



QUARTERLY | 2:20

God Is in Control

Not Somehow,
but **Triumphantly** –
Jill Saunders



The Need of
the **Hour** –
**William
McCrea**



Testimony –
**David
McMillan**



LTBS 2019 Accounts

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Balance @ 01/01/19	460472.67	Purchases (CDs, etc)	1673.99
Church Donations	52149.20	Broadcasts Africa, India, USA	17146.29
Church Deputations	16544.64	London	12999.96
Church Donations (Broadcasts)	5189.20	Irish Republic	13688.78
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LTBS Retail Unit Sales	43967.57	Bank Charges	238.13
Legacy	13422.59	Accountancy Fees	640.00
Paye A/c	505.44	T.V. Studio Project Expenses	195505.58
Sundries	219.70	Gratuities	3990.00
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LTBS 2019 Church Contributions

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Portadown	£6,317.13	Garvagh	£600.00
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EDITORIAL

Dear Reader,

Over the past three months we have all had to adjust to different lifestyles, not least with regards to the changes that have taken place in Sabbath Day worship. We praise the Lord that the work of preaching and teaching has gone on through the Internet and rejoice in hearing of precious souls trusting Christ as Saviour.

Due to the difficulty of getting the magazine distributed for the June issue, we have decided to make this an online only edition. Please take the opportunity to share the link to our magazine on your social media sites, praying that the Lord will use it to reach lost souls and to edify the saints of God.

Ryan McKee

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God Is in Control

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Dealing with Fear in the Christian Life



Hundreds of articles on fear and the coronavirus fill the internet these days. Doctors, psychologists, scientists, and researchers all make their contributions to helping their readers deal with the fear that arises from COVID-19.

Perhaps the greatest factor contributing to fear is traceable to what is unknown. COVID-19 is new and in many cases deadly. There is no vaccine for it yet and it's highly contagious. Its impact on the entire world has been sudden. Besides the impact on a person's health, businesses have closed and many may not reopen. The present dangers of the coronavirus, therefore, give rise to very legitimate concerns and fears. But in the midst of these fears the question that should be considered by every Christian should be –

How Should the Christian Deal with Such Fears?

The Scriptures have much to say about fear and how the Christian should deal with it. For example:

The Scriptures have much to say about fear and how the Christian should deal with it.

I. Scripture shows us that no one is immune from fear.

One of the very first things we read about Adam and Eve when they fell into sin was that they “heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden” (Genesis 3:8). The ones who had been created to have close fellowship with God were now afraid of God. And for good reason, because they had broken God's commandment and were now guilty before God. Ever since that fall into sin, men and women have been infected with the same fear Adam and Eve felt that day. Hebrews 2:15 speaks of those who “through fear of

death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” This fear of death is magnified by something else all men know intuitively, that “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

Other examples could be cited of men, even great men of the faith, who were overcome with fear:

1. David, a man after God's own heart, caved in to fear, thinking that eventually king Saul would succeed in taking his life (1 Samuel 27:1).
2. The apostle Peter, following his bold declaration that he would die for Christ, saw his courage and resolve evaporate before a maid, and in fear he thrice denied his Lord (Luke 22:56–60).
3. All the disciples crossing the stormy sea of Galilee were gripped by fear and awoke Christ, saying to Him, “Master, carest thou not that we perish?” (Mark 4:38).

From these examples we're able to learn a very important lesson – that when it comes to fear, the Christian dare not

trust in his own strength or courage to deal with it.

II. The Scripture also shows us where to direct our fear.

Proverbs 9:10 tells us, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.” This verse does not mean simply that the Christian is to be afraid of God. It does mean, however, that there is a recognition that God is the ruler of the universe, and His sovereignty extends to everything.

This truth can be particularly applied even to the present-day coronavirus. When God sent Moses to Pharaoh in Exodus 9:14, it was that God through Moses might announce to Pharaoh, “I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth.” It's worth noting from this word from God that plagues originate with God. He owns them when He calls them “my plagues”. And He sends them with the specific aim that Pharaoh and the Egyptians would know that there was (and is) none like unto Jehovah in all the earth.

How the Christian should pray that during this present coronavirus pandemic the inhabitants of the world would come to learn the same thing, and that many

would learn as the Christian has learned to temper their fear with faith in Jesus Christ.

When the disciples crossed that stormy sea of Galilee and thought they were going to perish, they awoke the Lord Jesus, who by a single word stilled the stormy sea and brought a great calm (Mark 4:39). And then in verse 40 He asked His disciples, “Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?” What Mark records next shows how a frightful fear is tempered into reverential awe when he writes in verse 41, “And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Here is fear rightly directed and rightly tempered into reverential awe by faith in Christ. When a sinner awakens to the fact that his sin calls for judgment but that Christ bore God's judgment on Calvary's cross for all who would believe in Him, then that sinner, by being converted to Christ, will have occasion to say in similar fashion to those disciples on the sea of Galilee, what manner of man is this that would pay such a price for a sinner like me, lost and undone? May the Spirit of God lead us then not to trust in ourselves, but to fear the Lord Jesus by faith.

When the disciples crossed that stormy sea of Galilee and thought they were going to perish, they awoke the Lord Jesus, who by a single word stilled the stormy sea and brought a great calm.



Geoff Bannister
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Free Presbyterian Church,
Indiana, USA.

The Need of the Hour



We live in very serious times, when it seems the whole world is held in the grip of COVID-19, yet those who love the Lord can rest assured that our sovereign God reigns supreme. I believe the great need of this hour is for God to send a “sky-blue, heaven-sent revival”, as Dr Paisley used to pray. Psalm 44:1 says, “We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old.” But we will see as we study 2 Chronicles 7:14 that there is a price to be paid for such movements of God.

