"IF" Statements of the Bible III

Fred R. Coulter—September 4, 2010

We will do a little more on the 'IF' clause, see if we can put it together so it follows along. In looking ahead, as I mentioned, there are more 'ifs' in the New Testament than the Old Testament. But what we're going to see is a consistency in what God wants.

If you can take the sermons that I did, God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping, and how that for the New Testament and conversion we need the Spirit of God to have a spiritual relationship with Him, to keep the commandments of God spiritually motivated from within by the Spirit of God. So we have a greater standard to meet than they have in the Old Testament, but nevertheless in the letter of the law this is what God required. He did not offer them any place, you can read here any place, that they would have eternal life. Not like the New Testament whereas the Scripture is, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life.' And, of course, that is conditional-'may' is a form of what is called subjunctive, meaning that it is very akin to an 'if' clause. You may, according to God's standard. Not that you should have eternal life, according to your standard, but according to God's.

Now let's come to Deuteronomy 11 and let's see that the love of God, love toward God, is in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. And we already have seen how that God told them to love Him with all their heart and mind and soul and being, even in the *letter of the law* they could do that. So He says the same thing here, because all of the punishment for sin is part of the love of God, so that it is going to bring us back to Him.

What I want you to do in this: I want you to go back and read Deut. 9 & 10, because that all leads up here to chapter eleven. Now Deuteronomy 11:1: "Therefore, you shall love the LORD your God, and keep His charge and His statutes and His judgments and His commandments always. And consider this day that *I do* not *speak* with your children who have not known and who have not seen the chastisement of the LORD your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His outstretched arm" (vs 1-2). Then He reiterates all the things that happened in Egypt, all the things that happened along the way as they came to where they are now ready to enter into the 'promised land.'

Verse 11: "But the land which you are entering to possess, it *is* a land of hills and valleys that drink water from the rain of heavens.... [In other words, He said, 'Not like Egypt where you have to

irrigate.' God would bless it and He would bring the rain.] ...It is a land which the LORD your God cares for. The eyes of the LORD your God *are* always upon it from the beginning of the year even to the end of the year" (vs 11-12). Now what better relationship could you have with God—huh? Think of that! Creator of heaven and earth watching over this special piece of land and now what has it turned into? *The bloodiest parcel of land on earth*.

Verse 13: "And it will be, **IF** you will hearken diligently to My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul.... [And what did Jesus say? 'If you love Me, keep My commandments'—right? Same thing, only for us it's a spiritual thing, with the Spirit of God. For them it was in the letter of the law. Can people in the letter of the law love God as much as they can with their heart, all their heart and all their soul? Of course! ... Then... [So here we have an if and then. Sometimes we have an 'if' and 'when.' This is 'if' and 'then.'] ... I will give the rain of your land in its due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your livestock so that you may eat and be full" (vs 13-15). And remember what we read last time. God said, 'When you have eaten are full and dwell in goodly houses, beware that you do not forget the Lord your God for giving you all of these blessings.'

But what happens every time? What was the story through the book of Judges? Another generation comes along and then they go after other gods, when God said, 'Don't go after them.' The new generation that comes along, it never fails. It happens in our lives, it happens in every life of the new generation. You think, just like I did, just like you did, that you know more than your folks—right? And so, you're going to do it your way—correct? Yes!

The new generation comes along after Joshua and the elders were in the land. And they said, 'Now look at all of these old gray haired white old fogies over here, and look, our neighbors are nice. They have different gods and they have some good things that look like we ought to be doing that.' So what happened? It became a trap and a snare for them—right? And they went after other gods. So God had to correct them.

So He says, "Take heed to yourselves that your heart may not be deceived..." (v 16). Now the only way to keep yourself from being deceived in

your heart is what? Because, the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked—right? You need the Word of God to continually give you direction, to continually give you understanding so that you're not going to deceive yourselves. If you love the Truth and know that God is Truth, and know that His Word is Truth—if you follow that as God has said—then you're not going to deceive yourself.

It's just like Christmas today. Christmas is the epitome of Satan's most gigantic hook into people. It's built on what? The name of Jesus! It's built on His birth. 'Oh, we're happy that He's born.' It's built around family, it's built around giving, it's built around the children. 'Oh, and the family, and everything together.' And oh, by the way, we're going to commemorate the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that's what a Christmas tree is with all those sex symbols on there. You know how that beautiful—what do they call that that winds around the tree? You look at it, it's a nice serpent going around the tree. I know as a little kid growing up, I wasn't such a little kid then, I must have been about thirteen, fourteen, and they came out with angel hair for the first time. Boy, with the lights, you put that up on the star and you drape that down over the tree, and you turn the lights on and everything just becomes magic.

