

K-505 Israel as the Missing Key

by Art Katz

The mystery of Israel is central to Paul's apostolic theology, and it reveals the church's authenticity and sanctification, with the ultimate purpose of salvation being to move Israel to jealousy and bring glory to God.

Duration: 1:22:43

Scripture: Psalm 102:15, Matthew 6:33, Acts 1:8, Romans 11:11-12, Romans 11:16, Romans 11:25

Topics: "Israel"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the ultimate demonstration that the church is called to be. He emphasizes that the church should strive to impress and move those who have historically been hostile and resistant to the message of God. The speaker acknowledges that the Jewish people have been critical of false televangelists and praises their discernment. He also highlights the importance of authentic love in the church, as it is what God waits for in his servants. The sermon concludes with a personal anecdote about encountering a Jewish person and experiencing the presence and glory of God.

Transcript

You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to go directly to Romans 11, 11. The whole chapter, of course, is fascinating. And that chapter should not itself be considered independent of chapters 9 and 10.

And often when I get on to the subject, I direct the hearers to certain elementary observations that Paul's statement on the mystery of Israel is not reserved as an addendum in the back of the book. It's not a little index. It is smack dab in the center of Paul's most systematic statement of his apostolic theology.

It's not a little addendum. It's central. And yet it has bewildered generations of theologians who have just been non-compos mentis when it comes to Romans 9 through 11, and especially 11.

They just pass it by. It's as if there's a veil over the understanding of even the most brilliant exegetes. And little wonder because Paul describes the entire subject as a mystery.

And he says it's a mystery in which he would not have us to be ignorant lest we become wise in our own conceits, plural, indicating that there is a consequence for the failure to have a knowledge of this mystery. It issues immediately into a series of conceits of such a serious kind as to disfigure, if not annul, the church as the church. Now when I say that, I'm not saying that it will cease to be able to have services and conferences, but it annuls the church as an apostolic entity.

And it is only as an apostolic entity that the church can succeed in winning Israel in the last days, releasing the king from his containment and issuing in the millennial kingdom and glory and being fitted itself for its own eternal participation in that theocratic rule. Aren't you glad that there are recordings? You'd have to be brilliant to have followed that statement. But I've got to make statements like that because there's no shortcut.

And I can't take the time to dot the i's and cross the t's of all of those statements, but just let them come into your spirit and pray that the Lord will bring it up to the level of your consciousness and understanding. It is absolutely critical in terms of your own personal eternal destiny. The issue of Israel, especially of the last days, is the issue of the church, of what it will be in its final configuration, character, stature, power, authority, and conduct.

Israel for the church is put up or shut up. It is God's designated test as to our authenticity and the degree of the truth of our sanctification. And I'll tell you that greater saints than we who are assembled here now have failed the test historically.

Some of the church fathers, Chrysostom called the golden-mouthed orator, failed the test and lapsed into the most virulent anti-Semitism because of the provocation of Jews that he had not the grace to bear. Luther, the giant of the Reformation, collapsed at this test. He spent, I think, three days or one day, I don't know the length of time, with three prominent rabbis, thinking naively he would persuade them about the truth of the Reformation and that they would recognize that in the Reformation church is the revelation of the faith of the God of Israel, and they failed to agree.

They were no more impressed with Reformed Protestantism than they were with Catholicism. And in fact, their refutation of his biblical arguments for Jesus as the Messiah according to the fulfillment of Scripture were of such a horrendous kind that they bordered on blasphemy. And by that he saw that the very presence of a Jewish or Judaistic rejecting body in Reformed Europe constituted a threat to the young Reformation itself, and then lapsed into a kind of foaming at the mouth by which he produced a book called *The Lies of the Jews*, which fueled the Nazi German persecution of Jews four centuries later.

The Jew has ever and always been the severest test to the church. They are a gold in our sight. There's something about them that is so provocative in their attitude.

