

INSIDE: OUTREACH PLANS TO RUSSIA AND ISRAEL › ISRAELI SEEKERS IN
NEW ZEALAND › HOW JOAN SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST

REACHING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

WITH THE
MESSAGE OF MESSIAH



Celebrate MESSIAH

Volume 19, Issue 1, April 2013

In Partnership with Chosen People Global Ministries

Holocaust Survivors



Dear Friend,

Shalom and blessings to you in Messiah Yeshua. I can't tell you how much of a joy it is to reach out to Holocaust Survivors and to other elderly Jewish people. Each time we host a special lunch for our Russian Jewish outreach, I am humbled by the privilege of loving, serving and sharing with these beautiful people.

Just recently, during the Passover week, we hosted a Seder for over 60 Russian Jews at Beit HaMashiach in Caulfield. Our team led by Rita Ivenskis worked really hard in preparing for the Passover Seder, paying attention to every minute detail.

A beautiful banquet was laid out and the people began to arrive by buses we had hired from the council.

One lady, Natasha, told me the story of when she was a little child back in the Soviet Union days under the communist regime: "I remember having Passover with my grandparents," she recalls. "It was illegal for us to celebrate anything Jewish, and so my grandparents would have to hide the matzot (unleavened bread) away in fear of being caught by the KGB or being spied upon by neighbours. But I still remember the smells of the food and the joy in the family as we sat down to tell the Passover story."

Natasha had a big smile on her face as she sat down at our Passover Seder, together with a host of other elderly Russian Jews.

All of them have stories to tell. Most of them are Holocaust Survivors who have seen humanity at its worst. They may not have been in the death camps of Auschwitz or Bergen Belsen, but they survived by

hiding away in the forests of Belarus or by fleeing further and further into Siberia. Some escaped the massacre at Babi Yar and others escaped by being shipped off into Soviet work camps. Each of them saw the horrors of the Nazi death machine in their own way as it made its way into Russia.

Since these folk are not officially recognised as Holocaust Survivors, and are not entitled to compensation payments, many of them live in a permanent state of need, right here in Melbourne.

As a ministry, we have had the privilege of distributing food parcels to many of these people and Rita and her team work tirelessly ministering to their spiritual needs. Many of them have come to faith in Yeshua as the Messiah over the past few years.

At the Passover Seder, I had the privilege of welcoming them. I pointed out that today we would be telling the story of the deliverance of the Jewish slaves out of Egypt almost 4000 years ago. I also said that the story of Passover had been repeated a number of times in different ways over the centuries. As Russian Jews they had experienced their own personal Passover as they were delivered from the Nazis as well as from the Communist regime, and now have the freedom of celebrating Passover in Australia. I added, "And today, many of you have experienced a spiritual Passover in your life as you have come to faith in Yeshua our Passover Lamb who has been sacrificed for us. Today, you experience the complete Passover story from Egypt all the way to Golgatha..."

As we reach out to these Holocaust Survivors and other elderly Jews, we realise that time is short. There is a sense of urgency in letting our Jewish people know the simple message that God loves them and has sent Yeshua the Messiah as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

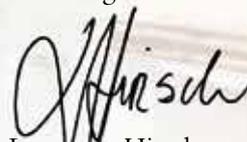
Love needs to be demonstrated though. The volunteers that help this vital ministry are amazing people that shine forth the love of God. We are so grateful to them.

We are also so grateful to those, like yourself, who support Your Mission to the Jewish people. Without your support we will not be able to reach out to our Jewish people with the love of Messiah.

In this newsletter you will read about the many and varied ways we are sharing the Gospel both locally here in Australia and abroad in places like New Zealand, Russia and Israel. Later this year, we will be taking another mission trip to Israel and then also to the "forgotten Jews of Far East Russia."

Your support for Celebrate Messiah is much appreciated at this time. Through your support, our outreach workers are empowered to do the work of "bringing the Message to the Original Messengers." Thank you for standing with us in prayer and in financial support.