I believe the great need of this hour is for God to send a “sky-blue, heaven-sent revival” ...

In the previous chapter we see the temple was ready for use. Solomon had ensured that the house of the Lord

exhibited all the splendour and beauty that would bear witness to the majesty and glory of God, in whose name it was erected. The king also erected a special platform in the midst of the court on which he stood before the altar of the Lord and spread his hands before heaven. He then fell on his knees before the congregation of Israel and prayed. He worshipped the covenant-keeping God of Israel and thanked Him for fulfilling His gracious promises in the days of his father David and then earnestly prayed for God’s intervention in his day. “[W]hen Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house” (2 Chronicles 7:1). So glorious was the manifestation of God’s glory that the priests could not enter the house of the Lord and the people bowed themselves to the ground, worshipping and praising the Lord.

After the days of the feast were finished, Solomon sent the people away, rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord. Then the Lord appeared unto the king by night, and in verse 12 God told Solomon, “I have heard thy prayer,” and He assured him also that his prayer was answered. Isn’t it mighty to know that God really hears and answers prayer? But for prayer to be answered, God lays down a set of conditions that still applies to us today.

1) The Possibilities

“If I shut up heaven” (v. 13). Sometimes God has to use difficult times to get the attention of His people. God can send times of drought, destruction by the locusts, or disease among the people, to bring the people back to Him. “If my people” (v. 14) reminds us that “only if” God’s people fulfil the conditions laid down by God will He intervene. Sadly, many have to say “if only” with deep regret because they failed to obey God’s conditions and they live without the blessings.

2) The Pathway

The principles outlined here for God’s people in Solomon’s day are applicable to us as we think about our need for revival and a spiritual awakening, and there is also a divine order in these conditions. What a privilege to carry His precious name! This address is given to a people who have identified themselves with God and His work.

a) The Preparation

Humility means “under another”. 1 Peter 5:6 says, “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God”. This is not me humbling someone else, but each of us bowing in contrite submission before God. Humility is the opposite of the pride that God hates. As we look at the conditions prevailing in our land and at the sad condition of the professing church of Jesus Christ and of our own hearts, then surely we know there is something seriously wrong. Our nation is so far from God, but there is also a spiritual dearth in the church. Economically the locusts are wiping out our prosperity, and in the church there is little growth or sign of blessing. The diseases of impurity and worldliness have invaded the house of God. It is so easy to point the finger at politicians and others within society, but the major problem lies within the church and in the individual hearts of believers. The real

answer lies there also. Are we really ready for God to move?

b) The Prayer

“And pray and seek my face”. One of the hardest things to develop is our prayer life. We need to view the secret place of prayer as a priority issue, and this demands sacrifice and devotion. Let us lay aside our memorised praying and do business with God, pouring out our hearts before Him and seeking His face diligently because we recognise there is nothing more important than seeing the face of God. We ought to desire His presence more than gold or silver.

c) The Purity

We must turn from our wicked ways in true repentance. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalm 66:18). Sin blocks the prayers of the believer. It is not enough to admit our sins; we must turn from them.

THEN AND ONLY THEN –

3) The Promise

“I will hear from heaven”. Hallelujah! Nothing now can stop the blessing coming down, for God has heard our prayer.

“I ... will forgive their sin”. With sin blotted out, God will restore the close fellowship and sweet communion that we have lost. We will feel His presence and power once again.

“I ... will heal their land.” Only God can do such a wonderful thing. Let us earnestly cry out to God in brokenness before Him: O sovereign God of heaven and earth, heal our beloved nation, but O God be gracious unto us Thy people and pour out Thy blessing upon Thy church again. Amen.

G. Campbell Morgan said,

“We cannot legislate spiritual awakening, but we can set our sails to catch the wind.”

The diseases of impurity and worldliness have invaded the house of God.



William McCrea
has retired from the pastorate after ministering for 50 years in Magherafelt Free Presbyterian Church, Northern Ireland.



The Work of the Lord Is Unstoppable

Without doubt, we are living in an unprecedented time. Who would have thought that a virus would have brought so much of our world to a halt, or predicted the many woes that have come with it? Hundreds of thousands have died. There are countless broken hearts. The mental health of millions, especially those living alone, is also seriously affected by lockdown. Limited contact makes a man's world exceedingly narrow, so that he closes in on himself and his soul is cast down.

Because "man is born unto trouble" (Job 5:7), Christians have the same concerns as others and are affected by what is happening around them. But their chief concern is the interests of the kingdom of God. Will the gospel still succeed when opportunities to publish it are not what they once were? What will become of the Lord's work in these days? How shall the local church fare?

For counsel on these matters

we must turn to the infallible Book.

From the beginning, God reveals Himself as a worker.

He was a worker in creation. When He rested at the end of His creation, we are not to think this was because His powers were low and He needed to recuperate, or that He was not busy in other matters. Again, the testimony of the Lord Jesus is that God is a worker. He said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John 5:17).

God the Father is a worker. God the Son is a worker. God the Holy Spirit is also a worker. He makes Christ's passion fruitful in His people, and gifts each child of God as He sees fit. We are told, "[A]ll these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will" (1 Corinthians 12:11).

Clearly, it is in God's nature to work, and He will never be any different. And He always perfects any work He puts His hand to. His greatest work, redemption, is

a finished work (John 19:30), and the application of it to believing hearts will also be finished, or performed, as the Scripture says (Philippians 1:6).

The gospel will be successful, for the Word of God is still quick and powerful to convict men of their need.

The gospel will be successful, for the Word of God is still quick and powerful to convict men of their need. The Spirit of God is still working to reveal the living Christ to those upon whom He will have mercy. And the blood of Immanuel is still charged with divine power to save to the uttermost. Hallelujah!

