

Holl-10 De Gekruisigde God (The Crucified God)

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing God crucified and understanding the horror of sin in order to have a true and deep faith.

Duration: 1:05:53

Scripture: Psalm 22:17, Isaiah 53:5, Luke 9:23, John 12:32, Romans 6:6, 1 Corinthians 1:18, Galatians 6:14

Topics: "Holland"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of the cross of Christ and the need to boast only in it. He highlights the sacrifice Jesus made, being humiliated and crucified to save humanity from humiliation. The preacher also discusses the significance of the wounds in Jesus' hands, head, and feet, representing our thoughts and practices. He warns about the increasing casualties and problems in the world, particularly regarding sexual immorality, and emphasizes the importance of considering these issues to maintain a strong witness. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the crucifixion of Christ and the need to love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Transcript

Christ Christed us. Maybe we've seen it, but we've not seen it. Maybe we need to see it by a light from heaven, which is another kind of seeing.

Maybe we've been able to accept it much too readily and too easily. It has just not offended us as much as it ought. We have really not been scared by the repulsiveness of it.

Or been stunned by its horror. The faith has become domesticated. The sting is out.

But it needs to be reframed. I was having a very interesting conversation with my brother Mark before we came tonight. It's something that traveling evangelists don't often confess one to another.

But it explains why their sleep is so frequently disrupted. All the more as their message is earnest and touches the kingdom of heaven. They're roasted in the night hours.

Sexual provocations. The enemy playing on any slight wisp of vulnerability. This stubborn thing that will not go.

This thing that polite Christianity will not discuss. This thing that we cover up and look the other way. And will not bring to the light.

And for which reason we suffer terrible harassment. Was the subject of our conversation. I don't know if you're aware of the statistics.

It's growing and impressive. Of the number of formidable leaders in Christianity and charismatic, impressive figures. Who have run off with the organist.

Of the woman whom they were counseling. The casualties are increasing. It's interesting that at the final end of the ages.

Sex really becomes the dominant issue. It's brought to an ultimate conclusion the one way or the other. There's going to be a marriage supper of the Lamb.

A wedding, a joining between the bride and the bridegroom. A holy event for which all eternity has waited and shall rejoice. And the other alternative? And there's no middle ground? A whole world drinking from the cup of fornication.

We ought to begin to consider these things now. Lest the casualties increase. And our witness be compromised.

And Satan have nothing to fear in us. Because he sees us in our private moments. When we have condescended to such lusts.

And he knows the weakness that has compromised us. And we have not overcome. I'm just speaking as a fool tonight, okay? Somehow the cross of Jesus Christ figures into all this.

My brain is not yet clever enough to figure it out. But my spirit is going off like an alarm. And we shall be the victims of such compromised deaths.

For which the intensity of the temptation shall increase enormously as we come deeper into the end of the age. To the degree to which we have not really appropriated the cross of Christ Jesus. I won't tell you the name of the ministry.

But it's very famous in the United States. Because it so celebrates the cross. Its theology is shot through with references to the cross.

And I came there as a speaker. And the Lord gave me the most peculiar message. You really have to be American to appreciate this.

Because you guys know the kind of franchises that we have in America. Long John Silver and McDonald's and what else? Burger King. Everyone likes the other.

These buildings go up overnight. Sharing the identical commodities. You know the way we Americans have a flair to create a certain kind of architectural atmosphere? We can make something look very rustic and homey and country-ish.

But we do it with plastic beams. They look like great hand-tuned oak beams. But who can afford such a thing today? And where's the man with the skill to do it? So we make a similitude of it.

Out of plastic. Which looks like it has the appearance. It's okay because it's up on the ceiling, you can't reach it.

And it's not really required to sustain any weight. But if you should have the occasion ever to wrap it with your knuckles, it's absolutely hollow. And if you should by chance step on it, it'll smash right through.

You know what the message was, what gave me this ministry? This cross-centered ministry. Your cross is not a wooden beam. It's a plastic similitude.

I wonder for how many of us is that true? We have only the plastic similitude. But we have not the bloody cross. And it shows.

In compromise. In deceit. In lying.

In fornication. In masturbation. In giving ourselves over to our own indulgences.