What, you say that you've discovered our Messiah in our scriptures? You can't even read Hebrew. Chrysostom, who is the first significant martyr? Polycarp. It says in the when they brought him to the stake to be burned to death, who was then in his mid or late 80s, the Jews were among the first to find the combustible materials.

And it says in the comment, and this they do always. They seem to have taken a great malicious delight in aiding and abetting in the martyrdom of God's choicest saints. So great was the animus against Christianity on the part of the Jews that was strung out in all of the Mediterranean communities where the church itself was being established.

And yet Paul says in Romans 11, verse 11, I said that I say, then did they stumble? So as to fall, did they, did they stumble to the fall? Are they finished? Can we be finished with this pestilential people is that bug us? Can we say that they've had their chance and they have historically missed it? They stoned the prophets and, and they brought to death the holy one of Israel of whom the prophets foretold. Doesn't it mean now that their time is over and we have now inherited their promises and we are the Israel of God.

The church would have loved to believe that.

And Paul says, God forbid that you should, may it never be, but by their transgression, their fall, salvation has come to the Gentiles. What a great relief if there were a period right after that statement, but a lack in the last, and this is called the amazing, astonishing doctrine. A little phrase is added.

Salvation has come to the Gentiles to move them to jealousy. Did you ever know that there was a purpose for your salvation beyond your salvation, that your salvation is not the sum all and the be all of your going to heaven and the benefits that accrue to you by believing that there's a purpose for your salvation as Gentiles that has not to do with any benefit that accrues to you, but an ultimate benefit that accrues to God. Namely, that he looks to you exclusively, that by virtue of the salvation that has come to you through their fall, that you in turn should move them to jealousy.

So much so that they will be willing to consider and to embrace the gospel of which Paul says in the same chapter, they are the enemies for your sake. I'll tell you, dear saints, as a former missionary to the Jews, and having been one myself for a long time, that there's no more formidable enemy of the gospel than the Jewish people. And the only reason you don't know it and that you can sit safely in your seat is because you have never, like myself, faced them nose to nose.

You've never had a door slammed in your face. You've never seen the bristling anger and indignation. You've never been cut to shreds by the cruelest words that human ingenuity could conceive that shreds you.

And they seem to have all the marbles in doing so. Anointed, authoritative, and powerful. They make you to feel like a jerk.

And how dare you present this message to them who have been on the receiving end of two thousand years of Christian persecution culminating in the Holocaust. You who can't even make it with your own wives. You're going to tell me who has won the Man of the Year award by the, what is it, the Jewish organization, B'nai B'rith, who has never once raised his voice to his wife, who is the picture of ethical and moral consistency that I need your Christ.

Can you understand what I'm saying, saints? What, is God being taken by surprise by these factors? He knows them well. In fact, he has been the author of the factors that would make the Jew in the last days the most conspicuous, powerful, vivid enemy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And yet, if we do not succeed, he does not succeed.

He remains contained in the heavens. The kingdom does not come. The world continues to fornicate like jackrabbits and go on with its incest and its mayhem and its pillage, its murder, and its ethnic cleansings and genocidal insanity until the king comes.

You will not see me until you say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. You say, why are you rubbing it in? Because I want you to feel something of the great weight of the staggering paradox of the thing that God himself has designed for the purposes of his own to conclude the age. I refuse to give any credibility to anything that purports to be prophetic, that makes no mention of the issue of Israel as it pertains to the church of the last days.

That omission for me is ipso facto complete evidence that whatever is going on, however much it be called prophetic, is fraudulent. There is only one great single prophetic burden of God that is on time now, and

that's the one that was expressed last night and that is being attempted to be expressed now. And it's not because I'm Jewish that I'm expressing it.

It's because it's the truth, and it's the last day's truth, central to the church's consideration. Not so much for Israel's sake and whatever their return will mean, which Paul says is life from the dead, but because the issue of the return is the issue of the glory of God forever. Where do you get that tats? Romans 11 36.

That's where I get it. That's what makes an apostle an apostle. His whole treatise and dissertation starts in chapter 9 with wishing himself accursed for his kinsmen's sake according to the flesh.

