A person in silhouette stands on a sandy beach, looking out at the ocean under a golden sunset sky. The waves are breaking on the shore, and the overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

# *My anxious thoughts I give to God*

*Worry Free*

*Faith Filled*

*Compiled by Dr. Harold Bollinger*

*Matthew 6:34*

*"So don't worry about tomorrow,  
for tomorrow will bring its own  
worries. Today's trouble is enough  
for today."*

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## Forward

### Philippians 4:6-7

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Imagine never being “anxious about anything”! It seems like an impossibility—we all have worries on the job, in our homes, at school. But Paul’s advice is to turn our worries into prayers. Do you want to worry less? Then pray more! Whenever you start to worry, stop and pray.

God’s peace is different from the world’s peace (see John 14:27). True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing that God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ’s kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and we can have victory over sin. Let God’s peace guard your heart against anxiety.

It is good to work and plan responsibly; it is bad to dwell on all the ways our planning could go wrong. Worry is pointless because it can’t fill any of our needs; worry is foolish because the Creator of the universe loves us and knows what we need.

Throughout this study, we will see many encouraging Scriptures that show us the need of trusting everything to Christ.

## Chapter 1



**Be not worried about your life.**

### **Matthew 6:25**

"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

Because of the ill effects of worry, Jesus tells us not to worry about those needs that God promises to supply. Worry may

- (1) Damage your health,
- (2) Cause the object of your worry to consume your thoughts,
- (3) Disrupt your productivity,
- (4) Negatively affect the way you treat others, and
- (5) Reduce your ability to trust in God.

- (6) Here is the difference between worry and genuine concern—worry immobilizes, but concern moves you to action.

**Do not worry about what you shall eat or wear.**

**Luke 12:22**

And He said to His disciples, "For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on.

The people flocked to Jesus because they had heard about his great miracle in raising Lazarus from the dead. Their adoration was short-lived and their commitment shallow, for in a few days they would do nothing to stop his crucifixion.

Devotion based only on curiosity or popularity fades quickly.

**Do not worry about tomorrow.**

**Matthew 6:34**

"So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

## **SEVEN REASONS NOT TO WORRY**

Matt. 6:25 The same God who created life in you can be trusted with the details of your life.

Matt. 6:26 Worrying about the future hampers your efforts for today.

Matt. 6:27 Worrying is more harmful than helpful.

Matt. 6:28-30 God does not ignore those who depend on him.

Matt. 6:31-32 Worry shows a lack of faith in and understanding of God.

Matt. 6:33 There are real challenges God wants us to pursue, and worrying keeps us from them.

Matt 6:34 living one day at a time keeps us from being consumed with worry.

### **The deceitfulness of wealth can cause unfruitfulness.**

#### **Matthew 13:22**

"And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

How easy it is to agree with Christ with no intention of obeying. It is easy to denounce worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth, and still do nothing to change our ways.

In light of eternal life with God, are your present worries justified? If you had everything you could want but forfeited eternal life with God, would those things be so desirable?

**Worries of the world will choke the Word out.**

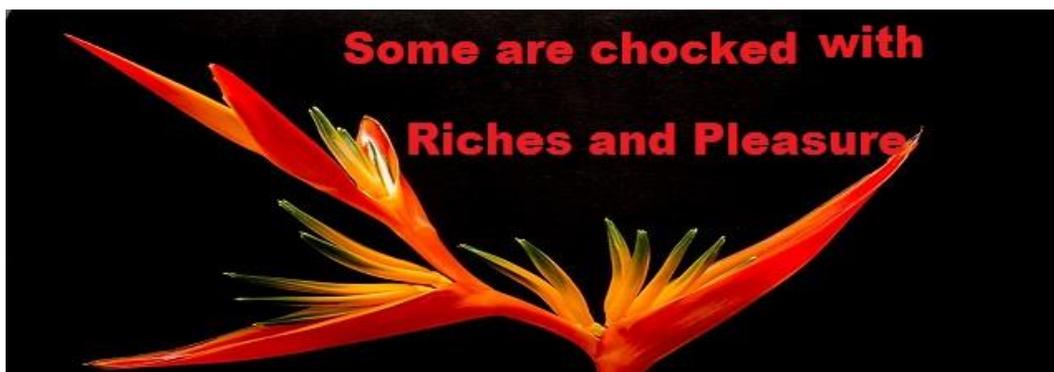
**Mark 4:19**

But the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

Worldly worries, the false sense of security brought on by prosperity, and the desire for things plagued first-century disciples as they do us today. How easy it is for our daily routines to become overcrowded.

