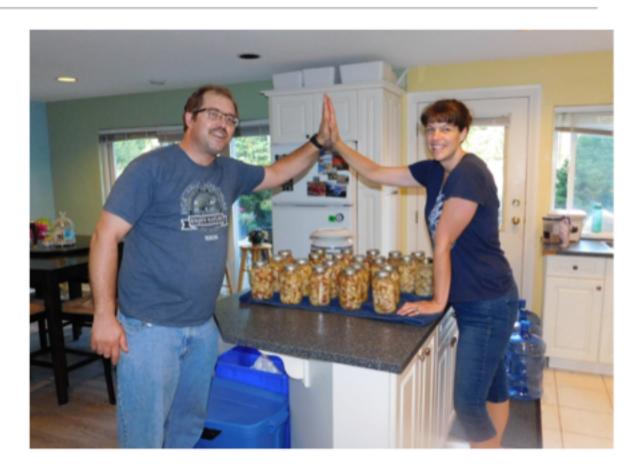
THE STORMRIDER MAGAZINE

ISSUE 5



FREEDOM AND COUNTRY LIVING

THE STORMRIDER MAGAZINE ISSUE 5

Hello, and welcome to the Stormrider Magazine Issue 5. In our farming section of this issue Ramona will be sharing on the topic of canning. In this one I would like to share with you the first in a series of prayers of my own for revival. My hopes are that it will stir you up to pray as well. I would also like to discuss Free Will Theism and I invite your comments to what I



have written. By all means visit our websites: https:// hobbyhomesteadingprepper.ca

http://www.zionchristianministry.com

http://freedomandsocialorder.com

https://seriousrv.ca

God bless you! Shawn Stevens

I want to express in the clearest language possible that all statements made in this magazine are meant to be taken not in malice towards any identifiable people group but rather as discussion on issues of public interest, for public benefit, in good faith. I believe that my views on the issues contained here are also consistent with our faith beliefs which are contained in our statement of faith which can be viewed on our websites. Whether you agree or disagree with what I have stated here we bless you. My articles are meant to be read with an open mind. By reading these articles you may find material that you find objectionable. By viewing the material, or any part of the material, printed in this magazine, and any part of the magazine and its pages, you agree to wave any legal or equitable rights

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Shawn Stevens

CANNING

The old school has become new school. If you're like me you grew up with a mom who did lots of canning. At the time I didn't pay much attention except to enjoy the fruits of her labor. Now, some thirty years later, my husband and I are canning together. Canning is a great way to preserve fruit, vegetables, pickles, meats, jam, salsa and soup. In this article, I will talk about peaches and potatoes and how my husband and I go about canning ours. Improper canning can result in food going bad, which can lead to botulism. This is a serious health risk and we recommend that you follow the instructions of certified canners. We do not have certification and are simply sharing what we do when we can. There are two options in canning: a canning pot with a round jar rack or with using a pressure canner. Personally, I like to use a pressure canner so that is what will be shared here.

Ramona Stevens

Canning Peaches

Here is a list of things that we use:

Clean canning jars with lids and rings, (the rings can be reused but the lids need to be replaced every year)

Pressure canner with rubber sealing ring

2 Large mixing bowls

Spatula

1 Small pot and 1 medium pot

Paper towels

Canning jar lifter

Magnetic canning lid lifter

Apple juice (dilute with water if you desire less sweet. I do 1/2 juice to 1/2 water)

Cutting board

Paring knife

Canning funnel

Note: 1 litre = 1 quart or 2 pints

50 pounds of peaches fills about 15, 1 litre canning jars and requires about 7 litres of apple juice.

Process:

- 1.1) We preheat the oven to 90 degrees celsius and place our canning jars in the oven to warm without the lids and rings. Later, the jars will be placed in hot water so warming the jars first prevents them from cracking due to a sudden change in temperature.
- 2. We place the lids and rings in the small pot and pour water in to cover them. We place this on our stove top on medium heat to keep warm.
- 3. We fill our medium pot with apple juice and place it on our stove top on medium heat to keep it hot.
- 4. We fill our pressure canner with water to about 3 inches depth, then place our pressure canner on stove top on high heat.
- 5. We dip the peaches in boiling water for 30-60 seconds to loosen the skins. Then we dip the peaches in cold water and the peal slips off. Next, we cut the peaches into halves or quarters and remove the pit. We set the peaches aside in the mixing bowl.
- 6. Using our canning jar lifter, we remove one jar at a time from the oven and pack it with the sliced peaches.
- 7. We place the canning funnel on top of the jar and pour the apple juice in to cover the peaches, being careful to leave 1/2 inch head space.
- 8. With our spatula we push the peaches down to release air bubbles.
- We wipe the rim of the jar with a paper towel.