He's not indifferent to his own people. He aches for them. He would exchange his own salvation if by that means some of them might be saved.

But his great jealousy and burden for their restoration is not for Israel for its own sake necessarily, but that in their being restored, God obtains glory and its glory forever. It's one final historic event in time that concludes time, but the magnitude of what is affected is of such a glory to God that it continues to celebrate him forever. Tell you what, supposing you're a nominal Indian Christian who attends church once in a while, but more frequently into the six-pack, how much would your faith and walk change if you knew that God was putting before you an opportunity for a participation in a concluding event in the age not ever again to be given that affects his glory forever? How would you like to have part in that? To have part in that is to have part in the eternal purposes of God.

It's transfiguring. It calls us to be larger than life, and it will compel us to be apostolic. This is the transition from charismatic to apostolic ground, the issue of the Jew, and it's interesting that those segments of the church that have not this vista and are in fact maybe resistant if not hostile to it, however much they might mouth the vocabulary of apostolicity do not obtain to it.

They are forever fixed in the lower realms of charismatica. This is the issue by which we're compelled to be apostolic or bust. Now what does that mean? I'm not going to tell you right now, but maybe you'll sense it as we go on.

Okay, so we have a mandate, saints, to move them to jealousy. Wouldn't it be great if there were an asterisk that would direct us to the bottom of the page and Paul will tell us in a neat way what he means by that and how it's to be done? We Americans who like to know how and our methodologists would love to see it spelled out for us, but no go. And still if you had to define it, what is it that would move Israel to jealousy? What kind of ultimate demonstration? What is the church to be that that jealousy could be affected by people who have been historically hostile and resistant? What have they seen so far that has so much as impressed them, let alone move them to jealousy? They're the first ones to see through the kinds of things that have totally captivated our carnal hearts.

All of the televangelists who've ended up tragically in disgraceful, uh, whatchamacallit, scandals. The Jews knew long before you that they were phonies. They're tough and I praise God for that.

Don't you like a tough critic? Somebody said to me, I don't know when it was a week or two ago, this is not easy. I don't know what problem they were suffering in the church. I said, so what are we called to that which is easy? We're called to what is tough, demanding even beyond ourselves.

That's why it says before the last statement to him, to him be glory forever. It says of him and through him and to him are all things. You underline where it says through him.

For example, if this speaking tonight is not through him and last night speaking, and when I'll be standing before a Jewish audience in Toulouse, France on the first night of Rosh Hashanah in September, when we leave here, if that message and that speaking on Jewish seriousness before God is not through him, forget it. There's a difference between performing something out of our own religious ability and something that is affected through him. Do you know the difference? And are you functioning consistently in that difference? The church that can say yes to that in truth is the church that will move Israel to jealousy and defeat the principalities and the powers of the air.

Verse 12, now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be? But I'm speaking to you who are Gentiles, inasmuch then as I'm an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry. Have you ever wondered about that? Shouldn't Peter have been the apostle to the Gentiles? And Paul, with his great rabbinical background, a prized student of the Rabbi Gamaliel, shouldn't he have been the apostle to the Jews? What a mishmash. Shows you how confused God is.

If somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them, for if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? And if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also. And if the root be holy, the branches are too. But if some of the branches are broken off and you being a wild olive were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich fruit of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches.

But if you are arrogant, remember that it's not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. You will say then branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in. Quite right.

They were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, however, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

Behold then the kindness and severity of God to those who fell. Severity. But to you, God's kindness, if you continue in his kindness, otherwise you'll also be cut off.

And they also, if they do not continue with their unbelief, will be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again. For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree and were grafted, contorted in nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you become wise in your own estimation or conceit that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

That's not just so much a designation of a time, but the fulfillment of an event or the consummation of the church's evangelical and missionary activity in the world. That the issue of Israel's restoration has not a thing to do with Israel. It has everything to do with the church, moving them to jealousy and bringing the fullness of the Gentiles in.

