

The Life of JESUS CHRIST

By James Stalker, M.A., D.D.

Author of "*Men and Morals*," "*Life of St. Paul*," "*Imago Christi*," etc., etc.
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Chapter 8

HINTS FOR TEACHERS AND QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS

IT will be observed that what has been attempted in the foregoing pages has been to throw into prominence the great masses of our Lord's life, and point clearly out its hinge-events, details being as much as possible curtailed. These details are more popularly known than any other part of human knowledge; what most readers of the Gospels need is a scheme let down on the details, in whose divisions they will naturally arrange themselves, so that the life may present itself to the eye as a whole; and an endeavor has here been made to supply this want. But in a Bible-class course extending beyond twelve or fifteen lessons, more of the details might be introduced with advantage. There is, therefore, subjoined the outline of a more extended course, along with a few questions on the text intended to stimulate pupils to further thought and inquiry. *

* As a teacher's apparatus I would recommend-

(1) Andrews' *Bible Student's Life of our Lord*, an unpretentious but excellent book, in which the apologetic difficulties in the details of the life are treated with much candor and success;

(2) Neander's *Life of CHRIST* (John series), the best life, in my opinion, yet published, though sadly marred by too great concessions to the spirit of denial, which had reached its climax in Germany at the time when it was written; and

(3) Farrar's, Geikie's, or Edersheim's *Life*, which will lend vividness to the teacher's remarks.

These books, along with a good Commentary on the Gospels, a Harmony of the Gospels, and a Handbook of Bible Geography, are sufficient. Happy will the teacher be who has at hand, in addition to the foregoing, Hastings' *Dictionary of CHRIST and the Gospels*, or Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. [147]

PRELIMINARY

1. Characteristics of the Four Gospels

Matthew - Hebrew thought and diction; well acquainted with the Old Testament; frequent quotations, "**That it might be fulfilled**;" aim to prove that JESUS was the Messiah; "**the kingdom**" very prominent; methodical groupings and combinations; groups of parables, chaps. 13, 24, 25; of miracles, chapters 8, 9.

Mark - Graphic and epic; supposed to be pupil of Peter, whose fiery spirit pervades his book; poetic objectivity and minuteness; details as to the looks and gestures of JESUS, the amazement He created, etc.; aim to show how He proved Himself to be the Messianic King by a succession of astonishing deeds; stormful haste, "**forthwith**," "**immediately**," and the like, very frequent.

Luke - More of the trained historian than the other Evangelists; Hellenic grace of style; series of cameos; gives reasons of events; philosophic; psychological comments; Pauline spirit and universality; CHRIST not only for the Jews but for mankind; genealogy of JESUS traced back beyond Abraham.

John - Supplies what the other Evangelists omitted; dwells specially on the work of JESUS in Judaea; His private interviews; His interior life; His most profound and mysterious sayings; lyric fervor, profundity, and sublimity of farewell discourses. (See Lange, *Life of CHRIST*, i. 243-285, and Haussleiter, *Die Vier Evangelien*.)

2. When were our Gospels Written? - See Tischendorf's little pamphlet of this name (translation published by London Tract Society) ; Lange, vol. i.; or Weiss; Westcott's *The Study of the Gospels*; Moffat's, Peake's, Bacon's, or Zahn's *Introduction to the New Testament*. It would probably be out of place in a Bible-class course to go at any length into this vexed and vast question. The most [148] important point is the date of John's Gospel; see Luthardt, *St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel* (Clark), or Watkins' *Modern Criticism* considered in relation to the Fourth Gospel, or Sanday's *Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel*.

"The man who hides from himself what Christianity and the Christian revelation are takes the parts of it to pieces, and persuades himself that without divine interposition he can account for all the pieces. Here is something from the Jews and something from the Greeks. Here are miracles that may be partly odd natural events, partly nervous impressions, and partly gradually growing legends. Here are books, of which we may say that this element was contributed by this party, and the other by that, and the general coloring by people who held partly of both. In such ways as these Christianity is taken down and spread over several centuries. But when your operation is done, the living whole draws itself together again, looks you in the face, refuses to be conceived in that manner, reclaims its scattered members from the other centuries back to the first, and re-asserts itself to be a great burst of coherent life and light, centering in CHRIST. Just so you might take to pieces a living tissue, and say there is here only so much nitrogen, carbon, lime, and so forth; but the energetic peculiarities of life going on before your eyes would refute you by the palpable presence of a mystery unaccounted for." (Principal Rainy, *New College Inaugural Address*, 1874.)

