equally tireless in their efforts to ensure

that "a good time was had by all."

Seven gospel meetings were held. It was not easy to speak much more slowly than usual, so that Dutch people who spoke only a little English might understand. But it was a very rewarding experience. A good number of Dutch nonmembers came in (some who spoke excellent English) and many seemed impressed by our appeal for a complete return to the ancient order of things. May the seed sown bring fruit in the willingness of many to embrace the truth, being freed from every human religious system and doctrine.

There were eight non-members in our party, and these attended the meetings consistently. Some had never before visited services of the Lord's church. We

pray they may turn to the light.

God speed the day when those of every nation shall sit down together in the kingdom of God, free both from the bondage of Satan and from the traditions, commandments and systems of men.

A. E. WINSTANLEY.

# SCRIPTURE | READINGS |

Sept. 4: Exodus 12:1-20; Luke 22:1-23. ... 11: Isaiah 63:1-14: Luke 22:24-53.

,, 18: Isaiah 52:13-53:12: Luke 22:54-71

" 25: Isaiah 59:9-21; Luke 23:1-23.

Satan at work (22:1-6).— Those concerned in this diabolical work little realised they were gathered together to 6 whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel foreordained to come to pass' (Acts 4:28). Their work brought about their defeat (1 Cor. 2:8). Luke, writing for Gentiles, explains that the feast in prospect was called the Passover. Though feast and Passover are distinct, they form in the way of speaking one festival. Read in this connection Numb. 28, 16 and 17, and Lev. 23:5 and 6.

The Saviour's popular reception during the week's beginning had so enraged the authorities that, in spite of their fear, they plotted. We notice their intention was 'not during the feast,' and they needed the stealth of Judas and his intimacy with his Master's movements. Any loyalty he ever felt towards Jesus had now entirely faded—he 'sought opportunity.' We safely assume that this was not a sudden change in him, so much as a development of avarice and possibly disappointed ambition.

Preparation for the Last Supper (22: 7-13).—It is said that the Jews cleared all leaven (with some formality) from their homes on Nisan 13th, which was probably Wednesday, the day on which these preparations were made. It could not be the day of the sacrifice of the lambs because of the purchase of food for the festival (John 13:29), and the other actions taken by the Jews the next day (see John 18:28). The question of the actual days of the week has been much disputed and the highest authorities have come to opposite conclusions. We would refer readers to page 84 in the June number of the S.S. The lambs would be slain at the time the Saviour was crucified, and while the festival taken as one whole would begin on Wednesday evening at the time of the Last Supper, the actual Passover meal would be eaten the following evening.

The Saviour knew of His departure and therefore with earnest desire had looked forward to 'this passover' meal, before He suffered as the One Passover Sacrifice for ever. The arrangements for this meal were made quietly, and any pub-

lic demonstration entirely avoided. From the time of His arrest (it was dark then) to His last words on the cross no moment of quiet or peace was possible, and only one brief conversation with a disciple (John 19:25-27).

Inhabitants of Jerusalem would give free use of their rooms to pilgrims coming to celebrate the Passover, and the disciples could have just another evidence of their Master's divine wisdom in His instructions for finding the upper room.

The meal (22:14-20).—Jesus said on another occasion 'how am I straitened until it be accomplished' (Luke 12: 50) with the same thought as in verse 15. He looked forward to the fulfilment of His institution when He would in a spiritual sense celebrate it with His disciples. It was customary for several cups of wine to be shared during the meal, the first at the beginning as in verse 17; but that which takes its place in the breaking of bread' was the last—'after supper.' passes this on to us as His testament or will, but better it symbolises His covenant of forgiveness (R.V.), Read Heb. 9: 15, 18-22.

Warnings and exhortations to the disciples (22:21-38).—The teachings recorded in John chapters 13 to 18 were given at this time, and Luke's record is abridged. First we read the warning of betrayal-which may have been given before the institution of the Lord's Supper. It is in fact a terrible thought that one could be present who had in his heart such diabolical thoughts of hatred and betrayal. Well might the Psalmist say: "Who can discern his errors?" and pray. 'Clear thou me from secret faults,' and include the 'meditation of my heart' in his last lines (Psalm 19:12). There would seem to be an allusion in verse 27 to the incident recorded by John (chapter 13:4).