How many of us in our missionary endeavor, or even in our local evangelizations, link the two things together? That whatever souls remained in the numbers that constitute the Gentiles being fulfilled, that somehow, that's the release of the thing that brings Israel's restoration. It may not be anything to do directly with the Jew, but when the fullness of the Gentile be come in, something is released that has been held in an abeyance that means their deliverance, for thus all Israel will be saved. It's not a direct ministry to the Jew, but when the fullness of the Gentiles come in, all Israel will be saved just as it is written.

The deliverer will come from Zion. He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. Notice, not Jacob from ungodliness, ungodliness from Jacob.

Jacob is acted upon by a release that comes for God to do it out of Zion because the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Isn't it remarkable how God ties in everything to conclude the age as it pertains to Israel and becomes Israel's key. So from the standpoint of the gospel, they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice, they are beloved for the sake of the fathers, for the gifts and the callings of God are irrevocable.

It's a good question to ask, what is the gift and calling of Israel? And even if they themselves have blown it, even if they themselves do not desire it to be a nation of priests and a light unto the world, because they'd much rather make money, still, because God's word has made that call and established that gift, it will be fulfilled even despite them. You know why, saints? Because the issue of God's word is the issue of God's honor. It's the issue of God's name.

It's the issue of God. And if he cannot succeed within Israel, even in their own patent and demonstrated unwillingness, he is not God. His word has got to be greater than their obstinacy and unwillingness.

That's how great the issue is. It's the final demonstration of God as God, not because of Israel's disposition towards him, but all the more because of their disposition against. That in their intractability and resistance and stubborn rejection, they all the more give opportunity to God to demonstrate himself as God.

For he will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, all the more mercy because they deserve it the least. Oh, the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God. Are you following this? So the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable for just as you were once disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience.

So these also now have been disobedient in order that because of the mercy shown to you, they may also now be shown mercy. God has shut them up to disobedience. They couldn't be good if they wanted to, but the heck of the matter is they don't want to.

So God is judging them for their failure, but their failure serves his every purpose. They are shut up into disobedience, that the only thing that can come to them that can extricate them from that hopeless fix is the mercy of God. And what is the mercy of God if it is in any way deserved? Mercy is not mercy except as it is undeserved.

That's what makes it mercy. And mercy is not merely an attribute of God. It is central and distinctive to God's whole being.

Remember when Moses said, show me thy glory and it will suffice me. And God hit him in the cleft of the rock and let his hind parts go before him. And it said, he revealed to him his tender mercy, his chesed.

That's the Hebrew word. Moses asked for glory. God showed him his mercy.

And when God shows his mercy, he shows his glory. When Paul says to him, be glory forever, the glory of God is going to be revealed by the mercy of God when it shall be extended to a people who are totally undeserving till the moment in which they receive it. And that shall be done before the face of all nations, so that no nation will be with excuse as to who in fact is God.

For they will both, they will have witnessed both the severity of his judgments that have cast that people again into all nations and bring the most severe time of Jacob's trouble upon them that they will be ground to powder that only a remnant of them will survive the terrible devastation of those days. That in fact, if it was not cut short, no Jewish flesh would survive. It will eclipse the Holocaust because nothing past has ever been like it no will again includes the Holocaust of the Hitler time.

That is future and at the door. Are you ready for it? You say, how can events of this ponderous kind be at the door? And now as you're speaking on, I'm beginning to put two and two together. Yeah, I'm catching a glimpse that what's happening in Israel is totally untenable.

Their condition is so fierce. It's so utterly hopeless. There's no prospect of any kind of political resolution of the difficulty with the Palestinians and they're ringed about by nations that are so bent upon their destruction.

Hopeless, mounting antisemitism in all the nations of the world, Jewish tombstones overturned, graffiti written on synagogue walls. There's antisemitic literature being turned out on American presses throughout this country in tons, and it will find ready acceptance the moment that our economy dips, let alone collapses. The Jewish bankers, the Zionist conspiracy to take over the world economy, and how many untutored dum-dums who look for simplistic answers will be quick to grasp something that's in keeping with their own regenerate hatred of Jews, just beneath the surface of our so-called civilization.

