



ATTHEW

PART TWO, BOOK TWO
A KINGDOM COME





WELCOME TO

ATTHEW



A NOTE ABOUT ASH WEDNESDAY ON MARCH 2ND

For over a thousand years, many Christians across the largest denominations have chosen to participate in the annual rhythm of the season of Lent as it leads us to Good Friday and ultimately to Easter. During Lent many choose to fast from food on certain days or abstain from other pleasures to remind ourselves that our lives under the sun are fleeting, and we are in the hands of our Lord, the One who conquers death. Lent provides a perfect reminder of our own mortality and offers a period of self-reflection, a setting aside of our wants, and an opportunity to trust in our Lord and King.

We invite you to join us on Wednesday, March 2nd at 6:30pm at the Gilroy campus as we participate together in Ash Wednesday and begin the season of Lent.

Ideas for the season of Lent (about 46 days):

- Fast from dinner to dinner one day per week
- Abstain from social media
- Give up buying Starbucks and save the money to give to charity
- Sacrifice some time every week to spend time with someone who is lonely
- Fast from lunch Monday through Friday and pray during this time instead





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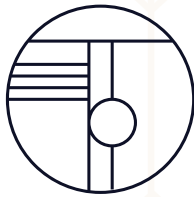
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HE COST

MATTHEW 8:14–22

¹⁴ And when Jesus entered Peter's house, he saw his mother-in-law lying sick with a fever. ¹⁵ He touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose and began to serve him. ¹⁶ That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick. ¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: "He took our illnesses and bore our diseases." ¹⁸ Now when Jesus saw

a crowd around him, he gave orders to go over to the other side. ¹⁹ And a scribe came up and said to him, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ²¹ Another of the disciples said to him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² And Jesus said to him, "Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead."





INTRODUCTION

In this section, there is a bridge from Jesus' healing ministry to some clues to what he thinks about discipleship. He has been releasing people from the chains of sickness and oppression, but also ensures those around him understand that people who submit to his authority and do the will of the Father tell a story through their life commitments as well.

DISCUSSION

- 1 Peter's mother's ailment seems relatively minor though fevers in the ancient world could have greater implications. How do you think it fits with the story of the leper and the centurion?
- 2 Read Isaiah 53:3-6. Matthew 8:17 refers to this passage in Isaiah. What is that passage about? If you were a first century reader of Matthew and you had read this Isaiah text, how might you be thinking beyond Jesus' healing ministry? What is it pointing to?
- 3 When you read about those "oppressed by demons," what do you think? How would you explain the demonic? How do you respond to supernatural things and why?
- 4 Observe the differences between the scribe and the disciple in Matthew 8:18-21. How are they different? How are the situations similar and different?

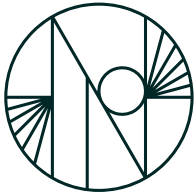
- 5 Read Luke 14:25-33. How is the Luke text related to the Matthew text for this session? Are these texts about counting the cost before becoming a Christian or something disciples should consistently do? Explain.
- 6 It is unlikely that Jesus was truly homeless, so what do you think is the point he is trying to make? Re-read Matthew 4:18-22. How could this text help us understand Matthew 8:19-22?
- 7 Here we have Matthew's first use of "Son of Man." This term can be traced back to the Old Testament. Read Ezekiel 2:1-3 and Daniel 7:13 and you will see two different uses of "son of man." Based upon the context, how do you think Matthew is using the term? Is it similar to either of the Old Testament references? Is it different?
- 8 Read examples from the Old Testament such as Genesis 23 and it is clear that care for honoring the dead was important in Israel. In Matthew 8:22 is Jesus changing this practice or is he trying to tell us something else? Explain.





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

Our days are filled with duties and plans that often are overridden by necessity, but all of us have an unwritten metric for what we allow to interrupt our schedule. Think of your daily commitments. What kind of things do you allow to change your schedule and priorities and why? Jesus has told us that the kingdom is for those who do the will of the Father. Does this metric make it into your day-to-day decisions? Are you allowing him to break in or is your Father's will "baked into" your weekly routine? This week is a perfect time to review your schedule.