In our minds being occupied with such things. Because we have not come to the real cross in truth. In this cheap and easy and glib age.

In which we can franchise hamburgers and fish. In which we can franchise hamburgers and fish. We have also franchised a kind of gospel.

It gives every appearance of being the real thing. But don't wrap it too hard. It'll not take any weight.

And there is a God who is booting over you tonight. Who knows only too well the weight that shall come. There's a lot of cheap things going on.

There's a whole Jesus culture. You know already that I'm sick of it. If I see one more Jesus t-shirt I'll vomit.

I don't even want to see portraits and pictures and paintings. To assure me of how masculine he was. I don't even want to see him by the flesh.

I don't care how ingenious the artist is. He can never do justice to the Lord of Glory. And any attempt humanly to depict him will be less than what he is.

I'll wait for the revelation that comes from the light from heaven, thank you. And you can keep your cheap pictures. But the same thing has happened also with the cross.

I understand that there are men who are making absolute fortunes today. In the Christian junk jewellery business. And how many bosoms have I seen a cross dangling? No, the bosom of the Frau.

More to attract our attention to the bosom than to the cross. We don't yet dare take this word holy in our mouths too casually. You shall be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.

And holy as he is holy. He is very holy. Because this is an age of extremity.

And we're rushing toward radical conclusions. And either we're going to be very holy. Or not at all.

Are you remembering that one of the evidences of the end of the age is a great falling away? When the love of many shall go cold. Many! Where are they going to come from? Some will come out of this room. Out of the whole inflated Christendom that exists today.

When iniquity shall abound. It's abounding more and more daily. Very seductive and powerful.

And if it's only a plastic cross to which we've come. Piece of cheap junk jewellery. We are almost assured that we will be among the victim.

So we need to have the cross raised for us in truth. And something branded into our hearts and spirits. Someone prayed this morning about loving righteousness and hating iniquity.

Such a thing will be for us a saving grace. But you'll only hate iniquity to this degree. That you really understand what it cost God.

So I want to talk to you about God crucified. I'm actually quoting the title of a book by a German theologian. Isn't it amazing when God quickens something by His Spirit.

That you all along known but not known. And when you see the title of a book. All of a sudden you're stabbed.

It's God crucified. God crucified. Well I can say that a hundred times and yell it at the top of my lungs.

But there's no guarantee that it will penetrate your heart. The Spirit of God has got to stab you. God crucified.

Maybe some of you know the painting that is so celebrated by the sisters of Mary at Darmstadt. It's called the Eisenheim Altar. Painted by a 16th century artist by the name of Grunewald.

It's one of those things that they used to put over the altar that folds up with leaves and has paintings of the crucifixion. You've never seen it. I would recommend it to you.

It's the only depiction of Christ crucified that I will ever endorse. So many of them look like a ballet dancer on his toes. Some of them look almost sensual.

A man with rippling muscles and really an extended torso. Not bad. But this one is a horror.

It is so grotesque you can barely dare to look at it. Therefore I suspect it was painted by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. You never saw a more gruesome figure.

You can hardly discern whether it's a man or some kind of mangled beast. Even the technology of this painting is remarkable. It's four centuries old and it looks like it was painted yesterday.

The freshness and the abounding power and the vitality of this painting. The fingers are all gnarled up in death. And the face bears the imprint of the final paroxysm of suffering.

The lips are white and the eyes are sunken deep in the skull. There is no communist that we should desire him. Marred more than any man.

And flecked over with blood that has coagulated and hardened. The artist has even indicated the spit. There are pieces of metal and wood actually in the flesh from the flagellations.

And the whole power, the hue of the body is like a ganglion in the flesh. It's a greenish color. Ganglion, it's corruption.

Unbelievably ugly. It's a statement of such suffering. Pitiful wretch of a figure.

And I've seen it now maybe three or four times. It's in Colmar, France, near Alsace-Lorraine on the French-German border. Colmar, C-O-L-M-A-R, L-L-M-A-R.

If you ever get a chance, don't miss it. It may be more important than three months of instruction in Latin. And every time I see it, I have a strange impression.

Of course, these artists always depict the crucified Christ with a loin cloth. It was a tradition of the medieval and renaissance artists. But there's not a shred of evidence in the scriptures to support that it actually was there.