Second, because God is such a good worker nothing can frustrate His purposes.

COVID-19 cannot hold Him

back. Think of the new opportunities for ministry that have arisen since the outbreak of the pandemic. Church doors are closed, but doors of utterance are opened via modern media. People who have questions about the state of the world and the dealings of a holy God with a perverse generation, are tuning in worldwide, searching for answers and finding peace in the preaching of Christ crucified.

Up to now, they might never have thought to enter a place of worship. It has taken a global epidemic to make them think about eternal issues. Mercifully, the God who has stirred their interest has gifted them with the hearing of the good news.

In one way or the other, regardless of circumstance, He will see to it that the gospel will be preached to all men everywhere. Only when this is done, will His work be complete. Matthew 24:14 says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

The Lord has also been stirring up His own people to pray. It may be just a remnant that is praying, but the Almighty is pleased to do great things with small numbers. Prayer meetings might be "virtual", but our God isn't!

Finally, God's determination to prosper His work does not mean that He is tied to property, or obliged to the local church.

The early church had no buildings of its own, but it was full of life and power. So however long lockdown continues and church doors are shut, Christianity will survive. It will survive because Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life (John 11:25).

In respect of the local church, we are living in a fool's paradise if we think it will continue indefinitely regardless of its behaviour. For example, Christ warned the church of Ephesus, "I ... will remove thy candlestick out of his place," because they had left their "first love" (Revelation 2:4, 5), and threatened the Laodiceans that for their pre-occupation with temporal matters He would spew them out of

In respect of the local church, we are living in a fool's paradise if we think it will continue indefinitely regardless of its behaviour.

His mouth (3:16, 20). These divine warnings are relevant for us today: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (3:22).

However, a local church being removed or cast off by Christ does not mean that His work has failed. Instead it proves that He is jealous for His glory. But lest the fate of Ephesus or Laodicea befall us, we must "search and try our ways, and turn again to the LORD" (Lamentations 3:40). Apart from this we cannot enjoy Jesus' promise in regard to the local church: "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Revelation 3:8).



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Oulton Broad Free
Presbyterian Church,
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Where Is the Lord at a Time Like This?



Before the pandemic of 2020 changed all of our lives, my wife Tonia and I had a life-changing event of our own. On December 5, 2019, at around 10:30 a.m., I smelled and saw smoke arising from the living room floor, just before the smoke alarm sounded in the basement of the church manse where we lived. Immediately running downstairs, I was hoping to find a small incident that I could extinguish, but instead I found equipment engulfed in flames which had already reached the rafters. After failing attempts to solve the situation, I called 911, but it was too late. Within a brief amount of time, the manse was ablaze and there was no saving it.

As I waited for first responders to arrive, I was calling on the Lord for mercy and sensed that He was near to His servant during this trying hour which shook me to the core. Otherwise, I was alone, my wife being out of town and learning the news from a neighbor. From the time of the fire until now, we

have known assuredly that God in His love for us and for His own glory decreed that this trial should occur. As time has moved along, we have seen that God's purposes are multi-faceted; some He has made plain, and some we will perhaps not discover until heaven. But as we sat in our small hotel room that first week, stunned and with earthly possessions and precious memories gone, we confess that our hearts were privately saying, "Why, God? What are you doing?"

"[S]hall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?" (Amos 3:6). This passage declares the sovereignty of God over disasters that occur anywhere and everywhere in the world, whether private or public. Our personal tragedy pales in comparison to the universal pandemic of 2020 which has enveloped the whole world up to this very hour. God has sent this current plague to awaken the planet, and just as in our personal trial, He no doubt has simultaneous purposes to accomplish before He closes the chapter on this

pestilence.

Where is the Lord at a time like this? I am asked to answer. I propose to you a few reasons:

• To Re-educate people that He is our Maker

The book of Exodus narrates the history of the nation of Israel in bondage and Moses coming on the scene as their deliverer under God's authority. When he entreats Pharaoh to let the people go, Pharaoh declares, "I know not the LORD" (Exodus 5:2). Yet after experiencing a dreaded plague he proclaims, "Intreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me" (Exodus 8:8).

May the church of Christ today have her (our) worship revived and witness renewed with more clarity and power.

So few today are acknowledging the LORD of this plague. Pulpits and periodicals need to promote the existence and sovereignty of God in hopes that many more will conclude that the Lord has decreed COVID-19.

• To Reveal the sins of the church and of society

Pharaoh continues his acknowledgement of the Lord by confessing, "I have sinned this time: the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked" (Exodus 9:27). Is this plague a result of sin? There would be no plague if the world were not fallen. This pestilence is not a random, mindless phenomenon, but from the arsenal of the Creator. He has commanded "all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30) and to turn to Jesus Christ for salvation. 1 Peter 4:17 says that judgment begins with the church. Amos 4:10 says, "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: ... yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD." Moses was afraid that God would send a plague if Israel did not resume true worship (Exodus 5:3). Has our worship been scriptural, sincere, and serious? Have modern-day Pharaohs intimidated us to delay and even forsake worship altogether, and now tempt or prevail over us to

Let us trust Him as the lone Monarch of the world and pray that all the nations will praise Him for His righteous acts and for His gracious mercy toward us.

procrastinate and downplay its necessity?

• To Refresh the church

The leaders and people of Israel were motivated to believe the Lord, to plead the blood of the Passover Lamb, and to march from bondage to the freedom of worship in the wilderness. May the church of Christ today have her (our) worship revived and witness renewed with more clarity and power. May our public and private worship be with more devotion to God and obedience to His Word.