NATURAL & SUPERNATURAL

MATTHEW 8:23–34

²³ And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. ²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. ²⁵ And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." ²⁶ And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" ²⁸ And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. ²⁹ And behold, they cried out, "What have

you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?" ³⁰ Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. ³¹ And the demons begged him, saying, "If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." ³² And he said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. ³³ The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. ³⁴ And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.





INTRODUCTION

Jesus has been teaching what it means to be Kingdom people and there is no doubt that it is a challenging journey. In this section we see how Jesus faces down these challenges as they unfold in both natural and supernatural ways, including in places that were not ideal for a Torah-observant Jew.

DISCUSSION

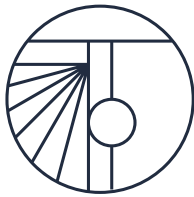
- 1 Have you ever been in a big storm that literally scared you? Explain.
- 2 This is the second time that Jesus labels his disciples those of “little faith.” Read Matthew 6:28-30 and compare the two situations. How do you understand his use of these words? What don’t they believe in each situation?
- 3 Jesus “saving” is noted here. Go back and read Matthew 1:21. How are these two “savings” different? How might Matthew be using this story to point back to the statement in chapter 1?
- 4 Describe a situation when you felt you revealed “little faith.” What would you say was at the core of your disbelief?

- 5 The question in Matthew 8:27 is important. Read Psalm 104:5-9, Psalm 106:9, and Psalm 107:23-32. What terms describe what God does to the sea in these Psalms and how does this compare to Matthew's words for what Jesus does here?
- 6 In the text about the demoniacs, what are the elements that might cause uncleanness by the Old Testament standard? What might be communicated by putting Jesus in this situation?
- 7 Read Matthew 7:28-29. The discussion of Jesus' authority continues to fill out. In Matthew so far, how would you describe the picture of Jesus' authority as it develops? How do the storm and demoniac narratives add to a reader's understanding of his authority?
- 8 Read Mark 5:18-20 which is not included in the Matthew account. What is Mark emphasizing? What is Matthew emphasizing?
- 9 Compare the reaction toward Jesus of the disciples in the boat with the reaction of the demon-possessed men. Who believed in Jesus' power before the miracle? Where were their fears directed and why?



GOSPEL MOTIVATION

Like the Leper and Centurion narratives that revealed Jesus' healing inside and outside Judaism, the storm and the demoniac stories reveal that Jesus' power is effective both inside and outside Jewish territory. Not only that, his authority is effective in both natural and supernatural realms. Jesus' disciples fear the power of the storm while the demons fear the power of Jesus. This is a good time to ask how you think about your fears and how it relates to your trust in Jesus. You are likely worried about a lot of things. Which of those things is making your trust in Jesus look small? Who can help remind you this week that Jesus is bigger than all of those fears?



THE PARALYTIC

MATTHEW 9:1-8

¹ And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. ² And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." ³ And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." ⁴ But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? ⁵ For

which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? ⁶ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." ⁷ And he rose and went home. ⁸ When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.





INTRODUCTION

Jesus has been displaying his authority in teaching, over nature and even over powers that seem supernatural, and the story of the paralytic continues in a similar way. But, at this point we see the beginning of those that would question and even oppose his authority. This tension will increase as Matthew recounts Jesus' ministry.

DISCUSSION

- 1 Have you ever plead someone else's case or come to someone's rescue? Why did you do it? Explain.
- 2 Whose faith does Jesus see and respond to? What makes that surprising? What are the possible implications?
- 3 Compare the situations in Matthew 8:10 and 9:2. Jesus recognizes faithful action in these stories. What kind of faithful action would others around you notice?