3. Other Sources of the Life of JESUS - References in Josephus, Tacitus, etc., of little moment except to show how small insight these observers had into the most important event of their

times. Jewish history and antiquities explain the period. Ancient history exhibits "**the fulness of time.**"

From two sources fresh information has recently been sought:

1. *Agrapha* are sayings of JESUS not found in the Gospels. These have been laboriously collected [149] by Resch, whose results have been sifted by Ropes in *Die Sprache Jesu*.
2. In Thomson's Books which may have influenced *Our Lord and His Apostles*, a source from which much new light is expected by some, is discussed - namely, the literature produced between the Old Testament and the New, which has all been collected by Kautzsch in *Die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen des alten Testaments*, and by Charles in *Apocrypha Pseudepigrapha*.

4. **The Annunciation** - Prophecy of Baptist's birth.

Visit of Mary to Elizabeth. Events connected with John's birth.

1. For what reasons may the Life of CHRIST be regarded as the most interesting subject of human thought?
2. Why are the first three Evangelists called the Synoptists?
3. What is the meaning of the saying that the scenery of Palestine is the fifth Gospel?

Chapter One

1. On the exact date of the birth of JESUS - probably B.C. 4 - see the essays at the beginning of Andrews' *Life*. Luke's statement that the taxing took place "**when Cyrenius was governor of Syria**" used to be pointed to as a mistake, Cyrenius having been governor ten years later; but the discovery that Cyrenius was twice governor (see Andrews, 3-6, 70-73) is a remarkable instance of how alleged mistakes in the Gospels are often made to disappear by further inquiry. Compare Ramsay, *Was CHRIST born in Bethlehem?*
2. On the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, see Andrews, in loc.
3. On Bethlehem, see Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*.
4. It has often been attempted to throw discredit on the story of our Lord's supernatural origin by comparing it to the heathen stories of how sons of the gods were born of mortal mothers; but, first, such an idea was utterly repugnant to the Jewish conception of GOD, and could not [150] spring up on Jewish soil; and, secondly, even these stories, poured forth from the heathen mind, were indications of a deep sense in humanity of the need of the Incarnation. Since 1892, when a pastor in South Germany was deposed for omitting from the Creed, which he had to read in Church, the references to the supernatural birth of JESUS and His bodily resurrection, a controversy on those two points has raged, first in Germany and then in the rest of the world. The considerations on the first of these topics thereby brought into notice will be found amply detailed in Orr's *The Virgin Birth of CHRIST*, and those on the other topic in the same author's work, *The Resurrection*.

9. On the star, see Andrews and Pressense, in loc.

10. **The Herods of the New Testament** -

1. Herod the Great, in whose reign JESUS was born, reigned over the whole of Palestine; died very soon after JESUS' birth; his kingdom was divided at his death among his sons.

2. Herod Antipas, son of the former, was at his father's death made tetrarch of Galilee and Perea; the murderer of the Baptist; JESUS was sent to him by Pilate.

3. Herod Agrippa I, grandson of Herod the Great, had as great dominions as he; put to death James, and imprisoned Peter; died miserably, as is related in Acts 12:4. Herod Agrippa II., son of Agrippa I; Paul appeared before him, Acts 25.

10. Archelaus was soon deposed from the throne of Judaea, which became a part of the Roman province of Syria.

11. Farrar's chapter on the Youth of JESUS is particularly good, and Geikie and Edersheim have many interesting remarks.

12. See Apocryphal Gospels in The Ante-Nicene Christian Library.

18. In Turpie's *Old Testament in the New* will be found much interesting information on the modes in which CHRIST and the Apostles quote the Old Testament Scriptures, showing where they adhere literally to the Hebrew text, where to the Septuagint, and where they deviate from both. A recent book on the same subject is Dittmar's *Vetus Testamentum in Novo*. In *Jesu Muttersprache* Meyer has attempted to prove that JESUS habitually spoke and preached in Aramaic, and this is accepted on the Continent. But even if this were his mother's tongue, it does not follow that He preached in it. The only elaborate argument on the subject in English, that of the late Dr. Roberts of St. Andrews, ends in the conclusion that He preached in Greek. Do not the fragments of Aramaic preserved in the Gospels convey the impression that He fell back on the mother tongue in moments of emotion, but that He habitually employed another language?