• To Remind us all of the last days

Christ will return in all His glory. We should capitalize on this universal plague by looking to biblical prophecy and its warnings of the ultimate judgment. Revelation 6 mentions the four horsemen, including pestilence as pandemic in the last days, just before He

comes to judge the earth (Psalm 96:13). Let us pray for a readiness for that day by the salvation of lost souls and by the believer's expectancy of His coming. Where is God in all of this? He remains on His throne and rules calmly and wisely over the universe. Let us trust Him as the lone Monarch of the world and pray that all the nations will praise Him for His righteous acts and for His gracious mercy toward us.

"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth."

(Psalm 67:3, 4)



Phil Owen
is minister of Berean Free
Presbyterian Church,
New York, USA.

Testimony - Wesley Irwin



When the Lord opened the eyes of the blind man in John chapter 9, it was a miracle. When Christ today opens the eyes of the spiritually blind sinner, this too is a miracle of His grace. I remember well the night the Lord opened my eyes to see my personal need of Him as my Saviour and how He had died to take away my sins. For many years I did not see that I had need of the Saviour or His redeeming blood.

As a child I had been baptised. I attended Sunday school. I went to church. I hated swearing. I was never drunk. The sight of some of my teenage friends intoxicated caused me to see the folly of such behaviour. Our family instilled within me the need to be honest and helpful to others. As a young person I was confirmed by the bishop laying hands on me, and following this I partook of "Holy Communion". I followed the directions of the prayer book in public worship quite diligently. While most

did not kneel when the instruction was given, I observed this practice. As far as my understanding went, I thought that I was on my way to heaven.

My belief that we are all going to heaven was to change when I came to hear the gospel of Christ faithfully preached.

My belief that we are all going to heaven was to change when I came to hear the gospel of Christ faithfully preached. This came about when God in His good providence caused a relative to offer me a job working for him. I accepted the offer and also lived in the home of that family, moving from rural Tyrone to Lisburn, Co. Antrim. When it came to Sunday they went to church and invited me along with them. The services were very

different from those to which I had been accustomed. The people sang enthusiastically, and the tunes were a lot easier to sing! The message that I heard was also different. It explained why the Lord Jesus came into the world. I had known that He had come, but I had never understood the reason why. Here such verses as Luke 19:10 were set before me: "[T]he Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

As I listened to the teaching of the Bible, I came to realise that I was a lost sinner, for Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned". I had never thought of myself like that before. God's Word showed me that none of us start out in life on the road to heaven. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). I was also to learn that our good deeds or character do not give us the right to get to heaven. These things I had never heard before. But as I listened, I knew what the Bible was saying concerning

me was true. I was a sinner. My sin would keep me out of heaven. The message that I heard did not stop there; it told me that I could have my sins pardoned and be made fit for heaven by putting my faith in the Lord Jesus and His saving and redeeming work for me on the cross. The idea of the Lord Jesus being my substitute and taking my place on the cross was new to me, but now I came to see it as the only way to be saved from the penalty that my sins deserved.

For six months I heard the gospel proclaimed. It convicted me. I knew I needed to be saved, but with my limited knowledge I didn't know how I could come to have this salvation for myself. I remember praying in my bedroom for the Lord to save me, and expecting

I remember praying in my bedroom for the Lord to save me, and expecting something spectacular to occur and show me that the Lord had heard my prayer.

something spectacular to occur and show me that the Lord had heard my prayer. But nothing happened. Then one night I was at home alone. This was a rare thing as the house was usually buzzing with people! When a knock came on the door, I answered. It was a lady from the church who had called to see the family before she returned to the mission field. I invited her in. In the course of conversation, she asked me, "Wesley, are you saved?" I replied that I wasn't. She asked why I hadn't trusted Christ. I said I didn't know how to be saved. When she asked, "Would you like to be saved?" I replied that I would. Here was someone to show me how I could become a Christian. There in the living room I was shown the need to acknowledge that I was a sinner, and that if I would call upon the Lord to save me, He would do just that.

We knelt down by the sofa, and there I called upon the Lord to save me. Did I feel an electric current flowing through my body, confirming that God had forgiven me and made me His child? No. But He saved me! I was turned to Romans 10:13, which confirmed to me that the Lord had heard my prayer: "[W]hoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." By faith, and not on

my feelings, I leaned upon that Word, and it assured me that He had saved me. If you will call upon Christ, He will also save you.

There in the living room I was shown the need to acknowledge that I was a sinner, and that if I would call upon the Lord to save me, He would do just that.



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The Greatest Disease of All

A Condition Worse than Coronavirus

With burials prohibited in the city of Wuhan, all seven of their crematoria ran at full capacity from January to March of this year to cope with the number of deaths from the coronavirus. A conservative non-governmental estimate reported that approximately thirty thousand have died in Wuhan alone, and many others have taken their own lives, being left distraught with grief.

An article carried a story of a Christian woman who belongs to a small Reformed church in Wuhan, who said, “A terrible disease was spreading in Wuhan. People were terrified, lest they would be attacked by the virus. Unfortunately, my husband and I were both infected by the Coronavirus. The plague brought great panic to my family. In my heart I felt that even though I was infected, I would still praise God! I am a sinner but He did not abandon me. My husband has always opposed my belief in Jesus, but this time he quietly listened to

me speaking the gospel to him ... After treatment both of us recovered from the Coronavirus. Praise the Lord for His protection, grace and love!”

Undoubtedly the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has been devastating, yet there is a condition of far worse devastation. Infection rate is 100 percent; death is certain; it destroys lives, ruins relationships, and eventually leaves those infected in hell with no possible cure. This condition is called sin.

