

What Determines Your Redemption? (Covenant of Redemption Part 1)

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Preacher: J.D. Edwards

[0 : 00] Our sermon text today is Psalm 110, all seven verses. We're in covenant theology as a series, and what we can listen for as we read through Psalm 110 is the covenant of redemption.

So this is God's decree in eternity, outside of time, and it's his decree to redeem a people. The Father will give the Son a people. So listen for that theme as we read, and remember we trust that this is God's inspired, inerrant, infallible, clear, and sufficient word.

It's God's very own word for you and me, who he calls his people. So when I'm done reading, I'll say this is the word of the Lord, and we'll say together, thanks be to God. Psalm 110, starting at verse 1.

A psalm of David. The Lord says to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter.

Rule in the midst of your enemies. Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power in holy garments. From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.

[1 : 19] The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord is at your right hand.

He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses. He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth.

He will drink from the brook by the way. Therefore, he will lift up his head. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

You may be seated. The Bible says that the grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Oh God, we receive this promise.

[2 : 19] That the Son is seated at the right hand of the Father. You've put the rod of the King in his hand. You've made him a priest forever.

And you are bringing all the nations under his feet. We pray that the kingdom of Christ will advance. We pray that he will rule over us with power, Lord.

May you be glorified as your gospel is declared from this psalm. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, Jack's parents were in debt.

They were farmers in the 1850s. But Ireland had a famine. The famous Irish potato famine. And so, this young man, when he turned 18, he saw really only one viable option for his future.

He would walk to the port. He would go to the little booth where the man was set up with a legal contract. And he would talk to them about a future in America.

[3 : 33] And they explained to him, you know, this voyage from Ireland all the way to the USA to New York City is very expensive. You don't have any money. And we're guaranteeing for you work when you get there.

And you'll have the opportunity to become an American citizen and buy land. Maybe even claim land for free. So, Jack signed a paper and he made himself an indentured servant.

He gets a free passage to the new country. But he has to work as a slave, as an indentured servant for seven years. And at the end of that time, his hard work earns for him redemption.

He's released of that bondage. America is defined by an immigrant work ethic. It always has been. That's how this nation began. And that's really what drives this pulse of this strong American economy.

And I think because we are all living in America, we need to be very careful that we have this immigrant work ethic. And we try to apply that now to our view of the kingdom of Christ. You and I, we were born in Adam's line.

[4 : 41] We were born with this massive debt and we piled on our own debt on top of it. Just like that immigrant. But we can easily deceive ourselves to thinking that we can just sell ourselves as a slave to God, maybe.

And work hard in order to determine our own destiny. And while that can be true in America, land of social mobility and opportunity, this is not the truth of the kingdom of heaven.

Spiritually, you and I are in debt. Our first parents are the ones who sold all of us into slavery. But we are hopelessly cursed under the covenant of works.

And the kingdom of God, you're going to want to say amen after this. The kingdom of God is not the USA. Thank you. You can't buy your way into the kingdom of God.

You don't work for your redemption. If your good works were what determines your redemption, you and I would be hopeless, right?

[5 : 46] Well, one of the glorious pictures, it's really a metaphor for God's eternal decree to save a people. It comes from David. And if there's anyone who knows and has put it in the records of history, I cannot save myself.

I am a sinner. It's King David. We know David's story. Praise God it came from him. If it came from someone like Daniel, you know, or Ezra or someone very admirable, Joseph, I would have a hard time believing that this could also be for me, but it comes from David.

So let's take comfort in that. Psalm 110 that we just read is the most quoted or alluded to psalm in all of the New Testament.

So do you see the New Testament authors by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit are pointing back and saying there's significance here. Pay attention to this. This is meaningful for the new covenant. 24 different times in the New Testament is Psalm 110 quoted directly or alluded to.

So beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the question I invite you to contemplate today is this. What determines your redemption?

[6 : 56] What determines your redemption? There's not a more important question you could think about for an hour. Everything's at stake. What determines to define redemption?

