

STUDY GUIDE 10

Ephesians 3 Recap

1. Review the Ephesians memory verses we have learned thus far:
 - a. Ephesians 1:3

b. Ephesians 2:8, 9

c. Ephesians 3:20, 21

Skim Ephesians 1; review the headers you gave to each paragraph (Study Guide 4, Question 2.)

Skim Ephesians 2; review the headers you gave to each paragraph (Study Guide 7, Question 2.)

Read Ephesians 3 and skim your completed Study Guides 8 and 9.

2. Give a brief header or short sentence to describe each of the following sections of chapter 3:
- a. Ephesians 3:1-13 (Verses 2-13 are one sentence in the original Koine Greek!)

b. Ephesians 3:14-19

c. Ephesians 3:20-21

Let's explore how chapter 3 connects to chapters 1 and 2. One way to summarize the first two chapters is:

Chapter 1 – Our spiritual *possessions* as a result of being *in Christ*.

Chapter 2 – Our spiritual *position* as a result of being *in Christ*.

Then the end of chapter 2 describes all believers (Jew and Gentile) being built together into a dwelling of God.

3. Now, note the phrase that begins Ephesians 3:1 and 3:14. Do verses 2-13 seem like a tangent/interruption to Paul's train of thought? Explain. (Hints: When Paul says, "for this reason...." to what is he referring? Note that Paul refers to himself an inordinate number of times in verses 2-13. Paul seems to be setting up an action that he will take due to this reason – what action does he take and in what verse is it mentioned?)

4. Compare the prayers Paul offers for his readers in Ephesians 1:16-19 and 3:14, 16-19. How are the prayers similar; how do they differ?

Ephesians 1:16-19

[I] ¹⁶ do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention *of you* in my prayers; ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might....

Ephesians 3:14, 16-19

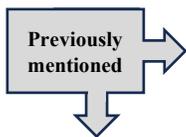
¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,... ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

5. Considering all that Paul has written in the first three chapters, what key points resonate most with you about who you are in Christ and what you have in Him? (This influences how you perceive the Lord’s calling on believers. Wow! What a calling!)

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 10

- I. Did you notice the five occurrences in chapter 3 of “according to/in accordance with” *G2596 kata*, indicating “in proportion to –”? (This word was introduced in questions 4-6 of Study Guide 4.) What does its use indicate about Paul’s ministry and God’s master plan?
- II. Adding to the list of parallels between the books of Joshua and Ephesians:

Parallels: Joshua & Ephesians



Joshua	Ephesians
Physical Inheritance = the Promised Land	Spiritual Inheritance = full, eternal life in Christ
Leader for the heirs: Joshua	Leader for the heirs: Jesus (Greek form of Joshua)
In Joshua 1:3, God tells Joshua, “Every place on which the sole of your foot steps I have given it to you,” The inheritance is theirs solely as a gift from God before they ever step foot in the Land. (A positional truth that does not yet match their conditional truth.)	From Ephesians 1:3, believers are <i>blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ....</i> These blessings are a gift from God, by grace. Furthermore, Ephesian 1:11 says believers <i>have obtained an inheritance....</i> (A positional truth that does not yet match a believer’s conditional truth.)

Joshua	Ephesians
<p>The certitude of the victory and receiving the Land was a positional truth – the Land was theirs, but they had to make it their reality – experience it as a conditional truth.</p>	<p>Believer's certitude of victory & Christ as our inheritance is a positional truth, but we need to understand it as a conditional (our condition here & now) truth.</p>
<p>Rahab, the Jericho prostitute who hid the Israelite spies from the authorities, is a picture of a Gentile coming to God by faith.</p>	<p>“The Uncircumcision,” (separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world) have been brought near.</p>
<p>After the initial attack on Ai failed [man's plan] and the second succeeded [God's plan, God's victory], Joshua gathered the Israelites for a ceremony of blessings and cursings in the natural amphitheater formed between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. [As Moses had instructed.] Joshua built an altar of uncut stones [no human work formed the stones] and the priests offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. Joshua wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses and read the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience to the Law. (Deuteronomy 27, Joshua 8:24-35)</p>	<p>From Ephesians 2:13-18, the reconciliation we experience with God was accomplished solely by Jesus Christ and no human work contributed to it. It was and is God's plan and God's victory!</p>
<p>In Joshua 4, the Israelites set up memorial stones after God parted the Jordan river for the crossing into the Promised Land. Verse 14 states that on that day God exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, so that they revered Joshua, just as they had Moses.</p>	<p>As believers follow Jesus longer and more deeply, He is more and more exalted in our own sight and by the lives we lead. Ephesians 3:20, 21 – God is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think. All glory is due Him in the church and in Christ Jesus forever!</p>
<p>Consider once more Rahab's faith [and act of obedience in hanging the scarlet cord] saving her family because of God's grace [extended to a Gentile!] and by His power – her home in the Jericho wall was the only piece left standing as the rest of the wall crumbled.</p>	<p>Rahab became a partaker in the promise of Christ Jesus as an ancestor in His lineage. God did <u>far more abundantly beyond all that she asked or thought!</u> His gift of grace was <u>upheld by His amazing</u> [and surgical] <u>power!</u></p>



