

Ambassadors Of Heaven

2 Corinthians 5:20 *Now then we are **ambassadors for Christ**, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Webster says an ambassador is "...the resident representative of his or her own government or sovereign...". So if we are ambassadors for Christ, it means we represent Christ and His country to the world. And what is His country? **Hebrews 11:13-15**.

When we come out of the world, we renounce our citizenship in the world; we become "strangers and pilgrims" in the Earth, and "declare plainly" that we seek a country. What country do we seek? **Verse 16**. So where is our citizenship? **Philippians 3:20** [read this verse in several translations; NKJV says it well "*our citizenship is in heaven*"].

What is our job on this Earth? **1 Peter 2:9**. What are we citizens of now? **Ephesians 2:19**. What were we before (and therefore, what is everyone else on Earth)? (Same verse). So we were *foreigners* from the kingdom of God. But now – after repentance, baptism, and newness of life – we are **CITIZENS** of the kingdom of God. And yet we are not **IN** the kingdom of God today, we are still on the Earth. Are we citizens of Earth? **John 17:16**. Are we living here, or "just passing through"? **1 Peter 1:17**.

Who rules the Earth? **Luke 4:5-6**. Is God's will done on Earth now? **Matthew 6:10**. [Note: There is no reason to pray for God's will to be done on Earth *if it is already being done here – but of course it isn't!*]. Is God's will done in the Kingdom of God? (Same verse).

At baptism we renounce our old life and adopt a new one; all the ties of that old person are broken, **including national citizenship**. The new person is a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven; but by definition, *our kingdom is in Heaven, not on Earth*. For now it is "a far country" (**Luke 19:12**), but as Lesson 11 showed, that kingdom is *coming* to this Earth.

However, until it does come we have no country. We don't belong to the one we currently live in – yet we cannot go to the one we do belong in – so we must be pilgrims, strangers in this world. Outcasts from the country of our birth, waiting for our heavenly country to arrive so we can truly feel we belong someplace.

But we are more than simply vagabonds, because we have a status in our heavenly country – a job God has given us to do, while we wait for that kingdom to arrive. We are ambassadors to this world's nations – representatives of that far country.

We represent not only the Kingdom of Heaven, but also the ruler of that kingdom – God Himself – to everyone we meet. So when we speak to the world, it is as if God spoke to the world – as Paul said “*as though God did beseech you by us*”.

To make this easier to understand clearly, let’s use a real-world example. Suppose an ambassador from Russia comes to the USA. How would he behave? What would he do? Would he be rude and obnoxious? Would he be offensive, break our laws, and bring shame to the name of his country? **Everything Mr. Ambassador does – let’s call him Boris – reflects on his country, good or bad! To the Americans, he IS Russia.**

The things he does affect our perception of Russia more than all the books ever written about it, because he is a personal representation of the ideals and beliefs of his nation. If he is likeable, then we may want to visit Russia; if he is scowling and snarling, we cannot help but have a bad impression of his country.

If he does leave a poor impression in our minds, then his superiors in mother Russia, when they hear of it, will recall him to his own country in shame and punish him for making us dislike them. Likewise, if your behavior as an ambassador for Christ reflects badly on Him you can be sure He will react similarly.

As ambassadors of heaven how we live reflects on God, and all questions of so-called “Christian living” are answered by that principle. But there is also a completely different line of questions we should ask; Boris’ personal conduct is important, it is true. It is also important that the Russian sent as an ambassador to the USA **does not become “corrupted” by American ideals and values and turn into an American.**

He is Russian. While he should live with us as peaceably as possible, ***if he ever puts his life here above his life in Russia, he has failed as an ambassador and has become a defector.*** Would he start a career here? He might take a side job here and there, but would he build a life here as if he were never going back to Russia... or would he treat himself as an outsider, a pilgrim here only for a few years until he’s recalled home or moved to another country?

Would he join our army? Would he vote in our elections? Would he be very interested in the news of our country, except as it affected his own? We will come back to Boris throughout this lesson because (with very minor exceptions), how an ideal Russian ambassador would behave in the USA is how we should behave in this world.

There is a third aspect of ambassadorship we must study as well; diplomatic immunity. Because our country respects Russia, we will not prosecute a Russian diplomat. A Russian ambassador doesn’t pay parking tickets, taxes, cannot be searched or detained by police. They are literally immune to prosecution.

The reason for this is that we trust Russia to punish him for his mistakes. The Russian embassy is literally Russian soil, and American authorities have no more jurisdiction there than they have in Moscow. Invading it would be an act of war. In order to have diplomatic immunity in a country, *that country must recognize your country and grant it immunity.* In other words, I cannot proclaim “Bursonia” as an independent nation, proclaim myself king, and send you out as an ambassador to the USA! For you to get diplomatic immunity, the USA would have to **acknowledge** my nation and grant my ambassadors immunity.

Similarly, you are an ambassador for Christ. He proclaimed the coming of a new country that would rule all nations by saying “the Kingdom of God is at hand”. This country was not recognized by the world, and its citizens were not granted immunity, even though they deserved that status. Later, in some countries, they were given full or partial immunity, which we’ll discuss later.

Meanwhile, when we join that Kingdom, we essentially “defect” against the world. We become citizens of a nation that is not a part of this world; a citizen of a kingdom that is not yet on this Earth, but still exists only in heaven. We may retain our citizenship in this Earth for the sake of convenience, just as a Russian defector might keep his citizenship in Russia as long as possible to spy for the USA, but he is a citizen in name only and not in spirit. His heart belongs to his new country, just as yours must.

And yet we still live on this Earth while we wait for that Kingdom to come rule it. And while we’re here, God has made us ambassadors to that faraway country, and sent us to speak to the kingdoms of this world on the behalf of their soon-coming ruler, Jesus Christ. And the details of why He did, and how we should act is what you’ll study in...

LESSON 23: AMBASSADORS OF HEAVEN

Does the world follow God? **1 John 2:16**. Should you love the world? **Verse 15**. Are you a part of the world anymore? **John 17:16**. Why not? **John 15:19**. Can you be the friend of the world and God’s friend at the same time? **James 4:4**. Why not? **Matthew 6:24**.

To be God’s friend, you have to act a certain way; but to be the world’s friend, you have to act in a completely different way. If they see you acting like God expects you to act, how will they react? **1 Peter 4:4**.

