

26th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 28 November 13, 2016

LUTHERAN

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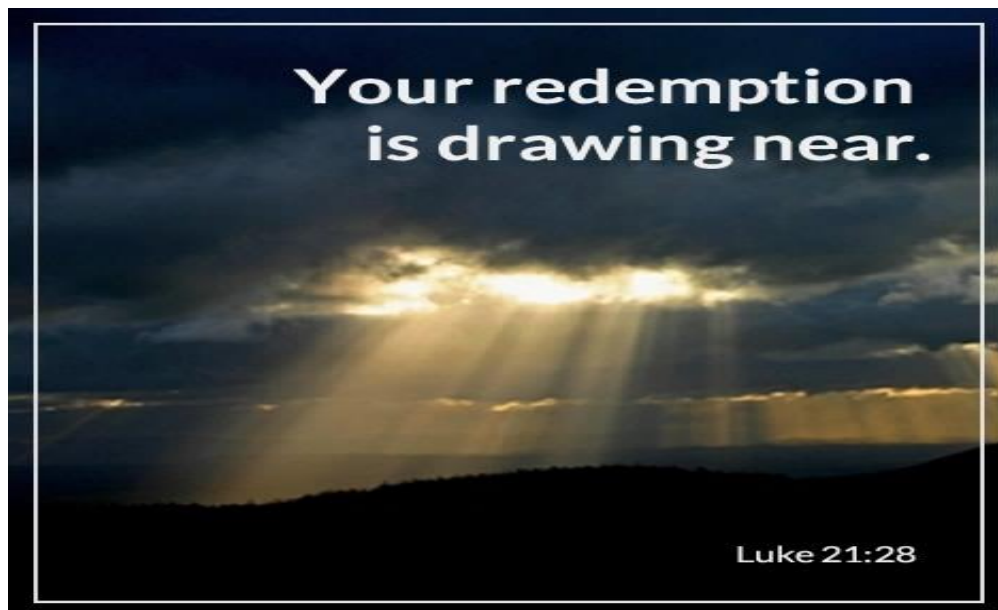
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“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”**

November 10, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details of this week's location.



<http://www.historicstpauls.ca/media/sermons/2013/11-17-when-bad-news-is-good-news>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 508 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 611

“The day is surely drawing near (nigh)”

This hymn is primarily a Lutheran one. On the list of hymnals that use it is the [Ambassador Hymnal: for Lutheran worship](#), a hymnal of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC) <https://www.aflc.org/>.

“Bartholomew Ringwaldt was born at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, in 1530, and was a Lutheran pastor at Langfield, in Prussia, where he died, 1598. His hymns resemble Luther's in their simplicity and power. Several of them were written to comfort himself and others in the sufferings they endured from famine, pestilence, fire and floods... --Annotations of the Hymnal, Charles Hutchins, M.A. 1872.” ... “Ringwaldt exercised a considerable influence on his contemporaries as a poet of the people, as well as by his hymns properly so called. He was a true German patriot, a staunch Lutheran, and a man who was quite ready to face the consequences of his plain speaking. His style is as a rule clear and good, though his rhymes are often enough halting; and he possessed considerable powers of observation and description... in the *Ohio Lutheran Hymnal*, 1880.” John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1907) http://www.hymnary.org/person/Ringwaldt_B

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbsIOpp21hY> Chorale prelude attributed to JS Bach on hymn tune Es ist gewisslich. [One LSB Hymn a Week](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPyO9ao45J0> Sing along to the piano.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJcXREt1nwM> A choral anthem from CPH.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

*Today continues the last of the “**Sunday after Pentecost**” series. Next week will be the **Last Sunday of the Church Year**, the final Sunday in green. (And the altar guild says?)*

Malachi 4:1-6; RCL, Isaiah 65:17-25 (Next Week: Malachi 3:13-18; RCL, Jeremiah 23:1-6 or Luke 1:68-79)

“This passage from Malachi is typical fire and brimstone scripture. This type of scripture attracts and repulses clear categories of readers. Those inclined to dismiss the passage simply because of its harsh rhetoric and punishment should reflect further on how these verses function within the broader narrative of the book. Those too eager to jump on the judgment day bandwagon should pause to understand how Malachi conceives of this day...” https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1845 [Steed Davidson](#), Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.

