

THE EDIFIER

Church of God (Seventh Day) Australia January 2026

*Come
Lord Jesus!*



Shrewd Stewardship

You Shall Call His Name Jesus

A Perfect & Faultless Sacrifice

Antisemitism

A magazine dedicated to uplifting
and transforming peoples' lives
through the uncompromised Word of God

THE EDIFIER



The truth will make you free

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Jesus as Judge

In our legal system, you cannot date the person who is to judge your case. Nor can they be your golfing buddy.

If you are being prosecuted for your dog mauling someone and the judge is your neighbour who knows you have no dog – fantastic, you may think! But alas, they cannot be your judge.

Concerning juries, one rationale for them is that being made up of ordinary people – our peers, they are more suited to judge us than esteemed members of the judiciary who some perceive as out of touch or sitting in ivory towers.

The Bible, (and interestingly the Koran), both proclaim Jesus as our Judge. The Bible presents Him as super-qualified to judge us because He's our peer being truly man (having walked in our shoes) and God, He is appointed by God as judge, He knows all about us and He is merciful.

The wonderful news for us is that, unlike in our legal system, we can be in close relationship with our Judge. Jesus actually desires this relationship before Judgment Day.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd; and I know my sheep, and am known by my own." (John 10:14)

Knowing Jesus before Judgment Day is given so much importance Jesus even says, "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ." (John 17:3)

A good way to start this vital eternal life-giving relationship is simply to open a Bible and learn of Him.

How is your relationship with Jesus Christ? □



*David Kidd, Pastor
New Zealand*



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A Worthy Manner?

This was submitted also as a student assignment

With the start of a New Year we become aware that the Lord's Supper/Christ Passover is just around the corner. With the arrival of this annual memorial we have cause to remember the apostle Paul's criticism of the Corinthian Christians for their unseemly behaviour at their agape – "love feast" – observances.

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus sat down with His disciples for what was his last supper with them and explained to them why He was washing their feet and what the bread and wine symbolized, namely, His soon to be sacrificially broken body and shed blood.

The Corinthian Christians were observing this Eucharistic ordinance of bread and wine, which was left by Jesus for all Christians to observe into the future. It was being done as an introduction to a communal agape meal in order to periodically remember Christ's broken body and shed blood that redeemed humanity from bondage to sin and ratified the New Covenant promises of salvation and eternal life to all of God's people.

However, the Corinthians were apparently not observing these occasions with due respect for each other and for the emblems of Christ's broken body and shed blood. Paul therefore criticised them for their lack of respect and decorum when coming together to take the bread and wine, instructing them in how they should behave during these community observances.

Jesus himself had instructed Paul as to what these emblems of bread and wine represented, and so Paul was in a position to also accurately instruct the Corinthians about them and how they should go about observing these sacred occasions – "in a worthy manner."

But what does a "worthy manner" mean? It means more than just good and considerate behaviour at the memorial observance. It is more a case of the right attitude in daily living such that we do not profane the sacrifice of Christ by being "double minded" – by pretending to be righteous and yet practising evil. Paul explains this in his writings to the church in Corinth:

"You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?"
(1 Corinthians 10:21-22).

To continue to live in a way which is contrary to God's will and then to sit down at a memorial dedicated to our Saviour is to take the symbols in an unworthy manner and so invite rejection and God's punishment. To avoid such a possibility, and to ensure acceptance before God, will require the sort of repentance and reconciliation that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 5:23-24 and which the apostle John describes in 1 John 1:6-10. In that way we will be accepting Christ's redeeming and reconciling sacrifice in a worthy manner, in that our faith will be self-evident in our life and in our behaviour (James 2:26). □

*Mike Baran
New South Wales*



Jesus told a remarkable parable, in Luke 16:1-5, about an unjust steward who was entrusted with managing his master's goods. Reports came back that this steward was wasting what belonged to his master, so he was called in and threatened with dismissal.

While serving as steward, he had given loans in his master's name. When he realised he was about to lose his position, he acted shrewdly. He went to those debtors and reduced their bills, securing favour so that they would receive him later when he no longer had a job. In other words, he made friends through generosity that was fraudulent, causing his master to lose some or all of his capital. He scrambled to do what was necessary to secure a future for himself.

Astonishingly, Jesus commended the steward – not for his dishonesty – but for his

wisdom and foresight. The children of this world, Jesus said, are often more shrewd in dealing with worldly matters than the children of light. Sadly, this is often true: many believers can be naive concerning money, wealth, and practical affairs, and often end up poorer or less prepared than their worldly counterparts.