Yours together for the salvation of Israel,



Lawrence Hirsch



Far East Russia

PLEASE PRAY:

- ✧ That the Lord will go before us; also for wisdom and discernment.
- ✧ For the Jewish leaders in Khabarovsk and Birobidzhan, and also for our missionaries in Artyom, Blagoveshchensk and Komsomolsk on Amur.
- ✧ Our health and safety whilst travelling; also for our families back home.
- ✧ That the will of our Heavenly Father will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- ✧ Financial support regarding this mission trip.



Celebrate Messiah missionaries

Lawrence Hirsch and Rita Ivenskis will be leading a team to Far East Russia . . .

Celebrate Messiah started the work in Far-East Russia in September, 2004. Since the fall of Communism in the early 1990s many Jewish people began to leave to make aliyah to Israel. Yet there are still a large number of Jewish people living in Far-East Russia, scattered in many small towns and cities like Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, Birobidzhan and Artyom.

Since pioneering this work in Far-East Russia, Siberia and the Ural Mountains, Celebrate Messiah has helped establish outreaches in Artyom, Vladivostok, and Komsomolsk on Amur. A mission team from Celebrate Messiah will be travelling in August to Far-East Russia to encourage and equip them with their work. The team will be flying from Melbourne to Hong Kong and then on to Korea. From Seoul we will be flying to Vladivostok. We will be meeting up with our missionaries Nikolay and his wife Natasha, from Artyom. The next day we will have a Shabbat service with the Jewish community in Vladivostok, and meet up with our friend Yuri who is our leader of the Jewish community. Then the following day on Saturday we will have a Shabbat service in Artyom with our newly-birthed congregation which now has about 40-60 people, led by Nikolay and Natasha. The next day we have a meeting in a big Vladivostok church. On Monday, we will visit Jewish families and hopefully be able to see the beauty of the Amur River. On Tuesday, we will fly to Khabarovsk and meet up with the Jewish community leader and his wife. We have known that couple for many years now, and we will see what work the Lord has for us in order to help them. We would also like to visit a few synagogues in Khabarovsk, and in addition we are hoping to meet up with young Jewish people who live there.

From Khabarovsk we travel by train to Birobidzhan, which is a Jewish autonomous region. We hope to visit local synagogues and some Jewish families who are known to us. We would also like to visit orphanages as well as Jewish kindergartens. We will be inviting missionaries Rina and Zhenia from Blagoveshchensk and Nadia from Komsomolsk on Amur, and we will be having a time of fellowship as well as a teaching seminar. From Birobidzhan by train we will travel back to Vladivostok, and from there we will fly back home to Melbourne.

New Zealand

**Scott Brown thought he had the greatest job in the world as a Messianic pastor in the U.S.
But then he moved his family to New Zealand . . .**



I love my job.

Oh, I know that missionaries are typically reporting on the rigors and challenges inherent in their duties. But if I would be perfectly honest, there is so much glory and wonder and joy to be had in the work we are doing here in New Zealand, it's hard to quench the excitement.

Take, for example, our most recent BBQ outreach. Backpackers from 10 nations showed up, and as usual, instant community formed. Just as everyone settled in with burgers in hand, I launched into this week's mini-message, which focused on reasons to believe why the Bible is the world's most current, most personally relevant, and most vitally important literature my guests would ever read...or their money back! (Not such a great deal, since our burgers and Bibles are free to them.)

As is most often the case, our international crowd gladly received Bibles and other gospel literature after "the talk". But what made this event special was the spontaneous line that formed, not to glean *bangers* from the grill (Google it) but wisdom from God. Some of these young seekers were so hungry for spiritual food that they queued up to ask questions about faith, spirituality and Jesus.

As the line shortened and finally dispersed, I noticed one of my new backpacker friends waiting in the

wings, motioning me to come over to speak with him privately. Behind the piercings, tats and marijuana paraphernalia hanging from Chris's neck was an aching heart. "I want to believe what you believe. I know this is what I need, but I don't want to fake it", he said passionately. I told him how much I respected his honesty, and informed him that faith is a gift that God gives to those who have a true desire to know Him (Eph 2:8,9). "Why don't we ask God to give you the faith to trust Him?", I asked. With childlike innocence and enthusiasm Chris joined me in prayer, after which he rushed to our resource table to do a bit of grazing.