- 10. Using the magnetic lid lifter we remove a lid and ring from the hot water on the stove and seal the jar.
- 11. Using the canning jar lifter, we place our filled jar into the pressure canner.
- 12. We repeat till our canner is full, then seal the canner and adjust element heat as needed till the canner shows 6 pounds of pressure. We cook for 10 minutes.
- 13. After 10 minutes we move the pressure canner off the hot element. We carefully remove the pressure regulator to allow steam to escape and the canner to cool. Once the pressure has returned to zero, we safely remove the canner lid.
- 14. Using the canning jar lifter, we remove each jar and place it on top of a towel on our counter. We allow to cool completely before moving the jars to a desired location.

At first glance it looks complicated, but with a little practise, we found our groove and the reward has been delicious canned peaches that can last all year long. A jar of canned peaches can be used to make snacks, desserts or even given as a gift.

Ramona Stevens

Canning Potatoes

The list of items that we use is the same as for canning peaches except the liquid used to preserve, instead of

apple juice, is a combination of water, lemon juice and salt. The prep time for canning potatoes is shorter than that of canning peaches because potatoes don't need to be peeled. However, the cook time is longer.

The prep of jars, pressure cooker and lids will be the same as for peaches. In a medium pot, we heat water as the preserving liquid.

Process:

- Wash and dice potatoes in 1 inch pieces and set aside in a large bowl.
- 2. Using the canning jar lifter, we remove 1 jar at a time from the oven and pack with diced potatoes.
- 3. Place the canning jar funnel on top of the jar and pour boiling water to cover the potatoes, leaving 1/2 inch head space.
- 4. Add salt and lemon juice.
- 5. With our spatula, we push the potatoes down to release air bubbles.
- 6. Wipe the rim of the jar with a paper towel.
- ⁷. Seal the jar and use the canning jar lifter to place it in the pressure canner.
- 8. Repeat till the canner is filled and then place the lid on with the pressure regulator and adjust the element heat as needed till the canner shows 11 pounds of pressure. We cook for 40 minutes.
- 9. After 40 minutes we move the pressure canner off the hot element. We carefully remove the pressure regulator to allow steam to escape and the canner to cool. Once the pressure has returned to zero we safely remove the canner lid.

10. Using the canning jar lifter, we remove each jar and place on top of a towel on our counter. We allow to cool completely before moving the jars to desired location.

Ramona Stevens

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OUR SPIRITUAL HUNGER AND PRAYERS FOR REVIVAL

We come to You Jesus Who are above all, "... the eternally blessed God. ..." (see Ro 9:5 NKJ)

We rejoice in You God "... through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation." (see Ro 5:11 NKJ)

For of You and through You and to You are all things, to whom be glory forever. (see Ro 11:36 KJV)

We don't know how to pray LORD but just express our need of You. Will You turn to us and touch us. You are our potter and we are the clay.(see Isaiah 64:8) We believe that the touch of the Master's hand can change us into something beautiful for Your own glory and useful for Your own purposes.

God prepare us to be the Bride of Christ a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, holy and without blemish (see Eph 5:27 KJV)

We have read in Your word LORD that "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: ..." (Isiah 42:3 KJV) Will you heal this bruised reed and blow upon this smoking flax and upon these glowing coals and cause a fire to spring forth?

We cannot live by bread alone. We need Your word. (see Luke 4:4) We also need Your Spirit and we need Your fire.

Renew, restore, rebuild.

LORD You came to send fire on the earth, and how You wished it were already kindled! (see Luke 12:49 NKJ) Please send Your fire to the earth. We need Your fire here LORD. On earth, right here please.

You have called us to "... walk in newness of life." (see Ro 6:4 KJV) We reckon ourselves "... to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (see Ro 6:11NKJ)

We are living in dark times "... But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" (see Ro 5:20 KJV) You said of Your servant Abraham "who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, ..." (Ro 6:18NKJ) We choose to hope and believe. Send revival.

Help us to be spiritually minded which is life and peace. (see Ro 8:6 KJV).

Like all creation we grown and labour "... with birth pangs..." (see Ro 8:27 NKJ)

We take hope LORD; "... If God be for us, who can be against us?" (see Ro 8:31KJV) "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (see Ro 8:31-32KJV) We are asking for revival. We need personal revival. We need corporate revival. We need church revival. We need city-wide revival, We need nation-wide revival and beyond.

LORD we are knocking at Your door.

" Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

(Matt 7:7-8KJV)

We are knocking. We read it in Your word LORD. "O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy. (see Hab 3:2 KJV)

Enable us LORD to "... run through a troop;..." and to leap "... over a wall." (see PS 18:29 KJV) For Your purposes Lord.

It is our cry to You that we would "... not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (see Ro 12:21 NKJ)

We pray for Your Church that we would be "... not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient[a] in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;" (see Ro 12:10-12NKJ)

Keep us from being conformed to this world, but instead transformed by the renewing of our minds that we "...may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (see Ro 12:2 NKJ)

Help us to "... Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." (see Ro 12:9KJV)

May we be united and likeminded that we "... may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (see Ro 15:6NKJ)

LORD, will You crush satan under our feet (see Ro 16:20NKJ) and win great victories for Your own glory, through our lives, for Your own glory. "For to this end Christ died [a]and rose and lived again,

that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living." (see Ro 14:9NKJ) Be Lord of all. You must increase. We must decrease (See John 3:30)

Forgive us for thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought. You have given to each of us a measure of faith. (see Ro 12:3) Help and cause us to use that measure of faith for You. Cause Your Church; "... to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand:..." (see Ro 13:11-12 KJV) Help "... us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. ..." (see Ro 13:12 KJV)Help us to; "... put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts." (see Ro 13:14NKJ)

Shawn Stevens

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I Believe in Free Will Theism

John Locke taught that man's mind had two main faculties, "the understanding" and "the will." The will is something imbedded deep within a person and can be seen in the choices that one makes. "Free will" is our act of choosing; it is a deciding of choices that are available to us. With our wills we choose the food that we eat, the careers that we work at and the vehicles that we drive, etc. We also use our wills to receive, or rebel against, God's rule over our lives. Rebelling against God's rule does not require grace. Receiving and accepting God's rule does take grace, a power greater than ourselves, enabling us to repent from our course of rebellion, surrender to Jesus, and accept Him by faith. Thankfully, God is a good God who enables men and women to turn to Him and be converted, if they choose. This turning, repentance and acceptance of God, and God's rule, is a choice of human free will. Not everyone in the world of theology agrees with my last statement. Free will in salvation is

something that has been hotly debated. Some say that debates, and discussions, on topics like this are divisive and unwise. Yet, what could be more important to a mortal man than the destiny of his soul? What could be more wise for a man or woman to do, in this life, than secure the salvation of their own soul? Tragically, many never make this monumental decision, some because they do not realize that they have a free will to do so. They do not realize that they have to act, that is, make a decision to repent and believe. I believe that discussion which enlightens people to the reality of human free will is beneficial and important. I believe that it is infinitely wise for men and women to secure their salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ. I believe in free will theism.

Free will theism is simply the belief that God gives to mankind a free will to accept, or reject, God's plan of salvation. Even though man is sinful and depraved, God makes it fully possible for man to come to God in repentance and faith and be converted. First, God has provided a way of redemption through Jesus' death and resurrection.

Now, God draws men and women, individually, to Himself and to this place of choice. God initiates salvation but the choice of whether to receive salvation, or to reject it, is still man's. Salvation would not have been possible without God's initial work but, with the completing of God's initial work, man is now to choose. Salvation involves both God and man. God is good and gracious in providing the sacrifice, Christ, and in drawing and enabling men to see, repent and believe. Now, it is for man to choose, to use his or her free will, to accept and obey God's call to salvation, or not.

The debate over free will theism has gone on by different names over the centuries. It is probably better known by the title, "Arminianism vs Calvinism," named after the theologians, James Arminius and John Calvin. However, the debate existed long before either of them lived. For centuries, theologians debated over Synergism and Monergism. Monergism is the belief that God is the all-determining source of reality and that God controls all things. According to Monergism, reality is a reflection of the all-controlling will of God. This

is something of a simplification because some Monergists, perhaps inconsistently, would acknowledge that, in an indirect way, certain things contrary to God's will may occur. A Monergistic view of salvation teaches that there is no participation between God and man in salvation, and that salvation has been fully predetermined by God before mankind was ever created. Synergism, on the other hand, teaches that there is free human participation in salvation. In the 16th century, a movement erupted known as the Protestant Reformation. In this reformation, a monk, named Martin Luther, became vocal against many dogmas of the Catholic Church. He began defending the position that salvation was by faith alone, and this conflicted with the meritorious system of works and penance which was taught by Catholicism. The Protestant Reformation started this way but, as it developed, another issue was taken on board, that of human free will. Luther did not believe in it and he was soon challenged by a well-known scholar, Desiderius Erasmus. Luther wrote a book, entitled "The Bondage Of The Will," and in it, he said that "Free will' is a downright lie." 1 Luther was

teaching Monergism and other reformers picked up the ball and began running with it.