**Jesus wants
His followers
to be faithful
with whatever
God entrusts
to them.**

Jesus then instructs His followers to “make friends” in this world with material resources, so that their generosity will provide support when earthly resources fail. But immediately after commending his shrewdness, Jesus condemns his unfaithfulness. If a person cannot be trusted with little things, who will entrust them with big things? If you are unfaithful with someone else's riches, who will ever trust you with your own? And if you cannot be trusted with earthly riches, how can you be trusted with eternal riches?

A servant of God must not place money above the service of God.

This parable was directed toward the Pharisees and religious leaders who were unfaithful stewards over God's people. They were serving for power and financial advantage, not out of love for God. The Pharisees derided Jesus because they were lovers of money.

Jesus wants His followers to be faithful with whatever God entrusts to them, whether great or small, whether their own or another's. Their actions are a test of character. If a person cannot be trusted with the riches of this world, they cannot be trusted with the riches of the Kingdom of God.

The later message of the parable tells of faithfulness and putting God first over money and worldly gain. The first lesson Jesus highlights is generous wisdom.

Solomon taught the same principle:

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, or even to eight, for you know not what disaster may happen on earth. (Ecclesiastes 11:1-2 ESV)

The idea is simple: when you have wealth, do not be stingy. Share it freely, even if you do not see immediate reward. Like casting bread upon the waters, generosity may seem like waste, but in time, it returns with blessing. It creates relationships, favour, and goodwill that may one day protect you or raise you up.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus preached to tax collectors and sinners, and the Pharisees. All were sinners in God's sight. Yet one group acted wisely. Tax collectors and harlots repented when they heard Jesus. They moved urgently, seeking mercy. They were "received."

But the Pharisees, though religious and knowledgeable, did nothing. Their indecision, pride, and love of money led to condemnation. They may have lost their future through spiritual foolishness, just like a steward who wastes his master's goods and makes no preparation for the day of reckoning.

Thus, the unjust steward represents two different spiritual attitudes: In the first part of the parable, he represents sinners who respond quickly and shrewdly when confronted with judgment – like tax collectors and harlots who repent. Secondly, in the latter application, he represents the Pharisees – unfaithful stewards who serve money rather than God, and who squander their opportunity.

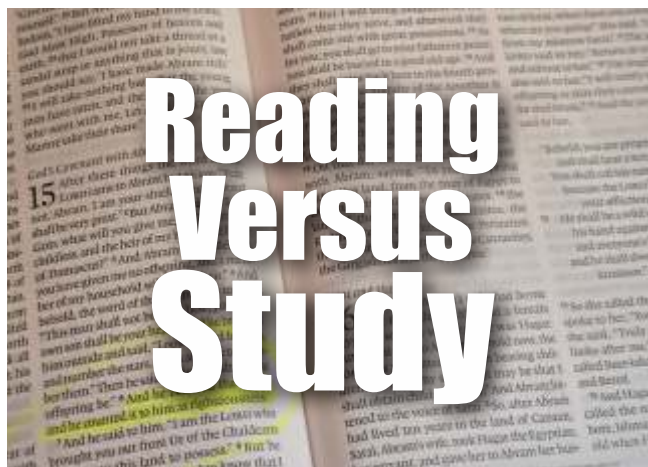
From this parable, we learn the following important life lessons:

1. Be shrewd (wise) with earthly resources. Use money to build relationships, do good, and show generosity.
2. Be faithful. If you cannot be trusted with money, you cannot be trusted with ministry, truth, or spiritual responsibility.
3. Put God before money. No one can serve two masters. Love God first and use money – not the other way around.
4. Practice generosity. What looks like waste may return as blessing, protection, and opportunity.
5. Respond urgently to spiritual truth. Do not delay repentance. Act while there is time. □

**Casting bread
upon the waters,
may seem like
waste,
but in time, it
returns with
blessing.**

*Panom Top
Western Australia*





Reading Versus Study

At this time of year many of us start a schedule to read the entire Bible in a year. Some schedules even run for two years. The danger in having such a long-time frame is that the goal may become one of course completion rather than actual learning.

The Bible was not written for our information but for our transformation.

It is not a self-interpreting text, to be read as one might read a contemporary novel. Nor is scripture a stone with which to bash other stones until they fit our viewpoint.

A reading schedule is good, but an even better approach is to study the scriptures: to consider the history, language, culture, text, grammar, syntax, translation, purpose and context. This requires sound learning, deep study and prayerful requests that the Holy Spirit may guide you into accurate truth – wherever that may take you.

If that sounds like a lot of work it is. But the reward is acquiring the type of knowledge that leads to wisdom.