After Lessons 19 and 20, this is not new to you. But it’s time to study the ramifications of the idea; we showed that you had to come out of the world, and we talked about how, *but we haven’t talked about what that means*.

In this lesson, we’re going to talk about how an ambassador for Christ acts. Starting with Lesson 27 we will discuss so-called “Christian living” topics; things for the most part we haven’t talked about yet. And everything you will learn in those lessons is contained in the one phrase “ambassador for Christ”. If you think about that phrase, and truly understand every implication it contains, you will know the answer to every question you’ll ever have about personal conduct.

MONEY AND JOBS

What should we care about today? **Colossians 3:1-3**. Where should we lay up treasures? **Matthew 6:19-21**. Is the kingdom of heaven worth investing in? **Matthew 13:44-46**.

Think about it this way; suppose you were an American visiting some foreign country and found or earned a great deal of money. What would your first thought be? “How can I get this converted into dollars and get it into my bank *in the USA*” – because the money of most small countries isn’t worth the paper it’s printed on 20 miles from their border.

And money in some strange country, a country where you are only going to be for a short while, does you little good. You’re only going to be in Armenia for a few weeks, and you can’t spend Armenian Drams back home – especially if they are stuck in some Armenian bank! For it to benefit you, you must

get it changed into **your own country's currency**, and then move it **back home where you can use it for the rest of your life**.

As a true Christian, you are a stranger on this Earth; a pilgrim wandering the Earth without a permanent home, waiting until you can go home for the first time to your true country, the Kingdom of Heaven. But in the Kingdom of God, they don't accept dollars as currency. You can't Western Union your money to heaven.

You must find a way to convert the fruits of this world's labor into something that has REAL eternal value. Something you can use for the rest of your eternal life. Jesus told the young nobleman how this worked in **Matthew 19:21**. Does helping people "exchange your currency" into heavenly denominations? **Hebrews 10:34**.

This is not to say you must take a vow of poverty to gain treasures in heaven; the lesson on money showed it is not a sin to be rich. But those riches *mean nothing* in the grand scheme of things. They are temporarily useful at best. If you aren't absolutely committed to do the right thing **even if it costs you every cent you have...** then you will be a pauper in the Kingdom of God, if you make it there at all.

If you do not seek FIRST the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (**Matthew 6:33**), then you will get a very poor exchange rate on your riches – you may wind up rich on Earth, but you will be poor in the things God values when He returns to set up the Kingdom. This happened to the Laodiceans (**Revelation 3:17-18**). Money is a great blessing – but never let it interfere with doing the right thing. After all, if God is on your side... do you need money anyway? **Matthew 6:28-34**.

TAXES AND THE LAWS OF MEN

Speaking of money... what does the Bible say about taxes? Do you owe them or not? Read **Matthew 22:15-17**. NOTE: If your Bible uses the word "tribute", that's just an old word for taxes. Did they owe taxes to Caesar (the government of Rome) or not? **Verses 18-21**.

It is very easy to apply that to our times; whose name is on your dollar bill? Isn't it the "The United States Of America"? Therefore, render unto the USA the things which belong to the USA, and render unto God the things which belong to Him!

Taxes as they are administered today are unfair, administered corruptly, and arguably illegal, but that is nothing new. Tax collectors have always been corrupt, brutal, and often their method of collecting the tax was technically illegal under the laws of that country. If you look up the "publicans" (tax collectors) in any Bible dictionary or commentary, you will see they were among the most brutal and corrupt tax collectors in history.

Did God command us to pay taxes to these corrupt officials or not? **Romans 13:1**. If someone has power over you – the president, governor, or sheriff – who gave him that power? (Same verse). Is there any power on Earth that God didn't allow? **Daniel 4:17**. Could anyone have power over Christ unless God gave it to them? **John 19:11**. There is no power men have that GOD didn't give them!

Your president, your sheriff, and yes, even your tax collector were put there by God as the men your country DESERVED, and NEEDED, for the job! What will happen to those who resist their authority? **Romans 13:2**. If you resist the authority of the local judge over you, **you are resisting God Himself!** Read that verse in several translations to see how clearly God says that **fighting legal authorities in**

any earthly nation is resisting the will of God! Romans 13:3. What does God call these authorities? **Verse 4.**

Those authorities are ministers of God. We may delude ourselves that they are elected or appointed by men, but God claims there are no rulers over us except those He appoints! **Now keep reading in verse 5.** We obey them, Paul says, not just to stay out of trouble **but to keep our conscience clean before God!** So does Paul tell us to obey tax laws? **Verse 6-7.**

Should we obey the judge? **Luke 12:58-59.** Should we argue and fume against police officers? **Matthew 5:25.** Will God bail us out of jail if we refuse to pay a fine? **Verse 26.** Even if the fine is unjust and even if we are innocent? **Matthew 5:39-42.** Should we submit ourselves to obey ALL the laws of Man? **1 Peter 2:13-14.** Why? **Verse 13.**

You are to honor these men for the LORD'S SAKE! This is not about you anymore – and it's not about whether you are innocent, or whether they are right or wrong. You are an ambassador of the Kingdom of God and if you so much as break the speed limit or park in front of a fire hydrant... *you reflect badly on your country and on your God!* **So obey all these laws FOR THE LORD'S SAKE!**

Even if you DIDN'T break the law and were falsely accused, should you still obey their judgment and trust God to deliver you? **Verses 15-21.** **God expects you to obey those who have power over you, not only the good but also the evil masters!**

When you are obeying God, will your enemies cause you legal problems? **Proverbs 16:7.** Can God give you favor with people in power (make them like you, or treat you well)? **Acts 7:10, Daniel 1:9.** When you are brought before a judge and he passes sentence on you... who truly gave you that sentence? **Proverbs 29:26.**

God promised to make even your enemies live at peace with you, if you obey Him. And if you *are* brought before them, and they DON'T rule in your favor, **that is still a judgment from God. Simply that God didn't deliver you from them; therefore you must not be doing all you should be doing!**