Now what could be wrong with that? Aren't they having fun? Aren't they doing things for the children? giving gifts for their children? Anyone who would be against that is Scrooge! Don't they have a movie on that? Yes! That's the biggest, biggest hook! It looks good, it sounds good, it feels good, and by the time you have a few eggnogs with some whoopee-do in it, everything is really good. And then there's kissing under the mistletoe, or is that New Years? I've been away from it so long I've forgotten a lot of it.

"...may not be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them.... ['We're just having fun. We're just doing it for the enjoyment of it.' Never consider the lies, and never consider that you're being taken away from God.] ...and you turn aside and serve other gods, and worship them.... ['Well, we're doing this to the name of Jesus.' Remember where we started with the 'if' clause? What was the first one? Gen. 4:7, 'IF you do well, shall you not be accepted? IF you do not well, sin lies at the door. It's desire is for you, but you must rule over it.' You have to rule over the deception that's within, you have to rule over the pulls of the lust of the flesh. God gives you the strength to do it.] ...And the LORD's wrath be kindled against you..." (vs 16-17).

Let's come to chapter twelve. I want you to read everything in between. We're just going to

some of the 'if' clauses here. This is true, Old Testament and New Testament, both. Deuteronomy 12:28: "Be careful to observe and obey all these words which I command you... [What did Jesus say? You can read the last part of John 12:42 to the end. 'The words that I speak, they shall judge you' correct? What did Jesus also say? 'Those who hear My words and do not do them, I liken to a man who builds his house on the ground,' not the one who builds it on the rock.] ...Be careful to observe and obey all these words which I command you, so that it may go well with you... [Doesn't everyone want it to go well with them? Yes! But Satan comes along and says, 'Now, there's a shortcut and I'll give you a benefit.'] ...go well with you and with your children... [Isn't that what you want to do with your children? 'Well, that's why we keep Christmas.' Really?] ...vour children after vou forever when... [could be if] ...you do that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God." Then God pours His blessings out-right? We've all experienced that, too, haven't we? Yes!

"When the LORD your God shall cut off the nations before you, where you go to possess them, and you take their place and dwell in the land.... [And after God has done all of this. I mean, even in the Old Covenant it's really a fair bargain—isn't it? Yes, indeed!] (He has another requirement): ... Take heed to yourself that you do not become ensnared by following them... [that is the nations] ... after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not ask about their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods that I may also do likewise?'.... [And as Jer. 7 shows, they did it right at the temple of God.] ... You shall **not** do so to the LORD your God, for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates..." (vs 29-31).

When it talks about shedding innocent blood, there are two forms of innocent blood that He talks about in the book of Jeremiah, in the book of Ezekiel, and Isaiah, which is this:

1. The most innocent is the offering of children to Molech, so that they would be a sacrifice to Molech.

That was their way of handling abortion. Think of the ceremony and everything. They would get them out there and have them drinking wine laced with drugs and things like that. The drums were beating and the priest was there, and 'This, after all, was to God.' Don't do that.

"...for every abomination to the LORD, which He hates, they have done to their gods; even their sons and their daughters they have burned in the fire to their gods" (v 31). That's innocent blood. The other innocent blood is:

2. Allowing murderers to go through the land.

Verse 32: "Whatsoever thing that I command you, be careful to do it. You shall not add to it, nor take away from it." Does that not sound like Gen. 4:7? Yes, indeed!

Deuteronomy 13:1, here's another *if.* "<u>IF</u> a prophet rises among you, or a dreamer of dreams, and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder which he foretold to you comes to pass saying, 'Let us go after gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them'" (vs 1-2). And that applies back to Deut. 12:32; 'don't add to or take away from.

That applies today, when they say, 'Well, you don't need to do the Old Testament. That's all been done away.' And it's interesting that the Protestants have it this way. I really did not know the severity of it and how they hook people into it. They believe in Jesus and forgiveness of sin. Fine, that's well and good. They believe in Christmas because Jesus was born then. They believe in Easter because that commemorates the resurrection. And everything else is grace, so all of the religious arguments beyond that we just ignore. So you talk about slicing and dicing the Scriptures! 'But it's so pleasant, it's so easy.' Isn't that nice.

Like the man I mentioned here I think it was last week, he was doing good works and helping the poor and taking care of widows and things like that. Then I asked him, 'Well, what do you think about the first commandment, second commandment, third commandment?' When Ι hit the fourth commandment, he said, 'Not getting into that argument.' And, of course, we need a church where we don't have arguments—right? So we just ignore it and we don't need to do it, and isn't that wonderful, we can all get along. Well, that's what it's talking about here.