I re-joined our other guests whose religious heritages ranged from Jewish and Moslem to Catholic and New Age, and whose stories all contained the element of quest. After another hour of lively conversation, we packed up our Bar-B Box (ministry trailer) and dispensed our traditional pre-departure hugs & handshakes. It was then that Chris resurfaced with his new Bible and other gospel-related literature in hand, grinning ear to ear. "Hey, thanks for the prayer" he said with a wink. "I've got some reading to do."

When we rolled back onto our campground, two new groups of Israeli travellers had pulled in just before us. Happily, another Israeli happened to pull in as well: My

beloved ministry partner, Zohar, whose ability to connect with fellow Israelis evangelistically far exceeds mine because of his command of the Hebrew language. Zohar's conversation with one of our new guests, a lawyer by profession, was so compelling that the next morning, when I offered her a Hebrew New Testament, she nearly pulled it out of my hand and said "THAT's exactly what I want! I can't wait to read it!" Like the 160 Israeli guests at our campground who preceded her this year, this dear bat tzion (daughter of Zion) would not leave our oasis without being refreshed by God's Word and God's Spirit. Like I said – I love my job.



Joan Kirsten

Joan's path directed by faith in Messiah Yeshua

I began life in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II because my mother wanted to be with her mother and my father could smuggle her in. I was born on the kitchen table and my love of cooking, and anything to do with food, began then.

I was smuggled out by being stuffed into the pouch on the side of my father's bicycle.

In order that I would be quiet, my father and his friends anaesthetised me, but they didn't know how much to give me and so they didn't know if I would survive or not. I did.

When my mother had been shot by the Nazis, my father came home that night, expecting to find two dead bodies, but instead there I was crawling amongst the other dead bodies and I was playing with my mother's 'bust halter'. Nobody was there, so we could only guess that at some point in the interrogations that went on, my mother must have taken it off and wrapped it around me.

I was 11 months old when she was killed.

Much later my father had a job at a saw mill near Radom where he had a secret compartment in the floor where he hid Jews until he was able to obtain false passports for them.

My aunt and uncle were brought there from another town. My aunt was to care for me, and my uncle was given a job at the saw mill but they were not aware of the work that my father was doing through the Resistance because he didn't want them to be implicated in any way should he be found out. Life at the saw mill went along as normal as possible till I was almost 3 years old.

One day there was a knock at the door and three Nazi officers were standing outside when the door was opened. Someone had reported that strange things were going on at the mill.

My father was arrested and taken to the local police station for questioning, and three days later they arrested my aunt and uncle. My aunt ended up in Auschwitz and always blamed my father for everything that she experienced.

My uncle and my father were eventually sent to Dachau where in the exercise yards the men all memorised the atrocities that the Nazi's committed, and the numbers on their lapels or hats, in the hope that if they ever got out of there, they could tell the world what had gone on.

Where was I during all these happenings?

We lived in a two-roomed apartment at the saw mill, and I was asleep and as the officers didn't ask for me, my aunt thought I would be safer if I were left behind. She was right. I remember screaming when I woke up and nobody



My Testimony

came for a long time. Eventually I was heard by the neighbours and risking their lives, they looked after me. They were Gentiles.

One day a Nazi Officer came to the flats and asked for me. He took me quite a long way to a Catholic orphanage and although I was officially too young, they accepted me. I found out when I was there last October, that all the nuns thought I was his own child.

How did a Jewish girl come to believe that Yeshua took all her sins away when He died at Calvary? I was not brought up in a religious home because the people who adopted me and brought me to Australia did not believe anything. They told me that science could explain everything, and the people who wrote the Old Testament were very clever and all they wanted was control of the people.

A lady who had gone to Burwood Teachers College with me was very patient and she answered all my questions, and believe me, I had many. I was one of those Jews who believed that Yeshua lived his life in such a way that it all fitted in with scripture, so I was surprised to come across many occasions where he had no control over the situation. For example, the barter for his garments at the cross.

I had a huge decision to make. Either Yeshua was the biggest liar and hypocrite that ever walked the earth or he was who he claimed to be: my Messiah.

My life verse is Proverbs 3:5&6, Trust in The Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths.

Joan is a much appreciated long-term Board member of Celebrate Messiah.