We're going to be plunged into such Nazi-like terror against Jews in this very country that you could never have imagined any more than Germans who pride themselves on Goethe, Schiller, Fichte, Hegel, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Brahms, and Wagner could have imagined it could have come to them. The mercy of God, and only the mercy of God, will save them out of their last day's distress, as many as God has elected unto salvation, and the redeemed of the Lord, which we sang tonight, shall return to Zion battered, bloodied, bruised. Mourning and sighing shall flee away.

From what? From their last day's affliction and the terror that will be at the heart of their life, right to the last moment's peril, when God will save them and bring them back as captive, out of captivity, on litters, on mules, on shoulders of kings and queens, and bring them to the millennial and restored nation from all the places in the earth in which they have been cast and dispersed in his judgment. Anyone who sees that process, and it will be visible before the face of all nations, will not again ever be able to dispute who, in fact, is God. God is the God of Israel.

He's the God of judgment and severity, but the God also of mercy and return. And the nations that will not come up to Jerusalem to honor him there will suffer a curse. Okay, all of that was introduction.

Now what I've labored on all afternoon is some thoughts on Romans 11, and the moment I see you dozing off and you can't take more, I'll stop. But I have some fresh things here that I've never myself seen before. So, in one of the most remarkable strokes of the divine genius, God turns the tragedy of divine judgment, Israel's casting away, as the very means for the grafting into the Gentiles, which redounds finally to Israel's return.

What seemed their loss may thus conceivably accomplish a far wider measure of good than even consistent loyalty could have achieved. If Israel had gone on with an unblemished track record and received the Messiah, and then it was itself the nation that brought the message of the gospel to other nations, they would not have succeeded and done as much as what was obtained by their rejecting the

Messiah. I don't know if you can understand that, because the gospel that came through their rejection and that was promulgated by the apostolic church was free from the ethnic and religious taint of the Jewish community that could not have brought that message without some discoloration of legalism or religious pride that would have turned the Gentiles away even from the message of the Messiah.

That in their rejecting of the message, it could come now to Gentiles in a way in which they could both hear it and receive it and be for them their salvation. Something was served by their rejection, but something is served also by the faith that has come to the Gentiles who now in turn will so act as to bring them back again. So the tendency that Paul is battling in the church is against the church wanting to see in Israel's fall a final defection.

But the genius of the quote amazing doctrine, that's what some men have called this amazing doctrine, is that God places the premium of their return upon the church that was created out of their rejection. Can you see there's a reciprocal thing here? They have fallen so that you could be grafted in, but you're grafting in is not for your satisfaction alone, but so as to bring them in. And in that way God can comprehend all in his mercy.

That's the staggering and amazing doctrine. The mandate of obligation to the Jew in every locality where the church itself should be established brings, these are my words, an ultimate dimension of demand which, if accepted and fulfilled, provides that dynamic that makes the church the church. I'll read it again.

Okay. Remember what Paul says in Romans 11:6, I believe it is? This gospel, I'm not ashamed of the gospel, he had every right to be. It was totally unintellectual.

It was totally non-rabbinical. It was off the wall in terms of people being saved without doing anything, but just believing, which is an offense and a scandal to Jews to this day. What, all you have to do is believe? What a cop-out.

You mean you don't keep Sabbath, you don't light candles, you don't do this, you don't fast on Yom Kippur? What a snap. You just got to believe? It's a scandal and contemptuous route to salvation for Jews, and it strikes at the very heart of the desire in man to affect his own righteousness by his own acts. Now, what am I saying? That Paul says, I'm not ashamed of this gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation.

The gospel itself is that message of foolishness, that scandal of a message that human intellect can not only not conceive, but it is calculated to be offended by. It has an intrinsic power in itself of the death and the resurrection of that one who came down from heaven and lived in obscurity, was rejected by his own people, became their sin-bearer, shed his blood, and was vindicated and approved of the Father by being raised out of that death and being ascended to the right hand of power and glory, and given all authority over heaven and earth, and whosoever believes in him shall not be disappointed. I'll tell you what, you don't know how foolish that message is until you stand up before a Jewish audience at Harvard University or City College of New York and preach it.

