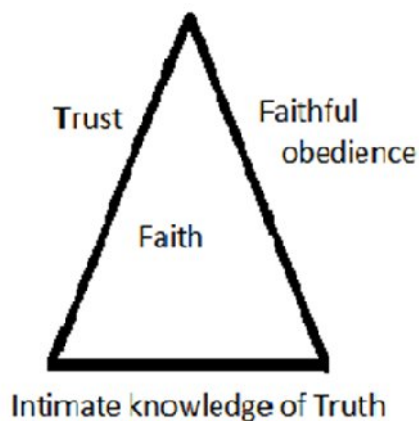
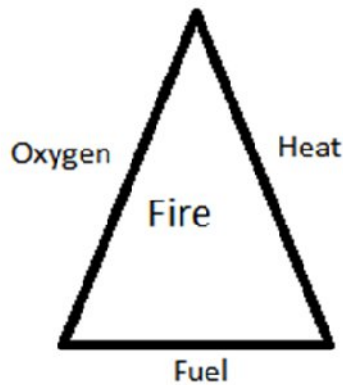


## What is faith?

The answer to this question is given in Hebrews 11: 6, as follows: ***“And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to Elohim must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”*** To have faith in Elohim means that we believe in Him, although we cannot see Him, but at the deeper level, it means that we believe in what He says: trusting enough in the promises He makes in His word



that we obey what He requires of us. To help us understand what true faith is, let me explain by the way every firefighter is taught the fireman’s triangle depicted here to the left: To have a fire you need (1) **Fuel** plus (2) **Oxygen** plus (3) **Heat**. By removing anyone of these three essential components the fire is extinguished. To understand what is meant by the word *faith* or more specifically faithfulness, transliterated in Hebrew as ‘*emunah*’, we make use of a similar tri-angle with three essential components on each side. Faith is not only a warm fuzzy feeling or an opinion, but true faithfulness requires (1) **Intimate Knowledge of truth** – or the word of Elohim as Yahshua defined truth in John 17: 17; plus (2) **Faithful obedience** to what we are taught; and (3) **Trust** in Him as the rewarder of those who seek Him. By removing any of these three component parts, you cannot have true scriptural faith or faithfulness. It is as Rav Yaa’cov explained in James 2: 17, in this way: ***‘Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead being by itself.’***

After a believer is immersed by a teaching elder of Elohim’s congregation, and had hands lain upon him/her by the teacher (as per Acts 8: 12 – 17) to receive the Set-apart Spirit, he/she needs to be taught the Scriptural truths by the teacher who immersed him/her, the same truths he was taught him by the teacher who came before, all the way back to Messiah, as He instructed His disciples in Matthew 28: 18 - 20, saying: ***“all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, immersing them in the name (one name) of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”***

After the believer is suitably immersed, he/she is required to grow in grace and knowledge of Elohim’s word in order to understand what He requires of us (as per 2 Peter 3: 18). However, we need to fully understand what Yahshua told His disciples here, bearing in mind what His main purpose was for coming to earth, namely to bring the lost sheep of the house of Israel back to the faith into which He was born. Please note that Yahshua was born a Jew and never changed His religion during His life on earth. We notice that Rav Kepha fully understood his Master’s command in Matthew 28, as he continues to explain in Acts 2: 36 - 39, saying to those who asked him what they should do, when they heard him explaining how Elohim promised to also give the Set-apart Spirit to those returnees from the house of Israel, saying: ***“Therefore let all the house of Israel (those who were dispersed into the nations, because of idolatry) know for certain that Elohim has made Him (Yahshua) both Master and Messiah—this Yahshua whom you crucified.” (37) Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Kepha and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren what shall we do?” (38) And Kepha said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be immersed in the name of Yahshua<sup>1</sup>(the salvation of Yah) Messiah for the forgiveness of your sin; and you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit. (39) For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far***

<sup>1</sup>Rav Kepha explains why we immerse new believers in Yahshua’s name in Acts 4: 11 & 12, saying: ***“He (Yahshua) is the STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, BUT WHICH BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone. (12) And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”***

***off, as many as YHVH our Elohim shall call to Himself.***” Rav Kepha gives two very important guidelines here, namely: That we should only immerse those who are ‘far off’ and only those whom YHVH calls to Himself at this time.