20. When it is said at any point in His subsequent life that He retired to "*the mountain*," it is generally needless to enquire which mountain. It was any mountain which was accessible; there were few places in whose vicinity there was not mountainous land.

9. To what extent must this star have been supernatural?

18. What portions of Scripture were most quoted by JESUS!

What is the Septuagint? What indications are there [152] that JESUS did not generally speak on the spur of the moment, but thought His discourses carefully out beforehand!

22. What views has Milton expressed on this subject in "*Paradise Regained*," and what is their value?

CHAPTER II

On the subjects treated in the first half of this chapter, the first 100 pages of Reuss' *Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age* will be found full of light.

27. It would be useful here to give a sketch of the history of the interval between the Old and New Testament histories, of which so little is popularly known. See Shrinner's *Historical Connection between the Old and New Testaments*, or Fairweather's *From the Exile to the Advent*, or Waddy Moss' *From Malachi to Matthew*. On the various modes in which Rome ruled subject territories, see Ramsay's *Roman Antiquities*, pp. 131 ff.

28. Synagogue arrangements, Farrar, i. 221:fr. the ritual of Presbyterian churches is a close imitation of that of the synagogue, whereas Catholic ritual imitates that of the temple. See Dods' *Presbyterianism older than Christianity*.

30, 31. On the Pharisees, see Mozley's remarkable discourse in his *University Sermons*, and compare Wellhausen's treatise on the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Farrar, 1. Chapter xxxi., will supply useful illustration of what is said in the text in regard to the scribes. A fund of information on these paragraphs in Hausrath's or Schiirer's *New Testament Times*; works on the Jewish religion of the time by Bousset and Hollmann.

35. A somewhat lengthened lesson might here be introduced on the Old Testament prophecies and types. See Fairbairn's *Prophecy and Typology*.

26. What are the Apocrypha?

31, 32. Give parallels from the history of Christianity. [153]

33. Compare the aspects of society in our country at present with those of Palestine in the time of CHRIST.

36. Give the names of persons who are said to have been waiting for the Messiah, and compile from the Song of Mary and elsewhere an outline of what their expectations were.

38. Compile from scattered references in the Gospels an outline of the conception which the scribes and the populace entertained of the Messiah and His era.

Chapter III

45. John the Baptist, excellent subject for class essay. Works on the subject by Reynolds and Feather.

49. Owen has a remarkable chapter on this subject in his work on the (Book II. Chapter 4).

50. *Potuit non peccare*, or *Non potuit peccare*? Ullmann, *Sinlessness of JESUS*.

51. The official significance of the Temptation is explained in the text; but it would be well to give also its personal significance for the character of JESUS and His relation to His Father. Temptation to unbelief, presumption and pride. Trench, *Gospel Studies*; Adolphe Monod's three sermons on *JESUS tente au desert*; also a work by Norman Macleod.

53. On the plan of JESUS, see Neander, in loco.

41. Give instances of men who have achieved a great life-work in a short time and died young.

42. It has been maintained that JESUS changed His plan, because He first addressed Himself to the Jewish nation as a whole, but afterwards organized the Christian Church from the nucleus of a few disciples. What would you say in answer to such a view?

45. What was the difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism?

46. Some think that JESUS and John had met before: is it likely? On what grounds may it be supposed that the dove and the voice from Heaven were perceived only by JESUS and the Baptist?

49. Collect the texts which speak of the influence of the HOLY GHOST on the human nature of JESUS.

53. Narrate Milton's account of the Temptation in "*Paradise Regained*." [154]

Divisions of the Ministry

What Andrews says on this subject, p. 109, is very good and clear, and so are his characterizations of the different periods, pp. 120, 167-173, 259, 296-301. See note on John 6:4 in Westcott and Hort's New Testament.