The disciples still had thoughts of an earthly kingdom with various offices of greater and less importance, and these apparently for a time superseded their fears of what was coming. The kingdom to which they were appointed was vastly different from their conceptions, and yet how great a responsibility they were to shoulder. The honour of eating and drinking at His Table is great—for us as for them—but they have the highest honour of 'whatsoever ye shall bind on earth . . . ' which meant 'judging the twelve tribes.'

A special warning was needed by Peter, on whom personally so much was to depend, to make him realise his need of divine aid—and the Saviour's prayer. 'Sifting' involves a big shaking. It would bring to light 'the treachery of Judthe instability of Peter and the weakness of them all.' We likewise need saviour's prayer, and 'He ever liveth make intercession' (Heb. 7:25). Final

Jesus warns them of the withdrawal of the miraculous protection granted during His earthly mission. Conflict and death are coming to the faithful. They will need power to wield weapons rather than money, provisions, or even garments. The too literal conceptions of the disciples brought the rebuke 'It is enough'—afterwards they would perceive His meaning.

The Agony of Gethsemane (22:39-46).—It is well to read the three accounts of these incidents to get the full picture prepared for us by the divine author. Luke does not record the withdrawal of Peter, James and John closer to the place of this scene of supreme temptation and agonising prayer. He who was tempted in all points like as we are, by reason of His purity and holiness of life had and needed greater power than we have—except as we confide and trust in Him—because He bore so much greater a trial. We just cannot know as He did the dreadful sinfulness of sin, nor bear it for others as He did. 'If Thou be willing' was the principle of His whole life of suffering obedience (John 5:30, 6:38).

We observe that it is not stated that the sweat was of blood, but like drops of blood—as blood falls from a wound. The disciples were wearied to exhaustion with sorrow and trial of the day—they could not keep awake. Only divine aid could uphold the physical frame under such awful strain and sorrow, and it was granted (verse 43). We never shall grow out of the need to watch and pray while we live here below.

The arrest (22:47-53). It is difficult to get the exact details of the arrest from what appear to be differences in the four accounts. Judas may have hastily and too early given his signal, and the whole band would be taken aback at the complete boldness of Jesus. Judas was rebuked, Malchus healed, and the priests and captains shown their cowardice. He Who restored the ear could have called the legions of angels to His help, but instead He meekly submitted to violent and wicked men, fully conscious of the surpassing indignities and torture which would follow. What supreme strength of will this indicates. Stephen and the noble army of martyrs followed in His train.

Peter's fall (22:54-62). — Peter's bold assertion of faithfulness (verse 33) is in marked contrast to his following afar off, but he falls still further from his promise when accosted, and the third time even denies with oaths and curses. This is a sad story but how true to human nature. It surely is better not to boast, but quietly to seek God's help in times of trial, and not to be critical but sympathetic towards Peter. 'Let him that thinketh he standeth...'

'Cockcrow' would be a time of a general awakening. Individual cocks might well crow before that, and was not that the case? The full warning was 'Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice.' So he had his warning, as recorded by Mark with fuller information from Peter himself, after the first denial, as well as the final realisation of his sin as Jesus turned and looked upon him as the sound of the general 'cockcrow' was heard. When we recognise our failure it is a sad and distressing experience

Jesus at the High Priest's house (22: 54 and 63-65). Here Jesus was first brought and subjected to cruelty and indignity. Fear had struck His captors at first, but they got bolder as no miraculous power was exercised against them, and feeling their power over the Holy One they thus early manifested their brutality.

Jesus before the Council (22:66-71).—
It seems that Annas, who had been deposed from the High Priest's office in favour of Caiaphas his son-in-law, first interviewed Jesus and permitted the indignities already mentioned, and then sent Him bound to Caiaphas for a further examination prior to the trial before the Sanhedrin—the whole Council. Here He was questioned and the false witnesses brought, and the verdict given as recorded in verse 71. Matthew and Mark give more detail.

The trial before Pilate (23:1-7 and 13-23).—It seems clear that Pilate saw through the accusations and the motives of the Jewish leaders immediately. He was out of favour with them already, and their ferocity against one whom he recognised at once as innocent roused his opposition. The perversion of the nation and the forbidding to give tribute falsehoods. were quite obvious Roman rulers of a restless and rebellious nation would soon know when political incitement was at work—and none at all had ever come from Jesus. His popularity with the common people could not have passed unnoticed by the authorities. Thus Pilate hoped to pass responsibility on to Herod, ruler of Galilee. He was entirely unsuccessful, but his weakness imposed still further torment upon the victim of envious and degraded manhood. The almost worse cowardice of Pilate led him finally to give way to clamour: the biggest crime in history followed.