The Great Day of the LORD

⁴ ^[a] “For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble. The day that is coming shall set them ablaze, says the LORD of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch. ² But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its

wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall. ³ And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act, says the LORD of hosts.

⁴ “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and rules^[b] that I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵ “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. ⁶ And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.”^[c]

- a. [Malachi 4:1](#) Ch [4:1–6](#) is ch 3:19–24 in Hebrew
- b. [Malachi 4:4](#) Or *and just decrees*
- c. [Malachi 4:6](#) The Hebrew term rendered *decree of utter destruction* refers to things devoted (or set apart) to the Lord (or by the Lord) for destruction

“Today’s Old Testament reading is filled with anticipation, expectation and urgency! “Ready or Not... Here He Comes!” Do these words remind you of the childhood game we all played, “Hide-’n-Seek?” Whoever was “It” would count and then call out loudly, “Ready or not, here I come!” Each player attempted to be “ready” so that they would not be caught “in the open” and unprepared!

Long ago, Malachi, one of the Lord’s prophets/spokesmen under the inspiration of God, cried out a message of warning and urgency. “See, I send My messenger, who will prepare the way before Me.” God was sending, and had sent, those messengers, including Elijah one of the greatest Old Testament prophets, throughout human history to His people. After him, God sent the New Testament Elijah, John the Baptist. (Jesus Himself said, “For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. He who has ears, let him hear.” (Matthew 11: 13-14; see also Matthew 17: 10-13)

The sense of expectation grows as the prophet proclaims, “Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to His temple; the Messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come, says the Lord Almighty.” (Malachi 3: 1) This Messenger is none other than Jesus Christ Himself. This Messenger is the One whom Isaiah had seen in a vision, “I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple.” (Isaiah 6:1) This same Jesus was BOTH the messenger of the Father’s love as well as the message itself! He came among us, in the flesh, to bring us the message and assurance of the Father’s mercy, care and love for us; but more than that, His coming, His life and His death in our place, actually give us the gift of forgiveness and eternal life! He IS the Good News of our salvation! We have Life in and through Him!..” <http://holycrosslutheran.net/blog/2015/12/12/ready-or-not-malachi-31-7/>

Read the rest of Pastor Snows sermon – do you remember how he ends each one?

Psalm 98; RCL, Malachi 4:1-2a or Psalm 46 (*Psalm 46 [again]; RCL, Jeremiah 23:1-6 or Psalm 46*)

A Psalm

Make a Joyful Noise to the LORD

98 Oh sing to the LORD a new song,
 for he has done marvelous things!
 His right hand and his holy arm
 have worked salvation for him.

² The LORD has made known his salvation;
 he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

³ He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness
 to the house of Israel.
 All the ends of the earth have seen
 the salvation of our God.

⁴ Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
 break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

⁵ Sing praises to the LORD with the lyre,
 with the lyre and the sound of melody!

⁶ With trumpets and the sound of the horn
 make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!

⁷ Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
 the world and those who dwell in it!

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands;
 let the hills sing for joy together

⁹ before the LORD, for he comes
 to judge the earth.
 He will judge the world with righteousness,
 and the peoples with equity.

“Psalm 98 calls for a new psalm! Since that call for something new is often sounded (Psalm 96:1, 33:3, 40:3; 144:9; 149:1; Isaiah 42:10) the point appears to be an important one. We could imagine that a good number of Old Testament people must have wanted to hang onto the “good old songs.” But there was also a group who must have said, “We need to hear something fresh, new, and contemporary, so that we can hold on to the young people.” ...