54. Sketch of the Geography of Palestine. See Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*; G. A. Smith, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*; Thomson, *The Land and the Book*; Henderson's *Palestine*; Tristram or Hort, *Fauna and Flora of Palestine*.

Chapter IV

59. There were two cleansings of the temple, the one at the beginning and the other at the close of the ministry. Such double accounts of similar events in the Gospels have been seized upon as examples of the tendency in speech to multiply one event into two. But it is forgotten that this is a tendency not only of speech but of action, and that, when a person has done anything once, there is a likelihood that he will do it again.

The Great Feasts:

1. The Passover, held in April, just before the harvest began.
2. Pentecost, held fifty days after the Passover, at the conclusion of the corn harvest and before the vintage.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles, held in autumn after all the fruits had been gathered in.

4. The Feast of Dedication, which JESUS once attended, took place in December.

57. Collect the sayings of John about JESUS, and of JESUS about John. [155]

Chapter V

On Galilee, see Farrar, I. Chapter 12. Neander's account of the means of JESUS is very valuable. For the convenience of teachers who may wish to follow out in detail the incidents of each period, the following list of the events of this year may be given (see Andrews, pp. 198 ff. and 536) :-

- Second call of Peter, Andrew, James and John.
- Busy Sabbath: preaches in synagogue of Capernaum and cures demoniac; heals Peter's mother-in-law, and cures many after sunset.
- Next morning goes to mountain to pray, then sets out on preaching tour in the neighboring towns, in one of which He cures a leper.
- Returns to Capernaum; heals man "borne of four," forgiving his sins; accused of blasphemy; walks by seaside and teaches; calls Matthew; accused as Sabbath-breaker for allowing His disciples to pluck ears of corn and for healing withered hand on Sabbath.
- Retires to a mountain; calls the Twelve; delivers the Sermon on the Mount.
- Again in Capernaum; heals centurion's servant.
- Another preaching tour; raises widow's son at Nain; receives message from Baptist and delivers panegyric on him; dines with Simon the Pharisee, and is anointed by the woman who was a sinner; parable of Two Debtors.
- In Capernaum again; casts out dumb devil; visited by His mother and brethren; teaches from ship.
- Crossing the lake, He stills a tempest; cures demoniacs in country of Gadarenes.
- Back in Capernaum; Matthew's feast; raises Jairus' daughter and cures woman with issue of blood.
- On another tour of the Galilean towns He revisits Nazareth; sends forth the Twelve; hears of Baptist's murder.

76. Some of the many questions in reference to the possibility and the proof of miracles would naturally, in an extended course, be treated here; see Mozley on *Miracles* and Illingworth's *Divine Immanence*. There cannot, I think, be reasonable doubt that our Lord gave His sanction to the view that the demoniacs were actually possessed by evil spirits. [156]

79. The acknowledgment that the Baptist wrought no miracles is a strong point against the mythical theory. If it was natural for that age, as this theory asserts, to surround with a halo of miracle persons who had impressed its imagination, why were not miracles attributed to the Baptist? Very few are narrated even of Paul.

80. Connection of the work of CHRIST with the fate of nature.

83. Monographs on our Lord's miracles by Trench, Bruce, Laidlaw, Steinmeyer.

84. On the teaching of JESUS many good remarks will be found in Harris' *Great Teacher*. On its

parabolic form, Trench's introductory chapters in his *Parables* are good. A much fuller account of what JESUS taught than is given in the text would be very desirable in an extended course, and might be gathered from the relative portions of any handbooks of New Testament Theology (Weiss, Beyschlag, Holtzmann, Feine, Weinel, Schlatter, Stevens). Monographs on the subject are Meyer's *Le Christianisme du CHRIST*, Bruce's *Kingdom of GOD*, and Wendt's or Stevens' *Teaching of JESUS* and Gilbert's *The Revelation of JESUS*;" see also Robertson's *Our Lord's Teaching* and Ross' *The Teaching of JESUS*. On the Parables of our Lord there is a rich literature, e.g. Lisco, Trench, Arnot, Bruce, Dods, Taylor, Goebel, Julicher, Bugge, van Koetsfeld.

92, 94, 100, I09-II3. It would be a useful exercise for the members of a class to illustrate these paragraphs by abundant quotations from the Gospels.