WHEN YOU MUST DISOBEY THOSE LAWS

Does this mean that any man has the right to tell you to break God's law? **Acts 5:27-29.** Of course not! Make no mistake; God's laws are HIGHER laws. Whenever it is possible to do so, you are commanded to obey BOTH His laws and the laws of men. But you are not obligated to keep the laws of men *if they conflict with the laws of God.* If it is against the law to keep the Sabbath, *you must keep it anyway.* If it is against the law to pray to God, what should you do? **Daniel 6:6-10.** That being said, did Daniel still keep EVERY OTHER LAW IN THE NATION? **Verses 3-5.**

Did Jesus pay taxes? **Matthew 17:24-26.** People who don't want to pay taxes always stop reading there – but keep reading in **verse 27.** There's a lot in those verses, so take it slow. First, the tax collector said "Does Jesus pay taxes?" and Peter answered "Yes". **The only reason Peter would be this certain of his answer is if Jesus regularly paid them in the past.**

But this time, Jesus wanted to make a point, for our sakes. He stopped Peter and asked if the children of the kingdom owed taxes, and the answer was no. Foreign dignitaries are not taxed by Earthly nations; so as future kings and priests of the royal family of Heaven – Elohim – we shouldn't owe taxes to these Earthly kingdoms either. **But Jesus commanded us to pay them even though we don't owe them!** And gave us an EXAMPLE by paying them HIMSELF!

But that's not all! Where did the money to pay these taxes come from? *It was miraculously provided by God!* God told us we don't owe taxes. But rather than cause an "international incident" over a few dollars, God commanded us to pay them anyway – and here's the wonderful part – He promises to provide the money for the taxes miraculously!

Now we may not lower a hook into the sea and pull up the money... but maybe someone comes by and pays off an old debt. Maybe we get a bonus at work. Maybe we just get an extra job we wouldn't have been able to get otherwise... but if you trust God, and have faith that He means what He says **then you know God will provide this money! And in my own experience, He always has.**

Think about it this way. Boris, our Russian ambassador, doesn't owe taxes, but rather than go to war with the USA over a few thousand dollars, his superiors would tell him to pay his taxes *and take them out of his expense account!* If America forced Boris to pay taxes, the taxes would truly come not out of his pocket, but straight from Moscow!

Is God going to force you to pay taxes which He, Himself said you don't owe... and then forget to pay you back? **Hebrews 6:10.** Jesus paid taxes so they wouldn't "speak against Him as an evildoer". So the truth He had to say wouldn't be drowned out by accusations about not paying taxes! And He commanded us to do the same. **So every true Christian pays his taxes.**

What should our goal be when dealing with this world's powers? **Romans 12:17-21.** Notice the CONTEXT – the verses that lead into – **Romans 13:1-7**, which you just studied! Bottom line, if it is possible, you are commanded to "get along" with all men. Why? **1 Peter 2:21-24.**

Do you really believe you will follow in Jesus' footsteps and be willing to die for your beliefs, if you can't even follow in His footsteps and pay your taxes?? Or obey the rulings of a corrupt judge? Commit your judgment to God and trust Him to work out your legal battles for you. To obey God, you must submit yourselves under the authority of the men whom God has placed over you.

Not because you are truly bound by those laws or judgments; but because, as a citizen of a far country, it isn't your place to try to change the laws of this one. And **also because you are an ambassador for Christ, with a job to do. You are here to preach the kingdom of God, the law of God, and condemn the evil works of the world. You can't do that if you get thrown in jail for refusing to pay a parking ticket or buy license plates for your car.**

NEWS OF THE WORLD

The average American spends over an hour every day reading, watching, or listening to the news. This is perhaps the biggest waste of time imaginable. News reports can be summarized briefly as follows... "trouble in the Middle East; corrupt politicians; some stocks up, some down; several people were brutally murdered/raped/robbed in your area". This is followed by a weather report for your area that is correct about as often as flipping a coin.

That is an oversimplification... but not by much. It's the same every day. So in a year, you probably spend about 350-450 hours on the news. What does it get you? How are you changed by that massive investment of time?

You're told there is trouble in the Middle East (which there has been every day since God gave the land to the Israelites 3,500 years ago). What does God think of that area of the world? **Revelation 11:8,**

Luke 13:34, Jeremiah 23:14. The atrocities that happen there are horrible, but no more so than anywhere else in the world, **and all because of the same cause. People breaking the laws of God.**

You're shown evidence the people who run your country might not have your best interests at heart (a lesson you should learn by the fourth grade). You're told about the stock market which Lesson 17 showed you was foolish at best, sinful at worst.

And you are taught to be afraid to leave your house by the various crimes – which as Lesson 4 should have taught you, doesn't apply to you if you have faith in God (see **Psalms 91** for a brief summary). Think of it this way; no one is afraid of swimming in the ocean until they watch Jaws. After that, there is always a germ of fear when they swim. If God has promised nothing will hurt you, why fill your mind with terrifying images and statistics that can only increase your fear, worry, and doubt – and thus hurt your faith and make it more likely that something WILL happen to you!

Where do crimes come from? **Isaiah 42:24.** Why? (Same verse). When these things happen, who causes it? **Jeremiah 2:17, 19.** Does God ensure that no evil happens to a city except what they deserve? **Amos 3:6.** Who is behind every blessing, and every punishment? **Deuteronomy 32:39.** Will the righteous suffer the same fate? **Proverbs 10:3.** What can deliver you from these things? **Proverbs 11:4.** Should Christians worry about crimes happening all around them? **Proverbs 12:21.**

The violent crimes happening every second across this land are horrible, but they are only the SYMPTOM of the much more serious crime. Read **Hosea 4:1-5.** This prophecy perfectly describes our country, indeed much of the world today! But this is merely the SYMPTOM – WHY is it happening?

God answers in **verses 6-10. They forgot the law of God, so God has forgotten them!** When Protestant Churches stopped teaching the law was GOOD for man about 100 years ago, Western morals went into a downward spiral which we haven't seen the end of even today! The richer they got, the more "God blessed America", the more they turned against Him!

Read **verse 8** in several translations, so you understand clearly not only do THEY sin, but they LOVE watching others sin and idolize them for it! Turn to **Romans 1:32** (and context) for a NT parallel. The murders are horrible, but the TRUE crime is that this world has turned from God, no longer preaches the laws of God, and is following the very first lie of the devil "thou shalt not surely die". If that hadn't happened first, murders would happen once a decade, not every few minutes.