The entrance of sin into the human race can be traced back to Genesis 3, where Adam and Eve walked in God’s beautiful creation, enjoying an abundant supply of all their needs and desires,

Undoubtedly the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has been devastating, yet there is a condition of far worse devastation.

while enjoying fellowship with God. Not a tear, not a sigh, not a single complaint, until Eve was tempted by the devil to break the one prohibition that God placed on man: “[O]f the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it”. This was a strict but simple law to prove obedience to God, which both Adam and Eve catastrophically failed, as they willingly chose to disobey God and therefore became sinners infected by sin. Their sinful condition passed on to their descendants, and thus the human race had contracted the worst of conditions. No test kit is required for this disease, “[f]or all have sinned” (Romans 3:23).

The effects of this sin are grimmer and more terrible than can be imagined, reaching into every aspect of life. They do not lessen at death, but become infinitely worse! There are daily hardships which everyone faces. At conception, when our existence begins, the effects of sin are at work

(Psalm 51:5) and continue to cause pain and problems until the day we die. This explains the error in asking why God allows pain and problems, when in fact sin is the cause of all our daily hardships.

There are many diseases that are caused by sin. The primary cause of the current pandemic and every other catastrophe is sin. Before the fall there were no viruses, mutations, bodily disorders, developmental errors, etc. In the beginning everything “was very good” (Genesis 1:31), but sin brought about the fall of creation and the introduction of every disease.

Furthermore, sin brought in the incurable effect of death. God said to Adam, “[T]he day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” The devil, who knew the penalty of disobedience, deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, and she then gave it to Adam. That day death began to work in them both. From then to the end of time, every member of the human race will die, and death is no respecter of persons, age, nor circumstances. “[I]n Adam all die” (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The eternal effect of sin is damnation. This is the inevitable conclusion as sin separates man from God, who is holy and just. Therefore He must punish sin by removing the sinner

The cure for sin is received by approaching the Lord in prayer, repenting of sin, and calling upon God for forgiveness and cleansing.

from His presence into eternal hell.

The effects of sin are too serious to ignore, so a cure must be found! No medical remedy exists, and no scientific research has the answer.

The only cure is found in Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:21 says, “[H]e shall save his people from their sins.” The Lord Jesus Christ is able to save, having paid the penalty that sin deserves and having provided a righteousness in which sinners can be dressed and covered. He became a substitute and sacrifice to remove our sin. “[F]or there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Although this remedy is available, it must be received by the individual. Medicine that is not administered will not cure. The cure for sin is received by approaching the Lord in prayer, repenting of

sin, and calling upon God for forgiveness and cleansing. “[W]hosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).

The coronavirus pandemic has wreaked havoc through the human race and has ended the lives of many people. How much more sin has wreaked havoc from the moment it infected the human race, ending the lives of every individual and causing the eternal damnation of multitudes! Yet the good news is, there is a cure available for all who will receive it.

Christ Himself issued the invitation in Matthew 11:28: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”



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is minister in
Larne Free Presbyterian
Church, Northern Ireland.

Are You Prepared to Die?



This is probably the most important question that anyone could be asked. This question deals not with the temporal but with the eternal. The answer to this question determines whether your soul will be in heaven or in hell. Therefore, it is a question we would all do well to consider.

Why should we be prepared to die?

1) We need to be ready because we know not the day of our death. In Hebrews 9:27 the Lord says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment”.

Death is a certainty for us all, if the Lord should tarry. But death is not the end. After death we will all stand before God to be judged. On that day if you’re not prepared, if you’re not saved, the Saviour will say to you, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”, and your soul will be cast into hell for all eternity.

2) In Amos 4:12 we read, “[P]repare to meet thy God, O Israel.” This was because the nation of Israel had sinned against God and had refused to heed all His warnings and return unto Him. Therefore the Lord was going to deal with them in wrath and in judgment.

So, too, for those who have ignored God’s warnings and have never accepted Christ as their Saviour. If they die in their sins, they will face the judgment of God upon sinners. And so I say with the prophet Amos, “Prepare to meet thy God.” Come to Christ and be saved.

Another reason why we must be prepared is that we know not when the Lord will come again.

3) Another reason why we

must be prepared is that we know not when the Lord will come again. In Matthew 24:44 the Lord says, “Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.”

On that day the Lord will say to His reapers, “Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn” (Matthew 13:30).

Friend, if the Lord should come again and you are not prepared, you’ll be left behind for the burning.

When should we prepare to die?

That’s very simple because we know not the day of our death or the day when the Lord will come again. Also, because of the uncertainty of life, we need to be prepared today.

There’s another important consideration in this matter. God says in Genesis 6:3, “My spirit shall not always strive

with man”. We cannot be saved at the time of our choosing. Indeed, without the working of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, we would have no interest or concern in the things of God or eternity. The Bible says that we are dead

The reality is, we can only be saved when the Lord is speaking to our hearts.

in trespasses and in sin, so how could we?

The reality is, we can only be saved when the Lord is speaking to our hearts. So if the Lord should stop speaking, one could live another lifetime and never again have any desire to come to Christ, and forever their soul will be lost in hell for all eternity. That’s a solemn and a fearful thought.

Therefore, the Lord says in Isaiah 1:18, “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

When should you make preparation to die? “To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts” (Hebrews 3:15).

How can you prepare to die?

1) Some people teach that

there are many ways to heaven and that it doesn’t matter what you believe in, so long as you are sincere in what you believe.

But the Scripture says in Acts 4:12, speaking of Christ, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

2) Some people hope that their “good works” will get them to heaven. Again, the Scriptures say, in Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us”.

In Ephesians 2:8–9 we further read, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

The Philippian jailor asked Paul and Silas in Act 16:30, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” In the next verse they told him, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”. The word “believe” means to trust completely in the Lord Jesus Christ alone and His atoning death upon the cross of Calvary.