Part of the torture, the pain of the cross was its shame. The nakedness of the victim stripped of his clothing. Whose arms are nailed to the cross.

And unable to cover himself. How shall I say it? Jesus bore this unspeakable humiliation. This revelation of the privacy of his sexual parts.

That we, because of that, may not be compromised in that area. I'm speaking like a fool. I have never before ever said that anywhere at any time.

But I think we need to hear it. What is there about human nature that somehow takes the speed out and learns to make of that horror a theology. And makes of it tenets of the faith, principles of the faith.

That somehow we can speak glibly about the punishment. And even sing he was wounded for my transgression. And go home that night and masturbate.

If ever we needed light from heaven. It's here. A revelation from God.

Of this suffering. Of this revelation. Of God crucified.

I don't think anything else will keep us. Nothing else will give us a horror for sin. Nothing else will keep us from crucifying the Son of God afresh.

Than to understand. Really understand. What God suffered.

In humiliation. In unspeakable pain. In the degradation at the hands of men.

In the sense of being forsaken even by God. Outside the camp on the gunk heap. A place of shame.

Cursed is every man that hangeth upon a tree. To hear the taunts of Jewish religious men. Come down and we will believe you.

He saved others, let him save himself. Have you understood this much? There is something about the nature of suffering. That is unlike anything else.

When it comes to a revelation of truth. Suffering reveals. As nothing else can.

Have you ever experienced that in your own suffering? Somehow you are on a feverish sickbed. You are nigh unto death. Or at least you feel that way.

And the things that would have occupied you while you were healthy. The things you could have given your time and your attention. Would have had long and serious discussions.

Somehow become terribly irrelevant in that moment. Suffering is like a hot knife through butter. It simplifies everything.

It gets right to the heart of the issues. And makes things bare and reveals them as they really are. As nothing else will.

That is why the great schools of theatre have always celebrated suffering. More so than the people of God. We haven't aged much in this.

But we need to. Because we are being called to the same end. Someone said that if anyone shall talk as Christ talked.

And walk as Christ walked. They'll suffer the same conclusion. And they shall hate us and kill us and claim they are doing God a favor.

And we shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. At the same time when the love of many shall grow cold. Because iniquity abounds.

Especially this kind of iniquity. Why shall they hate us? Because they cannot stand the contradiction between our faces and our spirit and their practice. The spirit of the world is going to increasingly say, come lie with me.

And if you will not, you will drive them to a fury. You ever hear the expression, there is no fury like a woman spurned? You spurn the whore from Babylon. You reject her cup of communication.

And you'll experience a fury unlike anything you've known. I've never forgotten one of the earliest experiences in my young believing life. I was only a few months old in the faith.

I was saved by a God whom I was not seeking. He brought me to himself in Jerusalem. And I came back to the teaching profession in California.

Lost all my friends the first night back. And the giving of my first testimony. But there was a Jewish teacher who was on the same faculty with me.

And we used to eat together at the faculty cafeteria. And I was a young and jealous believer. And I was always witnessing to her, as much as I knew my ignorance.

Maybe I had two or three or four scriptures. But I remember an occasion when we were eating and I was strangely stoned. This was a woman who was in a continuous state of adulthood.

And because she did not believe in sin and guilt, she had to run to a psychiatrist twice a week for the alleviation of the pressure. She took pills to put her to sleep and pills to wake her up. A pathetic wretch.

Full of intellectual presumption and pride. Arrogant and alienated from God. A picture of the world.

And here I was eating, not saying a word to her. Minding my own business. And yet I was conscious that she was growing increasingly restless.

And even irritated. And finally vexed. And I looked up with wide eyes of innocence and she couldn't contain herself any longer.

And she exploded with these words. She said, even when you're silent, you're a living accusation. I've never forgotten that statement.

There's a reason why the Lord has had me to remember it. That shall be the world's statement to us. If we shall go on to follow the Lamb, with it so ever He goes.

To the very end of the age. An age that is coming to its radical conclusion. The forces of light and darkness that will eventually collide.

If we're going to be holy, we'll be very holy. Or we'll be not at all. That's how polarized the world is going to become.

Those who can casually sing about the holiness of God tonight will not be able to sing at the end. Except they have come to such a deep place in Him. That they know His perfection and His holiness.