- 4 What's different about how Jesus responds in this story? What do you think the paralytic was expecting? What is central to Jesus' message here, and why do you think it is causing tension with the scribes?
- 5 Jesus accuses the scribes of "thinking evil in their hearts." What do you think he means? What is the evil that he discerns?
- 6 Discuss Matthew 9:5. Which is easier to say from your perspective? Explain the difficulties of each answer.
- 7 Read Daniel 7:13-14. "Son of Man" is used for the second time in this section's text. Compare Matthew 8:20 and Matthew 9:6 and describe the difference in the uses. Which one better refers back to the Daniel text's understanding of "Son of Man" and why?
- 8 What part of the Sermon on the Mount might be picked up here in Matthew 9:8?





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

In this session's text, Jesus gets to the root of our cosmic problem. He could simply heal people so that their earthly lives would be better, but there is a deeper problem that has eternal implications. His authority is big enough for it all. This includes you, on your worst day. We need to remember that our condition requires forgiveness, but also Jesus wants to give it. He wants to rescue us wholly. This week may be a time to ask for forgiveness or to bask in the glow of Christ's mercy. Often, we downplay forgiveness compared to physical healing. As seen here, Jesus doesn't.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MATTHEW 9:9–13

⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him. ¹⁰ And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹² But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”





INTRODUCTION

Here we encounter a “meta” moment. It is the story of the author, written in the Gospel by the author. The brutal honesty is incredible. Matthew is depicted plainly as a tax collector, likely labeled an insider enemy by most of his Israelite brethren. But Jesus continues to reveal a different perspective, not just through the miraculous, but also through the ordinary, everyday decisions of who he chooses to spend time with.

DISCUSSION

- 1 What is the most surprising thing that ever happened to you? Why was it surprising?
- 2 When you grew up, did you feel like you were on the outside or inside? Explain. Did you ever witness anyone trying to cross over the divide? What happened?
- 3 Read Matthew 8:18-22 again. It seems to be an interlude about discipleship just like today’s text in Matthew 9:9-13. How do they build on one another? What words are used in both? Give a description of what a disciple looks like from these two sections.

- 4 Consider how Jesus looks at his disciples. Consider how the Pharisees look at them. What's the same and what's different?
- 5 Reread Matthew 8:11 and compare it to Matthew 9:10. How are these two passages similar? What might be an implication?
- 6 In our culture, is there a difference between meeting someone at a restaurant versus inviting them to your home for a meal? Why/why not? When is the last time you invited someone new to have a meal with you?
- 7 In Matthew 9:11, the Pharisees ask the disciples a question about Jesus that only he can truly answer. Have you ever had this happen—a person asking someone else who knows you a question that only you can answer? What are typical reasons people do this?
- 8 Does Jesus really think that the Pharisees “have no need of a physician”? Explain using previous parts of Matthew as a guide.
- 9 Read Hosea 6:4-10. This is the context of the homework Jesus gives the Pharisees in verse 13. Collectively come up with what you think Jesus is implying through this Old Testament reference. How might you reword it for today?





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

When the “rule” becomes more important than the intention of the “rule-maker,” a problem arises. For example, ritual purity can be at odds with care for the poor or infirmed. Should my desire to remain clean overwhelm my call to care for the poor? Worse yet, what if my cleanliness becomes the goal? Take some time and think about your Christian life. Have you raised one element of discipleship at the cost of another or become so focused on a divine task that you forget about the Divine One who asked you to do it in the first place? Considering today’s test, we do so at our own peril.



INESKINS

MATTHEW 9:14–17

¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?” ¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. ¹⁷ Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”





INTRODUCTION

When Jesus is presented with difficult theological or religious questions, it is not unusual for him to respond in an enigmatic manner. Today's passage is no exception. When approached with a question about the fasting habits of his disciples, he answers by offering three strange metaphors in a row, none of which are explained. And while the deeper meanings of these metaphors may not be immediately obvious, there is profound and transformative truth hidden within them.