“Who is this that darkens counsel [questioning my authority and wisdom] By words without knowledge?” (Job 38:2 Amplified Version.)

Memorising scripture also has its place. Without understanding though, it is simply speaking of God rather than hearing God. At school we were taught to memorise information and then repeat it back to prove that we “understood” it. Unlike school however, the Bible teaches you how to think.

*“But we have the mind of Christ.”
(1 Corinthians 2:16) □*

*Richard Todd
South Australia*

And You Shall Call His Name JESUS

There are many funny stories about baby name choices. Two lawyers chose the name Miranda after the Miranda rights arrest protocol i.e. “You have the right to remain silent, anything you say can and will be used against you.”

A huge Disney fan wanted a Disney princess’s baby name, but her husband refused. So she suggested Aurora. He agreed, not knowing it was Sleeping Beauty’s name.

The naming of baby Jesus, however, was not a funny story, but a deeply meaningful one. Joseph and Mary had little choice as to which name because an angel told Joseph to call him Jesus (Yeshua in Hebrew).

Yeshua means Saviour. He was called Yeshua because, as Matthew 1:21 says, “He will save His people from their sins.” God wanted the world to know we can all escape the logical punishment for our sins by looking to our Saviour.

Two verses later it’s also said, “the virgin shall conceive and they shall call His name Immanuel, which means God with us.” Jesus’ given name wasn’t Immanuel, but Christians do call Him God with us.

Scripture gives Jesus other significant names, including in the eighth century B.C. quote predicting His life: *For unto us a Child is born ... And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (Isaiah 9:6).

If by faith you ask Him to be all these things to you, the door to everlasting peace and relationship with the Everlasting Father will be opened for you. □



*David Kidd
New Zealand*

A PERFECT & FAULTLESS SACRIFICE

INSPECTION

Throughout the Old Testament, strict instructions regarding animal sacrifices were in place to ensure they were of the highest quality; the best of what could possibly be offered. Perfect in health, without blemish or spot (Exodus 12:5 and reaffirmed in 1 Peter 1:19).

For the priest performing the sacrifice, their first essential task was verifying the animal's purity through physical examination. Any not meeting the requirements were immediately rejected.

Such also applied to free will (voluntary) offerings. *"You shall offer of your own free will a male without blemish"* (Leviticus 22:19). This foreshadowed Jesus' sacrifice. As High Priest, only He could oversee His own sacrifice, *"No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again"* (John 10:18).

If this process did foreshadow the pure, blameless and perfect sacrifice of Jesus, then we would expect to see a priestly examination and confirmation of the "sacrificial Lamb".

THE INSPECTION OF JESUS

Jesus Faces Pilate (Luke 23:4; 13-14)

Then Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, the rulers, and the people, said to them, "You have brought this Man to me, as one who misleads the people. And indeed, having examined Him in your presence, I have found no fault in this Man concerning those things of which you accuse Him; no, neither did Herod, for I sent you back to him; and indeed, nothing deserving of death has been done by Him."

Jesus Faces Herod (Luke 23:9-10)

Then he (Herod) questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. Then Herod...sent Him back to Pilate.

Jesus Faces Annas - former High Priest

(John 18:13; 19; 23-24)

"And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year." The [former] high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?" Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Jesus Faces the Caiaphas & the Sanhedrin

(Matthew 26:57; 59-60).

And those who had laid hold of Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

Now the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none.

The above paragraphs merely relate what the scriptures themselves say without interpretation. We see that the Lamb that was to be slain, for the remission of all sin once and for all, was inspected and examined by all appropriate authorities: Pilate as Governor, Herod as king, Annas the former High Priest and Caiaphas the current High Priest. None found any basis of a crime or offence being committed. However, they went further, changing the initial charge of blasphemy to one of treason against Caesar, a capital offence that the Romans could not ignore.

Also to be noted is the recording of these words witnessed in the presence of the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, elders, the Sanhedrin and, as recorded in Luke 23, the people themselves.

An honest assessment of all these events would conclusively determine that Jesus as the Lamb of God, was indeed examined and thereafter affirmed to be a perfect and faultless sacrifice. □

*Richard Todd
South Australia*



The Deep Roots of Anti-Semitism

The three Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam all claim Abraham as one of their forebears. Abraham's Judaic and Christian families stem from their son Isaac, but the Islamic families stem from Abraham's earlier surrogacy with his wife Sarah's Egyptian handmaid Hagar, who gave birth to Ishmael some 14 years prior to Isaac's birth – Ishmael grew up apparently as a “wild donkey of a man” (Genesis 16:12) – a life lived malevolently against everyone.