That they are overcomers in Him. That the axe has been laid to the root of their own life. And they can rejoice in their overcoming.

And have come to that true freedom in Christ. By those who have appropriated the cross in truth. And not merely acknowledge it as correct doctrine.

Or wear it around their neck as jewelry. Or have it as a plastic thing. Have we entered into this? Have we been reminded that Jesus died naked? He suffered unspeakable shame.

That we should be shameless before Him. And not bring reproach to His name. Nor blaspheme it by our own infidelity.

Nor blaspheme it by our own infidelity. He died naked. Left the world naked.

And He came into the world in the same condition. Isn't it interesting that it's the same species of nakedness that we celebrate both? The only fellowship that I have ever visited in the world will have become overwhelmingly aware of the Holy Presence of God in the moment of setting foot on their property. I didn't experience that here.

Only with them. Who have the deepest sense of the sufferings of Christ. And I don't know how I can explain this to you.

And one of my visits to them I brought home a terracotta figurine of the baby Jesus. It's an embarrassment for Brooklyn, Jill. What would you do with sentimental little things like that? I have nothing to do with sentimental things.

Merely because it was an infant does not make it sentimental. Although you can sentimentalize both it and the cross. When you go to where I've just come in the meeting room there was a big cross on the wall behind me.

Very unique. I've never seen anything like it. It was all roses.

Panels of flowers set up in the form of a cross. Very pretty. Very impressive.

But a lie. Satan would love to see it all sentimentalized. But we need to see it in its color.

We have to understand that it was God who came down from heaven to earth. And was born into the earth naked as a helpless dependent infant. That's what impressed me with this figurine.

The infant was armed like this with a beatific expression on his face of complete trust. It's a sublime thing. But he was naked.

It's a humiliation for God to come in as a form of a man and say, what was wrong with a man? Higher form of life on earth. For us it might be something that for God it's a humiliation to be imprisoned in the form of a man and to come down from heaven and lay aside his glory as a dependent little infant. And live a life of obscurity and hiddenness.

And suffer the rejection of his people. And to conclude his life in an unspeakable torture of which words cannot describe of which the scripture says ends in crucifixion. Even God does not attempt to understand it.

And left the world as he entered it naked. That's your king? I want to tell you a review that does not touch Jewish taste. They don't have much stomach for kings that come running in on the back of horses upon which never man sat.

A picture of utter foolishness and weakness and humiliation. Jerking its way down the Mount of Olives. Not very kingly by human standards.

Dying in the place of sin that God would keep. Then his disciples couldn't stand the sight of it and fled. That dangling piece of flesh.

That's God. And you say Art, why was that necessary? I can't answer you. But in this book on the crucified God you know what the German theologian says? He says, do you know where true faith begins? Not plastic faith.

True faith. The kind that will keep you from masturbation and from fornication and from the indulgence of flesh. Do you know where true overcoming faith begins? The place where an atheist would say it should end.

That confounds any kind of logic and reason. That confounds any kind of logic and reason. There's not a religion on earth that has such an event as this as its center and its means but Christianity.

It's an offense of offenses. Who can understand these things? But he says, the scripture says he suffered for our transgressions. He was wounded for our transgressions.

And he was bruised for our iniquities. All we like sheep have gone astray. And the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all.

It pleased the Lord to bruise him. He suffered for the transgressors. Do you want to know how horrible sin is in God's sight? Do you want to see as God sees? For that alone is truth and anything less than that is error or deception.

See God crucified. See God nakedly hanging. See this excruciating suffering.

And you'll understand his horror of sin. Has it been a horror for you? So much so that you could never consider to crucify the Son of Glory afresh. Or trample upon his blood by singing choruses that celebrate something of which we have little actual knowledge and experience in which many of us are contradicting in actual practice or thought or imagination.

He was wounded for our transgressions. Have you read Psalm 22 lately? What a picture of crucifixion. Maybe a thousand years in advance of the event.

He was wounded for our transgressions. I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax that is melted in the midst of my bowels.

14th verse, 14th. My strength is dried up like a potsherd and my tongue clearest to my jaws. Thou hast brought me into the dust of death.

My tongue clearest to my jaws. Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. They pierced my hands and my feet and I tell all my bones they look and stare upon me.