And because we haven't, we are less of a church than we ought to be, because God has calculated that for our necessary growth. They are the enemies of the gospel for your sake. You need that.

Or you would have declined it to some kind of sappy, charismatic, sensation-feeling, pulse-taking, dumb-dumb spirituality that not only does not affect the Jew, doesn't affect anyone. This is the gospel to

the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Don't start where you got it easy, start where it's toughest.

Start in Jerusalem where I was crucified, and where the prophets were stoned, and see how far you get. See if your four spiritual laws will cut any mustard. Okay, go ahead and add a fifth one, which they've done.

We Jews always require one more. I mean, I don't want to disparage that. I know that there have been Jews who have saved by the witness of Jehovah's Witnesses, by Mormons, by the most remarkable outlandish and unbiblical deceits, but it set in motion something that had eventuated in their salvation.

Praise God. But what I'm saying by and large is this. It's not going to be through some cutesy thing, or some little formula, or nomenclature for salvation that we can obtain by showing them step one, step two, step three.

This is the hard critic. These are the ones that have been on the receiving end of two millennia of persecution by seeming Christians that has etched itself so deeply into Jewish consciousness that my 91-year-old mother will not set her foot into a Volkswagen. Now she may set her foot into my Mercedes-Benz, because I'm not sure that she knows that that's made in Germany.

Deep, deep prejudice, because what shall a Jewish mother believe if Hitler was not a Muslim, and he's not a Jew? What is he? He's a Christian, and it's at Christian hands. A brother, Michael Brown, has written a book, our hands are steeped with blood. Yes, they are Jewish blood, and if you knew what I knew, you would cringe about the hundreds of Jews in Germany, and Central Europe, and in other places during the times of the Crusaders who blocked themselves into their synagogues, and refused the offer of conversion in order to spare their lives, but did a Kiddush Hashem, they sanctified the holy name of God by murdering their children, and slitting the throat of their wives, and taking their own life, that when the Crusaders with their crosses on their tunics came bursting in to the synagogue, all they found were corpses.

Boy, I'll tell you, God has the deck stacked against him, and how many times have I been told by my outraged Jewish kinsmen, when I sought to communicate to them, that I'm worse than Hitler. Hitler only sought to destroy our bodies, they said, but you seek to destroy our souls. You paid flunky.

So, let me read this statement again. To move them to jealousy, to affect their restoration by bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles, the incentive for the completion of our evangelical and mission burden, is a mandate of obligation to the Jew in every locality where the church itself is established. Have you noticed this? Wherever the churches, Jews are, I have found them in Tokyo, I have found them in former Yugoslavia, I know a Jew who speaks, what do you call that best form of Chinese? Mandarin Chinese, and then he speaks Castilian Spanish, because they went from China to Latin America.

Where in the world have Jews not been dispersed, where the churches, Jews are, in one form or expression or another, however few. So, in the purposes of the judgment that has cast them into the nations, they have also been deposited at our door, so that we are without excuse in terms of what our witness to them has been. And as I know that I know that I know, the church that has not seriously considered this and taken it to heart to do it, has never known the power of the gospel as it is revealed most acutely as it is presented to them.

And if we have not learned it with them, what are we presenting to the Greeks? And that's why the Indians are in their lamentable condition today. The mandate of obligation to the Jew in every locality where the

church itself is established brings an ultimate dimension of demand, which if accepted and fulfilled, knows it takes a conscious yes to the Lord. It's a mandate that is not automatic.

It's implicit in scripture, but it needs to be embraced, where we say yes to the Jew first. If it's accepted and fulfilled, provides that dynamic that makes the church the church. There's no way to embrace this mandate and still hold the resurrection simply as a doctrine.