✪ Mary Ann Porter



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STUDY GUIDE 11
Ephesians 4:1-16

Review your memory verses -- Ephesians 1:3, 2:8-9, 3:20-21.

Read Ephesians 4:1-16 two times. ____ ____

Read verses 1-6 again.

1. In verse 2 there are several important characteristics Paul encourages us to acquire. What are they?

For each of these characteristics, what do you think would be the opposite characteristic?
(You may list more than one.)

Example: nice mean gentle _____

humble _____ patient _____

Write down an example of how you have seen a person be genuinely humble, gentle or patient recently. (No names, please.)

Before we can ever hope for true unity in a large group, we need to be developing personal characteristics that create unity. How are you doing in the above three areas? Which characteristic above do you most need to grow in? Explain. (Remember that it is God and His grace at work in us which causes growth.)

2. In verse 3 Paul says to "be diligent" or "make every effort" to preserve unity. Why do you think Paul finds it necessary to use these kinds of words in connection with preserving unity?

According to verse 3, what "breaks" if we are not unified in the Spirit?

How then can we know if we aren't contributing to the unity of the Spirit?

Personal: Is there a brother or sister you need to go to and be reconciled with in order to promote unity of the Spirit? If so, start praying about the right time and way to approach that person about reconciliation, and then do it. Remember verse 2 as you go.

3. Verses 4-6 speak about unity. What word stands out to you (is used often) in these verses?

List all of the things which Paul says there is "one" of: (verses 4-6)

There are many issues that divide Christians, over which they may disagree. But what is Paul focusing us on here?

When interacting with other Christians, do you personally tend to focus on the areas in which you agree or disagree?

How does this section encourage you to view other believers?

Read verses 7-16.

4. In verses 1-6 we saw that God desires us to pursue unity, but now in verses 7-16 we will see that He doesn't desire for us all to be the same. He desires unity, but diversity. Verse 7 tells us that all of us have been given something. What is it that each one of us have been given?

According to verse 7, who is in charge of what measure of gift(s) a person receives?

Why can we be tempted to feel proud or insecure about our gifts? How does the truth in verse 7 counteract that?

In general the gifts break down into two categories: speaking gifts and serving gifts. (See I Peter 4:10-11.) For a more detailed list of some of the gifts, see Romans 12:6-8. Each one of you, when you became a Christian, was given a gift (or gifts) from God. That ought to make you feel special.

NOTE: We should be able to talk candidly and openly about our gifts – all of them are important, none unimportant. They are from God, not worked up by us.

5. What are the apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor/teachers supposed to do? That is, what is their job description? (Verses 11-12)

Put in your own words what it means to "equip" or "prepare" someone for a job, activity or duty.

6. But, according to verse 12, who is to do the works of service?

What common idea about "church work" does this go against?

7. What is the purpose of us all using our gifts? (Verses 12-13)

What would be the result of some people not using their gifts?

What do you think your spiritual gift might be? If you aren't sure, that's fine. But start praying that God would reveal it (or them) to you and that He would open opportunities for you to use it (I Peter 4:10). Asking other people what they think your spiritual gift might be is oftentimes helpful. Also, you may want to try something short-term, and see how it goes. Think about what you really enjoy doing.

In summary, if we have a proper understanding of spiritual gifts, we can never say "I don't need you." Neither can we say, "You don't need me." In order to be a healthy functioning body, we all need each other, we need to depend on each other.