By studying the Scriptures, we get to understand what he meant by the words ‘far off’, since it is mentioned before by the prophet Daniel when he prayed to YHVH in Daniel 9: 7 about the two houses of Israel, who were both exiled at that time, but the house of Judah returned to the Promised Land 70 years after been taken captive by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and remained close to YHVH even in captivity, saying: ***“Righteousness belongs to Thee, O YHVH, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries Thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee.”*** We see further that Rav Shaul used these same words in Ephesians 2: 11 – 13, but giving us more details of the meaning of the words ‘far off’, saying: ***“Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Un-circumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— (12) remember that you were at that time separated from Messiah, exclude from the commonwealth of Israel, (consisting of both houses and ruled over by King David) and strangers to the covenants of promise (the covenant that YHVH made with Abraham that he and his descendants will live in the Promised Land eternally – as Spiritual children of Elohim; but also the covenant YHVH made with David, that he will again rule over the restored commonwealth of Israel in what is now, the near future), having no hope and without Elohim in the world. (13) But now in Messiah Yahshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Messiah.”*** This is essentially saying, that we do not have to immerse our Jewish Brothers, since they have always known what sin is, and could therefore repent when they transgressed Elohim’s teachings. But also notice the second guideline given by Rav Kepha in Acts 2: 39, being that we should only immerse those from the lost ten tribes of Israel, plus a number of real Gentiles, whom YHVH calls. This is in agreement with what Messiah taught in John 6: 65 saying: ***“For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.”*** This should tell those Nazarene/Messianic Jews/Israelites who are too anti-Semitic to realize that the Jews were right all the time, that we need not convert or teach them anything, since they retained the oracles of Elohim, that He gave to both houses of Israel at Mount Sinai. This is also perhaps why Rav Yaa’cov authenticated the Jewish Synagogue, whilst disciples (or students of the way) of Yahshua we were still allowed to go there, a few years after Messiah’s death, resurrection and ascension to heaven, saying in Acts 15: 21: ***“For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, since he is read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”***

After immersion a new believer has to start obeying the Torah commands that he/she learned, realizing that once we start following the way of Elohim, we are placed into a covenant relationship with Him. It is similar to the way the ancient Israelites were placed in a covenant relationship with Elohim on the very first Pentecost or Shavuot that they observed on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan at Mount Sinai, when He gave them the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. It is important to understand that only those who remain faithful to the end will be in the kingdom of Elohim, as may be understood from reading Revelation 17: 14, as follows: ***“These (the ten kings who will receive authority from the beast) will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Master of masters and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.”*** Even, if we who have been called by YHVH and were suitably immersed, we need to continually remain in touch with Elohim, by studying His word to see if our lives conform with what He requires of us; and by coming to Him in prayer to ask for His forgiveness when we do not meet up to His expectations, but also to thank Him for providing and protecting us. To be able to remain faithful to the end, we require an intimate knowledge of truth and trust that he will ultimately let us inherit the Promised Land and make David our king, provided we obey Him and do what He requires of us in His word. When we were immersed into Yahshua’s saving name, we were betrothed to Yahshua our Messiah. When Yahshua returns to Jerusalem, He will return as our bridegroom as He also explained in the parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25. The oil spoken about in Matthew 25 is knowledge of truth that is taught in a discipleship program similar to the one Messiah started with His disciples and commissioned them to continue until He