98. See Candlish's *Cunningham Lectures on The Kingdom of GOD*.

101. Stalker's *Christology of JESUS*, being His Teaching Concerning Himself, supplies ample information about the voluminous foreign literature on the teaching of CHRIST.

103. CHRIST's method of dealing with inquirers.

105. On the apostolate, see Bruce, *Training of the Twelve*. [157]

107. Sketches of the leading apostles. The difficulty about the choice of Judas is only a fragment of the larger difficulty of reconciling the foreknowledge of GOD with man's free-will.

109. For some of the remarks on the character of JESUS I am indebted to Keirn, *Geschichte Jesu*. Compare also Bushnell's fine chapter on the character of JESUS in *Nature and the Supernatural*, Phillips Brooks' *The influence of JESUS*, and Peabody's *JESUS CHRIST and the Christian Character*.

114. Ullmann's *Sinlessness of JESUS*.

115. Here the two names by which JESUS called Himself - Son of man and Son of GOD - should be explained. See Beyschlag's *Christologie*, Stanton's *Jewish Messiah*, or Baldensperger's *Selbstbewusstsein Jesu*; as well as Abbott *The Son of Man*, Contributions to the Study of the Thoughts of JESUS.

76. Mention as many great and good men as you can who have been called mad.

77. What reasons may be suggested why JESUS sometimes used means and sometimes dispensed with them?

79. What proof of the credibility of the gospel account of the miracles of CHRIST is afforded by the confession that John worked none?

80. Is it correct to speak of the miracles of JESUS as interruptions of the order of nature?

81. What form of missionary effort seeks to imitate both the preaching and healing activity of CHRIST?

82. Can the popular notions about the wicked life of Mary Magdalene be proved from the Gospels to be incorrect?

83. With what evidence would you support the statement that JESUS, though the Man of

Sorrows, was yet the most joyful of men?

86. What portions of the Old Testament specially justify this description of the Oriental mind?

89. Enumerate the parables of JESUS, and make a list of His other most remarkable figures of speech.

96. How would you account for the great difference between the circle of CHRIST's ideas recorded by the Synoptists, and the circle of His ideas which we find in John?

97. Which of the Evangelists uses the phrase "*the kingdom of Heaven*," and what does it mean?

103. Enumerate the private interviews of JESUS. [158]

108. What proof of their Master's supernatural greatness is afforded by the character and achievements of the Twelve?

114. What conclusions can you draw from the fact that JESUS was sinless?

115. Prove the divinity of CHRIST as fully as possible from the first three Evangelists, and show that it is a complete mistake to allege that it is taught only by the fourth of the Evangelists.

Chapter VI

THE events of this year were the following:-

- Leaving Capernaum, He crosses the lake; feeds five thousand; walks on sea; rescues sinking Peter.
- Again in Capernaum; discourse on bread of life; many disciples forsake Him; He says that Judas has a devil; discussion about eating bread with unwashed hands.
- Long journey to Tyre and Sidon, where he cures Syro-Phoenician woman's daughter; then to Decapolis, where He heals a deaf man and feeds four thousand; returns to Capernaum.
- Leaves it again; cures blind man at Bethsaida; visits Caesarea Philippi; the great confession; the Transfiguration; cures demoniac boy; announces His death.
- Again in Capernaum; pays tribute.
- Visit to Jerusalem at Feast of Tabernacles; teaches in temple; attempt to arrest Him; Nicodemus seeks justice for Him; adulteress brought to Him; heals blind man, who argues with rulers; parable of Good Shepherd.
- Final departure from Galilee.
- Journey towards Jerusalem; John and James wish to rain fire on a Samaritan village; the Seventy sent out; journey through Perez; parable of the Good Samaritan; the Lord's Prayer; dumb demoniac healed; encounters with Pharisees; parable of Rich Fool; "signs of the times;" heals infirm woman; warned against Herod.
- At Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem; visit to Bethany; nearly stoned in the city.
- Retires to Bethabara; while at feast in a Pharisee's house on the Sabbath, heals dropsical man, and speaks parable of Great Supper; several parables directed against Pharisees.
- Raising of Lazarus.
- Retires to Ephraim; heals ten lepers; more parables against the Pharisees; blesses children; the rich young man; Salome's request; Jericho - Bartimaeus, Zaccheus; thence to Bethany. [159]

Luke gives by far the fullest account of the events of the period between the final departure from Galilee and the final arrival at Bethany, chaps. 9-19.