THAT is the crime you should worry about – not deceived thugs killing each other for pocket change. That's only a symptom, not the cause. The cause is as God said – because our people rejected knowledge, God has rejected them.

Because you are only an ambassador, merely passing through this Earth, none of this is your problem. The news keeps you updated on the affairs and interests of this nation and this world *but that shouldn't matter to you.* And it won't... IF you have followed God's command in **Colossians 3:2.**

Similarly, nothing that happens on Earth can affect the Kingdom of God or its citizens more than superficially. Read **Philippians 3:17-19**, in the BBE translation if you can find it. Note that Paul condemns these people "*whose minds are fixed on the things of the earth.*"

How better can you describe a person obsessed with the news than someone "whose mind is fixed on the things of the Earth"? And *that* is the context for **verse 20**, quoted earlier but which you now see is

directly in the context of having your minds focused on the petty squabbles, financial troubles, and bickering between these Earthly nations!

Your goal should be to teach the world WHY they are suffering – not to spend hundreds of hours every year reading about HOW they're suffering! And as for the affairs of your Earthly country... it isn't your country anymore. Its news isn't relevant to you, because if this country collapses around your ears, God promises to save you out of it (**Isaiah 54:13-17**).

Unless, of course, you've defected to that country (Luke 21:34). Because if you truly are an ambassador for Christ, you won't spend more than a few hours a year on the news of this world. Just as the average American spends no more than a few hours a year on the news of France – because it isn't his country.

There is one scriptural objection to this, **Luke 21:36**, which many believe commands us to watch world events, and keep up with the news. But **read the scripture. Is that what it says?** It says "Watch.... THAT you may be accounted WORTHY to escape all these things". You're to watch YOURSELF, keep an eye on your OWN HEART to make sure that, when these things come **you are worthy to escape them!**

If you aren't doing that, then it doesn't matter if you understood ALL prophecy, and knew the exact instant Jesus was returning! Because if you aren't worthy to escape the plagues of Revelation, you won't escape them no matter how much you watch the news! And if you ARE worthy, God will see to it that you DO escape, even if you don't own a TV!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE WORLD

Does Boris cast a vote in the US elections? Why not? ...Exactly. Because he isn't an American and has no right to meddle in its politics. But that simplistic answer hardly scratches the surface.

It is commonly believed the purpose of the Christian religion is to change the world. Is it? **John 18:36**. We are not a part of this world. We belong to a kingdom that is not a part of this world, with a ruler who is not a part of this world. Whose world is this? **Luke 4:6**. Is it a good world? **Galatians 1:4**.

We are not OF the world. We do not have the right to choose its rulers. True Christians do not get involved in politics. But why not? Why don't we try to change the world for the better, we who have the words of life?

Simple. Because it can't be done. As you learned in Lesson 10 and Lesson 12, this world's governments and religions are not good organizations gone bad, which can be fixed by adjusting a few policies, a few laws, and getting a few good people in positions of power. They are bad organizations gone worse, with only the occasional good man put in power at the right time to make sure God's plan happens on schedule.

As you learned if you requested and read the article "Satan's Great Deception", this world's nations began with the rebellion of Satan. Adam and Eve joined him, and after the world was destroyed by the flood Nimrod and Semiramis helped Satan rebuild the same evil system at Babel. When God destroyed Babel and scattered its people to the corners of the Earth, they carried with them the doctrines of Nimrod – ultimately the doctrines of Satan – and his method of government.

Each interpreted it their own way, but all are diametrically opposed to the way of God. Every government, every religion on the planet is a part of the same Babylonian system. You can't just change one law, or depose one evil dictator or one political party and turn it into a "good" system, because at the core they are ALL evil. Not one system sets God and His word as its unquestioned head. Few even pretend to draw inspiration from it.

THE PROPER FORM OF GOVERNMENT

For good government, who must be king? **Isaiah 43:15**. The only perfect form of government is a theocracy – a government ruled directly by the true God. What happens when voting – democracy – alters that form of government? **1 Samuel 12:12, 17**.

Unless God is the King, there is only one fundamental type of government – human. All kingdoms in the world today, whether they are monarchies, democracies, dictatorships, oligarchies or communist are run by men. Some are run by the majority, some by the minority, some by just one man. But all rely on the righteousness and wisdom of humans. What is wrong with that idea?

What is the basic nature of men? **Jeremiah 17:9**. Have all humans sinned? **Romans 3:23**. Are all humans deceived by the devil? **Revelation 12:9**. If you obey the devil, are you his servant? **Romans 6:16**. Does every sinner serve the devil, even if he is ignorant of it? **1 John 3:8**.

Any government that relies on men to make decisions about right and wrong cannot help but serve the devil, because governments are made of men and all men are deceived by him. This is a fundamental flaw with every government on Earth.

Getting a righteous man elected to office – even if possible – could not change that fundamental flaw. It might make life easier or better for a few months or years, **but it cannot change the fact the system is flawed and has been since Adam and Eve first rebelled against the command of God!**

WHY WE AREN'T TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

The system of democracy only works when 51% of the people love the truth and want to obey God. A monarchy only works if the ruler obeys God. Oligarchies only work when the minority who is in power obeys God. **All these systems are only righteous systems for as long as they are de facto theocracies – when the ruling party defers true rulership to God!**

God first set the Earth up as a theocracy, since God was the rightful ruler of Earth; He not only created it, but He was the best ruler for the job. He gave Adam dominion – rulership – over the Earth (**Genesis 1:26-28**). But then Satan came along and convinced Adam and Eve to obey him instead of God. And they did. Do you know what that was? *The first democratic revolution!*

Most people believe the first human democracy was in Greece, but it wasn't. The first human democracy was in the Garden of Eden. Satan persuaded Adam and Eve to reject God's kingship over them, and to put Satan in charge. Satan's political platform was freedom from the tyranny of God, who was denying them access to the desirable fruit that would make them wise as God!

As soon as the majority of humanity followed Satan, he became the **democratically elected ruler of Earth. And you joined Adam and Even in casting your vote for Satan when you first sinned.** That's how Satan became ruler of all the kingdoms of the Earth, and why he was able to offer the power over

them to Jesus, saying, “*for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*” (Luke 4:6). **Adam and Eve delivered it to him in the first democratic election!**

Today, ALL the kingdoms of this world are in Satan’s power – and he gives authority over them to whomever he wishes. What does God call his present position? **2 Corinthians 4:4**. What did Jesus call him? **John 14:30**. Against what do we wrestle? **Ephesians 6:12**. And how much of the world has fallen under his sway? **1 John 5:19**.