Psalm 98 is one of seven psalms in the Bible that were used at a festival to celebrate God as King: 47; 93; 95; 96; 97; 98; 99. Many of these psalms contain the cry, “The Lord is king” (see 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1). These *enthronement psalms*, as they are called, are not to be confused with *royal psalms*, which are associated with events in the life of the king (Psalms 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144). To put it another way, in the *enthronement psalms* God is the king. In the *royal psalms*, the king is the king.

The heading “A Psalm” designates this as a musical piece suitable for use in worship. The psalm itself calls for instrumental accompaniment, with both stringed (verse 5) and brass instruments (verse 6). The psalm divides into three parts: Praise to the Lord because of mighty deeds in the past (verses 1-3), praise to the Lord the ruling King in the present (verses 4-6), and a call to nature also to praise the Lord who will come in the future to set things right in the world (verses 7-9).

What’s It All About? (verses 1-3)...A Planet Full of Praisers! (verses 4-6)...

Let Heaven and Nature Sing (verse 7-9)...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1535 [James Limburg](#)

It’s not that there is an end of the year test, but, do you recognize James Limburg yet?

An excellent “new” hymn based on this Psalm is “Earth and all Stars” LSB 817. Written by “Herbert Brokering (b. Beatrice, NE, 1926) ... this text for the ninetieth anniversary of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, in 1964... About his writing of the text Brokering says: I tried to gather into a hymn of praise the many facets of life which emerge in the life of community. So there are the references to building, nature, learning, family, war, festivity. Seasons, emotions, death and resurrection, bread, wine, water, wind, sun, spirit. . . have made great impressions on my imagination.” http://www.hymnary.org/text/earth_and_all_stars

Enjoy this hymn with words and pictures at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBRh4eOCpQQ> or pull out your hymnal and sing along to this organ accompaniment - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OPTzqdkhnSA> .

2 Thessalonians 3:(1-5) 6-13; RCL, verses 6-13 only (Colossians 1:13-20; RCL, verses 11-20)

“With chapter 3 Paul begins to bring this epistle to a close, but in doing so, we are privileged to see a wonderful model as Paul demonstrates how his team’s confidence lay not in human plans, promotion, programs, or human personalities, but in the Lord Himself. Their confidence for whatever they might need and face was an unending trust in the provision and faithfulness of the Lord and His powerful Word. The Lord Jesus said emphatically, “I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.” While God uses frail human instruments in accomplishing His work on earth, the ultimate accomplishment of the work depends on the work and faithfulness of the Lord and His Word.

Our modern ‘go-go’ tendency is to be quick to plan and act rather than pray, wait on the Lord, and then in God’s timing and leading, work in His strength, leading, and provision. This is not only the position of wisdom but of humility as we put our trust not in ourselves, but in a sovereign God and Savior. Again, the apostle provides us with a model, not just for ministry but for life...” <https://bible.org/seriespage/8-final-confidences-god-s-grace-expressed-2-thes-31-5#TopOfPage>

J. Hampton Keathley III, Th.M. was a 1966 graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and a former pastor of 28 years.

Pray for Us

3 Finally, brothers,^[a] pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored,^[b] as happened among you,² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.³ But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one.^[c] ⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command.⁵ May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

Warning Against Idleness

⁶ Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you,⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.¹¹ For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.¹² Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.^[d] As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.

- a. [2 Thessalonians 3:1](#) Or *brothers and sisters*; also verses [6](#), [13](#)
- b. [2 Thessalonians 3:1](#) Or *glorified*
- c. [2 Thessalonians 3:3](#) Or *evil*
- d. [2 Thessalonians 3:12](#) Greek *to eat their own bread*

“The one who is unwilling to work, shall not eat” (2 Ths 3:10; NIV2011).

“In today’s heated climate of disputes over universal healthcare and a social safety net, this verse has seemingly taken on a life of its own. Opponents dispute the meaning of this verse and quarrel over people’s intentions and probable outcomes. There is no question that, while some of the stranger apocalyptic elements of 2 Thessalonians may be avoided as undignified, this passage has never suffered for adherents.