returns one day soon in Matthew 24: 45 & 46<sup>2</sup>. This is why the five prudent virgins told the foolish virgins in the last part of Matthew 25: 9, saying: ***'Go instead to the dealers (those who teach Torah) and buy some for yourself.'*** As Yahshua's future bride we are supposed to make ourselves ready at this time, by washing our robes in the word of truth – cleaning up our lives using Torah. There are many in our Nazarene Israelite and like-minded community, who continually watch the signs of the time, as Yahshua also told us to do in Matthew 24. Even though the main purpose for giving these signs is to get ourselves ready for Messiah's return, they do so simply in an attempt to save their own lives. It was for this reason that Yahshua warned His disciples in Matthew 16: 25, saying: ***"For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it."*** They misinterpret what Yahshua told His followers in Matthew 24: 42 (KJV), saying: ***'Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Master doth come.'*** Some say Yahshua meant that we should watch the signs of the times, by reading newspapers and magazines to see what is happening in the world around us, ties up with prophecies of His return one day.

But, there is more to what Yahshua told His disciple's when He said: ***'Watch therefore'***, than just watching the signs of the times; He also meant that we should watch ourselves and the way we live; to see how it conforms to the example He left us whilst He was on earth. When reading Matthew 16: 25 (quoted before) together with verse 24, we understand that this is really what Yahshua meant, in this way: ***'Then Yahshua said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let Him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."'*** Even though Scriptural prophesy is important for us who live at this end time, we need to be more concerned about the way we live than its fulfilment, for then at least we will be ready when the Master comes, taking into account His warning in Matthew 7: 21 – 23, as follows: ***'Not everyone who says to Me, "Master, Master," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. (22) Many will say to Me on that day, "Master, Master," did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles? (23) And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.''*** Let's therefore examine each of the components required for true faithfulness in turn here below:

We start with an **intimate knowledge of truth**: The prophet Daniel prophesied in Daniel 12: 4 that knowledge will increase at the time of the end, and true to prophecy both scientific and knowledge about the way of Elohim are being 'discovered' at an ever increasing pace. In agreement with Daniel's prophecy, Yahshua told His disciples in Matthew 13: 11 & 12, saying: ***"To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. (12) For whoever has, to him shall more be given, and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him."*** Even though there is an excess of information available about almost any subject that man's mind can contemplate, humanity is unfortunately lacking the basic knowledge so essential for their well-being. Yes, we are at this time drowning in an information over-load, but are starved of knowledge about Elohim and His ways. But, why is that so? Why does mankind not understand the way of Elohim? We get the answer in Hosea 4: 1 (KJV), as follows: ***'Hear the word of YHVH, ye children of Israel: for YHVH hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth (Torah)<sup>3</sup>, nor mercy, nor knowledge of Elohim in the land.'*** We see here that something vitally important to the very existence of mankind is lacking. But, notice carefully that it is not missing because it cannot be found any longer, but it is missing because people have rejected the available knowledge and will as a result be destroyed, as Hosea wrote further in verse 6 of Hosea 4, saying: ***'My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law (Torah) of your Elohim, I also will forget your children.'***

But what did Messiah mean by knowledge about the kingdom of Heaven (that will come to earth when He returns, as He taught us to pray in Matthew 6: 10)? It has to do with what Rav Yaa'cov told believers in Acts 15: 14 – 18, saying: ***"Simeon (Rav Kepha) has related how Elohim first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles (those Israelites who were scattered into the nations of the world and became like***

<sup>2</sup>Matthew 24: 45 & 46: ***"Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes."***

<sup>3</sup>Psalms 119: 142, ***'Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Thy law is truth.'***