DISCUSSION

- 1 Earlier in the Sermon on the Mount we discussed fasting. Have you tried to work fasting into your disciplines? If not, why not?
- 2 Look at Matthew 9:11-13 from last week and compare the questions being asked. Who is asking? Who are they asking? What might this communicate about how Jesus is being received?
- 3 Read Ezekiel 36:25-26. What does God say his people need? How will they receive it? How does this differ from what you know about some of the practices of the Pharisees in the time of Jesus? Read Jesus' critique of their behavior in Matthew 23:23-24 for an example.

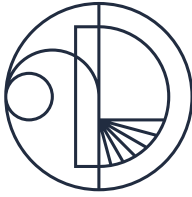
- 4 In both of the metaphors that Jesus gives, there is something new that is incompatible with something old. Any attempt to combine the two things leads to ruin. What might the old garment and old wine skin represent? What has made them “inflexible” to the point of being incompatible with the “new”?
- 5 In some sense, Jesus has not come to “patch up” something old, but to bring something new. Think back to the Sermon on the Mount, and Jesus’ teachings about things like anger, lust, divorce, oaths, and retaliation. In what sense are those commands new, and how do they relate to older commands?
- 6 What kind of response does the teaching and activity of Jesus cause among the leaders of the established religious system in Israel? How does this relate to the metaphor Jesus presents in this passage?
- 7 In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul says that anyone in Christ is a “new creation,” and that “the old has passed away.” Do you think the “new creation” Paul describes is more like the wine, the wine skin, or both in Jesus’ metaphor? Why?
- 8 Christians now live in anxious anticipation of the return of the bridegroom. Jesus indicates that during this period, fasting is appropriate. What are some ways that you could incorporate fasting into your life?





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

In the ancient world, new wine skins were still stretchy and able to change size and shape. They would be filled with new, partially-fermented grape juice, and that fermentation process would be completed inside the skin, which would stretch and expand, changing shape to accommodate the bubbling life within. But this could only happen once. Old wine skins no longer had the necessary malleability, and would be destroyed by the pressure caused by active fermentation. Like old wine skins, many of us have deeply engrained patterns of thought, habits of behavior, and views of God that are incompatible with the “new wine” of the gospel. Praise God, by his grace, he provides not just the new wine of the gospel, but the new heart necessary to contain it. Pray with your group that the transformation brought about by the grace of God will continue its work of reshaping you into the vessel that you are called to be.



DEAD, BLIND, MUTE RESTORED

MATTHEW 9:18–34

¹⁸ While he was saying these things to them, behold, a ruler came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹ And Jesus rose and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰ And behold, a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment, ²¹ for she said to herself, “If I only touch his garment, I will be made well.” ²² Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. ²³ And when Jesus came to the ruler’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ he said, “Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl arose.

²⁶ And the report of this went through all that district. ²⁷ And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, “Have mercy on us, Son of David.” ²⁸ When he entered the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus said to them, “Do you believe that I am able to do this?” They said to him, “Yes, Lord.” ²⁹ Then he touched their eyes, saying, “According to your faith be it done to you.” ³⁰ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, “See that no one knows about it.” ³¹ But they went away and spread his fame through all that district. ³² As they were going away, behold, a demon-oppressed man who was mute was brought to him. ³³ And when the demon had been cast out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds marveled, saying, “Never was anything like this seen in Israel.” ³⁴ But the Pharisees said, “He casts out demons by the prince of demons.”





INTRODUCTION

If the previous healings were not enough, Matthew continues to report more of Jesus' miraculous work in rapid-fire succession, even layered within each other. And, these instances of Jesus' authority are illustrated over matters that are beyond what most would consider "natural," even raising the dead.

DISCUSSION

- 1 Have you ever been in the middle of doing something important and someone interrupted you with something that would take you away from the task at hand? Explain. Did it irritate you? Why/why not?
- 2 It's hard to imagine as modern people what the chronically bleeding woman was going through. Read Leviticus 15:25-27 and consider the implications for her life. How is her story different from all the others so far? Why do you think she approached Jesus the way she did? What was the likely response to what she did from the surrounding Jewish people? How is Jesus' response different?
- 3 There are Old Testament precedents of raising the dead. Read 1 Kings 17:17-24 and 2 Kings 4:18-37. Who raised the dead and what was their role in Israel?