The trial before Herod (23:8-12) —Why did Jesus make no reply to the questions of Herod? It was surely because both questions and answers would be entirely futile. He knew there was no real wish to know the truth, and He had taught His disciples not to cast pearls before swine. That fox' was, however, the title given by Jesus Himself to the puppet monarch, who could sink so low as to join his own soldiers in their despicable

game of baiting a helpless and innocent prisoner. Such things were common in those dark and cruel days—and they are far from unknown in the supposed enlightened age in which we live.

R. B. SCOTT.

# NEWS FROM THE CHURCHES

Aylesbury.—We are pleased to report another addition to our number as a result of our recent mission with Brother Weldon Bennett. He is John Tomey, a young man who was formerly a member of the Pentecostalists. However, he has been baptized in the scriptural manner; for the remission of sins. He was received into fellowship on Lord's Day, August 7th.

Our new brother is very spiritually minded and should be a great asset to the work here. Although doing farm work, he does not allow this responsibility to stand in the way of his obligations to the Lord.

We rejoice greatly in this further blessing, and we pray that the Lord will continue to find this church worthy to receive fruit for the labour. L. H. CHANNING.

Blackburn.—The church rejoices in the word being faithfully preached and bearing fruit once again. We are glad to report the addition to the church of Derek Renshaw, a Sunday School scholar from infancy and a regular attender at the gospel meetings. He put on the Lord Jesus in baptism on Lord's Day, July 10th.

The occasion was made doubly joyful by the receiving back into fellowship of his mother, after a long absence. Pray with us, brethren, that both may be kept useful and faithful.

H.W.

Buckie and Peterhead.—A rally sponsored by the Buckie and Peterhead Churches, was held in the United Free Church Hall, Peterhead, on Saturday, 30th July. Meetings were held in the afternoon and evening.

Bro. George Reid, Senr., from Buckle, presided over the afternoon meeting, which numbered fully a hundred. After giving a welcome to visiting brethren from Birmingham, Wigan, Fife, and Slamannan districts, he gave a special welcome to Bro. and Sister Crosthwaite from Ulverston, commenting on the stand they had taken for the truth, and our need to be steadfast and unmovable in the work of the Lord irrespective of the consequences, knowing our labour was not in vain in the Lord.

The speakers were Bro. Andrew Gardiner and Bro. Walter Crosthwaite. Bro. Gardiner exhorted us to "Unity," using as the basis of his remarks Eph. 4:1-5.

He showed the One Faith revealed One Way of Salvation, and if obeyed gave admission into the One Body—the Church. He urged us faithfully to preach these truths. Bro. Crosthwaite spoke on "Restoration," giving us an outline of Church history. He dwelt on the need, means, and manner by which New Testament Christianity could be restored, and showed that, although it meant sacrifice for all, it would end in a crown. Brethren S. Hunter and D. Dougall rendered items of praise.

After tea, provided by the sisters, we met for a Gospel service. Approximately 140 were present. Bro. W. Strachan, of Peterhead Church presided, and Bro. Dougall and Bro. Crosthwaite were the speakers. Bro. Dougall spoke on "Back to Jerusalem," using as the basis of his message Luke 2:40-49. He dwelt on the need of going back, the negligence of those trying to get back, and the joy of those who get back. Bro. Crosthwaite spoke on 'The Church, the pillar and ground of the truth,' revealing what the truth was, and the Church's duty to broadcast it faithfully. He urged upon his hearers the need of accepting the truth, so that they might be freed from sin and made heirs of heaven.

During the service, Bro. John Geddes, of Buckie, rendered a hymn of praise. A day that will live long in our memorles for its inspiration through faithful preaching was brought to a close with the singing of the hymn, 'Just as I am without one plea,' and prayer.