8. What is the best example of Christian maturity? (Verse 13)

What are some characteristics of immature faith? What are the immature vulnerable to? (Verse 14)

9. How do we help each other through our various stages of immaturity? (Verse 15)

"Speaking the truth in love" (verse 15) is a neat equation, but often we tend to only emphasize one half of the equation. Some of us have a tendency to speak truth but in a harsh or insensitive manner. Others tend to be very sensitive and kind but are not completely truthful. Where do you see yourself in regards to this equation?

What is God's desire for us in this regard?

10. What do the words "we... grow..." (verse 15) teach us about the Christian life?

How can this encourage you in times of failure or frustration?

Who or what causes the growth of the body? (verses 15-16)

What is the ultimate, final goal of the "building up of the body"? (verse 16)

11. Looking back over this entire passage, what idea has been the most important or helpful for you? Explain.

☞ Laura Gamble

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 11

- I. Ephesians chapter 4 begins, “Therefore;” to what is Paul referring? (Glancing over your Study Guide 10 may help.)
- II. What shift in tone can you detect in Paul’s writing?
- III. The beginning of Ephesians 4:1 literally translates as, “Therefore I, the prisoner **in** the Lord...” At the end of Study Guide 2, we learned about Locative of Sphere. (Thoughts in the Margin, note II.) At the time of writing to the believers at Ephesus, Paul had been under house arrest for years (briefly in Jerusalem, transferred to Caesarea, and then finally in Rome.) How does Locative of Sphere (in Christ) apply to Paul? How does his location (in every sense of its meaning) impact his message?

☞ Mary Ann Porter

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STUDY GUIDE 12

Ephesians 4:17-32

PUTTING ON OUR NEW CLOTHES – This section of Ephesians speaks about putting off the old self, and putting on the new self, using an analogy that seems appropriate – getting dressed. Paul tells us just the right clothes to wear in order to be "like God in true righteousness and holiness." (verse 24)

Read Ephesians 4:17-32 two times ____ ____.

Memorize Ephesians 4:32.

Read verses 17-19 again.

1. From these verses, describe fully how Paul says that the Gentiles walk. (NOTE: The word Gentiles here literally means "nations," referring to all people outside God's family.)

What do you think it means to have "futility of...mind?" (verse 17)

What causes lack of understanding and futility of mind? (verse 18)

What is the opposite of hardness of heart?

What can we be doing to keep from becoming hard-hearted? Or, in other words, how do we cultivate a soft heart?

Read verses 20-24.

2. Notice that in verse 20, Paul does not say "learn about Christ," but he says "learn (or know) Christ." What is the difference?

3. What does Paul instruct them to do in regards to their former manner of life? (Verse 22)

Is this active or passive? What is our part in this?

4. What is the old self?

Paul is writing this to believers, to people who are already Christians. With this in mind, is Paul talking about a once-and-for-all laying aside of the old self, or a process? What do you think it means to lay aside the old self?

5. What do you think it means to be "renewed in the spirit of your mind?" (NASB) How do we think differently if our minds are renewed in the spirit? (verse 23) Think of some of the truth that we've seen in Ephesians 1-3. Also see Philippians 4:8.

6. What are we told about the new self? (Verse 24)

What do you think it means--practically speaking--to "put on" the new self?

Paul has just outlined for us the general theme of this passage. We are to put off the old self, and put on the new self. Now he gets more specific with what he means. What follows are some practical ways (what it looks like) to put off the old self and put on the new.

Read verses 25-32.

7. In verse 25, we are told to lay aside falsehood. What are some common ways in which we can all be guilty of being false or untruthful?

What are we to do instead? And to whom?

Who is your neighbor? (See Luke 10:25-37) Therefore, who are we to speak truth to?

Paul tells us that we are to speak truthfully to our neighbors because we are "members of one another." What do you think this means, and why is it important? (You may want to review Ephesians 4:15-16.)

8. Verses 26-27 speak about the emotion anger. Is anger necessarily a sin? Give an example of when anger might not be a sin.

When do you think anger becomes sinful?

9. Paul tells us not to let the sun go down on our anger. If we remain angry for a long time, we are giving the devil an opportunity or a foothold. What usually happens when Satan gets a foothold (in our lives, families, the body of Christ, etc.)?

Personal: Is there some anger about something or toward someone that you are allowing to remain? Explain. What do you think God wants you to do about it?

10. Verse 28 tells us that we are not to steal. Maybe we don't rob banks or shoplift, but there are other, more subtle ways we can "steal." What are some of them?