What determines whether you are pardoned from the penalties of God's violated law? What determines whether you are ransomed from your bondage to sin?

You need to know the answer to this. So my first point for you is this. It pleased our triune God to express his eternal decree by way of covenant.

That's the language of our confession of faith. It pleased the Lord to condescend. As Ryan put it in Sunday school, it's like God stoops down and he expresses this to us by way of covenant.

So look again at the heading of this psalm. It's Psalm 110 verse 1. We're told it's a psalm of David. You got to keep the characters correctly in your mind here. So David's the one writing this.

[8 : 02] And the first words say this. The Lord. That's Yahweh. Jehovah. That's the God of Israel. So David's beginning this psalm by declaring God's name. Yahweh. That's one of the characters.

David's the human author writing it. Yahweh says to my Lord. The great King David. The one who had all these messianic promises attached to his name and his line.

That great King David has a Lord that's other than Yahweh. What's going on here? This isn't only complicated or hard for us if we read it like that.

This was hard for the Jews when Christ walked on the earth. In Matthew 22 verse 42 and in the other gospels, Jesus takes them to this. He says, oh teachers of the law, look here.

Whose son is the Christ? Christ means the anointed one, the promised Messiah. If then David calls him Lord, how is he David's son?

[9 : 02] Jesus is basically saying, oh, you masters of the law, come back and look at Psalm 110. Look at all of the old covenant. I want you to study this. And it silences them.

They don't have any ways of explaining it. Christ had to be that full revelation to show what's going on. So who are the parties here? Well, one is the Lord, Yahweh, God, the God of Israel.

And he says to David's Lord. And Jesus is revealing in the new covenant, I am David's Lord. Yes, I am from the line of David. I am the son of David.

I will sit on the throne of David. I will be the king over all of God's people. But I'm also David's Lord. Outside of time, I'm the one that David got somehow a glimpse.

And this is how that revelation came out on the page. So we need to now walk through this psalm with that correct New Testament interpretation that Jesus gave us.

[9 : 58] We need to read this psalm as father in dialogue with son. God the father in dialogue with God the son in eternity past. Before Jesus took on a body. Are you still with us?

This is so beautiful. It's so beautiful because this is what Jesus comes to reveal. So the father says to the son, I will promise you so many things that we're going to walk through.

But you got to ask to, okay, hold on. Your first point was that it pleased our triune God to express his eternal decree by way of covenant. I heard father. I heard son. Where's the Holy Spirit?

Well, in Sunday school, we're seeing all these other places where we can bring in what God has revealed. So one example are the servant songs. One of those is Isaiah 42.1.

God says, behold my servant. So that's God the father referring to his son as a servant in this covenant. Whom I uphold. My chosen one in whom my soul delights.

[10 : 59] That's the language of the father describing his son who would become a servant. And he says, I have put my spirit upon him. Isaiah 61.1 says, the spirit of the Lord God is upon me.

Now it's the son declaring it. Because the Lord has anointed me. So the spirit of God is everywhere. God is one. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Covenanting together is the language God has given us to understand what the father promised the son and sealed by the spirit. Okay, still on this first point.

When did this happen? Well, Titus chapter 1 verse 2 says, God who never lies promised the hope of eternal life when? Before the ages began.

This is when God promises the hope of eternal life. When does it happen? 2 Timothy 1.9. God's own purpose and grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus when?

[11 : 59] Before the ages began. So this inter-Trinitarian covenant, it takes place before the ages began according to scripture. What can we call this intra-Trinitarian dialogue before time began?

Well, the Bible metaphorically calls this the covenant because he says, look at verse 4 of Psalm 110. Verse 4 he says, The Lord has sworn he will not repent.

The Lord makes an oath. That's covenantal language. So God calls this an oath-bound promise. It's a commitment with legal sanctions.

In church history, they've come to describe it as the covenant of redemption. And it's helpful for us to continue using the same terms that the church has used over the centuries because we're in dialogue with the larger church.