A life packed with materialistic pursuits deafens us to God's Word. Stay free so you can hear God when he speaks.

## Chapter 2



**Some are choked with riches and pleasures of life.**

### **Luke 8:14**

"The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

"Path" people, like many of the religious leaders, refused to believe God's message. "Rock" people, like many in the crowds who followed Jesus, believed his message but never got around to doing anything about it.

"Thorn patch" people, overcome by worries and the lure of materialism, left no room in their lives for God. "Good soil" people, in contrast to all the other groups, followed Jesus no matter what the cost.

## **Do not keep worrying**

### **Luke 12:29**

"And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying.

Jesus commands us not to worry. But how can we avoid it? Only faith can free us from the anxiety caused by greed and covetousness.

It is good to work and plan responsibly; it is bad to dwell on all the ways our planning could go wrong. Worry is pointless because it can't fill any of our needs; worry is foolish because the Creator of the universe loves us and knows what we need.

He promises to meet all our real needs, but not necessarily all our desires.

**Don't let your hearts be weighted down with life's worries.**

### **Luke 21:34**

"Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap;

Jesus told the disciples to keep a constant watch for his return. Although nearly 2,000 years have passed since he spoke these words, their truth remains:

Christ is coming again, and we need to watch and be spiritually fit. This means working faithfully at the tasks God has given us. Don't let your mind and spirit be dulled by careless living, drinking, or the foolish pursuit of pleasure. Don't let life's anxieties overburden you, so that you will be ready to move at God's command.

**Some married men are concerned only about their wives.**

### **1 Corinthians 7:33**

But one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife.

Some single people feel tremendous pressure to be married. They think their lives can be complete only with a spouse. But Paul underlines one advantage of being single—the potential of a greater focus on Christ and his work. If you are unmarried, use your special opportunity to serve Christ wholeheartedly.

**Do not let your heart be troubled.**

### **John 14:1**

"Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me.

Jesus' words show that the way to eternal life, though unseen, is secure—as secure as your trust in Jesus. He has already prepared the

way to eternal life. The only issue that may still be unsettled is your willingness to believe.

## **Your Heavenly Father will feed you.**

### **Matthew 6:26-32**

Matthew 6:26-32

Look at the birds. They don't need to plant or harvest or put food in barns because your heavenly Father feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than they are.

Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? Of course not.

"And why worry about your clothes? Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and gone tomorrow, won't he more surely care for you? You have so little faith!

"So don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing. Why be like the pagans who are so deeply concerned about these things? Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs,

To “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness” means to turn to God first for help, to fill your thoughts with his desires, to take his character for your pattern, and to serve and obey him in everything. What is really important to you?

People, objects, goals, and other desires all compete for priority. Any of these can quickly bump God out of first place if you don't actively choose to give him first place in *every* area of your life.

## Chapter 3



**God clothes the grass. He will clothe you.**

### **Luke 12:27-30**

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

And seek not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things?

Jesus commands us not to worry. But how can we avoid it? Only faith can free us from the anxiety caused by greed and covetousness. It is good to work and plan responsibly; it is bad to dwell on all the ways our planning could go wrong.

Worry is pointless because it can't fill any of our needs; worry is foolish because the Creator of the universe loves us and knows what we need. He promises to meet all our real needs, but not necessarily all our desires.

## **The disciples cried out in fear.**

### **Matthew 8:25**

And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!"

Although the disciples had witnessed many miracles, they panicked in this storm. As experienced sailors, they knew its danger; what they did not know was that Christ could control the forces of nature. There is often a stormy area of our human nature where we feel God can't or won't work.

When we truly understand who God is, however, we will realize that he controls both the storms of nature and the storms of the troubled heart. Jesus' power that calmed this storm can also help us deal with the problems we face.