One such reformer was John Calvin. He assembled most of the basic tenets of Calvinism, a theology of salvation which is, ultimately, Monergistic. Calvin was not as brash as Luther and said that he did believe in free will, but only in the same sense as Augustine believed in free will. Essentially, his view was still Monergistic. Calvin viewed Luther as an apostle. To Calvin, salvation was authored and enacted by God alone and men and women were predestined, irreversibly, to either salvation or damnation. Calvin's successor was a man named Beza and he also spread these ideas. Beza had a brilliant student by the names of James Arminius.

Arminius was a gifted teacher and scholar and became an eminent professor in the land of his birth, Holland. Arminius stirred up much controversy because, unlike Calvin and Beza, Arminius was a synergist in his theology. He acknowledged that God initiated salvation and supplied "Prevenient Grace," the ability for man to come to God by faith.

However, he rejected the notion that those who do not come to God by faith, do not do so because God predestined, or purposed, for them to not come. He argued, from the Scriptures, the reality of free will in salvation and many were enlightened. Both Calvin and Arminius have had their followings, with denominations and Christian movements taking sides on these issues. The debate on human free will has been kept alive to our day.

So, why not leave this issue up to theologians? The answer, as to why we shouldn't, is because what you believe about free will and salvation will likely determine how you respond to the Bible's message of salvation and its call to repentance and faith. If you believe that the matter of your soul's salvation was decided before you were born, and that you do not have any say in the salvation or damnation of your own soul, will you make the vital decision that God asks of you? If you believe that nothing you do, in any way, will change the outcome of your destiny, will you lay down your life, pick up your cross and follow Jesus?

The controversy is, in large part, over the meaning of the Biblical word "predestined." The Bible says:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual
blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He
chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,
that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In
love He predestined us to adoption as sons through
Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind
intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His
grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the
Beloved.

Ephesians 1:3-6

Here, we have Paul teaching that God, the Father, chose us (the Church) before the foundation of the world and predestined us to adoption. If this verse was read in isolation from the rest of the Bible, it would be easy to see how it might be interpreted in a Monergistic way. However, there are other verses that discuss predestination. The Bible also says; "For

those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;" (Romans 8:29). Here, we read that God predestined those whom He "foreknew." What is meant by "For whom He foreknew"? Many theologians believe that these are the ones whom God knew would choose Him and salvation. God knows the future, and many argue that He knew ahead of time who would obey His call to repentance and faith, and who would not, and, based on this foreknowledge, He chose them and predestined them to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus. Both Calvinists and Arminians believe in predestination. However, Calvinists believe in an unconditional predestination. Arminians believe in a predestination which is conditioned on God's foreknowledge of who would choose to obey God's call with their own free will. To Arminians, predestination, then, is God's determination to redeem those who would choose to obey the plan of salvation that God has authored.

Because Calvinism claims that salvation is wholly a work of God, it has been argued that Calvinism is God-centered and Arminianism is man-centered. This is an unfair evaluation. Arminianism gives the credit of salvation to God. God authored salvation; God provided atonement through Jesus' death; God raised up Christ from the dead; God draws men and women to Himself and calls them to salvation; God enables them to repent and believe; then man yields to this pull and obeys with his will. This is not mancentered. Salvation is a work of God, but it is only experienced by those who allow God's work to occur in them. There must be a human response.

In salvation, God does draw men to Himself, but not irresistibly. The will of men is pulled toward, but not forced into, decision. Man must make a decision and that decision is his own. This means that man has a free will. If man did not have a free will, then in what way could God judge him fairly? On one occasion, John Wesley listened to a message in which free will was denied. He responded, in writing, with these comments on the message and the speaker:

What good would it do mankind if he could convince them that they are a mere piece of clockwork; that they have no more share in directing their own actions than in directing the sea or north wind? He owns that 'if men saw themselves in this light all sense of moral obligation, of right and wrong, of good or ill desert, would immediately cease.' 2

Wesley's concern was that if people believed that they could not help doing wrong, and that there was no way for them to do otherwise, they would soon loose any sense of right or wrong. How could they be held accountable for what they could not help but do? However, if mankind knows that he does have a free will to choose between good and evil, then those lines of good and evil become clear. With our wills we either accept God's sovereignty over our lives, or we rebel against His rule. If we do the latter, at least in our own minds, we set ourselves up as sovereign.