We're understanding it in the same way that those who have gone before us have. One definition by J.B. Fesco I think is helpful. What is the covenant of redemption? He says it's the pre-temporal, before time, intra-Trinitarian.

[13 : 06] There's Father, Son, and Spirit. Oath-bound promise to redeem a people in Christ. That's what the covenant of redemption is. I just want to comfort you.

The fact that God's plan to redeem us is before the ages began. And it's attached to God Himself, Father, Son, and Spirit. And God does not change.

God is immutable. This is grounds for such hope. Such security. Thomas Boston, 1800s Scottish pastor, he wrote, God's decree to redeem you is eternal.

If the divine decrees were not eternal, God would be changeable and imperfect. So it's impossible. God has decreed to redeem His people. And it will happen.

So brothers and sisters, take comfort in this first point. God decreed to redeem you from all eternity. And He bound up this promise in Himself.

[14 : 09] And God is immutable. You are secure. It pleased our triune God to express His eternal decree by way of covenant.

So now I want to walk through what is this covenant. What did God promise? What's in it? This is our second point. Number two. In the covenant of redemption, the Father promised the Son victory over His enemies.

Let's see the rest of verse 1 and verse 2. The Father says to the Son, You will sit at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion to rule in the midst of your enemies. So for David, this language is so loaded.

You know, Zion was not even part of the kingdom. I mean, he had to go as a scrappy soldier with Saul as a disgraceful king before him. And they had to conquer Zion, take the hill, and establish this as the fortress of God.

[15 : 10] And here's where the temple would be built. So from here we would have the office of king and priest. And God would rule. And in David's mind, this is a promise for someone from the line of David to be there, ruling as a king and a priest.

And that God Himself promises to make all of the enemies, all those who want to oppose the theocracy of God, He will make them a footstool under the feet of this kingly priest.

What a glorious promise. Let's cut this diamond that we have in these verses with more diamond, more parts of the scripture. So here we have the Father saying to the Son, Son, you will go on a mission for me.

The Son says, Father, I will go to the world to do your will. Notice how Jesus describes this mission in Matthew 13, verse 38.

Jesus said, This field is the world. The good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.

[16 : 17] The harvest is at the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

The world is described as this field that belongs to God. And God's saying, I'm going to send you, my son, into this mission field.

In this mission field, you have your people that will be like the wheat. You're going to harvest them out of the world. And there are others that will oppose you. They will hate you. And for them, they will be cut and thrown and burned like the chaff.

This is what God is promising his son. You will rule over all the world one day. On that great day of the Lord, all will look to you as the king. Some will be a gracious people that bless you for being their savior.

Others will oppose you to the end, and they will be crushed under your feet. This is what God decrees. Victory for the son over God's enemies.

[17 : 22] And Thomas Boston again wrote, whoever, whatsoever God decrees comes to pass. It's infallible. Isaiah 46.10 says that God declares the end from the beginning, from ancient times, things not yet done.

And he says, my counsel shall stand. I will do my pleasure. This is God's decree. Let's see how the new covenant now sheds light on this decree.

That the son will rule over all of God's enemies. Hebrews 10.13 says that our Lord Jesus Christ, having crushed the serpent's head on the cross, he ascended. He went up.

And he is waiting until his enemies should be made a footstool at his feet. So the son now, as the kingdom advances on earth, is waiting. And the father is the one doing the work by the ministry of the spirit.

Through the church, his kingdom is extending. Well, who are the enemies of God? Who are these enemies that will be brought low before the feet of the king?

[18 : 26] Romans 5.10 says that while we, to the church, while we church, were enemies of God, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son. He's conquered us.

He brings us now in humility before his feet. His death purchased us to belong to him as his possession and him as our king. The last one on this point is Corinthians 15.25-26.

Now the church, having been brought under the kingdom of Christ, being at his feet, belonging to him, Christ will reign until he has put his enemies under his feet.

And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. So we reign with Christ in a spiritual sense now, but we will die. We still long for that great day when there will be no more death and dying.