Jesus is willing to help if we only ask him. We should never discount his power even in terrible trials.

## **Jesus cares when you are perishing.**

### **Mark 4:38**

Jesus Himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?"

The Sea of Galilee is 680 feet below sea level and is surrounded by hills. Winds blowing across the land intensify close to the sea, often causing violent and unexpected storms. The disciples were seasoned fishermen

who had spent their lives fishing on this huge lake, but during this squall they panicked.

The disciples panicked because the storm threatened to destroy them all, and Jesus seemed unaware and unconcerned. Theirs was a physical storm, but storms come in other forms.

Think about the storms in your life—the situations that cause you great anxiety. Whatever your difficulty, you have two options:

You can worry and assume that Jesus no longer cares, or you can resist fear, putting your trust in him. When you feel like panicking, confess your need for God and then trust him to care for you.

### **Jesus rebuked the winds and waves.**

#### **Luke 8:24**

They came to Jesus and woke Him up, saying, "Master, Master, we are perishing!" And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm.

The Sea of Galilee (actually a large lake) is even today the scene of fierce storms, sometimes with waves as high as 20 feet. Jesus' disciples were not frightened without cause. Even though several of them were expert fishermen and knew how to handle a boat, their peril was real.

## **Jesus tells us not to doubt.**

### **Matthew 14:31**

Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed over 5,000 people. What he was originally given seemed insufficient, but in his hands it became more than enough.

We often feel that our contribution to Jesus is meager, but he can use and multiply whatever we give him, whether it is talent, time, or treasure. It is when we give them to Jesus that our resources are multiplied.

The text states that there were 5,000 men present, *besides* women and children. Therefore, the total number of people Jesus fed could have been 10 to 15 thousand.

The number of men is listed separately because in the Jewish culture of the day, men and women usually ate separately when in public. The children ate with the women.

## **Do not say that you have no bread.**

### **Matthew 16:8**

But Jesus, aware of this, said, "You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread?"

## Chapter 4



**Israel shall be scattered to the ends of the earth.**

### **Deuteronomy 28:64-65**

"Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known."

Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul.

This severe warning tragically came true when Israel was defeated and carried away into captivity by Assyria (722 B.C.), and Judah to Babylonia (586 B.C.). Later, in A.D. 70, Roman oppression forced many Jews to flee their homeland. Thus the people were dispersed throughout the various nations.

## **In the midst of distress, Israel was overtaken**

### **Lamentations 1:3**

Judah has gone into exile under affliction and under harsh servitude; she dwells among the nations, but she has found no rest; all her pursuers have overtaken her In the midst of distress.

The term *lovers* refer to nations such as Egypt, to whom Judah kept turning for help. As the Babylonians closed in on Jerusalem, the nation of Judah turned away from God and sought help and protection from other nations instead.

## **God will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem.**

### **Ezekiel 4:16-17**

Moreover, He said to me, "Son of man, behold, I am going to break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they will eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and drink water by measure and in horror, because bread and water will be scarce; and they will be appalled with one another and waste away in their iniquity.

Ezekiel's unusual actions symbolically portrayed the fate of Jerusalem. He lay on his left side for 390 days to show that Israel would be punished for 390 years; then he lay on his right side for 40 days to show that Judah would be punished for 40 years. Ezekiel was not allowed to move, symbolizing the fact that the people of Jerusalem would be imprisoned within the walls of the city.

We know that Ezekiel did not have to lie on his side all day because these verses tell of other tasks God asked him to do during this time. The small amount of food he was allowed to eat represented the normal ration provided to those living in a city under siege by enemy armies. The food that was to be cooked over human excrement was a symbol of Judah's spiritual uncleanness.

### **Violence will cause anxiety.**

#### **Ezekiel 12:19**

"Then say to the people of the land, 'Thus says the Lord GOD concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel, 'They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water with horror, because their land will be stripped of its fullness on account of the violence of all who live in it.

These two short messages were warnings that God's words would come true—*soon!* Less than six years later, Jerusalem would be destroyed. Yet the people were skeptical.

Unbelief and false security led them to believe it would never happen. The apostle Peter dealt with this problem in the church (2 Peter 3:9). It is dangerous to say Christ will never return or to regard his coming as so far in the future as to be irrelevant today.