NEWS BRIEFS

SEDEERS PROVE A BLESSING TO MULTITUDES

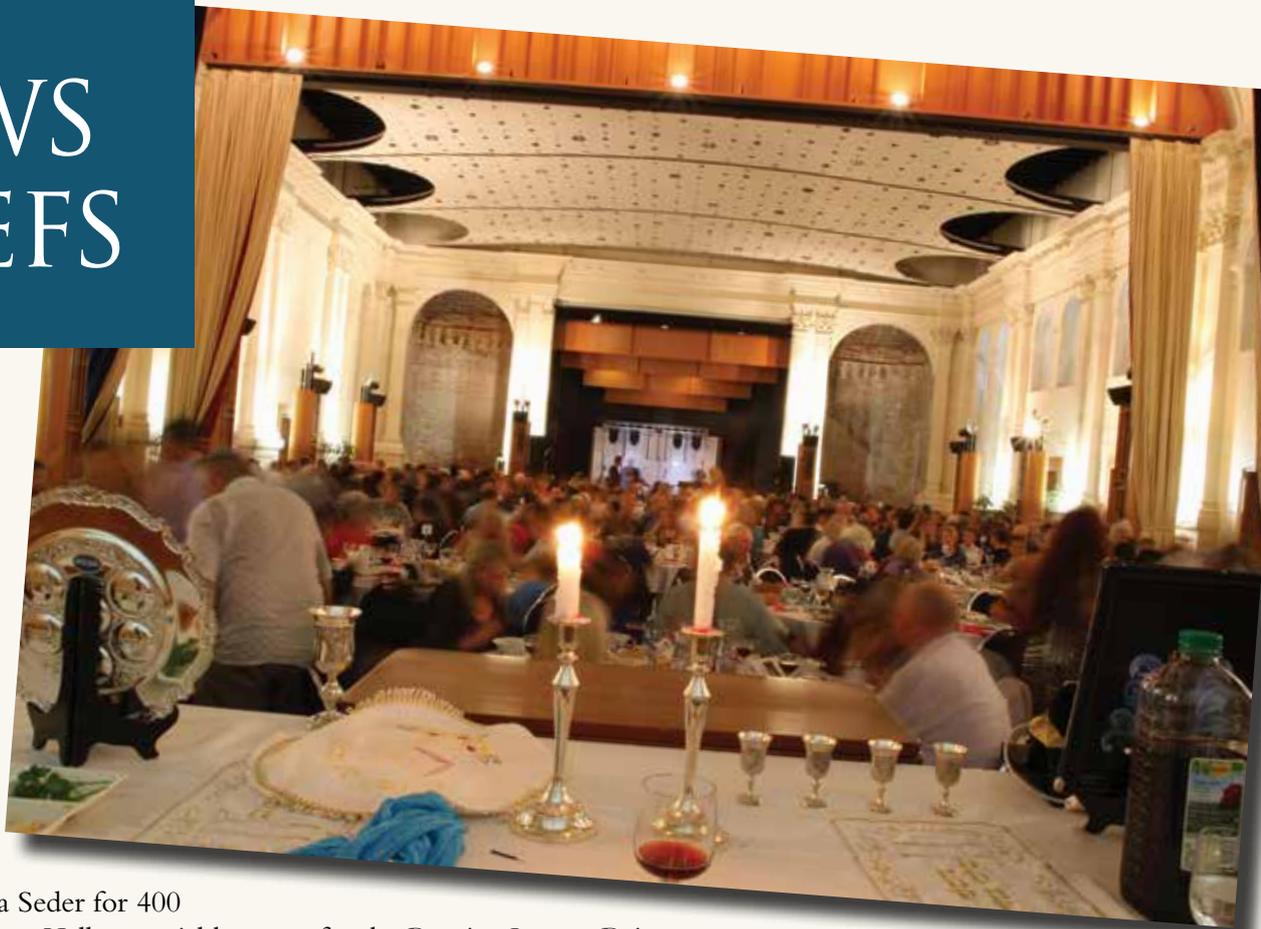
More than 800 people were blessed by community Passover Seders held in Melbourne, Sydney and the Sunshine Coast.