A. STRACHAN.

Peterhead.—It is with joy and gratitude in our hearts to our Heavenly Father, that we record another two additions for the Lord. On July 17th, Mrs. Paterson, and on July 22nd, Ronnie Buchan were immersed into Christ. On both occasions Bro. David Dougall preached the gospel. Through the assistance of Bro. George Hudson, of Summer Lane, Birmingham, and Bro. Dougall, we have been able to conduct Bible Study and Gospel meet-

ings five nights weekly. The month was brought to a close with the services of Bro. W. Crosthwaite on Lord's Day, July 31st. It was a real joy to be at both services. As he searched into God's Word, and brought out its treasures we were thrilled at their beauty and rejoiced to be in the family of God and recipients of such food. number of 89 broke the bread and over 100 attended the gospel service. sword of the Spirit was wielded mightily and we are sure conviction was wrought in the hearts of many. Although in his eighty-second year our brother has a wonderful memory and amazing vigour. We pray that God will bless him abundantly in the days that lie ahead. To all who have helped us in prayer, presence and preaching we say Thank You, but ascribe all praise and glory to God.

A. STRACHAN.

Albert Street, Wigan.-On July 30th and 31st the church made its first venture of holding a week-end rally and the response to our effort was very inspiring Members from the district Churches and others from Yorkshire and the Midlands came to support us, and to all we extend our thanks and appreciation. In the afternoon of Saturday we had a devomessage from Bro. Geoffrey Lodge, followed by a discussion which was very helpful to all present. We had a panel of speakers answering questions on "The Local Assembly"; this also provided excellent teaching and showed how far we come short of the New Testament Church. After tea we heard Brethren A. Marsden and A. E. Winstanley faithfully proclaiming the Gospel to about 120, including many non-members; our hearts were made glad when at the close the daughter of our Bro. and Sis. Gibson came forward and confessed her faith in Christ and was immersed into His

On Lord's Day, Bro. Lodge exhorted the Church, in the afternoon spoke to the Bible School and in the evening preached the Gospel. This meeting was followed by a united gospel meeting, when Bro. Winstanley gave an inspiring and powerful address. Great interest was shown and we feel that seed was sown that will bring forth fruit in due time. We all realised our time had been well spent in the Master's service. w. smith.

Capetown, Woodstock.—On Lord's Day morning, 31st May, we had with us in fellowship Bro. O. D. Brittell, wife, and family of Sinde Mission, Livingstone, Northern Rhodesia. The messages given by Bro. Brittell in the morning and at the Gospel service were based on the great need of preaching to the unsaved.

In the afternoon of May 5th, together with other brethren on the peninsula, we were able to witness the opening of the New Grassy Park church building, about twelve miles from our assembly hall. Fine messages of interest and encouragement were given by various brethren, and our young people rendered hymns and anthems. There were more than 100 present, including children.

On the evening of 28th June, Bro. Brittell showed us pictures by lantern of the activities at Sinde Mission. It was very interesting, and appreciated by all who

were privileged to see it.

Finally, on the afternoon of 24th July, we were able to rejoice in witnessing a young native man confessing the Lord Jesus and being united with Him in baptism. This was due to the efforts of our native brethren labouring at Langa, a native location about seven to eight miles from our assembly. We trust that in lands near and far those of us who contend for the faith once delivered to the saints might in the days ahead of us.

God willing, reap souls to the glory of God, and with patience await the coming of our blessed Saviour.

T. W. HARTLE.

# **OBITUARY**

Ilkeston.-The Church here mourns the loss of another aged member, Bro. Robert Robinson, who died at the Nottingham General Hospital on July 30th, aged 84 years. He was received into the fellowship of the Church, being formerly immersed, on January 31st, 1932. For most of his life, we believe, he had a strong desire to serve his God and Saviour whom he loved, and earnestly tried to do so according to the light and knowledge he had. We rejoice that he came to know and follow the way of the Lord more perfectly, leading him into fellowship with the church. Unfortunately, that fellowship was broken in July, 1933, because of some disagreement and misunderstanding with his brethren. But we rejoice that in October, 1954, he was restored to fellowship, and has continued more earnestly and faithfully than ever

to serve and witness for his Saviour.

Being a widower and living alone for some time, he has latterly been a resident at the Copnty Council's Old People's Home. There he was a living witness for his Lord and ministered daily, as far as his strength would allow, to the physical and spiritual needs of all in the Home. During this time, though it was too much for his strength, he has insisted on meeting regularly with us around the Lord's Table. His earnest prayers and general demeanour have been an inspiration to

Our sympathy goes out to his only son and family surviving him. This son has been very devoted to his father and ministered to his needs for many years.

s. JEPSON.