"...'Let us go after gods, which you have not known, and let us serve them.' You shall not hearken to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.... [That's why those things come along. Just like it said there when we talked about Hezekiah when God said that He left him to 'prove what was in his heart.'] ...You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him" (vs 2-4). Then they were to take that prophet and dreamer of dreams and go out and eliminate them.

Today, as we have covered before, the New Covenant does not have the *administration of death*. The greatest enforcement that the Church has

spiritually is disfellowshipment or expulsion from the congregation. They cannot kill, they cannot murder, they cannot execute, they cannot throw in prison, they cannot bind them in stocks, they cannot put them in dark rooms to correct them, and all that sort of thing. *No!* The greatest thing we have is the Word of God to correct us. We have to be self-correcting as led with the Holy Spirit of God.

1-Corinthians 11 is very interesting, because they had a dispute over keeping the Passover. Just like today, as I gave *Passover 101*, this man has come out of Protestantism and he doesn't know anything about the Passover. We just published the new Passover book and he was reading it and he came to church and asked me the question. 'Well, can you give me a quick Passover 101? How come you have so much in the Passover book?' I said, because those are as many questions as we know about today concerning the Passover and all the difficulties surrounding it. Because the world and Satan cannot let people know the Truth of the Passover. That would put them in direct contact with Jesus Christ and God the Father. So people say it's unimportant, we don't need to. And what they're doing is piling on a lot of 'skubalon' and that's normally called manure or dung.

So it was happening in Paul's day. Now they had contentions here, 1-Corinthians 11:17: "Now in this that I am commanding you, I do not praise you, because when you assemble together, it is not for the better but for the worse.... [Some people have said, 'Well, I was in a good mood until I went to church.' Sounds like that's still going on today.] ...For first of all, I hear that there are divisions among you when you are assembled together in the Church, and I partly believe it.... [v 19 this ties exactly in with what we read in Deut. 13]: ...For it is necessary that heresies be among you... [They're going to spring up. How are they going to handle it? What are you going to do with it?] ...so that the ones who are approved may become manifest among you" (vs 17-19).

You need to use that as a guide. Where is the Truth really being spoken? And also it does this, it also puts the burden upon the individual member coming to church who is responsible for what he hears, and if he or she hears something that's contrary to the Word of God, you go up and ask the minister, 'What about this?' That's the way that heresy comes in. And what is the whole theme of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? 'A little leaven leavens the whole lump.' Isn't it interesting the way that the Holy Days and Passover are designed?

Just a quick review: The Passover comes first and is not a Holy Day because of everything that was done on that day. And that was part of the work of the Lord that He had to go through it to die.

But also before you come in contact with the true God you must go through Christ. Isn't that what He said? That's why it comes first. That's why the Christian Passover with Christ being our Passover and our sacrifice comes first. Why? Your sins must be forgiven first!—right? Yes! Then what immediately follows that is what? The Feast of Unleavened Bread! And that is what? How to get sin out of your life spiritually—true? Yes! God's way follows along in the progression that it should. Then you have seven weeks to Pentecost, which then are the weeks where you grow and overcome, showing your lifetime as it were until the resurrection at Pentecost. That takes care of the Church.

Then along comes Trumpets and Atonement and Tabernacles and this shows us that the true Kingdom of God must come from heaven. Christ must return, set it up on the earth, get rid of Satan the devil, and establish the Kingdom of God in the millennium, and we have been trained to become part of that. So God has a plan. Then you have the Last Great Day. What is God going to do with all of those that He never called? Well, different religions would have them burning in hell forever. God says, 'No, the dead know nothing. I'm going to resurrect them and give them an opportunity for salvation that they never had in their first life.' Now how's that for love? How's that for a plan? So heresies must come up so that we are all going to be on guard.

Let's come back to Deuteronomy 28; let's see some more of the 'if' clauses. I covered some of these recently on Church at Home showing what's going on in the nation and I actually did six Church at Home reading through it. It worked out better reading half-hour segments, covering it in half-hour segments, because Deut. 28 is really one of the—when you get into the curses, boy, that's heavy reading, heavy, heavy reading. It's hard to take all at once, so we're not going to cover any more here than just the 'if' clauses to show that God gives us the choice. What are we going to do?

Deuteronomy 28:1: "And it shall come to pass, IF you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God... [How many times have we read that? We are to hearken diligently!] ...to observe and to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth." You might think about that when you read the Constitution of the United States and how they started out. This nation came closer than any nation in the entire history of mankind to base everything they did on God.