All that God says is sure to happen. Don't dare assume that you have plenty of time to get right with God.

## **Anger and wrath lead to evil doing.**

### **Psalm 37:8**

Cease from anger and forsake wrath; do not fret; it leads only to evildoing.

Anger and worry (fretting) are two very destructive emotions. They reveal a lack of faith that God loves us and is in control. We should not worry; instead, we should trust in God, giving ourselves to him for his use and safekeeping.

When you dwell on your problems, you will become anxious and angry. But if you concentrate on God and his goodness, you will find peace. Where do you focus your attention?

## **A good word makes the heart glad.**

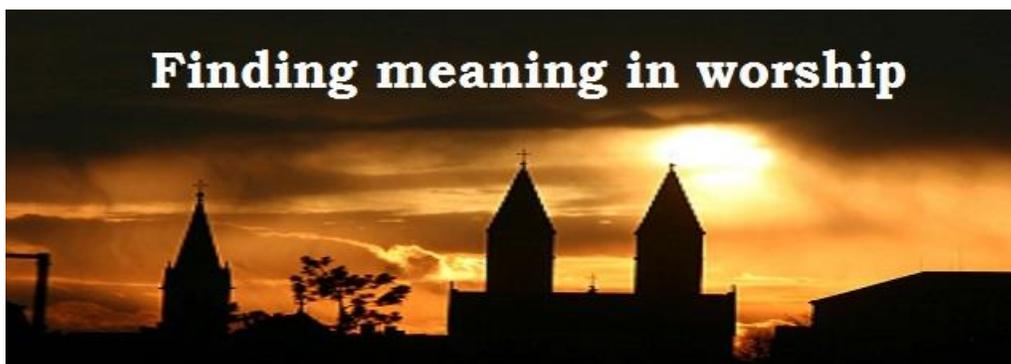
### **Proverbs 12:25**

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.

The diligent make wise use of their possessions and resources; the lazy waste them. Waste has become a way of life for many who live in a land of plenty.

Waste is poor stewardship. Make good use of everything God has given you, and prize it.

## Chapter 5



### Finding meaning in worship.

#### Luke 10:40-42

But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me."

But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Mary and Martha both loved Jesus. On this occasion they were both serving him. But Martha thought Mary's style of serving was inferior to hers. She didn't realize that in her desire to serve, she was actually neglecting her guest. Some are so busy doing things *for* Jesus that you're not spending any time *with* him? Don't let your service become self-serving.

Jesus did not blame Martha for being concerned about household chores. He was only asking her to set priorities. It is possible for service to Christ to degenerate into mere busywork that is no longer full of devotion to God.

**Worry will not add time to your life.**

**Matthew 6:27**

"And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?"

**Luke 12:25**

"And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span?"

Seeking the kingdom of God means making Jesus the Lord and King of your life. He must control every area—your work, play, plans, and relationships. Is the kingdom only one of your many concerns, or is it central to all you do?

Are you holding back any areas of your life from God's control? As Lord and Creator, he wants to help provide what you need as well as guide how you use what he provides.

**A steadfast mind will keep in perfect peace.**

**Isaiah 26:3**

"The steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you.

We can never avoid strife in the world around us, but with God we can know perfect peace even in turmoil. When we are devoted to him, our whole attitude is steady and stable. Supported by God's unchanging love and mighty power, we are not shaken by the surrounding chaos (see Phil. 4:7). Do you want peace? Keep your thoughts on and your trust in God.

**Seek God's kingdom and blessings will be added.**

**Matthew 6:33**

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

To "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness" means to turn to God first for help, to fill your thoughts with his desires, to take his character for your pattern, and to serve and obey him in everything. What is really important to you?

People, objects, goals, and other desires all compete for priority. Any of these can quickly bump God out of first place if you don't actively choose to give him first place in *every* area of your life.

## **Luke 12:31**

"But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

Seeking the kingdom of God means making Jesus the Lord and King of your life. He must control every area—your work, play, plans, and relationships.

Is the kingdom only one of your many concerns, or is it central to all you do? Are you holding back any areas of your life from God's control?