Rabbi Lawrence led a Seder for 400

people at St Kilda Town Hall, a special banquet for the Russian Jews at Beit

HaMashiach, and with help from Paul and Susanna Becker a Seder for more than 250 at the Big Pineapple near

Noosa. Sydney also hosted a well-attended Messianic Passover Banquet, and the NSW staff have led many Messiah in the Passover presentations and meal outreaches in NSW & ACT. Some fellowships have already planned for next year.



PASSOVER PACKAGE BRINGS JOY TO JACK'S WORLD

A Perth student has told how receiving a Tikkun Olam (Repairing the World) package has brightened his world. "This was a very happy occasion, because as a poor student, the holidays would have been pretty lacking," said Jack*. Barry's team of volunteers has distributed around 100 food packages this Passover.

RUSKIES RECEIVE YESHUA IN RESPONSE TO LOVE

Our Russian worker Rita praises the Lord that He is doing amazing work among the Russian Jews in Melbourne. The volunteer teams are able to visit hospitals, nursing homes and people in their own homes, and the Lord has opened their hearts with so many of them receiving Yeshua as their Lord and Saviour.

The third Wednesday of each month, the Dom Missie congregation organises a service and lunch for the elderly in our Messianic community. At the last service lunch, we rejoiced that three ladies accepted Lord Yeshua as their Messiah. We give thanks to the Lord for our volunteer team, who give their hearts and their time to help with this work to love the Jewish people with Yeshua's love.

SYDNEY ACTIVE IN EVENTS TO RAISE BANNER OF MESSIAH

Sydney Celebrate Messiah held a well-attended Purim party in February complete with an ad hoc costumed Purim play demonstrating the events of the Book of Esther and Bible study on the rescue God provides through Yeshua.

Several of the Sydney young adults attended Muchan: the international young adult Messianic conference at the end of last year. They reported on the size of French crepes and other wonders of Paris, and especially how they now are more confident and motivated to share their faith as a result of attending the conference.

CENTURION'S RUN FUNDRAISER POSTPONED

The 36-hour run around Port Phillip Bay led by Norman Frazer from the Beit HaMashiach congregation has been postponed till 25-27 October 2013. This will allow a longer preparation for the runners as well as behind the scenes organisation and promotional campaign. The run will raise funds for the Caulfield Messianic Centre Project.

**not his real name*

Outreach Israel



Celebrate Messiah's young adults pastor Jay will lead a team of 10 on a hands-on mission trip to Israel in July . . .

We are excited to be sending off a team of young adults on Outreach Israel 2013. A wonderful team made up of nine Aussies and one American for two weeks at the beginning of July. This is a fantastic time in Israel, because it's the start of the summer holidays and there's a real festive mood in the air. Several of the ministries that had the team from February last year have invited us back to work with them.

Outreach Israel is a mission trip that's really a sampling plate for young adults to whet their appetite for Jewish ministry. We also see it as an emissary from Australia to the believers who are serving the Lord in Israel. The team will serve Messianic and Arabic ministries, and rub shoulders with young Israelis, serve the poor, pray and worship in prayer houses, encourage the local believers, share Yeshua, and experience the Land. We'll stay in hostels and prepare our own meals. We go to serve and so try our best to be totally self-sufficient and not a burden on any of the ministries.

As many of the team are still students, we try to keep costs low. Most of the team have to raise their funds. The two weeks cost \$1700 plus airfare. Each individual is not only encouraged to raise their funds, but also to raise extra to sow into the ministries we serve with. Last year, we were able to bring \$3500 with us to bless the ministries. We



worked in more than half a dozen ministries in our short time there, and so many people were blessed.

There are quite a few ways you can get involved. We'll be sending out newsletters like we did last year throughout our trip.



We would love a prayer team to support us up to and throughout our time in Israel. Israel can be quite volatile at times, and we need all the prayer support we can get. And we would appreciate any financial help too. To receive more information, support us with prayer or finances, or to receive the on-tour newsletter, please email outreachisreal@celebratemessiah.com.au

Simcha* 2013 – a global extravaganza

Chosen People Global Ministries will be holding its international conference in Melbourne to coincide with Simcha, and so representatives from 16 member countries will be joining us at the Phillip Island Adventure Resort from Friday 6 December to Sunday 8 December 2013.

Hear excellent Bible teaching from messianic leaders, pray for revival amongst Jewish people in Australia and around the world, enjoy Messianic worship in music and dance.