It compels you to cross the transcendent ground that makes resurrection the key to the operation of your own life. Because except that your witness to them is on that basis, you have no witness. And that means that the life itself is not only the power but the source.

It's not going to be your four spiritual laws. It will be what the life itself will express. As he will and when he will, you might find yourself embarrassed in what you're prompted to speak by his life that you would never have spoken yourself if you had chosen.

I don't know how many Jews I've insulted in the power of the Holy Ghost. It's like saying to a black brother who was seated opposite me at the faculty dining hall in Oakland, California when I came back as a believer, having been one of the leading faculty radicals as an atheist, and he was munching away in indignation knowing that I'd become a Christian, shooting arrows at me with his eyes and gristling. And he says, I'm struggling, he said, that my black children can sit opposite your white children and eat their lunch at the same table.

I said, I thought you were radical. Is that all you want, this equal mastication? Well, I will not be satisfied until we're breaking bread together in brotherly embrace. John 3.16 has probably been one of the greatest cop-outs that the church has employed in the absence of any other provision because they know not God as their life who will give them a unique word appropriate to the one being confronted, where if you substitute John 3.16, you're only putting before them a dead cliché.

God had me picked up off the side of the road by a man and having me sit down on the front seat and making me to feel as if I were the exalted guest doing him a favor. And he turned to me as we drove off and he said in German, he said, uh, my brother, he said, why are you traveling like this? And I answered him in my broken speech. I said, well, I'm a modern man whose life is shattered at its foundation.

I'm seeking for the deepest answers to life. Where did that come from? And before I could think further, I was saying, and I'm Jewish. I thought of all the stupid things to say.

Why did you have to give him that unsolicited piece of information? And I turned cautiously to see his recoil. And the remarkable thing is the guy was lit up like a tube. He thought that being Jewish was dandy.

For me, it was only another one of the inexplicable predicaments of life. I didn't know what it meant to be a Jew, but evidently he knew something I didn't know. And he said, uh, would you like to have some refreshment at my expense? And we did.

And what a golden conversation in a Swiss coffee house. As I poured out my soul to a Gentile stranger, thinking to myself, cats, what are you doing? You're sharing the deepest, most private secrets of your life that you have not shared with closest friends or your own mother. With a man who has picked you up who is a stranger.

I thought, what is it with this man that can draw my heart out like that? And I spit out everything. I was a man dying of despair and hopelessness, Berkeley grad. They used to put my scores up on the blackboard and then begin the rest of the class somewhere lower without hope.

And I was telling him my sense of futility for the human race, that we're moving toward Holocaust, to racial decay and absolute moral degeneration. And I see no hope. I've been a Marxist.

I've been an existentialist. I've been a pragmatist. And the man was listening and nodding and drawing my heart out.

And finally, when I finished, I had nothing more to say. I had come to the end of myself. He said, do you know what it is that the world needs? And I leaned forward and I thought to myself, well, here's a man who at least knows how to ask the question.

I'm dying for what the world needs. I had my arms folded over my chest. You never saw a more cynical mug than what I was sporting that night.

It would have scared you stiff. You would have left me at the side of the road and not even have stopped. I want to know what the world needs.

I leaned forward. I thought, what is he going to tell me? There's nothing new under the sun. He said, odd.

Remember, a man's salvation is hanging on one statement. If he had quoted John 3.16 or said, are you saved, brother? Or made even the mention of the name of Christ, which I could not pronounce, it was a curse word in my mouth. I would have said, thank you, but no thank you.

What he had to say in that critical juncture was the issue of salvation, not only for myself, but the unnumbered tens or hundreds, I don't know how many, that had been saved, affected, blessed by the ministry that God has brought through me because I was saved by a critical word at a critical time that could only have come by the Holy Ghost. What he said, what the world needs is for men to wash one another's feet. When I heard that, wham, down I went like the ox felled with a bull.

Something broke in my heart. I had vision of men bowing and washing the feet of the lowly and the despised. I guess today I would see Israelis washing the feet of Palestinians and white South Africans the feet of black.