The key focus of the passage, however, should not surprise the one who has been paying attention. Both verses 6 and 11 use a rare term that only occurs in these two verses of the New Testament to describe the problematic ones, and while many translations have opted for “lazy” or “idle” on the principle that these people are refusing to work, classically this adverb comes from the word group for “disorderly” or “disruptive” (hence the NIV2011 opting to double-translate it as “idle and disruptive”). Taken in its normal meaning, suddenly the picture opens up that these may well have been the same troublemakers from chapter 2, causing the theological earthquakes and distress. Indeed, the picture Paul paints of these troublemakers is

not simply that they are lazy or won't work, but that they actively work trouble for the church (v. 11) as busybodies and meddlers in things which they have no business.

Verse 11 gives us one of Paul's fun plays on words that help us realize his rhetorical brilliance. These disruptive ones will not "work" (*ergazomenous*), instead they work mischief (*periergazomenous*), building the counter to the positive of what they should be doing. The characterization in verse 11 is crucial for getting this passage correctly, giving a threefold picture: they are disruptive, will not work, and are meddlers. Grammatically, the descriptions are positive, negative, positive, but lexically they are all negative. It is not that they are simply lazy, or heaven forbid, unable to work. These people are able to work, but use that ability to create chaos in the community. As such, they directly contradict the example of the apostles who by status would not have had to work but did anyway. This passage has nothing to do with whether a social welfare should be in place to catch the helpless in society; this is entirely concerned with those who *should* and *can* work but refuse and instead direct their energies to causing chaos in the community. This day and age when it is entirely possible, and disturbingly common, to work full time -- or more than full time -- and still not earn a living wage, Christians need to be profoundly careful with our rhetoric about those who depend on welfare for survival. We should be fighting for justice and help for those in that position, rather than carelessly branding people with this passage..."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1848

[Mariam Kamell](#) Assistant Professor of New Testament Studies, Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia,, Canada

“The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 21st Chapter”

Luke 21:5-28 (29-36); RCL, verses 5-19 only (Luke 23:27-43: RCL, verses 33-43)

“Glory to You, O Lord”

“This is a scene that ought not to have been cut so short. The amputation of the end deforms the scene itself. Read another ten verses, at least. And read a few more on the front end, while you're at it...” (continued after reading)

Jesus Foretells Destruction of the Temple

⁵ And while some were speaking of the temple, how it was adorned with noble stones and offerings, he said, ⁶“As for these things that you see, the days will come when there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.” ⁷ And they asked him, “Teacher, when will these things be, and what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?” ⁸ And he said, “See that you are not led astray. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he!’ and, ‘The time is at hand!’ Do not go after them. ⁹ And when you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified, for these things must first take place, but the end will not be at once.”

Jesus Foretells Wars and Persecution

¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake. ¹³ This will be your opportunity to bear witness. ¹⁴ Settle it therefore in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer, ¹⁵ for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict. ¹⁶ You will be delivered up even by parents and brothers^[a] and relatives and friends, and some of you they will put to death. ¹⁷ You will be hated by all for my name's sake. ¹⁸ But not a hair of your head will perish. ¹⁹ By your endurance you will gain your lives.

Jesus Foretells Destruction of Jerusalem

²⁰ “But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. ²¹ Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it, ²² for these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written. ²³ Alas for women who are pregnant and for those who are nursing infants in those days! For there will be great distress upon the earth and wrath against this people. ²⁴ They will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive among all nations, and Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The Coming of the Son of Man

²⁵ “And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, ²⁶ people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

The Lesson of the Fig Tree

²⁹ And he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. ³⁰ As soon as they come out in leaf, you see for yourselves and know that the summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all has taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

Watch Yourself

³⁴“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap. ³⁵For it will come upon all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶But stay awake at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are going to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

a. [Luke 21:16](#) *Or parents and brothers and sisters*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” **“Praise to You, O Christ”**

“Jesus and his disciples are still in Jerusalem. They are still in the Temple, which is where he has been teaching since the beginning of chapter 20. All of the previous arguments and rhetorical traps have been set in the Temple; these detailed discussions of the most Jewish of issues have been conducted in that most Jewish of places, the Temple, the place where God touched the earth and held it still and safe. Just moments ago the faithful woman, both widowed and impoverished, threw her whole life into the Temple treasury.