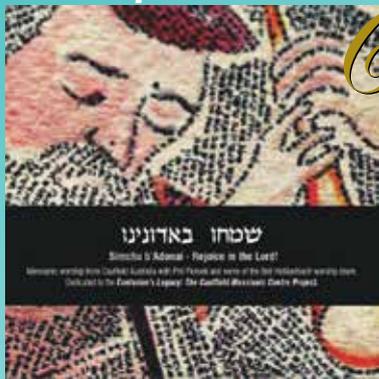
Book early to avoid disappointment.

Celebrate a special Simcha* conference this year with an extravaganza of messianic speakers from around the world.

**Simcha is a Hebrew word meaning a joyous*

Simcha 2013

Phil's New CD Prompts Us to "Rejoice in the Lord!"



THE Centurion's Legacy

The Caulfield
Messianic Centre Project

Melbourne's
messianic music
maestro Phil Plotnek
so loves the messiah
of Israel that he's
dedicated his latest

CD to the new Caulfield Messianic Centre Project.

Simcha b'Adonai - Rejoice in the Lord!

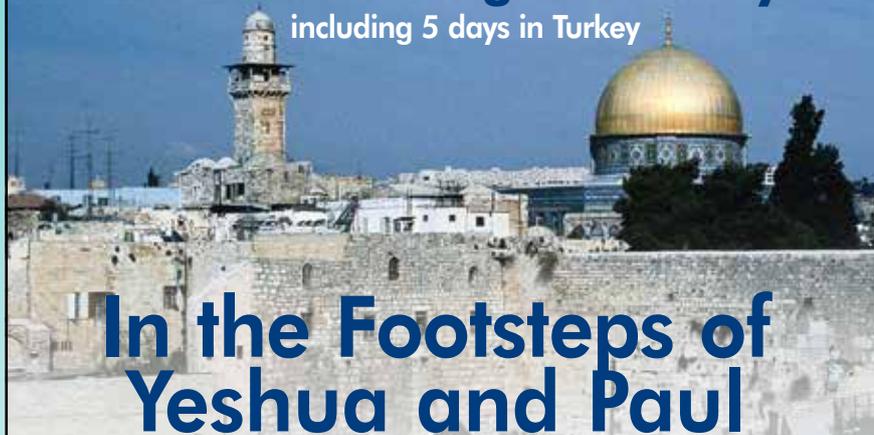
comprises 15 tracks of mostly original songs. Phil is joined by members of the Beit HaMashiach Messianic Congregation worship team, and his daughter, Emilea-Jayde, is a special guest singer on *God is my Refuge*. Phil's late father Joseph was an evangelist and Jewish missionary who dreamed about having a messianic centre in the heart of the Jewish community in Melbourne. "...it is obvious now that God was the master visionary all along, and determined the time for now," says Phil.

The CD is now available for \$25.

Go to Celebrate Messiah's online store at www.celebratemessiah.com.au/store or phone the Celebrate Messiah office on 03 9563 5544.

Proceeds from the sale of the CD will go to the project.

19 October - 9 November 2013 See Israel Through Jewish Eyes including 5 days in Turkey



In the Footsteps of Yeshua and Paul

This unique 3-week tour will include hands on ministry while following in the footsteps of Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah and Paul the Apostle. Your tour hosts Barry Buirski and Mark Polonsky are Jewish believers in Yeshua and, together with qualified messianic Jewish tour guides, will help you see Israel through Jewish eyes. The tour is presented by Celebrate Messiah and operated by Inner Faith Travel.

The **See Israel Through Jewish Eyes** tour will feature:

- **ISRAEL:** Haifa, Jerusalem, Jordan Valley, Masada, the Dead Sea, and the Sea of Galilee
- **TURKEY:** Istanbul, Troy, Pergamom, Smyrna, and Philadelphia

For more details or to apply please contact:
Inner Faith Travel, 20 Grandview Tce, TALLAI, QLD 4213
Phone: 07 5530 2900 toll free 1800 074 426
email: holyland@ift.net.au



Celebrate MESSIAH "Bringing the Message to the Original Messengers"

Serving together with Chosen People Ministries in: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, England, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, United States.

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