124-128. It would be a good exercise for the pupils to collect texts from the Gospels illustrating these paragraphs.

126. See :Mackintosh's *CHRIST and the Jewish Law*.

136. The effect of the Baptist's death on the adherents of JESUS is put in a very striking, perhaps exaggerated way in *Philo-christus*.

143. At Feast of Tabernacles and Feast of Dedication.

122. How far does conscientiousness justify conduct? Illustrate your answer by historical parallels to the conduct of the Pharisees.

129. Can you. show from the Old Testament that miracles were not necessarily evidences of a divine mission?

Chapter VII

Details not referred to in the text:-

Supper at Bethany and anointing of JESUS by Mary; barren fig-tree cursed; second purging of temple; widow's mites; several parables; details of parting meeting with the apostles; the portents that accompanied His death; details of His burial; restoration of Peter.

145. The Passover took place this year on April 6th.

146. The anachronism of using the days of the Christian week will be condoned for the sake of clearness.

152. I cannot adopt the theory of Judas' career expounded in De Quincey's well-known and brilliant essay that he thought JESUS too unworldly and hesitating, and precipitated Him into a position in which He should be compelled to exhibit His divine glory, but with no thought that He would suffer Himself to be executed. Its strong point is the suicide of Judas, which is held to have shown a kind of nobility in his nature. But it is inconsistent, I think, with his peculation and his kiss, and especially with the tone in which Scripture speaks of him. [160]

156. Here an account might be given of the destruction of Jerusalem, to be got from Josephus.

160. On the difficult question whether it was the Paschal supper which JESUS ate with the apostles, and whether John places the crucifixion on the same day as the other Evangelists, see Andrews, 368 ff. Farrar, Excursus x., and Smith, *The Days of His Flesh*, Appendix viii. See also Westcott *The Gospel of the Resurrection* and Milligen *The Resurrection*.

169. The silence of JESUS.

172. On the legal aspects of the trial, see *The Trial of JESUS CHRIST* by Dr. Taylor Innes, Advocate.

180. Herod was ultimately banished to Gaul.

189. Pilate was also ultimately deprived of his position, and is said by Eusebius to have at length killed himself, "wearied with misfortunes." His wife, under the name of Claudia Procula, is included among the Catholic saints.

193. The cross was probably of the form in which it is familiarly represented, though sometimes it was like the letter T or the letter X. It only raised the victim a foot or two above the ground. The soldier was able to reach the lips of JESUS with a hyssop-stalk. Zoeckler has an excellent monograph on the cross of CHRIST.

195. The circumstance that blood and water flowed from His pierced side has been held by eminent medical authorities to prove that JESUS died literally of a broken heart - broken with sorrow. See the opinions of Sir J. Y. Simpson and others in the Appendix to Hanna's *Last Days of our Lord's Passion*.

199. With the argument of this section compare Paley, *Evidences of Christianity*, Part i.

201. Details of Peter's fall. It was when passing from the committee-room, where He had been informally tried, to a barrack-room, where He was detained till the legal hour for opening court arrived, that "**Jesus turned and looked upon Peter.**" [161]

203. In some ways the most important appearance of. all may have been that to His own brother James. On its results and their apologetic value, see *Imago Christi*, p. 50.

204, 205. Swete, *The Appearances of our Lord after His Passion*; also a work on the same subject by Loofs.

144. Quote a passage from Acts to show from how many different countries the scattered Jews gathered to the annual feasts.

147. The meaning of Hosanna and of Hallelujah?

155. Who were the persons not of Abraham's seed with whom JESUS came in contact in the course of His ministry?

163. Collect the texts in which the majesty of our Lord's appearances is mentioned.

181. In what points was the trial of Paul which resulted in his being sent to Rome similar to that of JESUS.

194. What were the seven last sentences of JESUS?

203. What is the meaning of the remark, that the Christian Church is the best biography of CHRIST? [162]

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