But in the meantime, his kingdom is real. It's inaugurated spiritually. So we describe the victory of Christ as an already spiritual victory, though it's not yet consummated.

[19 : 32] That great day is still coming and we long for that day. So in the covenant of redemption, the father promised the son victory over all of his enemies.

Number three, in the covenant of redemption, the father promised his son a people that will love him. In the covenant of redemption, the father promised his son a people that will love him.

Look at verse three, Psalm 110 verse three. The father says, thy people, son, shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, for thou hast the dew of thy youth.

Now there's some Hebrew poetry here. The womb of the morning, the very beginning of the day. It's describing that great day of the Lord. From the very beginning, you will be like the dew.

You will be like that transparent, clear, refreshing, pure light that comes from heaven, refreshed, preserved. The son will take on a flesh, but he'll be an eternal, glorified king forever.

[20 : 47] He will be beautiful. And his people will behold his glory. The decree of our Lord God here, it is just like that dew.

It's like the womb of the morning. God's decree is light. It's most pure. 1 John 1 says that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.

So here in this, in this intra-Trinitarian covenant, God the Father is the covenant Lord. And he's speaking to his son who willingly takes the position in this covenant to redeem as the vassal servant.

The father is the Lord, the son is here to serve and do what the father tells him. The reason I emphasize that is because what does that make us? These are the parties of this covenant of redemption, father and son, sealed by the spirit.

What about us? How do we fit into the story? Verse 3 says that your people will be willing on the day of your power. God the Father will give to the son a people as a reward.

[22 : 02] Not robots, not pre-programmed, you know, vessels that are just going to be there because they had to. No, the father promises to give the son a people who love him, who willingly offer themselves like volunteer soldiers.

This is good news, folks. We are the reward in this covenant. We are not the servants. Christ became the servant and the father gives his people to his son as a reward for his obedience.

In a sense, it's not even about us. Do you see that? This is between father and son because God is love. I'm trying to distinguish as well the covenant of redemption from the covenant of grace.

Now in the covenant of grace, Jesus Christ is Lord. Lord, well, what does that make us? We're his servants. But we're willing servants. We're joyful. We're safe sinners.

Of course we want to serve this good king. But in the covenant of redemption, the father is the Lord and the son is the servant. Second London Confession says, the father gave the son a people in eternity whom in time, that means in history, the son redeemed.

[23 : 25] And those he redeemed, he calls. Those he calls, he justifies. Those he justifies, he sanctifies. And those he sanctifies, he will one day glorify. Praise God for this promise.

It's like the son says, father, I want, I want to be a king over a people that will be joyful to join my army and to fight and to follow me and march with me. I want a people that can share in our love.

I want the oppressed of this world to feel like they are adopted. They belong to us. They belong to God. In Isaiah 42, 1, we get this insight.

The servant, the servant, the son, he will bring forth justice to the nations. Isaiah 61, verse 1 says, he will bring good news to the poor. The father has sent the son to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and to open the prison for those who are bound.

The father says to his son, oh son, your people will see the beauty of your holiness as their savior. Their hearts will ache for you. In Ephesians 1, 4, we're told that the father chose us, Christians, the father chose you in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.

[24 : 52] He did this in love. My point was that in the covenant of redemption, the father promised the son a people that will love him.

You want to be this people. This is who we want to be. And here's the test. Do you love the son? Do you love him? Then you belong to him because the father gave you to his son.

We're still tempted to think like that immigrant work ethic where I can sell myself and work for God and earn his love. Augustine confessed, the confession of evil works is the first beginning of good works.

Grace is given not because we have done good works, but in order that we may be able to do them. See, under the covenant of works, we were unwilling to surrender to God.

Under the curses of the covenant of works, we are proud and cold-hearted. And we love sin. But God makes us willing. He makes us eager to confess our sin and depend on God as our Savior.

[26 : 02] So that's the promise for you today. God makes you, whom Jesus Christ has redeemed, willing to follow him. If you ever question your salvation, be reminded of that question.