That’s the only way anyone can prepare to die. You must repent of, and turn away from, your sin and ask the Lord to forgive you and to save your precious soul.

Friend, it is time to seek the

Lord. Life is uncertain, death is sure, judgment is coming; prepare to meet thy God.

That’s the only way anyone can prepare to die. You must repent of, and turn away from, your sin and ask the Lord to forgive you and to save your precious soul.



Geoffrey Abraham
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Church, Northern Ireland.



Testimony - David McMillan

The Oughley Hill is situated in County Down halfway between the towns of Saintfield and Carryduff, and it was in this beautiful rural setting that I grew up on the family farm.

My family were prominent members of First Saintfield Presbyterian Church, and we were involved in most of the meetings and activities of the congregation. But sadly, in none of those meetings do I ever remember being told that I needed to be saved if I was to go to heaven.

The Killynure Schoolhouse was just a mile from our home. It was there in that little building, at the afternoon Sunday school, that I first heard the gospel. Then we were invited to a special after meeting at the Schoolhouse that was held on Sunday evening, 7 January 1979. That night as Dr Paisley preached the gospel I became greatly concerned about my soul. It was after that meeting in the small side room that Dr Paisley knelt beside me and

led me to the Saviour. Before I went home that evening, Mr Robert Lowe (who started the meetings at the Schoolhouse) gave me some very wise spiritual advice, on the importance of confessing Christ to others.

It was after that meeting in the small side room that Dr Paisley knelt beside me and led me to the Saviour.

As I grew older my only ambition was to be a dairy farmer. To prepare myself for what I thought was going to be a life on the farm, I went to Loughry Agricultural College outside Cookstown. It was there that my path crossed with a young believer called Basil Cuddy from Cookstown Free Presbyterian Church. Basil's friendship and fellowship, the influence of his family, and the Cookstown Free

Presbyterian Church were a great encouragement to me as a young Christian.

In 1983 I started to attend the Martyrs Memorial Church in Belfast, sitting weekly under Dr Paisley's ministry. At the Martyrs Church I got involved in the Lord's work, teaching a Sunday school class for three years at the afternoon Sunday school in the old Ravenhill church. I was also involved in the youth work of the congregation, serving for a time as the secretary of one of the youth committees. At the communion service, after the evening service on Lord's Day 30 October 1983, I became a communicant member of the congregation.

A short time after I finished my studies at Loughry, I went with a group of young friends to hear Dr Alan Cairns speak at a special meeting in Mount Merrion Free Presbyterian Church. In his message Dr Cairns told a little of the story of his call into the ministry, and that night the Lord began to speak to me about full-time service. The idea of leaving the farm to devote

myself to a life of ministry was something I struggled with for approximately two years. However, during that time the Lord providentially closed the door on my plans to be a dairy farmer by the introduction of the milk quota scheme. Then, in 1985, when I was almost twenty years of age, the Lord spoke to me again about full-time service through the words of Luke 1:76–80. That very afternoon I knelt at my bedside and surrendered my life to the Lord.

In September 1987 the Presbytery accepted me as a candidate for the gospel ministry, and I studied at the Whitefield College of the Bible, completing the four-year theological course in the summer of 1991. During my time in college my father died from a heart attack, and my younger brother Gordon died at just seventeen, because of being born with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. These close family deaths impressed upon my heart the importance of living my life for the Lord while I still had the opportunity. It was also while at the Whitefield College of the Bible that I met a missionary student called Roberta Clarke. We were married in July of 1989, and we have two children, Ruth and Matthew.

In the last twenty-nine years we have had the opportunity to serve the Lord together in

three locations. First, in Burry Port in South Wales (1992–2001). I was the first Free Presbyterian minister to serve in Wales, being ordained for that work in November 1994. Then I ministered to the Mullaghglass congregation (2001–2010). Currently I am the minister in the Armagh church (since 2010).

On 23 April 2018 I took cardiac arrest at the entrance of Terminal One of Dublin airport, at the start of a mission trip to east Africa. The Lord's providential care can be seen in so many of the events of that day. My life was saved because of the swift actions of my friend Alastair Hamilton and the airport paramedics. That very evening in the Mater Hospital in Dublin I had surgery for a double heart bypass. A few days later the Lord spoke to me through Joshua 14:10, "the LORD hath kept me alive", and those words clearly sum up the whole story. I am very thankful to the many people who prayed for my recovery following the heart surgery. The Lord has been pleased to answer those prayers in a remarkable way. It is very encouraging to realise that the Lord still has a work for me to do. That period of serious illness taught me afresh the reality of how short my time on earth really is and how important it is to use that time in the service of Christ.

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David McMillan
is minister in
Armagh Free Presbyterian
Church, Northern Ireland.

Overview of the Book of Judges

This book gets its name from the unique band of leaders God raised up to deliver His people. The title "Judges" actually means Deliverers.

The book covers that period of Israel's history when they were governed by the Judges. It spans from the death of Joshua through to the establishing of a monarchy. While the author of the book is not named, it is widely accepted that Samuel penned the book.

The theme throughout the narrative is one of deliverance from the consequences of failure and compromise. The Lord is shown as One who is willing and able to deliver. The mercy of God to sinful man stands out, and emerging from this book is the faithfulness of God to an undeserving people.

To find the key verse in Judges you must go to the final verse of the book, Chapter 21 v verse 25, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This verse unlocks the core issue of why God needed to raise up deliverers. Every man followed his own way. There

was no rule of law, which inevitably led to chaos. This book therefore stands as a warning to any nation that turns its back on God and seeks to replace His law with their own.

The Lord is shown as One who is willing and able to deliver.

In coming to the book itself, we see that it can be divided into three sections.