They didn't have all the knowledge that we have today, but they had all the knowledge of all the corrupt kings and the knowledge of civilizations in

the past, and they understood certain basic things that people must be ruled by God and they must choose individually. Collectively, the people should have enough sense by studying and reading the Bible to be able to have a government that would be limited over them. But the mistake has been that the Constitution, as good as it is, can never replace the Word of God. If you have people who leave the principles of the Bible and the Word of God, you're going to end up with a giant mess, like we have today, where they take the freedom of religion; that was their big mistake. It should have been the true worship of God. Now what was produced was better than anything else up to that point, because it was based mainly on the Word of God, some trust in Christ, etc.

But here is the thing, v 1: "...if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth.... [God put us there because of His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We're going to see we didn't do it, so now He's taking us down.] ...And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you IF you will obey the voice of the LORD your God" (vs 1-2). Then He lists all the blessings. Everyone loves to have all the blessings.

He sums it up here in v 13; again the 'if' clause. Human nature is the variable in it. God is not the variable. God is 'the same yesterday, today, and forever.' God cannot lie! God gave His promises. And even in the things that we saw, even like concerning David, even though David sinned very grievously, God didn't change His promise, because His Word is true—right? Yes!

Verse 13: "And the LORD shall make you the head, and not the tail. And you shall be always above, and you shall not be beneath, **IF** you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today, to observe and to do them. And you shall not go aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right hand or the left, to go after other gods to serve them" (vs 13-14). And isn't it amazing how many times in the Bible does it say, 'Don't go after other gods to serve them,' and yet, what is the first thing that people do? *Go after other gods to serve them*—right? So that shows you what human nature is like.

Now v 15 another 'if' clause: "And it shall come to pass, <u>IF</u> you will not hearken to the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you." And then, boy, is it a big heavy-duty dirge reading all the rest of Deut. 28! So I'll leave that up to you to read. You might have to take it in

several sessions, because it's pretty heavy. Toward the end it gets into sickness and plague and calamity and cannibalism, and all that sort of thing.

Verse 58, after talking about the siege of the enemy within. I'll have something to say about that after the Feast of Tabernacles. Just to give you something to think on: How many Islamic mosques are in the United States of America? And they present a great problem. All you have to do is look at England. There are 2300! That's to say nothing of other elements that could rise up and be an army. And remember the curses in Lev.26. He said, 'If you keep My commandments, five of you shall chase a thousand and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand.' But the curse is, 'If you don't obey Me, five will chase a thousand of you, and a hundred will take care of ten thousand of you.' So it doesn't have to be a great invading army.

Look at the great army that we have in Afghanistan. What is it? Five chase a hundred—right? A hundred go after five? And they kill them and another one rises up and they kill them and another one rises up. You can't take care of God's business yourself by going to war and fighting unless you return to God first. Can God take care of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and all of them? Oh, yeah, He sure can! What are some of the weapons that God has? Well, He already showed it in Pakistan—a great flood, great earthquakes—right? He could make them fight against themselves—couldn't He?

Remember what happened when Hezekiah went in and prayed and asked God to fight the battle for him? He said, 'Okay, I'm going to fight for Jerusalem for My name's sake.' The whole 185,000 of the army of the Assyrians fought against each other and killed each other and they were dead! So they went in the morning to go to battle—no army! Isn't that a better super-secret weapon that all the bombs in the world? *Yes!* God can take care of Iran and little Hitler running around there. Let one of their bombs explode while they put it on a rocket. That'll take care of them.

I feel sorry for the Jews. They're going to learn their only recourse is not trying to make peace with those who hate you, but you better make peace with God and you better make peace with Christ and you better quit your rejecting of Jesus Christ. Yes, reject some of the Christian religions that you see. Absolutely! But if you're a Jew you better read Zech. 12, God is yet going to fight for Jerusalem but only when there is a great repentance by the people there. God is not going to do it just because we desire it. So it's something here!

Verse 58: "**IF** you will not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name,

the LORD YOUR GOD, then the LORD will make your plagues extraordinary, and the plagues of your seed great and persistent plagues with evil and long-lasting sickness. Also, He will bring on you all the diseases of Egypt of which you were afraid. And they shall cling to you. Also, every sickness and every plague, which *is* not written in the book of this law, the LORD will bring them upon you until you are destroyed. And you shall be left few in number..." (vs 58-62).

Look at the number of diseases that there are today. They're not listed here; if you watch any television, all of the drugs and things that they have. How did we get this way? *Because we left God!* And what happened? We let the multi-national companies begin to genetically modify the food so our food is not food. And to give us medicines to take care of it, because we're not seeking God. All of those things. So He says there that He will hear them if they get into captivity.