The USA and some other western nations were founded on Biblical principles, but it was still government “of the people, by the people, and for the people”... which is a good system *only when the majority of the people love their neighbor as themselves*. The founders of the USA had seen what happened when a wicked minority exercised power to oppress the majority and tried to ensure that wouldn’t happen again, and they did a fairly good job of it. **But they couldn’t prevent the wicked majority from exercising power over a righteous few. No human form of government can!**

Tomorrow if worldwide elections were held, with God on one side and Satan on the other, **the overwhelmingly vast majority of the world would vote for Satan**. They don’t know him as Satan of course; they would vote for him as that other “Jesus”, or as Brahma or Buddha or Mohammed or the Great Spirit or Grand Architect. He has many names.

But the point is that he is the democratically elected ruler and no “little flock” of true Christians could possibly change that by lobbying with politicians to get prayer allowed in schools or the Ten Commandments back in public buildings.

When men are righteous, we have good leaders, as you can read in **1 Samuel 12:14-15**. When they are unrighteous, then we have bad leaders. The specific form of government makes no difference – monarchy or democracy, if the people in power are righteous, the rest are happy and free.

THE SOLUTION

What is the solution to this world’s ills? You learned it in Lesson 11. The solution is in **Daniel 2:44**. These kingdoms will be broken in PIECES and consumed utterly. There will be no vestige left; no scrap of law, no ceremony, and no procedure from this world’s system will survive the coming of the Kingdom of God.

How many of this world’s armies survive the return of Jesus Christ? **Isaiah 34:1-2**. What will happen to all nations that do not serve God? **Isaiah 60:12**. What will happen to this world’s cares, activities, and governments when Jesus returns? Will He just “reform” them? **2 Peter 3:10-11**. So knowing this is the destiny of this world’s kingdoms, should we work to fix them anyway? **Verses 13-14, 17**.

No, this world’s religions and governments are rotten through and through. Not a single part of them is worth saving. They must be torn down completely and built up from scratch. Can nations be so bad they are not salvageable? **Isaiah 1:4-6, Nahum 3:18-19**.

The Protestant Reformation failed. The world believes it succeeded, but if it truly had succeeded then they’d all be keeping the Sabbath and obeying the clear commands of God you’ve learned in these lessons. The problem with the reformation was, it was... a reformation. A **re-forming** of the Catholic church into a new, different group of churches *but the same evil heart survived in the new churches*. The core doctrines of the trinity, the Ten Commandments being abolished, immortality of the soul, heaven/hell, Sunday, and so on all survived.

What the reformers needed to do was not to REFORM the Catholic Church, but to **utterly destroy her and her doctrines** and start over from the ground up, as you have done in this course. Protestant churches have merely “re-formed” the pagan religion of Babylon. But what they NEEDED to do was to build their religion from the Bible, and do no less, and no more, than what it said.

If that is true of the great whore, it is no less true of the beast she rides. There is no point in reforming the beast’s kingdoms even if it were possible, which it isn’t. There is nothing about them worth saving. Their laws, their form of government, their punishments, their politicians... there is absolutely nothing about any Earthly system worth incorporating into the Kingdom of God.

PRAYING FOR RULERS

This comes from **1 Timothy 2:1-3**, the idea that we should pray for rulers and “*all that are in authority*”. It is interpreted two ways – the first way is long, tedious, boring (did I mention long?) prayers saying, “We ask thee, Lord, to bless the president, and bless the governor, and bless the mayor, and bless the senators, and... <insert 5 minutes of droning here>.... amen”.

The other way is to pray *for a certain ruler* to come in power, to effect social change. i.e., pick a “good Christian candidate”, and pray for him to be elected. Both of these interpretations are dead wrong. If anyone ever actually READ the verse, it clearly says WHY we should pray for rulers.

Read it again, in **verse 2** – “*that WE may lead a quiet and peaceable life*”. We pray for them **for our good! Not for theirs!** We are told to pray for them, not to be converted, not to be blessed, not to be guided to lead the nation well **but SO we can dwell in peace!**

People in power over you can make your life miserable. Kings can make laws against Sabbath keeping. City inspectors can make it impossible for you to build a house. Bosses can make your life miserable. Is it wrong to manipulate these people (via God’s power) for our own ends? Paul said no! (**verse 3**). It is both good and acceptable to do this. And it works!

I once did a complete remodel for a very large house. It was a nice job – I was paid well and five days a week the house was empty for me to work on it. Saturday of course I didn’t work, and Sunday the homeowner – my boss – was in town, and we looked over my work and planned out the next week.

Well, after some time my boss and his wife started fighting constantly (they got divorced about a year later). Naturally, it made my Sundays miserable. I was more exhausted refereeing their bickering on Sunday about paint colors and light fixtures and carpet patterns than I was the other five days put together.

These people were in authority over me, and made my life difficult for months. Finally, I read the scripture about praying for “all that are in authority”, so I could have some peace. And so I did. The very next week the change was incredible. They actually were civil almost the entire time! Now I won’t say they didn’t bicker at all, or the other six days when I wasn’t around them they weren’t at each others throats, *but it made my life easier.*

Some months afterward, my boss (whom of course I had not told any of this) came to me and commented on how much better he and his wife were getting along. I told him what had happened, and I could see he was skeptical... but I wasn’t. The rest of my time at that job, I never had the same level of stress from their relationship.

I didn't do this for their benefit. They were both selfish and both wrong and there was nothing I could do for them. God is not judging the world today, and the details of what happens between most of them aren't too important to Him. They'll have the rest of their lives to bicker, if it's important they do that. If it would make the life of one of His children easier to have two carnal people get along for awhile... why wouldn't He smooth over their ruffled feathers a bit, just long enough to let us dwell in peace?

God can, and will, do incredible things to make our lives easier. Judges can forgive us, tax assessors can be more fair, rich men can give us good jobs. And that's what this scripture is talking about – asking God to interfere in the lives of unconverted people in power over us, so we can live in peace.