I willingly follow Christ, joyfully. Who else could I follow? Because in the covenant of redemption, the Father promised his Son a people that will love him.

Praise God. Fourth point here is that the covenant of redemption, it was a covenant of works for the Son. What determines your redemption?

You can't work for it. Well, guess what? Someone else had to. Therefore, the covenant of redemption, it was a covenant of works for the Son. Notice what God says here in verse 4.

The Lord has sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The Father says, Son, you see the rewards I promise to give you.

[27 : 08] I promise to make all the nations, all your enemies will come and bow at your feet. But there's a problem. God is holy. God is holy. And this people I'm going to give you, they are not holy.

They need a priest. These people need a mediator. And it can't be someone from this cursed line. It can't just be a Levite like every other priest. It cannot be a man to stand between God and man.

It must be you, God the Son. And you're not only going to be a priest, you're going to be a kingly priest. It's different than the system that Israel knows.

You will be a kingly priest that ransoms them. The Father says, Son, your work in this covenant is not only to be a priest. Your work is to be the sacrifice as well.

We get a hint at the Son's response in Isaiah 52, 13. The Father says, Behold, my servant, he's speaking of his own son, my servant shall sprinkle many nations.

[28 : 19] That's the work I need my servant, my son, to go do. And the Son says in the words of Isaiah 50, 6 and 7, Father, I will give my back to those who strike.

I will give my cheek to those who pull out the beard. I will not hide my face from disgrace and spitting. Father, I will fulfill the mission, the work you give me in this covenant.

And I will do this trusting your word. Also from Isaiah 50. Picture Jesus praying this to the Father. Isaiah 50, verse 7. Oh Lord God, you help me.

Therefore, I will not be disgraced. Therefore, I will set my face like a flint. I know that I shall not be put to shame. It's the Father who sustains Him.

This was decreed before the ages began. J.C. Ryle pointed this out. All of Christ's sufferings on the cross were foreordained.

[29 : 25] They did not come on Him by chance or by accident. They were all planned, counseled, determined from all eternity. The cross was foreseen in all the provisions of the Trinity for the salvation of sinners.

God set up the cross from everlasting. In the words of Hebrews 12, 2, it's like the Son says, Father, it's for the joy that you have set before me that I will endure the cross and I will despise the shame and I will do it for that people you promised me.

The Son will obey His Father for you, church. Thomas Boston, God's decree to redeem you is most wise.

God says He will not repent of it. Verse 4, God sees all the things together and at once. Nothing God decrees could ever have been undermined.

Romans 11, 33 says, Oh, the depths of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God. This is the only response we can come up with. How unsearchable are God's judgments and how inscrutable are God's ways.

[30 : 47] Praise God. The covenant of redemption, it was a covenant of works for the Son. It was His work that determines your redemption.

My fifth point here is that after fulfilling the covenant of redemption, the incarnate Son will then be glorified as the ruler of the world. After fulfilling the covenant of redemption, the incarnate Son now taken on flesh, He will be glorified forever as the ruler of the world.

This is what is promised in verse 5 and verse 6. The Lord at that right hand shall strike through the kings in the day of His wrath. He shall judge among the heathen.

He shall fill the places with dead bodies. He shall wound the heads over many countries. This is the prophetic idiom of David, the warrior shepherd.

David had seen a bloody battlefield. He'd seen crushed heads. He'd seen a king on his horse splattered in blood, galloping around, celebrating a victory of battle.

[32 : 03] That's the image David gives the people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit. This is Christ in His glorified state. It's like the Father is promising the Son, Son, you will suffer.

You will be that priest from this line of priests that no one can even have a comparison to that will endure forever. You will suffer as the sacrifice.

But Son, you will be victorious. I will bring your enemies at your footstool. You set up my right hand and I will strike through the kings on your day, on your great day, the day of God's wrath.

You will be victorious in battle. Your kingdom, none can touch. All creatures that oppose the triune God will be slain. We will pour out our wrath on those who abuse your bride.