Chapters 1 and 2 serve as the introduction. These chapters explain how the unhappy situation came about and the sad spiritual condition of God's people at the time.

Chapters 3 to 16 form the main body of the book. Here, twelve judges are spoken of in succession, from Othniel through to Samson, covering a period of approximately three hundred years.

Chapters 17 to 21, by way of conclusion, give further insight into the spiritual climate of those days.

Out of the twelve Judges named, six will stand out, namely, Othniel, Ehud,

Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson. Everyone will be familiar with at least two or three of these names. Who could forget those Sunday school stories of Gideon, the reluctant deliverer with his three hundred men, or the mighty Samson, who slew more in his death than in his life?

The period prior to each of the six major judges being raised up is marked by a serious departure from God. On the six occasions we read these words, "[A]nd the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD." This was then followed by a period when God chastised His people for such apostasy.

Each of the judges proved to be unique characters. They came from eight different tribes and served in various parts of the land, and they all had their

own particular strengths and varying abilities. This all serves to show that God can use any individual who is willing to be used. Four of the judges are named in Hebrews 11:32 as examples of outstanding acts of faith.

The Bible commentator Sidlow Baxter refers to the fourfold cycle which repeats itself throughout the book. This sequence of events he outlines with four words; **sin, suffering, supplication, and salvation**. These headings ought to provoke thought. In effect they comprise two sets of twins; sin and suffering are closely aligned, as are supplication and salvation. A summary of this cycle can be seen in chapter 2 verses 18 and 19 "And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of

them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the

judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way."

The **sin** can be easily detected, as a failure to obey God's law. There was a moral and religious corruption, as they would enter into leagues with the Canaanites and intermarry with the ungodly.

The **suffering** came as a result of their disloyalty to the Lord. God would deliver them into the hands of their enemies. God's people were oppressed and became greatly impoverished as a consequence of their sin. Where there is such a departure from God the outcome is devastating; not only will it impact the country, but it also affects the church and will reach right into the family.

Their sad condition eventually drove them to cry to God in **supplication** for deliverance. Here we can see how the Lord can be called upon in times of national crisis to raise up individuals as instruments of deliverance.

In answer to their cry **salvation** came. God raised up these various judges for a twofold purpose, to avenge Israel of their enemies and to

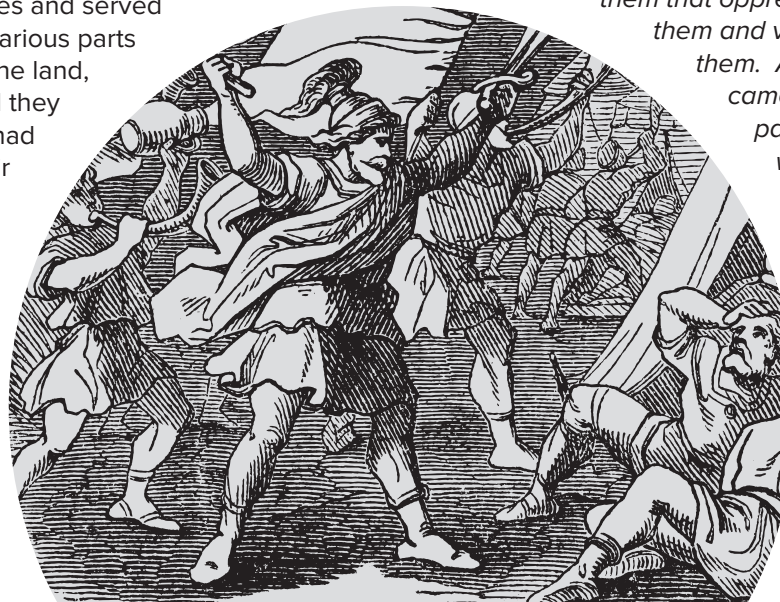
purge the land of idolatry and sin. In answer to prayer there was a restoration, socially, morally and spiritually.

Through this line of deliverers, we are of course pointed to the greater Deliverer and the mighty salvation He accomplished. The Lord Jesus is the Saviour and Deliverer of His people, and as His people, we become partakers in His kingdom, and we have that sure and certain hope that we share in His glorious victory.

Through this line of Deliverers, we are of course pointed to the greater Deliverer and the mighty salvation He accomplished.



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Not Somehow, but Triumphantly



None of us anticipated what March 2020 would bring and the changes in the world as we know it. Within a matter of days, a microscopic virus altered man's freedom and forced him to be seen for what he is, whether he wants to admit it or not – totally dependent on the mercy of God. This global crisis has certainly caused billions to fear and panic, but as the Lord's people we can steady ourselves in the truth of God's sovereignty. He is always in control and knows the end from the beginning. He is neither hindered nor deterred from His purposes. We can rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him.

In the midst of enforced isolation, I listened to a sermon by the late Dr Ken Connelly. He told the story about something he saw while staying with a family in America when he first arrived from Ireland many years ago. He was inspired by a statement he saw on a plaque hanging above the sink in their farmhouse kitchen. At first he was puzzled by its message and location. Why wasn't it hanging in the front hall or in the living room,

where people would see it and benefit from it? Then it dawned on him that the message on that little plaque wasn't meant for anyone but the farmer's wife. It would serve to remind her that she could glorify God in her chores, even when she was washing the dishes. The message above the sink would silently but powerfully teach her: "Not somehow, but triumphantly."

That farmer's wife knew the Lord and, like us, she had choices to make as to how she would approach her daily work and circumstances. Think about it. A lot of domestic chores are done at the kitchen sink, where there is time to think and work at the same time. She could either knuckle down and just do what she had to do, or do what she did as unto the Lord. We know nothing about the unique burdens she bore. She may not have struggled to fulfill her duties as a housewife, but maybe as she worked, her heart ached trying to raise a rebellious teenager or care for an aged parent with health issues. Maybe she had little money and several small children to feed. Or maybe

her daily burden at the kitchen sink was like Hannah's, longing to have her own children. We can only imagine this woman's world, but we do know this: every time that farmer's wife set foot in the kitchen, she couldn't help but remind herself that she had a choice: to live somehow or triumphantly.