You know the wonderful hymn by Isaac Watts? When I survey the wondrous cross? Do you know this beautiful hymn that he recites here? When have you surveyed it last? Do you know what Finney was writing that I read today? He said he would not dream of traveling in ministry with any colleague who was not himself broken down before God at least once every two or three weeks. That encourages me to speak on this subject tonight because I am sure you know it all already anyway. But I don't think that I would list God to suggest that a frequent survey of the cross would be a good thing.

But I don't think that a frequent survey of the cross would be a good thing. We need to see the Lord high and lifted up. When I shall be lifted up I will draw all men to myself.

We need to remember what the heart of the faith is that staggers the minds of atheists and unbelieving Jews God crucified for our transgressions and our iniquities. Isaac Watts was inspired by the Holy Ghost to compose this hymn when I surveyed the wondrous cross in which the Prince of Glory died my richest gain I count but loss and poor contempt on all my pride only when you survey the wondrous cross anything else is play acting a gamesmanship a mere phraseology a subscribing to correct doctrine a plastic substitute we need to survey the wondrous cross in which the Prince of Glory died forbid it Lord that I should boast except in the cross of Christ my God any of us boast then? if not in words in countenance and in appearance you know how Phineas said he knew that conviction was coming into a people to whom he spoke that God was breaking them down by his spirit they couldn't hold their heads up they couldn't look at him they had to turn their faces away they looked down they were bowed over he said so long as he saw an audience that still continued to look up at him as the speaker he knew that God had not yet done his work of convicting power forbid it Lord that I should boast except in the cross of Christ my God all the vain things that charmed me most I sacrificed to his blood see from his head his hands his feet sorrow and love mingled down if he was naked in his private parts and humiliated there to save us from humiliation what shall we say of the significant wounds in hands and head and feet wounded in the head for our thoughts our sensual thought life and wounded in the hands for our practices for which reason many of us cannot yet lay hands upon others and send them forth wounded in the feet because we have carried our bodies to places where we ought not to have been you know about that shroud of Turin that famous linen thing that's been kept for centuries you know about that that shroud of Turin that famous in which there is considerable evidence that it was actually the shroud that covered the body of Jesus. Interesting that it should be coming out of hiding now in our generation.

It was just recently examined by a panel of experts and anatomists who know the human body and its structure. They counted over 200 lash marks on that body. So how could they have that kind of evidence? Because a strange thing happened in a certain explosive moment.

That took the coagulated blood that clung to this linen cloth and made of it a photographic negative in a blinding moment of light. So that every wound was registered on that sheet. 200 lash marks.

Profuse bleeding in the scalp from some kind of a thing that was pressed on the brow and the scalp. And ugly evidences of torture I can't even describe. See from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love mingle down.

See it. By the Spirit of God. See it.

I'm just being so much the fool tonight. I wouldn't even call this a sermon or a message. I'm simply trusting God.

That somehow he wanted Christ crucified preached. He wanted himself raised upon the cross before his people. That we might see it.

Really see it. Really celebrate it. Really acknowledge it.

For it alone can keep us. When we see the horror of what sin caused him. We shall love righteousness.

And hate iniquity. And keep ourselves. From crucifying the Son of God afresh.

Do you see it? Do you see it? In Isaiah 54 verse 8. He was cut off and out of the land of the living. He was cut off and out of the land of the living. Because of the transgressions of his people the plague was upon him.

There is something so surgical about that expression. So total. Talk about total God calling for total man.

Cut off and out of the land of the living. I'll tell you that that is more than just the issue of sin. It's a profound salvation for us.

If we have been joined with that one in that crucifixion. To be cut off and out. Such a radical separation from the world and from the flesh and from the devil.

For those who have had the same cross, the same axolotl to their roots. For those who have had the same cross, the same axolotl to their roots. I'll try and end this now.

Remember the eunuch that Philip led to the Lord in Acts 8? God taught so much of that man he took an evangelist from a field of successful ministry and joined him to one black man on his way to Ethiopia. God taught so much of that man he took an evangelist from a field of successful ministry and joined him to one black man on his way to Ethiopia. According to a Christian legend this one man brought Christianity to Africa.