The hatred between Isaac's and Ishmael's progeny now occupies some 3500 years of history. Today, large sections of the Arab world simply want to destroy Israel; this was evidenced in the 1948, 1967 and 1973 wars, where Israel was attacked by vastly larger Arab armies, and miraculously not only survived, but defeated their enemies. I personally saw the burned-out Jordanian tanks and military trucks in the Westbank and Negev when I visited Israel some years ago.

The thin slice of disputed land in the centre of the Middle East is democratic Israel. It is surrounded by enemies on all sides, notably by the terrorist

organisations of Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis, all seeking Israel's annihilation. Their stated manifesto is the destruction of Israel and to kill every Jew; the state sponsor of this terrorism is Iran.

More recently, following the Nova festival attack in Israel on 7 October 2023 and the two ensuing years of heightened drama, war, bloodshed and perpetuated false narrative, we again see the tentacles of anti-Semitism reach our own shores at Bondi Beach in Sydney a few weeks ago, with 15 Jews celebrating Hanukkah shot to death by two Islamic militants.

How could this happen on our own shores?

This long-perpetuated hatred of just .02% of the world's population is on some levels hard to understand. This is because we in the West largely exist by the multicultural mantra of “live and let live.” But many other countries don't think as we do. When parents teach their children that Jews are dogs and worthy of death; when schools and mosques perpetuate this ancient hatred, we have an endless supply of jihadist combatants ready to perpetuate their hatred wherever they can.

Students of history will also recognise Christianity's own anti-Semitism “skeletons in the cupboard”. Past

generations labelled Jews as “Jesus killers.” Did you also know that it was largely anti-Semitism in the third century that fuelled the changed day of worship for Christians from Saturday to Sunday? The Roman emperor, together with various councils, declared that people must not Judaize by resting on the Saturday Sabbath, but rather worship and rest on the first day of the week, Sunday. The theological arguments for the change to Sunday worship pale into insignificance when compared to the political expediency of rife antisemitism. Historians note that for the first two centuries, a majority of practising Christians still celebrated Saturday Sabbath!

The historical rise of Islam as a religious and political entity, together with its tenets, laws and objectives, such as “convert or die,” are completely incompatible with western multicultural ideals.

Internationally, Israel’s current troubles are really a wake-up call for all of us. As one political commentator put it, “Israel is the canary in the coal mine.” The war they are fighting will one day be our war for survival. What is surprising in Israel’s defence, is that last year, when Iran fired some 1000 projectiles consisting of intercontinental missiles and radar evading drones, Israel shot them all out of the sky using their Iron Dome and David Sling defensive missiles. War analysts still wonder how this was possible!



How can we end this anti-Semitism?

Politicians, of course, are busy trying to placate an uneasy public by introducing “hate speech” laws that restricts everyone’s freedom but offers no physical protection. Australian gun laws and immigrations policies are currently in the limelight, but they’ll do little while we allow mass demonstrations featuring hateful chants, fuelled by fiery, contemptible sermons by Imams. Even if we were to in the interim deal with these dangerous ideologies, according to the Bible, these will make little difference to the brewing malevolence that has existed for millennia.

The prophecies surrounding Jerusalem, and the Middle East in general, foretell a time of world war, with all nations gathering around Israel for battle. Anti-Semitism will have reached international fever pitch, and as the prophet Zechariah once conveyed, “*Jerusalem will become a cup of staggering for all nations.*” (Zechariah 12:2)

Western nations are fast losing their original Judeo-Christian ethos, resulting in an identity crisis that often focusses on race and gender. History will likely consign our former rise to glory into the sands of yet another vanquished and enslaved civilisation.

This lingering anti-Semitic hatred doesn’t look good, either now or into the future.

The antidote is in Jesus’ words: “*Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who malign you.*” (Luke 6:27-28)

The opposite of hate is love, and this is manifested in kindness, compassion, courage and care. As a nation, our identity must return to our Christian roots. Any other platform or identity is automatically doomed to failure, attested to by the recent bloodshed on our own iconic Australian beachfront. □

*John Klassek, Pastor
Western Australia*



Article also as published online at
<https://dailydeclaration.org.au/2025/12/29/antisemitism-historical-roots/>



Come Lord Jesus!

John, one of Jesus' original disciples, now much older and in exile on the isle of Patmos, experienced Jesus in a dramatic vision recorded in the last book of the Bible, Revelation. Instructed by Jesus to write down all he saw and heard and send it to the churches, the letter that has become a bookend to our Bible, concludes with Jesus' own words of promise.