God is sovereign, but He is refraining from most (but not all) of His judgment until the end of the age, until the day of judgment. In this pocket of time that we live in, He is drawing us to Himself and watching us to see what we do with our free will. Will we obey Him and answer His call to faith? Will we repent? For many, they feel they can't repent because they do not know if they are predestined to it and if repentance is possible for them. Charles Finney called this kind of theology "a perfect strait jacket." 3 It is a strait-jacket because many of those believing this theology don't really know if they are elected to salvation, so as to be able to repent and believe. People need to know that God is drawing them, that they can respond and repent and believe.

If God is sovereign and the author of salvation, is it blasphemy to assert that we do anything in responding to His call? If we do anything in response, does this take the glory of it away from God? No. Paul writes to Timothy these words; "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who

hear you." (1 Timothy 4:16). Here, Paul says that Timothy is to, in some sense, ensure salvation for himself and others. Also, James writes; "My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." (James 5:19-20). Here, James says that those who turn people back to God are saving these people from death. What do these two verses tell us about human agency? Is it wrong to say that we can save ourselves, and others, or is there a sense in which this may be said? Does this take away from the sovereignty of God? No, it does not. We just need to think this through. All of the strict Calvinistic interpretation on sovereignty has bent the thinking of many to the point where they dismiss human involvement in receiving salvation. What is the truth? It is like the doctor who tells his patient that the patient is terminally ill. The doctor then hands the patient medicine. The patient takes the medicine and is cured. You could say that the doctor saved him. You could say that the medicine saved him. You could say that the patient saved himself by

swallowing the medicine. All of these statements are true. In the case of salvation, the doctor is God and the blood of Jesus is the medicine. We, who obey Jesus' call to salvation, are the patient. God receives all of the glory for salvation. He did for us what we could not do for ourselves. He made a way where there was no way. Now that the way has been opened to us, we must choose it. We must take the medicine. This is not heresy. The problem is not with the "language" of free will. The problem is with the way that Calvinism has trained our minds to interpret sovereignty. We need to break out of this kind of thinking and climb out of the strait-jacket.

Calvinism not only creates a strait-jacket, by which a man does not know whether or not he can repent, it also causes man to think of himself as an unfortunate victim, rather than a criminal. Sinful man has broken the laws of God. Man is not passive. He has committed sins, by his own free will, and now he is commanded to repent and receive God's forgiveness. There is something for him to do; it is to repent and exercise faith. Friend, let us not cry "inability." The doctrine of inability can become an excuse.

Again, it is our concept of sovereignty which will either clear, or muddle, our understanding of salvation. God wins the final battle over sin, lawlessness, the devil and all the forces of evil, but that does not mean that, along the way, His will is always carried out. God's will is often frustrated. God often pulls people toward Himself, and toward faith, and then the people resist His pull. The Bible states; "Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," (Romans 2:4-5) (impenitent means unrepentant in this verse). Stephen rebuked the unbelieving Jews who were opposing him, saying; " 'You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did." (Acts 7:51). Jesus said; "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the

way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling." (Matthew 23:37). Jesus wanted to embrace all of the people of Jerusalem but their wills, or at least the wills of many, stopped this from happening.

Some will still say, "Is not man deprayed so that within himself he does not have the power to be converted?" Yes, but it is like the instance when Jesus came to the synagogue where there was a man with a withered hand. He said to him; "... 'Stretch out your hand!'..." (Matthew 12:13). The man stretched forth his hand and was healed. This was a great miracle but, initially, this must have seemed like a strange request. How could the man stretch forth his hand when it was withered? In response to Jesus' call and command, he just willed to, and God's healing power responded to his faith and he was healed. It is like unsaved men and women have a depraved and withered soul. In fact they are spiritually dead. It is as if Jesus is saying to them, "Stretch forth your soul and receive eternal life."

By God's enabling grace, men and women can choose Him, and His way, and exercise faith. God gives us a free will to choose or to reject salvation. Free will theism is still a belief in a God-centered salvation because God is the author of salvation, the One Who paid for redemption, the One Who draws us, the One Who enables us to choose and repent and trust Him, and the One Who regenerates our being and makes us a new creation.

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ENDNOTES:

1 Martin Luther, The Bondage Of The Will, translated by Henry Cole (Choteau: Old Paths Gospel Press, n.d.), 17.

2 John Wesley, A Compend of Wesley's Theology, Ed. Robert W. Burtner and Robert E. Chiles (New York: Abingdon Press), 131-132. 3 Charles G. Finney, The Original Memoirs of Charles G. Finney (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 47.

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