According to a Christian legend this one man brought Christianity to Africa. It says an Ethiopian eunuch. Note that it is.

A man who has had the axe laid to the root. A man of great authority. Who has the charge of all of the Queen's treasure.

Jesus spoke at one time about eunuchs. He said there are some eunuchs that are born eunuchs. Poor biological freaks.

They never will have the physical enablement for the gratifications that are the right of all men. And there are some eunuchs that are made eunuchs by men. And there are also men that are made eunuchs by men.

If you talk about a horrible sin. And if you take in the scream and the scream that must have been when a man with his arms was held back and another man did the horrible thing. But he said there are some eunuchs that have made themselves eunuchs.

For the kingdom of heaven's sake. This Ethiopian eunuch was a man of great authority. And had charge of all the Queen's treasure.

Really only a eunuch can. Because he can be implicitly trusted. There is no way that he is going to usurp anything from that kingdom over which he has charge.

He is not going to appropriate anything of himself. Because the ax has been laid to the root. He has been cut off and out.

And God offers us also the same provision. The cross of Christ Jesus. Laid to the root of life.

That you might be cut off and out of the land of the living. The only man in my opinion that will be safe at the end of the age. The only believer.

Abounding with iniquity. Iniquity shall abound. Full of filth and lust.

Seductions of such power that you will stagger. Such subtlety and such sensuality. That it is taking its victims already among Christians.

Only a dead man can be safe. To whom the ax has been laid to the root of his life. Who has been cut off and out of the land of the living.

Who recognizes the horrible propensities of his flesh. That self-conscious discipleship is not the answer. That I'll never do this again is not the answer.

That whistling in the dark and singing the choruses is not the answer. There's only one answer. It's the cross of Christ Jesus.

Not the plastic composite. But the blood of the cross. The place of suffering and shame.

Where God bids us come. If any man would come after me, let him deny himself. Take up his cross.

When Christ bids a man come. When Christ bids a man come. He bids him come and die.

I had the strangest impression of that as I came into the room. As I surveyed the faces as you were singing about the holiness of God. A word came into my heart, spirit, unclean.

A contradiction of the word that was being sung, holy, holy. And the darkness of the faces. The flood of shadows.

Suggested something else. So I just wanted to stand with Paul tonight. And preach again Christ and Him crucified.

The power of God unto people. The power of God unto salvation. Not just in the hereafter.

But the here and now. For those who are cut off and out. Who have been joined with Him in that place.

Who have been made eunuchs for Christ. Who have welcomed the ax laid to the root. It's the power of God unto salvation.

I commend it to you. That we see this. And come to it.

And cleave to it. Till the end of the age. Shall we pray for that? I ask you precious God in Jesus' name.

To honor the obedience of your servant. Who has spoken the theme you have put in his heart. And have trusted the consequence to you.

If there is power in this cross. If suffering reveals. I ask you to demonstrate it now.

I ask for the spirit of revelation. That we might see. Christ and Him crucified.

God crucified. For our sins and our transgressions. I ask you to show us if we have played with the wrong cross.

And have preferred the plastic kind. Which is a lot lighter to carry. But cannot sustain weight.

You said that if you were raised up on the cross. You would draw men to yourself. I ask you to do it.

I ask you to find eunuchs in this room tonight. Who certainly were not born eunuchs. They were not compellingly made eunuchs.

But have chosen to be eunuchs. For the kingdom of heaven. Who will welcome the work of the cross.

Made to the root of their life. Not to be distracted by the question of marriage or not marriage. Or girls or not girls.

But as dead men who have no life unto themselves. Brought back from the dead. That they might live unto God.

Totally for his glory. Someone had to be compelled to carry your cross 2000 years ago. And tonight you are asking for those who will voluntarily come to it.

And so just as your minister. Of this gospel. I invite as many as will.

To come to this cross. Not in some sentimental and shabby way. Not in some plastic way.

But in actuality. It's a place for the despairing. Who know that they cannot of themselves overcome.

And self-will will not do it. And keeping up appearances will not do it. Only a true identification with your death.

That they might with you be cut off and out. And with you also. Be raised to a newness of life.

That is free of shame. That overcomes in the overcomer. That is perfect in his perfection.

And is holy in his holiness. Did us come. And join you in that place.

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