It is not about pronouncing boring blessings on every carnal public official we can name, nor trying to pray a slightly-less-evil politician into office hoping he will force a nation of unrighteous people to be righteous against their will.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Henry David Thoreau wrote an essay which is quite famous on the obligation of every citizen to be civilly disobedient. It makes a compelling case that a true patriot must be disobedient to any law he feels unjust. For example, if he felt a tax was unjust, he simply didn't pay it. If they threw him in prison, he was content; they did their duty, he did his.

As people learn the truth of the Bible about law and justice, they often get led astray into either militant or social activist thinking. Parts of the Bible do indeed encourage civil disobedience. For example, should we follow an evil nation? **Exodus 23:2**. Was Phinehas praised for executing a sinner? **Numbers 25:6-13**.

The Old Testament is full of examples of great men like David, Samson, and Gideon who slew the enemies of God. Well intentioned but misguided men today sometimes apply that same thinking to blockading abortion clinics, refusing to pay taxes to be spent on unrighteous goals, and in extreme cases taking up arms against the government.

Much of this has already been shown to be wrong by the simple fact this is not our country, and what they do is frankly none of our business – any more than we have a right to meddle in the affairs of Germany or Japan. As ambassadors of heaven, we are strangers here. Not political lobbyists, *but guests in this world*.

WE ARE NOT QUALIFIED

But there is more to this answer than just that. It is revealed by reading **2 Corinthians 10:3-6**. We are in a war – make no mistake. The kingdoms of this world hate the Kingdom of God – and God and His followers return the feeling (**Psalms 139:21-22, 2 Chronicles 19:2**). Our kingdoms are at war!

We do not wage that war with guns and bombs, nor with votes and lobbyists. Today, we wage that war with the sharp two-edged sword God gave us – the Bible (**Hebrews 4:12**). The armor of God we wear in this battle is described in **Ephesians 6:11-18**. Our defense is not a gun, but a shield of faith. Our weapon is not a sword, but the spirit of God which is expressed by the word of God. **This is how we wage war against wicked spirits in high places.**

This is how we attack the illuminati and defend ourselves from the tri-lateral commission. This is how we wage war on government conspiracies and international banking monopolies – not by building a

compound in Idaho and buying guns and joining the militia! ***But with righteousness, truth, faith, and the word of God.***

But that is just for today. When Jesus returns, those weapons will change and we will rise to meet Him and join Him in executing judgment upon all who reject the coming Kingdom (**Jude 1:4-5**). Why don't we execute that judgment today? Why aren't we making this world a better place NOW by executing sinners and overthrowing governments? Read **2 Corinthians 10:6** again. ***Because today our obedience is not yet full! We are not QUALIFIED to execute others for their sins while we yet have sins of our own!***

Jesus said only those without sin were qualified to execute sinners (**John 8:7**). You and I are not yet without sin. Only when we are born – not merely begotten or conceived, but fully BORN again, with a new spirit body, when the spirit of God remains in us and we CANNOT sin, will we be qualified to execute judgment upon the world!

For now, we can and should warn them; tell them of the coming judgment; tell them they are sinning and what it will bring. But we must never forget we are their *ambassador*, not their king! And certainly not their executioner!

MINISTERS OF GOD

But there's more. You already read in **Romans 13:1-4** the rulers of this world, from the president to the local dog catcher, *are ministers of God*. They are men appointed by God to do a certain job, whether they know it or not. And resisting that authority is the same as resisting the authority of God Himself.

For example, Saul was an evil ruler, who had repeatedly tried to murder David, the rightful ruler God had anointed. But given the chance to execute Saul, what did David do? **1 Samuel 26:8-11**. Notice how David reasoned! God had put him in power, and if God wanted him out of power *God would see to it that it happened!!* So many people forget it is the MOST HIGH who rules in the kingdoms of men!

Until that happened, Saul was David's ruler and David called him his "master" (**1 Samuel 24:6-12**). Now if David showed that sort of respect to an evil king trying to murder him, who was being influenced by the devil... what sort of respect do you owe to your policeman and governor? **Exodus 22:28, Acts 23:5, Ecclesiastes 10:20**.

Every true Christian is an exemplary citizen of the nation he spends his time in this life. We are VERY civilly obedient. Until the laws of the nation command us to act contrary to the laws of our own nation – the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven. When that happens, we have no choice, but even then, how do we disobey their laws? **Daniel 6:10**.

He didn't go into the town hall and make a huge protest for his rights – he simply disobeyed the law and did exactly what he did before. He didn't hide it, nor did he flaunt it, he simply ignored their laws and did the right thing. As you see if you read the rest of the chapter, God saw to it that he did not suffer the least pain for his choice and the men who condemned him died – and **NOT** by Daniel's hand.

We are put here to respect the authority God has given these men, and as much as possible to "*live peaceably with all men*". When necessary, we respectfully disobey. Not cursing and threatening them the whole way, but quietly and firmly standing your ground.

AN EVEN BETTER ANSWER

What about the many examples of people who DID disobey the civil authority and DID execute judgment? For example, why were midwives rewarded for lying? **Exodus 1:15-20**. Why was Rahab the harlot saved out of the city for hiding the spies, whom legally she should have turned in to be executed? **Joshua 2:1-14**. How does that square with what you just read?

The answer is easy! Every question disappears when you understand it's all about the *Old Covenant and the New Covenant*. Lesson 21 went into great detail about the differences between what God expects of you as a New Covenant Christian compared to what God expected of you as an Old Covenant Israelite.

Israelites were not ambassadors for Christ. They DID have a kingdom on this earth, the Kingdom of Israel of which God was, theoretically, the head. And as citizens of Israel – NOT citizens of Heaven – it was their DUTY to disobey laws they felt were unjust. God EXPECTED them to execute the wicked in accordance with the laws and statutes of God. They were SUPPOSED to be zealous about executing His judgments **because Israel was supposed to be His country – the Kingdom of God on Earth!**

But New Covenant Christians are held to higher standards – standards of faith. When faced with a kingdom that commands midwives to kill newborn children, the midwives lied to protect them. **This was better than killing the babies, but it was not an act of faith.** For an act of faith in a similar situation, read **Daniel 3:1-18**, particularly **verses 15-18**. Those three men COULD have avoided the issue. They could have pretended to worship, without actually worshipping, the statue.