Gentiles – believing themselves to be Gentiles and some real Gentiles) **a people for His name.** (15) **And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written,** (16) **AFTER THESE THINGS I will return, AND WILL REBUILD THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID WHICH HAS FALLEN, AND I WILL REBUILD ITS RUINS, AND I WILL RESTORE IT,** (17) **IN ORDER THAT THE REST OF MANKIND MAY SEEK YHVH, AND ALL THE GENTILES WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME** (returnees from the lost sheep of the house of Israel, who are known as people of Elohim),’ (18) **SAYS YHVH, WHO MAKES THESE THINGS KNOWN FROM OF OLD.”** This is also in agreement with Yahshua’s main purpose to bring a remnant of the lost ten tribes back to the faith into which He was born, so that when He returns to earth one day, He will be able to re-establish the kingdom of Elohim over both houses of Israel and enter into a New Marriage Covenant with them. They will then become the model nation YHVH intended them to be when He originally took them out of Egypt and gave them His Torah at Mount Sinai. The result will be that all the nations of the world will eventually become obedient to Him and with the passing of time during the millennium He will rule the whole world. This is essentially what YHVH promised both Abraham and King David, as mentioned in Ephesians 2: 12 (quoted before). Let’s therefore review these promises that YHVH made to Abraham and King David.

Commencing in Genesis 17: 7 – 11, we read about the covenant that YHVH made with Abraham in the land of Canaan, as follows: **“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be Elohim to you and to your descendants after you. (8) And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their Elohim.” (9) Elohim said further to Abraham, “Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. (10) This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you; every male among you shall be circumcised. (11) And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you,”** But what did YHVH mean by saying: **‘for an everlasting possession’**, since we know that human beings cannot live forever. YHVH must have told Abraham, that through his one descendant, namely Yahshua the Messiah, he and his descendants will one day in the future be resurrected, to again dwell in the Promised Land eternally, as we read from Hebrews 11: 17 – 19, in this way: **‘By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son** (something that YHVH will do, to what was then still future to Abraham); (18) **it was he to whom it was said, “IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED.” (19) He was considering that Elohim is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type (of Messiah).”** We see Yahshua telling the Jews of His day that Abraham knew about His future sacrifice for mankind in John 8: 56 – 58, saying: **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.” (57) The Jews therefore said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” (58) Yahshua said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.”**

Few people realize that like with our father Abraham, YHVH also entered into a special covenant relationship with King David as recorded in Psalm 89: 3 & 4 and 34 – 37, as follows: **“I Have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, (4) I will establish your seed forever, and build up your throne to all generations. (34) My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. (35) Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. (36) His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. (37) It shall be established forever like the moon, and the witness in the sky is faithful.”** For those people who since the mid-1990’s became overly obsessed with watching for the crescent moon to determine their Feast Day calendar, instead of relying on the Levites amongst the Jews to determine Elohim’s annual Feast Days, this confirms the importance of the moon, but as a reminder that YHVH will one day honor His covenant with King David. We see in the prophecy yet to occur when the two houses of Israel will once again become one in (YHVH)’s hand that David will again rule over the united Israel, as witnessed in Ezekiel 37: 15 – 28, but specifically in verses 21 – 25, where YHVH again confirms His covenant with David, in this way: **“And say to them, ‘Thus says YHVH Elohim,’ behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; (22) and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and**

**one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations, and they will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. (23) And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people and I will be their Elohim. (24) And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes, and observe them. (25) And they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons, and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant shall be their prince forever."**

King David like Abraham also believed in the resurrection of the dead, as witnessed in Psalm 22 where we get to see King David's knowledge regarding this 'uncertain' subject of the resurrection of the dead and the coming Kingdom of Elohim in verses 27 – 29, in this way: **'All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to YHVH, and all the families of the nations will worship before Thee. (28) For the kingdom is (YHVH)'s and He rules over the nations. (29) All the prosperous of the earth will eat and worship, all those who go down to the dust will bow before Him, even he who cannot keep his soul alive.'** The underlined sentence tells us that even sinners will be resurrected to life again after the Great White Throne judgment mentioned in Revelation 20: 12, where YHVH will open their minds to the truth of the Scriptures. Continuing in Psalm 17, where King David showed his faith to be in the first resurrection in verse 15, saying: **'As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake.'** This is exactly what Rav Yochanan taught us in first John 3: 2, saying: **'Beloved, now we are children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be, we know that, when He appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.'**