Challenges create reactions. Somehow comes naturally. Somehow grits its teeth and depends on self to do what it has to do, often with frustration and resentment. Somehow walks by sight. "I will get it done somehow." Triumphantly, on the other hand, comes prayerfully. It depends on God and walks by faith, looking beyond the task at hand to the heavenly Father who is able to bring blessing and joy to the smallest detail.

Perhaps the message on the wall in the farmhouse was inspired by something the apostle Paul wrote in his second letter to the Corinthians. At Troas he confessed that he was struggling with

disappointment and admitted that he "had no rest in [his] spirit" when he came there to preach, because he had expected to meet up with Titus, but discovered he wasn't there. Paul may seem to have resigned himself somehow to accept his disappointment, but he quickly confirms triumphantly: "[T]hanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

A believer's triumphs are all in Christ. In ourselves we are weak, and have neither joy nor victory; but in Christ we may rejoice and triumph. True believers have constant cause of triumph in Christ, for they are more than conquerors through him who hath loved them.

(Matthew Henry)

"In Christ" – yes, that makes all the difference. That's the only way we can function triumphantly. Why are we so often defeated? Is it because we fail to give the job our best effort? Is it that we fail to be determined enough to see it through? No! We fail to remember we need the Lord's help! We go to the Lord with the big issues, but forget to seek His help and victory in the daily round and common task. If the coronavirus conflict has taught me anything, it has taught me that I need the Lord in the smallest things too.

God has got to become so great to me that He invades every little unimportant mundane part of my experience. What am I apart from Him? I have nothing worthy of two minutes' investment. I need to learn how great God is and how little man is.

(Dr Ken Connelly)

There is a well-known hymn that also reminds us about living triumphantly. It is "Faith Is the Victory" by John Yates (1837–1900), who lived in Batavia, New York, about 135 miles southeast of Toronto. At eighteen, John began to serve the Lord by lay preaching throughout New York state. He married Maria Everson from Port Hope, Ontario, and they had four sons. In John's day, the deadly infectious disease was not COVID-19 but diphtheria, which also transmits from person to person, usually through respiratory droplets, from coughing or sneezing. (We rarely hear of cases today with widespread immunization available.) In the space of one week, John's faith was severely tried as this disease claimed the life of his dear wife and two of his four sons. Only the grace of God enabled John to continue his ministry, not somehow, but triumphantly, and enabled him to compose a hymn based on 1 John 5:4, which has blessed so many Christians for the last one hundred years: "Faith is the victory, we know, that overcomes the world."

The Lord Jesus taught us

to pray, "Thy will be done." How will we react to the will of God being worked out in our lives from day to day? Of course we will rejoice in the good days, but what about the difficult ones? Will we sigh and murmur, "Oh, great. Somehow, I've got to do this"? Or will we submit with a humble heart and say, "Lord, let Thy perfect will be done in me and help me to honour Thee in every task by doing it willingly unto Thee." May it be so!

Paul encourages us with this hope:

"[T]hanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).

May the Lord honour His servants worldwide who have put this truth into action during these months of global pandemic, and at great personal sacrifice have sought to honour Him, even risking their lives for others and for the sake of the gospel—not somehow, but triumphantly.



Jill Saunders
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LTBS Worldwide RADIO PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

Broadcasting the Word of Life throughout the world on AM, FM and INTERNET RADIO.
Schedule effective as of **March 2020**.

Africa

Voice of Hope (Central & Southern Africa)
9680 kHz... Sun. 5.00pm

Voice of Hope (West Africa)
13680 kHz... Sun. 5.00pm

Imani Radio 88.8 FM... Wed. 7.30pm, Thurs. 10.00pm

MMUST FM 103.9 FM... Sun. 7.15pm, Wed. 7.45pm

Canada

Fredericton, NB 104.5 FM... Sunday 8.30am

Calgary, AB CHRB 1140 AM... Sunday 10am & 10pm
& Saturday 5.30pm

Vancouver, BC KARI 550 AM... Sunday 9.30am
Monday–Friday 5.00am & 5.00pm

Prince George, BC 93.1 CFIS FM... Sunday 8.00am

Fort St. John, BC Moose FM 101... Sunday 8.30am

Portage La Prairie, MB CFRY 920 AM... Sunday 8.00am

Swift Current, SK CKSW 570 AM... Sunday 9.30am

Nipawin, SK CIOT 104.1 FM... Monday–Friday 6.00pm

GTA ON, Joy Radio 92.5 AM... Sunday 9.30am

Caribbean

Grenada, West Indies

Harbour Light 94.5 FM & Internet...

Monday–Friday 3.30am (AST)

Harbour Light 1400 AM, 94.5 FM & Internet...

Monday–Friday 10.30am (AST)

England

London Premier 1305, 1332, 1413 MW

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Freeview 725

Monday–Friday 1.00am

Far East

Bible Voice 11945 kHz... Thursday 7.30am

New Zealand, Palmerston North

Access Manawatu 999 AM... Sunday 11.00am

Republic of Ireland

Castlebar, Co. Mayo, Community Radio 102.9 FM
Sunday 10.00am Tuesday 7.30pm

Donegal, Radio North Country 846 AM

Monday–Friday 9.30am Sunday 8.15pm

Monaghan, Radio Star Country 981 AM

Monday 10.00am & 3.00pm. Wednesday 3.00pm

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