*"And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."
"Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done."
(Revelation 22:7,12 ESV)*

Some translations render the word "soon" as "quickly." Whichever, the encouragement impressed upon John of Jesus' building and edifying those seven churches in Asia Minor (where Turkey is today), giving insight into events preceding his glorious return, also provided the assurance that this was "soon to take place".

*Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.
(Revelation 1:3 ESV)*

We could easily assert that Revelation is purely symbolic, written in an apocalyptic, almost cryptic style, and solely appropriate and relevant to first-century culture and events, such as the brutal Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. But this message was meant to be read and understood by the churches.

However, a careful reading of Revelation tells of yet future events surrounding and leading up to Jesus' return. The questions we might wrestle with are: What does this really look like for us? How might we be blessed to also read and take to heart the mysterious events, angelic beings, strange metaphors and rich symbolism?

Are we, some 2000 years later, somewhat naive to keep on believing its message as being more literal and relevant for the church then and today than an otherwise obscured, problematic or vague text? Is Revelation simply an apocalyptic style of writing, using imagery to speak of ultimate victory? Or is Revelation a clear, unambiguous message not only for the first century apostolic church but also insight and instruction for the church today?

The notion of Jesus' second coming seemed to experience renewal some 180 years ago among Sabbatarian believers in the United States. Belief in Jesus' visible and literal return was a pillar of

originating belief and revival from which, for example, the Church of God (Seventh Day) grew. Followers of Jesus believed and preached that Jesus might return in their lifetime. We read of the “Great Disappointment” of 1844 as a part of US religious history!

Since then there have been countless other “wanna-bees” touting subsequent dates for Jesus’ return. All have failed. Did they not read Jesus’ own words on this?

“Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”
(Matthew 24:30 ESV)

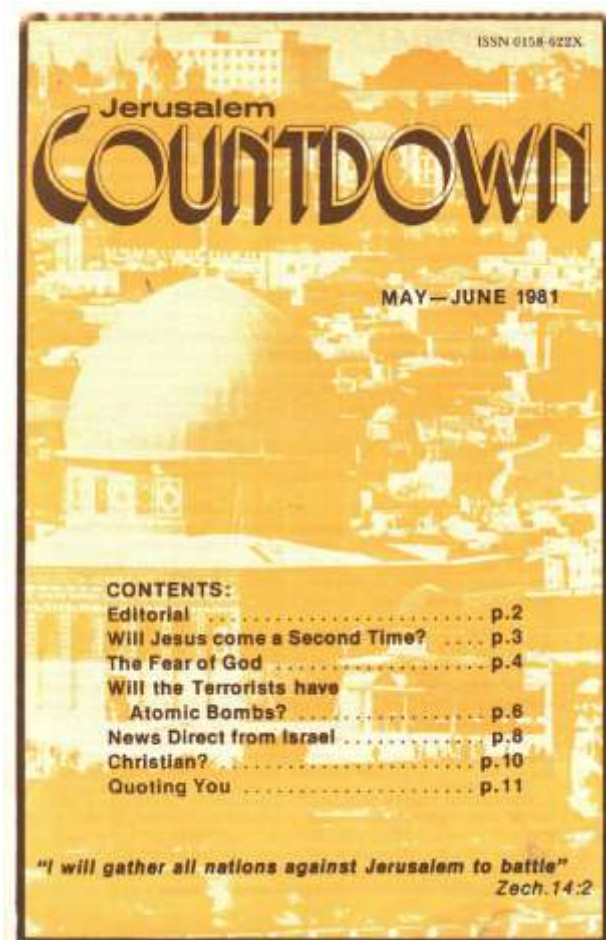
“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” (Matthew 24:36 ESV)

It does seem, however, that perhaps Jesus wants His followers to always be waiting for Him, and not given to an attitude of “last-minute repentance”. In one of Jesus’ many parables, the nobleman or master goes away for a long time, and then returns to his servants who must then give account.

It’s also a given that to the LORD, a day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day! (2 Peter 3:8, Psalms 90:4) In other words, that is one way God explains to us that He exists outside of what we know as “time.” For us mortals, albeit created out of earth in God’s image and likeness, and for today’s followers and believers in Jesus everywhere, there is a genuine and enduring yearning for that day when faith becomes sight. When Jesus returns in glory and power, surrounded by all his holy angels, and in a thunderous voice, amidst a final trumpet blast, the dead awaken from sleep in the dust of the earth, to finally not only to see their Lord returning as He is in glory, but to also be as He is!

As John’s pen touches the Revelation parchment for the last time, his annotation speaks to our hearts today: “Come, Lord Jesus!” ☐

*John Klassek, Pastor
Western Australia*



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But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine.

Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'

(Luke 10:33-35 ESV)

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