Deuteronomy 30:1: "And it shall be when all these things have come on you the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and when you shall call *them* to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, And shall return to the LORD your God and shall obey His voice according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, **then** the LORD your God will turn *away* your captivity. And He will have compassion on you, and will return and gather you from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you" (vs 1-3). He said even if you're out in the heavens. Well, we know how that can happen today—right? *Yes!*

So then He says He's going to make it easy for you. That has to do with the Bible. I want to especially bring this up today. All of us have the Word of God today. Never has any generation ever had it like we have it. We have the Bible. We have it audio, we have it video, we have it digital-right? You can put it on your cell phone. You can put it in your iPod. You can plug into your ears and you can listen to it as you go along, or you can plug it into your ears and you can be all hyped on all of the satanic music that's around. Never before! And it's interesting how that human nature is so dangerous when everything is going well. Remember that, because you become complacent in many different areas; so likewise with the Word of God. The only way you're going to get the washing of the Word of God to have your mind cleansed is to study it. That includes every minister and elder and teacher, because you can't teach and you can't preach and you can't do it by just going back and using your same old notes that you've used for fifty years. That'll never do!

God says, 'I'm going to make it easy for you.' Verse 10: "IF you shall obey the voice of the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, and IF you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.... [Always there is repentance and God will honor repentance according to the degree of knowledge that you have. That's why I think there is hope for the United States for the time being.] ...For this commandment which I command you today is not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that you should say, 'Who's shall go up to heaven for us, and bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea that you should say, 'Who shall go over the sea for us to bring it to us, so that we may hear it and do it?' But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, so that you may do it" (vs 10-14). Meaning it's in a language you can understand and it's not difficult to understand if you're willing.

"Behold I have set before you this day life and good, and death and evil... [That's every day. Remember what I said. You're only a breath away from death.] ...In that I command you this day to love the LORD your God... [How many times God says love Him? Do you love Him with all your heart and mind and soul and being and that's where it's supposed to be with all of us—correct? *Yes!*] ...to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it" (vs 15-16).

- We have a greater land to possess—don't we?
- We have the Kingdom of God to possess—don't we?
- We have an inheritance that's better than that—don't we?

It's eternal! And the ultimate is going to be what? New Jerusalem, living for all eternity! And if you think God has a good plan now, wait until He unveils His plan when we're all spirit beings and New Jerusalem is here on the earth. And says, 'All My children, here is My plan.' Whoa! That's going to be something—isn't it? Yes, indeed!

Verse 17: "But **IF** your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them.... [Notice how many times the *if* and the *when*, and the *if* and the *then* clauses always has to do with obeying God or other gods—which is what? *The first commandment*—correct? *Yes!*] ...I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it.... [In our case, *spiritually*,

we won't be there.] (So here's the record. God uses things that are obvious, that everybody understands): ...I call heaven and earth to record this day against vou..." (vs 17-19). Heaven and earth are here. We enjoy looking at the beautiful earth. We enjoy looking at the heavens. We enjoy everything that is here—right?—all the food and everything. Just before we came down here to services, Dolores and I had a wonderful white peach nectarine, just so sweet it just melts in your mouth. And God made that. I can't help but think every time I squeeze some juice from a lemon or an orange or cut a peach there's a little stem. That little stem on that nectarine, that's how long it was and it was attached to the tree. And look what came of it! Little things can produce wonderful things because of God. Heaven and earth, that's a witness, can't miss it. As soon as you walk out of here you're going to see it right?

"...blessing and cursing. Therefore, choose life, so that both you and your seed may live. That you <u>may</u> love the LORD your God, and <u>may</u> obey His voice, and <u>may</u> cleave to Him... [Conditional: may obey His voice; may cleave to Him.] ...for He is your life and the length of your days... [Spiritually He is our life and eternal life—correct? Yes!] ...so that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers—to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob—to give to them" (vs 19-20). And the ultimate is the Kingdom of God.

These *if* clauses are very important. So remember: *if*, *when*, and *then*; and remember the witness—*heaven and earth*.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 11:1-2, 11-17
- 2) Deuteronomy 12:28-32
- 3) Deuteronomy 13:1-4
- 4) 1-Corinthians 11:17-19
- 5) Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 13-15, 58-62
- 6) Deuteronomy 30: 1-3, 10-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 4:7
- John 12:42-50
- Jeremiah 7
- Leviticus 26
- Zechariah 12

Also referenced:

- Sermon: *Passover 101*
- Sermon Series: God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping
- Book: The Christian Passover by Fred R. Coulter

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