And what are we to replace these with?

NOTE: You may notice it especially here, but it is true throughout this entire passage: taking off the old self (quitting our sinful ways, repenting) is not enough. We must then put on the new self (accepting God's forgiveness and walking in the new life He offers us). To quit stealing is good, but that is not the end of the process. We must then start working, and share with those who have

need. No one after taking off their dirty clothes goes downtown naked. Rather, they shower and put on clean clothes, and then they go downtown. Likewise, you don't plow your garden and pull all the weeds, and then let it sit dormant. Rather, after you have plowed and weeded, you plant good plants; otherwise, the weeds will just grow back.

11. According to verse 29, what is not to proceed from your mouth? Give some examples of what this might include for us today.

What is to come out of our mouths? What are we told to be aware of when we speak?

What should be the purpose of the words that come out of your mouth?

Remember: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can break my heart."

12. What does verse 30 tell us to do or not to do?

Did you realize that you have the power to grieve the Holy Spirit? Every evil action, every sin that we do grieves the Holy Spirit. What can we learn from the fact that we can grieve the Holy Spirit of God?

13. From verse 31, list all the things that we are to get rid of, that we are to put away from us.

The good news is that these harmful sins can be replaced. What characteristics are they to be replaced with? (verse 32)

What is significant about the manner in which Paul says we are to forgive each other?

14. From this passage, have you been made aware of some area of your life that you need to more actively put off the old self, and put on the new? Explain.

Remember, this new self is not something we come up with on our own. It is new life from God. He is the one who enables us to put off the old self and to put on the new self that He provides for us. Our part is to have a soft heart that cooperates with God by actively obeying what He tells us to do.

✞ Laura Gamble

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 12

- I. Pastor David Guzik¹ notes some aspects of God's forgiveness that can cause us to think twice about withholding forgiveness:
 - a. God holds back His anger a long time until He forgives. He bears with us for a long time though we sorely provoke Him.
 - b. God reaches out to bad people to woo them to Himself, and attempts reconciliation with bad people.

- c. God always makes the first move in forgiveness, trying to reconcile even though the guilty party is uninterested in forgiveness.
 - d. God forgives our sin knowing that we will sin again, often in exactly the same way.
 - e. God's forgiveness is so complete and glorious that he grants adoption to those former offenders.
 - f. God, in His forgiveness, bore *all* of the penalty for the wrong we did against Him. He was innocent yet He bore the guilt.
 - g. God keeps reaching out to man for reconciliation even when man rejects Him again and again.
 - h. God requires no probationary period to receive His forgiveness.
 - i. God's forgiveness offers complete restoration and honor. He loves, adopts, honors and associates with those who once wronged Him.
 - j. God puts His trust in us and invites us to work with Him as co-laborers when He forgives us.
- II. Warning – this is a heady question. Recall from Study Guide 4 (Thoughts in the Margin, note I) the distinction between *positional* truth and *conditional* (*experiential*, here and now) truth. If we posit that believers are *positionally* saved – as is stated in Galatians 2:20 that – “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” While also positing that believers are *experientially* saved (that salvation is permanent and cannot be lost.) This sounds like the “old self” of Ephesians 4:22 is dead and removed; so why does a struggle with sin remain? (In other words, what is the difference between the “old self” and the “flesh?”)

¹ enduringword.com/bible-commentary/ephesians-4

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Additional Scripture for Study Guide 12

☐ Philippians 4:8

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.

☐ Luke 10:25-37

²⁵ And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶ And He said to him, “What is written in the Law? How does it read to you?” ²⁷ And he answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸ And He said to him, “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ Jesus replied and said, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. ³¹ And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, ³⁴ and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on *them*; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.’ ³⁶ Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers’ *hands*?” ³⁷ And he said, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said to him, “Go and do the same.”



3. The word *walk is peripateo* Strong's number G4043. It occurred twice in the first three chapters of Ephesians –

Ephesians 2:1-2 “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience”

Ephesians 2:10, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Walk appears three times in chapter 4 (and also in chapter 5.) What does Paul mean when he uses *peripateo*?

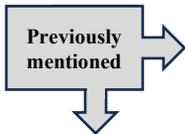
4. Now describe what Paul means by *the calling* in Ephesians 4:1? (Your answer in Study Guide 10, question 5 may help.)