If they'd thought ahead, they could have made sure they were elsewhere when the ceremony took place, or found some other clever way out. Or perhaps they could have suddenly “discovered” their shoe laces were untied at just the right moment and bent over to tie them when everyone else was leaning over to worship the image. **But those, while better than worshipping the statue, are not acts of faith.**

What they did was the right thing. Facing the confrontation head-on, they said they would *not* worship the statue. That God was able to deliver them from the fire, and if He didn't – well, that would be too bad, but they wouldn't worship the idol. *No lying was necessary!* The midwives COULD have done the same thing – told Pharaoh their God was able to save them from Pharaoh's wrath, but if He chose not to... well, they still wouldn't be a party to murder.

That would have been the act of FAITH – the act of a New Covenant Christian. Phinehas running the man through with a spear was, **for an Old Covenant Israelite**, a noble and righteous act which God respected greatly. But Peter letting the holy spirit kill Ananias and Sapphira was the act of FAITH of a New Covenant Christian (**Acts 5:1-11**). **Both acts were good deeds judged by the terms of the covenant they were under.**

David killing Goliath, while it showed great faith, *still involved killing, which New Covenant Christians are forbidden to do until their obedience is full*. It was acts like that which prevented David from building the temple (**1 Chronicles 22:8**). When the proper way to handle it was how Michael handled his own Goliath – merely saying “*the Lord rebuke you*” (**Jude 1:9**).

David could have simply walked up to Goliath and said “*the Lord rebuke you*”. Surely Goliath was no stronger than the Devil, who fled at Michael's rebuke. God could have smitten Goliath with fear, a plague, lightning, or opened up the ground and swallowed him at David's rebuke – and David wouldn't

have shed Goliath's blood. That is how Daniel's three friends would have handled the situation. That is how a New Covenant Christian should handle similar situations.

Of course, if God hadn't been there to help David, and David had rebuked Goliath and God *hadn't* done anything... then David would have looked foolish and probably been killed by Goliath... and **that's why it's called an act of FAITH!**

But whether or not God saved him, *David wouldn't have broken the sixth commandment!* He wouldn't have had the blood on his hands that God later complained about, which made him a "bloody man". **There was a way out that didn't break any commandment and showed even more faith! AND THERE ALWAYS IS!**

You may be thinking "who are you to second-guess David"... and I'm nobody. But you can see for yourself how much God complained about David's bloodiness, and how much God loved the way Daniel and his three friends dealt with problems.

David's way required significant faith – surely David had much greater faith than his brothers or Saul had – but the other way requires POWERFUL, STRONG faith. And God appreciates that way much more than the other! Why? **Hebrews 11:6.**

David trusted God enough to go up against a giant armed only with a slingshot. **But not enough to go up against the same giant armed ONLY with the word of God. And that's why David didn't build God's temple.**

CONCLUSION ON CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

What was Jesus' example? When He was betrayed to be killed, did He allow His servants to fight for Him? **John 18:36.** Did He even HEAL the man whom His ignorant servant had hurt? **Luke 22:50-51.** Did Jesus say there was nothing He could do to save Himself? **Matthew 26:51-53.** Did He say Pilate had ANY power over Him? And if so, how did Pilate get that power? **John 19:10-11.**

1 Corinthians 10:13 makes us a clear promise that with any temptation – such as, say, being commanded to murder babies – there is a way of escape. We also know for a fact that God does not tempt man with evil! **James 1:13.** That means there is a way of escape *without breaking the law of God.* We won't have to LIE to get out of it. We won't have to break the Sabbath. We won't have to murder the babies or overthrow the government. There is a way to get out of it without sinning!

But that way might require faith. It might require a lot of faith, and a willingness to die if God doesn't help you. But that's what a New Covenant Christian signed up for when he or she was baptized!

God accepted the lies of the midwife, Rahab, the killing by Phinehas, David, the mighty men, and all the other various violent acts done in God's name in the Bible.

He even rewarded them for doing the wrong thing for the right reason *because the people who did them were, at least at the time, under the Old Covenant.* God judged them **and rewarded them** by the standards of the Old Covenant, as citizens of an Earthly kingdom and not as ambassadors of a heavenly one.

Today's secular Christians who are, at best, under the Old Covenant SHOULD lobby to get the Ten Commandments back in schools, and I'm glad they're doing it! They SHOULD seek to get righteous

leaders, and I wish them luck! *Because this is their country and God will reward them for every righteous thing they do for it!*

HOWEVER. As New Covenant Christians, we seek a better country – a heavenly one. We understand this world’s nations are doomed and beyond saving. And we understand we have no right interfering in the policies of this government. If we can teach its citizens to obey God, **THEY would change the government – we wouldn’t have to lift a finger!**

All the efforts of today’s Christianity to change the world are like putting a band-aid on a terminal brain tumor. It might help the tiniest bit, *but until they strike at the root of the problem it will accomplish nothing of real value.*

The whole system is sick, and it must be torn down utterly and a new government built, one with God as its head, Jesus as high priest, and the government given to the saints of the Most High. THAT is the solution. You can’t vote that into existence – and it will come whether you help or not.

All you’re doing in this life is warning the world, helping some few people to see the truth, and on a personal note, determining your place in that future government. Will you be a respected ambassador promoted to a king or priest? Or will you be a failed ambassador, sent home in disgrace? Or exiled and destroyed with the people whom you loved more than your own heavenly nation?

RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP

Because of what you’ve read, we don’t vote. We don’t lobby. We ignore the politics of these Earthly nations as we ignore the squabbles of birds in our yard squabbling over shiny pebbles – which is of roughly the same importance in the grand scheme of things.

You can see several examples in the Bible of Paul invoking his rights of citizenship. Before we completely close this subject, those should be explained. As I said up front, we are ambassadors of an unrecognized country. As ambassadors, we SHOULD have the rights of diplomatic immunity, freedom from taxation, exemption from military service, jury duty, license plates, and other civic responsibilities. However, since no government recognizes the Kingdom of Heaven, we don’t have those things.

But often times, as regular citizens we are offered those rights or fractions of them. For example, we can opt out of forced military service if we become “conscientious objectors”. So at least in that area, regular citizens are given the same right an ambassador would have – exemption from military service – so there is no sin in exercising this right which a nation gives us, since we deserve that right as ambassadors.