As Lord and Creator, he wants to help provide what you need as well as guide how you use what he provides.

Money seen as an end in itself quickly traps us and cuts us off from both God and the needy. The key to using money wisely is to see how much we can use for God's purposes, not how much we can accumulate for ourselves. Does God's love touch your wallet? Does your money free you to help others? If so, you are storing up lasting treasures in heaven. If your financial goals and possessions hinder you from giving generously, loving others, or serving God, sell what you must to bring your life into perspective.

## Chapter 6



**Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord**

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### **Jeremiah 17:7-8**

"Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD And whose trust is the LORD. "For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought Nor cease to yield fruit.

Two kinds of people are contrasted here: those who trust in human beings and those who trust in the Lord. The people of Judah were trusting in false gods and military alliances instead of God, and thus they were barren and unfruitful.

In contrast, those who trust in the Lord flourish like trees planted by water (see Psalm 1). In times of trouble, those who trust in human beings will be impoverished and spiritually weak, so they will have no strength to draw on.

But those who trust in the Lord will have abundant strength, not only for their own needs, but even for the needs of others.

### **The mind set on the spirit is life and peace**

#### **Romans 8:6**

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Paul divides people into two categories—those who let themselves be controlled by their sinful natures, and those who follow after the Holy Spirit. All of us would be in the first category if Jesus hadn't offered us a way out. Once we have said yes to Jesus, we will want to continue following him, because his way brings life and peace.

Daily we must consciously choose to center our lives on God. Use the Bible to discover God's guidelines, and then follow them. In every perplexing situation ask yourself, "What would Jesus want me to do?"

When the Holy Spirit points out what is right, do it eagerly. For more on our sinful natures versus our new life in Christ, see Romans 6:6-8, Ephes. 4:22-24; Col. 3:3-15.

**God will never allow the righteous to be forsaken.**

#### **Psalm 55:22**

Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.

God wants us to cast our cares on him, but often we continue to bear them ourselves even when we say we are trusting in him. Trust the same strength that sustains you to carry your cares also.

### **Be anxious for nothing.**

#### **Philippians 4:6-7**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Imagine never being “anxious about anything”! It seems like an impossibility. We all have worries on the job, in our homes, at school. But Paul’s advice is to turn our worries into prayers. Do you want to worry less? Then pray more! Whenever you start to worry, stop and pray.

God’s peace is different from the world’s peace (see John 14:27). True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing that God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ’s kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and we can have victory over sin. Let God’s peace guard your heart against anxiety.

**Your consolations delight my soul.**

**Psalm 94:18-19**

If I should say, "My foot has slipped," Your loving kindness, O LORD, will hold me up. When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, your consolations delight my soul.

**Lord, try me and know my thoughts.**

**Psalm 139:23**

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts.

David's hatred for his enemies came from his zeal for God. David regarded his enemies as God's enemies, so his hatred was a desire for God's righteous justice and not for personal vengeance. Is it all right to be angry at people who hate God? Yes, but we must remember that it is God who will deal with them, not us. If we truly love God, then we will be deeply hurt if someone hates him. David asked God to search his heart and mind and point out any wrong motives that may have been behind his strong words. But while we seek justice against evil, we must also pray that God's enemies will turn to him before he judges them (see Matthew 5:44).

David asked God to search for sin and point it out, even to the level of testing his thoughts. This is exploratory surgery for sin.

How are we to recognize sin unless God points it out? Then, when God shows us, we can repent and be forgiven. Make this verse your prayer. If you ask the Lord to search your heart and your thoughts and to reveal your sin, you will be continuing on God's "way everlasting."

### **Cast all your anxiety on the Lord.**

#### **1 Peter 5:7**

Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

Carrying your worries, stresses, and daily struggles by yourself shows that you have not trusted God fully with your life. It takes humility, however, to recognize that God cares, to admit your need, and to let others in God's family help you.

Sometimes we think that struggles caused by our own sin and foolishness are not God's concern. But when we turn to God in repentance, he will bear the weight even of those struggles.

Letting God have your anxieties calls for action, not passivity. Don't submit to circumstances, but to the Lord who controls circumstances.

**To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:** Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

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