5. What is your response Paul's earnest request in Ephesians 4:1, “to walk in a manner worthy of the calling...”?

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 13

I. Something to ponder: AI-created (artificial intelligence) content on the internet is growing harder and harder to distinguish from reality. Elon Musk’s company xAI has its own chatbot (Grok) that can answer questions, create images, provide coding [computer programming] assistance, write papers and more. In 2024 Elon Musk predicted that the current generation may be among the last to reliably tell real from fake media. How should believers think about this possibility in light of Paul’s cautions in chapter 4 for believers to mature in Christ and “no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming....”

II. Parallels: Joshua & Ephesians



Joshua	Ephesians
Physical Inheritance = the Promised Land	Spiritual Inheritance = full, eternal life in Christ
Leader for the heirs: Joshua	Leader for the heirs: Jesus (Greek form of Joshua)
In Joshua 1:3, God tells Joshua, “Every place on which the sole of your foot steps I have given it to you,” The inheritance is theirs solely as a gift from God before they ever step foot in the Land. (A positional truth that does not yet match their conditional truth.)	From Ephesians 1:3, believers are <i>blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ....</i> These blessings are a gift from God, by grace. Furthermore, Ephesian 1:11 says believers <i>have obtained an inheritance....</i> (A positional truth that does not yet match a believer’s conditional truth.)
The certitude of the victory and receiving the Land was a positional truth – the Land was theirs, but they had to make it their reality – experience it as a conditional truth.	Believer’s certitude of victory & Christ as our inheritance is a positional truth, but we need to understand it as a conditional (our condition here & now) truth.
Rahab, the Jericho prostitute who hid the Israelite spies from the authorities, is a picture of a Gentile coming to God by faith.	“The Uncircumcision,” (separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise having no hope and without God in the world) have been brought near.
After the initial attack on Ai failed [man’s plan] and the second succeeded [God’s plan, God’s victory], Joshua gathered the Israelites for a ceremony of blessings and cursings in the natural amphitheater formed between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. [As Moses had instructed.] Joshua built an altar of uncut stones [no human work formed the stones] and the priests offered burnt offerings and peace	From Ephesians 2:13-18, the reconciliation we experience with God was accomplished solely by Jesus Christ and no human work contributed to it. It was and is God’s plan and God’s victory!

<p>offerings. Joshua wrote on the stones a copy of the law of Moses and read the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience to the Law. (Deuteronomy 27, Joshua 8:24-35)</p>	
<p>Joshua</p>	<p>Ephesians</p>
<p>In Joshua 4, the Israelites set up memorial stones after God parted the Jordan river for the crossing into the Promised Land. Verse 14 states that on that day God exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, so that they revered Joshua, just as they had Moses.</p>	<p>As believers follow Jesus longer and more deeply, He is more and more exalted in our own sight and by the lives we lead. Ephesians 3:20, 21 – God is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we can ask or think. All glory is due Him in the church and in Christ Jesus forever!</p>
<p>Consider once more Rahab's faith [and act of obedience in hanging the scarlet cord] saving her family because of God's grace [extended to a Gentile!] and by His power – her home in the Jericho wall was the only piece left standing as the rest of the wall crumbled.</p>	<p>Rahab became a partaker in the promise of Christ Jesus as an ancestor in His lineage. God did <u>far more abundantly beyond all that she asked or thought!</u> His gift of grace was <u>upheld by His amazing</u> [and surgical] <u>power!</u></p>
<p>When the Israelites crossed the Jordan it was a picture of coming out of death and into life. They set up the 12 stones in the middle of the Jordan – this is akin to the old man (in the water, dead); the 12 stones on the western bank of the Jordan represented new life (out of the water/death, into their inheritance – like baptism!)</p>	<p>The old self is laid aside (Ephesians 4:22;) he is dead. Per 1 Peter 2:5, believers are living stones being build up as a spiritual house like what is described in Ephesians 3:21. Living because some of the Rock lives within us! Believers are life in the midst of a world of death – this should be noticeable to others.</p>
<p>The initial defeat at Ai (Joshua 7) was caused by sin in the camp. (Achan had taken things under the ban during the siege of Jericho.)</p>	<p>We can walk in sin as a Christian, but we cannot walk in <u>victory</u> while walking in sin. From Ephesians 4, we are to no longer walk as the Gentiles [we could, but we shall seek not to!]</p>



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