Next we get to **Obedience**: Our fathers in the faith Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived out their lives with unwavering faith that YHVH, who cannot lie, will eventually give them what He promised, even though they like all men died. We read about the promises that YHVH made to them recorded in Hebrews 11: 8 - 10, as follows: **'By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. (9) By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; (10) for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is Elohim.'** From this we understand that our fathers in the faith were fully aware of the coming kingdom of Elohim. They believed in the Gospel of Elohim and believed that they will be part of it. Do you believe the gospel of Elohim proclaimed by Yahshua? The gospel that Yahshua preached is recoded for us in Mark 1: 14 & 15, as follows: **'And after John had been taken into custody, Yahshua came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of Elohim, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Elohim is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.'** We see further from Hebrews 11 (the faith chapter) that King David and the other fathers and mothers in the faith who met Elohim's requirement by being obedient to their dying day, did not receive what was promised them as confirmed in Hebrews 11: 32 – 38, in this way: **'And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, (33) who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed acts of righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, (34) quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (35) Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection(the first resurrection); (36) and others experienced mockings and scourgings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. (37) They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated. (38) (men of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.'**

Obedience is a main component of true faithfulness in the way of Elohim. YHVH our Elohim is not interested in our offerings and sacrifices, since everything belongs to Him anyway. As Israelites, YHVH tells us through Moses in Deuteronomy 10: 12 & 13 saying: **"And now, Israel, what does YHVH your Elohim require from**

*you, but to fear YHVH your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, (13) and to keep (YHVH)'s commandments and His statutes which I am commanding you today for your good."* Similarly, when you ask any parent how they know their children love them, they will tell you they know, because their children usually do what they tell them to. We read accordingly from Hebrews 2: 10 & 11, ***'For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. (11) For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.'*** Yes, YHVH is presently busy *'bringing many sons to glory'* so that we will eventually be of the same Elohim family. Many people who confess belief in Messiah do not believe what He did and taught whilst He was on earth. For example Yahshua did not abolish the Tanach or 'Old Testament' as they believe, and He said so in both Matthew 5: 17 – 19 and John 5: 47. But those who make such claims read right over these verses. He also taught clearly in John 3: 13, saying: ***"And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man."*** At the end of John 3, we read from verses 36: ***"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of Elohim abides on him."*** Saying we believe in Him, means nothing unless we also obey Him

This brings us to the final part, **Trust**: Yahshua's main message was the good news about the coming Kingdom of Elohim on earth, as it is now in heaven, one example being in Luke 8: 1, in this way: ***'And it came about soon afterwards, that He began going about from one city and village to another, proclaiming and preaching the kingdom of Elohim; and the twelve were with Him.'*** Despite the fact that both Abraham and King David did not see Yahshua in human flesh, they believed what He taught them as the word of Elohim. They also trusted that YHVH will one day in the future make good on the promises that He made to them, despite dying without receiving these promises, as witnessed in Hebrews 11: 39 & 40, in this way: ***'And all these (meaning our fathers in the faith), having gained approval through their faith, did not receive what was promised, (40) because Elohim had provided something better for us, so that apart from us they should all be made perfect.'*** Yes, they believed in the better resurrection, during which those who will be resurrected at Messiah's coming will be changed into Spiritual sons and daughters of Elohim, as witnessed in Revelation 20: 6 as follows: ***'Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of Elohim and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.'*** Do you trust YHVH to believe with all your heart and soul in the coming kingdom of Elohim, like Abraham and King David did? If you do then it is time that we follow them, becoming obedient to the only One who can give us eternal life, namely YHVH. It was for this reason that He taught in Matthew 6: 31 – 33, saying: ***"Do not be anxious then, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'With what shall we clothe ourselves?' (32) For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. (33) But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you."*** Think carefully about it!