Likewise, most governments exempt churches from taxes. If we can take advantage of that without submitting ourselves to censorship or compromising our loyalty to God, we should. If not, we don’t need to – God can provide the church with enough money to cover the taxes, and more.

So if you have rights offered to you that coincide with the rights of an ambassador, use them. If we are denied those rights for whatever reason, simply do without and God will provide. If you have faith worthy of a New Covenant Christian, you won’t particularly care one way or the other (**Matthew 6:25-34** pretty much says it all).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

All passports contain the warning to travelers in foreign countries that it is possible to lose your American citizenship. If you have one, read it for yourself. It starts out “Loss of U.S Citizenship: Under certain circumstances, you may lose your U.S. Citizenship...”, then gives a list of five things any loyal citizen must not do while abroad:

- (1) Being naturalized to a foreign state
- (2) Taking an oath or making a declaration to a foreign state
- (3) Serving in the armed forces of a foreign state
- (4) Accepting employment with a foreign government
- (5) Formally renouncing US Citizenship before a US Consular officer overseas

You’re about to see those five things have all been mentioned in God’s passport as well. If you commit any of these acts while you are a pilgrim on this Earth, you will automatically lose your citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Calling yourself a Christian is a rare privilege, not a right. One you can easily lose by any of the above acts. Now let’s look at each of them in Biblical terms...

(1) BEING NATURALIZED TO A FOREIGN STATE

Citizens of the USA cannot spend more than a few years out of their own country without losing their citizenship automatically. If you spend enough time in a foreign country to become a “naturalized” citizen there, you automatically lose your US citizenship.

What happens if a citizen of heaven becomes too involved in this world’s affairs? **Mark 4:18-19**. Does God warn us about being naturalized to a foreign country? **1 John 2:15, Luke 21:34**. If you become a citizen of heaven, and then go back into the world, are you fit to retain your citizenship? **Luke 9:62**. Will God make sure you have an opportunity to if you wish? **Hebrews 11:14-16**.

Once you’ve become a citizen of heaven, if you spend too much time outside your country, away from your people, you will lose your heavenly citizenship. If you start to love this world, spend your time on its cares, you will lose sight of the fact you are a stranger here.

If you forget you are just passing through, just killing time until you can dwell in your country where your heart truly belongs... then you will lose your status in God’s country. And since you loved your Earthly country, God will punish you when He punishes them.

(2) TAKING AN OATH TO A FOREIGN STATE

The US Consul adds “or its political subdivisions”. What does God say about this? **Matthew 6:24**. You cannot take an oath of allegiance or obedience to any earthly government and still fully perform your duties to your heavenly kingdom at the same time.

You cannot “pledge allegiance to the flag, or to the republic for which it stands” because your allegiance belongs to a heavenly kingdom now, not any Earthly one. You cannot bind yourself with an

oath to serve them *in any way* because you have already bound yourself completely and unconditionally to God. And if you attempt to divide your loyalties, you will lose your heavenly citizenship completely.

(3) SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES OF A FOREIGN STATE

This was covered extensively in Lesson 22; but this is another argument against it, for as an ambassador serving in the armed forces would divide your loyalties between your commanding officer and God. Both will demand your full allegiance, and only one can have it – and only one deserves it. In addition, as a soldier in this country, you may one day be asked to attack citizens of your own country – fellow true Christians – without even knowing they belong to your country.

So joining the military automatically causes loss of heavenly citizenship as well. All of these principles are self evident, so obvious that all Earthly countries realize them. It is patently obvious that no US ambassador can join the armies of North Korea without being forced to commit acts of treason punishable by death against one country or the other. He will either be killed for being a spy by the Koreans, or executed for defection and betrayal by the Americans. Whomever he serves, the other will hate him – just as you cannot divide your loyalty between God and the USA or any other country.

(4) EMPLOYMENT WITH A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT

As Christians, we are observers, strangers on this Earth. We are not here to change the world, but to call people OUT of it so the world's governments can be destroyed. This Earth's kingdoms are sick, beyond all healing.

God is calling people out of this world's nations, so He can destroy them; just as God called Lot out of Sodom (**Genesis 19:13-15**). And that's why we are commanded to leave Babylon with the words "*Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*" (**Revelation 18:4**).

God is calling people out of the nations of this world, as Lot was called from Sodom, so the kingdoms of this world can be turned to a smoking cinder and a new, righteous, heavenly kingdom can be set up in their place. But if you look back as Lot's wife did, you will suffer her fate.

Once called out of these nations, we have no right to go meddling in their governments, trying to be elected mayor, governor, senator; working as tax assessors or prison guards or policemen for a corrupt nation enforcing unjust laws we cannot endorse. Boris the ambassador could not perform any of those jobs in the USA, and no heavenly ambassador can either – not without losing his citizenship.

(5) RENOUNCING US CITIZENSHIP

Matthew 10:33 *But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

That basically says it all. But denying Christ is more than just saying "I am not a Christian" when there is a gun to your head. You deny Christ when you don't act as He told you to act, or when you keep silent when you ought to speak.

And the US consular website adds one last clause that would result in loss of citizenship; a sort of blanket clause that includes "everything else":

(6) CONVICTION FOR AN ACT OF TREASON

If you betray your sacred trust as an Elohim, deny God before men, remain silent when you should speak of this world's sins...

If you betray Christ by delivering His brethren to the secret police in time of persecution, or lead God's children away from the truth for your own ends... or if you "sacrifice a bit of the Truth for the good of the Church", as so many corrupt ministers do today, or any other willful act that betrays the constitution and bill of rights your country – God's word – you will lose your citizenship. And when the Kingdom of Heaven does arrive, you'll be just another Babylonian.

Revelation 18:21 *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*

This work is completely non-denominational and is meant to fulfill Christ's great commission to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" (**Mark 16:15**). **This publication is not to be sold**; "*freely ye have received, freely give*" (**Matthew 10:8**).

The Bible tells us to PROVE ALL THINGS, and The Simple Answers encourages people to do just that. If you cannot PROVE what you believe, you have no right to believe it! Many of the things we print are shocking because they are different from what you've heard, but if something we say offends or upsets you, we hope you will take the time to set aside your preconceived ideas and PROVE your point from the Bible to see if you truly have been right all these years.

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