- 4 Read Luke's account in Luke 8:40-54 and compare the two women. Imagine the last twelve years of each of the women's lives. How are they different?
- 5 This is the first time we see the term "Son of David" referring to Jesus. Read Matthew 1:17. Do you remember why the number fourteen was important? Why would the term "Son of David" be used for Jesus? What are the possible implications?
- 6 Compare Matthew 8:10 with Matthew 9:33. Who's saying each statement? What do the statements have in common? How would you explain the conflicting responses in Matthew 9:33-34?
- 7 Matthew 9:30 is not the first time Jesus demanded secrecy. Read back in Matthew 8:4 and explain why you think Jesus would do this? Why do you think these demands were somewhat ignored?
- 8 Twice in today's text Jesus talks about the "faith" of the person being functional in their healing, and this is not the first time we hear this. Considering all the miracles that have preceded, how would you define the "faith" that Jesus has been acknowledging? Define some key attributes of this faith.





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

It would seem that nothing will faze Jesus as he continues on his ministry, but the tension is heating up as the Pharisees and scribes observe his actions and the response of the people. His authority seems to be without limit. The Pharisees say his power must be from the prince of demons. What seems like simple “name-calling” will become something more. What obstacles have you experienced as you have tried to live out your faith? Are you experiencing any? Jesus was called names, labeled blasphemous, and eventually killed for his work on our behalf. This should encourage us as we run into obstacles, but does it? Is there something that you could do this week that would reveal the humble, compassionate, and active faith that glorifies our King?



ENDING DISCIPLES

MATTHEW 9:35-10:15

³⁵ And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.

³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸ therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

¹ And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

² The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. ⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere

among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶ but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

⁷ And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' ⁸

Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay. ⁹

Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, ¹⁰ no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food. ¹¹ And

whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. ¹² As you enter the house, greet it. ¹³ And if the house

is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. ¹⁴ And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. ¹⁵ Truly,

I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town.





INTRODUCTION

Much of the gospel since the Sermon on the Mount has focused on Jesus' authority not just in his teaching but in how he lived each day. Here we see that his authority is intended for those that follow him as well. Jesus' disciples are to become delegates of his kingdom bringing his gracious authority with them.

DISCUSSION

- 1 The Greek word under "compassion" can mean "guts." What are the things that you would say move you "in your guts"? How would you compare the things that move you to the things that move Jesus?
- 2 In this situation, Jesus sees his people as harassed and helpless. How do you feel seeing Jesus respond as a shepherd?
- 3 What is Jesus' next step after he sees the needs in Matthew 9:36? Does he immediately solve all of the problems or something else? What does his response imply?
- 4 Compare Matthew 9:35 and Matthew 10:1. How is this language almost identical? What are the possible implications of this?

- 5 Read Matthew 28:16-20. Compare and contrast the Great Commission with the commissioning of the disciples here in Matthew 10:1-15. What are the key differences?
- 6 Matthew is a tax collector. Simon is a Zealot. Why would these two who would oppose each other in Israel, be called together by Jesus? Do you have any example from your life where you worked well with someone very different to you, maybe even at odds with you?
- 7 What do you think it means when Jesus says “the kingdom of heaven is at hand” in this context?
- 8 Why is the judgment to come worse than Sodom and Gomorrah? Read Matthew 11:20-24 and identify what is the appropriate response to Jesus and his work?





GOSPEL MOTIVATION

In Matthew 10: 8 Jesus prepares his disciples to be sent out with the words “you received without paying; give without pay.” What have the disciples received at this point? They have had the benefit of following him and seeing his miracles firsthand. They now have received the gift of his delegated authority. They are now supposed to give without payment. God’s grace is a huge topic, and in a small way it is represented here. We too have received God’s grace. Are we good at passing it along? Where do you struggle in being gracious to others? Does your graciousness come with “strings attached”? Ask someone close to you this week how gracious they think you are to those with whom you come into contact? Listen carefully and humbly.



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