Glasgow, Hospital Street.—It is with much sorrow of heart that we record the death of Bro. William Clark, son of Sister Annie Morton and step-son of Bro. Andrew B. Morton. After a long painful illness patiently borne in which he had all the help that human aid could render—doctors, loving parents, district nurses, and the continual prayers of faithful brethren, submissive to our Heavenly Father's will, he passed into the sleep of death on July 26th at the age of 42. He died in the faith, in the certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

Bro. D. Dougall, who knew him well, officiated at the funeral both in the home and at the graveside. He spoke words of appreciation, comfort and hope to all near and dear. Bro. W. Arthur and Bro. A. Brock took part in the prayers. We look forward in faith to a grand reunion in His time, nevermore to part.

A, B, MORTON,

#### COMING EVENTS:

Brighton.—The Church at Brighton for one hundred years has been witnessing for Christ and primitive Christianity, and now, to speed us on the 'second mile,' we propose holding a series of meetings to be addressed by Bro. L. Channing, commencing Saturday, September 3rd and continuing until Lord's Day, the 11th. We beg the help of our brethren having a similar plea.

It is proposed (p.v.) to hold a public meeting at 3 p.m. on September 3rd, when addresses by two of our visitors will be followed by questions and discussion.

Tea will be provided at 5 p.m. and the evening meeting will follow at 6.30 p.m.

Arrangements for accommodation will be made by Miss Thelma Smith, 78 Southover Street, Brighton, to whom details of needs should be sent. E. THORPE.

Wigan (Albert Street).—Visit of Bro. Bill Richardson, from Holland, September 10th to 25th. Gospel meetings every night except Friday. We cordially invite members and friends to support us by their presence and prayers in this great cause of winning souls for the Master.

Loughborough.—The Church meeting in Oxford Street are holding anniversary services on Sept. 25th-26th. On Saturday, a rally will be held at 6.15 p.m. when Bro. Fred. Day (Birmingham) and Bro. Ralph Limb (Eastwood) will be the speakers. Tea will be served at 4.30 p.m.

Lord's Day services will be addressed by Bro. Fred Day, at 11 a.m. and 6.15 p.m. We extend a warm welcome to all to attend these services.

Blackburn.— Special Gospel Campaign during October, conducted by Bro. Leonard Morgan. We shall be grateful for your support and remembrance in prayer. Why not charter a coach for the Saturday evening meetings? Particulars later.

#### COMING EVENTS.

**Kentish Town.** — Anniversary Rally, Saturday, October 15th. Details later.

Great Yarmouth Fishing Season, 1955.—Our fisher brethren from the North of Scotland have arranged to have their rally in Great Yarmouth on Saturday, October 22nd, 1955. Bro. D. Dougall is being released by the Slamannan District, so that he may give his services for this mission during the herring season.

Brethren desirous of attending the rally can be accommodated in hotels, boarding houses, or apartments. It has been impossible to ascertain the tariff, but it is expected to be reasonable, being off season.

Will brethren who desire to be with us notify Bro. Dougall sometime during September, stating the length of intended stay and the kind of accommodation they require, and he will endeavour to make the arrangements during his stay in Yarmouth before the Rally.

Brethren who can make their own arrangements are requested to do so, but should inform Bro. Dougall of their intended presence at the rally. His address is: 'Seaview Cottage,' Wallacestone, Brightons, Falkirk, Stirlingshire.

Slamannan District.—The half-yearly Conference of Sunday school teachers will be held (D.V.) in the meeting-place of the Church of Christ, Slamannan, on Saturday, 24th September, 1955, at 4 p.m. At this conference, Bro. David Dougall will speak on "How to hold on to Teenagers' in the Sunday school." A very warm welcome is given to all who are interested in the work amongst the young.

Church of Christ, 32 Church Street, Woodstock, Union of South Africa.—Notice of Meetings for the benefit of visiting brethren and others: Lord's Day, Breaking of Bread, 11 a.m.; Bible School for Children, 3 p.m.; Gospel Service, 7 p.m. Monday: Young People's Fellowship, 8 p.m.; Thursday: Bible Study, 8 p.m. All heartily welcome.

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Secretary of Conference Committee: A. HOOD, 45 Park Road, Hindley, Nr. Wigam. NYASALAND MISSION. Contributions to W. STEELE, Atholl Dene, Longniddry, East Lothian.

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