Our zeal for holiness will be unleashed. unleashed. The whole world will see the glory of God. You will be glorified and our justice will be as magnificent as our grace.

[33 : 21] That's the image of Jesus Christ on His great day, guaranteed by the Father Himself, sealed by the Spirit. It will come to pass. Zechariah 6.13 says, It is He who shall build the temple of the Lord.

That's the role of the priest in the order of Melchizedek. This priest that will rule from God's kingdom over all the world. But not only will He build His temple as a priest, He shall be the bearer of royal honor.

He will also be a king. And He shall sit and rule on His throne. And there shall be a priest on the throne. The two offices are combined. The king is a priest.

And the priest is a king. And it's all in the one person of the Son. And the council of peace shall be between them both. This is what God decrees for His Son.

You will suffer, but you will be victorious. And from the kingdom of heaven, you will rule over all the world as the mediating priest and also as the king, ruling over the hearts of your people.

- [34 : 30] And those people, you will see them be persecuted and suffer. We'll use that to sanctify them. And one day in the great day of the Lord, you will return in judgment and you will make all things right.

This is God's decree before eternity began. Thomas Boston wrote, the decrees of God to redeem His people are free.

God's covenant of redemption depends on no other but all flowing from mere pleasure, the mere pleasure of God's own will. God has made no decrees suspended on any condition besides Himself.

There is nothing man can come up with to stop the kingdom of Christ from coming in power. There is nothing that we can do to become unredeemed.

We will be willing, willing servants, willing followers of King Jesus. We will depend on Him as our priest mediating for us, interceding for us, daily because God decreed that this would happen.

- [35 : 33] We cannot undo it. There is no more comfort than we could have than trusting in this eternal decree of God. In that office of being a royal priesthood, that is who Christ is.

That is what we are told the church becomes in 1 Peter 2.9. You church, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

He is the one who determines our redemption. My sixth observation here is this, that in the covenant of redemption, the Father promises refreshment and honor to His obedient Son.

In the covenant of redemption, in Psalm 110, that is the last thought we are left with. The Father promises His Son refreshment and honor for His obedience.

We are told in verse 7, He shall drink of the brook by the way. Well, there is David on the desert plains of Israel going days and days without finding fresh water.

- [36 : 49] Maybe He had some on Him or a cistern, but there is living waters flowing now and the King can take a breather. On His way, He will refresh Himself. The Father is encouraging His Son who will gladly obey His Father.

Son, when you finish the work I gave you to do in this mission, you will rest and drink. Just as God finished His work of creation and rested as ruler with His world as His footstool.

Christ will say, it is finished. He will be ascended at the right hand of the Father and He will rest as a priest. His work is finished and the world is His footstool. You will have a body, Son.

You will be raised from the dead. You will be seated at My right hand where there is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. And you will enjoy refreshments from the river of divine pleasures.

this is God's decree for His Son. The Son knew this joy of one day having His bride with Him in His Father's palace.

- [38 : 00] This was the decree of God to accomplish it. Thomas Boston wrote, the decrees of God are constant and He by no means alters His purpose as men do.

God has sworn to save you in our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. The Father knows, My Son, He shall do this. My Son shall succeed.

My Son shall succeed because I have decreed this mission for Him and my mission for Him in my eternal decree is unchangeable. And then we're told in verse 7, I shall lift, I'm sorry, He shall lift up my head.

[39:12]

The Father promised this and nothing that the Lord endured was a surprise. J.C. Riles again pointed out, not one throb of pain did Jesus feel, not one precious drop of blood did Jesus shed, which had not been appointed long ago.

Well, we saw last time how we were born east of Eden under the covenant of works with Adam. Adam sold your freedom and in bondage to sin we piled on our own sins as well.

He made himself low. He lived on earth under his own law. It's the law that binds you and me. And he did this to redeem you, his people.

[40 : 26]

May tongues be loosed and praised and sing the triumph of our King who ransomed Adam's race. He trampled down the canceled sin. He rent the veil and saved.

All glory be to God. Let's pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
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