And now some of the people with Jesus look up and speak in awe of the beauty of the Temple, the center of the Jewish world. Of course, Luke and Jesus (and every conceivable ancient audience) knew that the beauty of the Temple was a matter fraught with tension and contradiction. The Temple was stunning. The Temple was huge. Paula Fredriksen notes that the outer court could hold 400,000 people, and further notes that, at festival times, it frequently held crowds nearly that large. The Temple was overwhelming, as befits the building that honors the God who alone is God.

And the Temple was beautiful because Herod, that Roman stooge who styled himself as King of the Jews, had spent massive amounts of money making it beautiful. Herod, that vicious and brutal despot known as much for his private slaughter of his family members as for his acts of public largesse, had built up the Temple so that it would rival pagan temples built up by rival rulers. Faithful Jews knew the Temple testified to God’s unique majesty. They also knew that the beautification project was meant to bring glory to Herod, that grandson of converts whom the rabbis refused to acknowledge as Jewish. Nobody that brutal, that barbaric, that pagan, can belong to the family of the faithful.

Jesus’ words, therefore, about the leveling of the Temple, not one stone on another, would have had a double bite. On the one hand, that leveling (even at the hands of Rome) would remove the Herodian blot from the holy city. On the other hand, the Temple was the Temple, and not even Herod’s pagan corruption could change that.

The reason you need to read more verses, and not just stop at verse 19, is that such a truncated text flows from the destruction of a building to geo-political chaos to religious and social rejection (extending even to family-shattering betrayals) to a promise of safety amidst the chaos of martyrdom. And then it stops.

The implication is that the calm individual is the center of the world, that Christian endurance has been the point of Jesus’ whole message.

If you read further, you notice that this sermon, useful and edifying as it is, is swirled back into a larger chaos and that the larger threat is not to Christian endurance but to Jewish survival. Having floated briefly in the eddy of endurance even in the face of intra-family strife, Jesus sweeps that hearer back out into the main stream of this discourse: Jerusalem will be encircled and trampled underfoot by Gentiles, Jews who will flee in terror, and all will see the stability of the universe shaken.

Even in this world-destroying catastrophe, Luke's Jesus says, God's faithful people should lift their heads and expect resurrection, redemption, and rescue. It is worth remembering at this point that when Anna saw the infant Jesus in the Temple back at the beginning of the story, she spoke of him to all those who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem. Luke's story requires the audience to imagine all those people whom Anna found as still waiting and expecting a resurrection of faithful hope.

If Jesus' listeners indeed do lift their heads and look around, they will see, even in the moment of deepest catastrophe, the host of those who have been waiting with them since even before Anna found them and spoke to them. In fact, this chapter ends with that host (in Greek, the *laos*, a word used in Luke and in the Septuagint to refer to faithful Israel) rising early day after day to listen to Jesus in the Temple.

It is also worth remembering that when Luke's story was told in this form, the Temple had already been a smoldering ruin, razed to the ground by Roman command, for something like thirty years. The disaster that is forecast has already been seen. This is always the case with proclamations of promise and warning. Any congregation, any group gathered to worship and study will always include people whose worlds have been shattered, whose hopes have been trampled. Some of them might also be old enough to have learned to lift up their heads and look for the promised resurrection even in the midst of the triumph of death. Others will need to be supported while they try just to draw another breath.

This larger scene does not just offer encouragement to heroic endurance. Chapter 21 is a scene that pictures God's people as always gathering to wait together for resurrection. Sometimes endurance is not enough, not even nearly. **When it really matters, only resurrection will do, and in Luke's story, we wait for resurrection together and in the company of people like old Anna, who has been waiting longer than most of us have been alive.**" (boldface added)

http://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1853 *Richard Swanson*

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