Even in my own school system, terrible agitation and conflict between the teachers and the administrators, the students and the teachers. We were whitey, we were the establishment. Hatred, division, strife, enmity at every level of life.

And here's a man with one answer. What the world needs, he said, is for men to wash one another's feet. Down.

I don't think my body moved. I still had my hands folded over my chest, still that mug, but my human spirit had fallen underground and was whimpering. I had heard the words of life and somehow I knew that what the world needs is not another ideology or political system.

It needed another spirit. And on that basis, this man went on to speak to me about the gospel of Jesus Christ in German. And I was trying to say, hey, but that's not for me.

I'm Jewish. See, I was still in those categories. That's for the goyim.

They have their God, we have ours. They have their book, we have our book. But I had no voice.

And by the time he finished, I knew that I'd heard the words of spirit of truth and of life. And I left that man staggering like one drunk. The critical turning point where a word must come from God and not some kind of religious reflex action that we employ because it's convenient.

Have you access to that life? I'll tell you what, if you're not in a continual dependency of that life, you think you're going to find it in an ultimate moment? I remember myself later on as a believer driving down the autostrada in Italy, their high-speed unlimited highways in a Volkswagen, you know, to get one of those things up, get the speed up. And I was zooming along. There were hitchhikers every 10, 15 feet, or you could have a dime a dozen.

And though I'd been a hitchhiker, I don't automatically pick up a hitchhiker. I wait, you know, when God indicates. And I passed a blonde head, a blur of blonde head, and boom, my foot was on the brakes screeching.

And the vehicle was shaking in all of the rigor of bringing that thing to a halt and throwing open the door. And a guy huffing and puffing, a blonde kid gets into the vehicle. And the moment he got in, whoosh, sweep of God's presence and glory.

That blonde kid was Jewish. How could I have known at 85 miles an hour that the life, the life, the life. The issue of Israel's deliverance in the last days is the issue of resurrection.

By those who have gone beyond mere approval of the correctness of the doctrine to being able to say with Paul, for me to live is Christ. And the reason that we're on the other side of resurrection tonight is because we're playing it safe and have played it safe historically. There's nothing required from us and others that we cannot perform on the basis of our own ability, strength, and religious sufficiency.

But when you face the challenge of the Jew, all that ends. And that's why Paul was an apostle, not to the circumcision, but to the uncircumcision, because the issue of Israel's restoration is the issue of the Gentile and bringing the church to its full apostolic stature. So the key to Israel is the Gentile church.

And the key to the church is this dynamic of obligation, which it would not, if it would never have chosen for itself, yet is alone calculated to save it from the religious self-centeredness and even spiritual egocentricity that would have been its apostolic ruin. This is pure cats. What am I saying? God in his genius has made us a provision.

There's something that serves us in a remarkable way to have a purpose for our being outside of ourselves and beyond ourselves, namely to move them to jealousy. Otherwise we would be inextricably and unavoidably self-centered, as is true of most churches. How did you like the meeting? How was the speaker? Did you enjoy this? How do you like that? Everything is predicated on us, our likes, our satisfactions, and we would be fixed in that rut.

We would have just brought into the church the egocentrism that occupied us in the world and now have another face, religious or spiritual, but equally egocentric. We need something to break the power of that self-centered orbit, and God provides it in giving us a purpose for our being outside of ourselves to move them to jealousy. So this mystery has been lost to the historic and contemporary church's consideration,

as is evident from the church's own condition.

There would be, in my opinion, no necessity for I don't even want to discuss with you whether valid or invalid, but the phenomenon itself would be totally unnecessary if the church were living in the vital life of God and taking upon itself the mandate of God toward the Jew, which brings them inextricably into embracing the eternal purposes of God for the church. We wouldn't need something to lift us out of the doldrums or something to give us a taste of joy. We would be moving in a dimension of apostolic authority and reality that would make Toronto totally redundant and unnecessary.

I don't need to be revived. I'm continually revived. I'm bubbling over.

I have everything to do to keep my mouth shut, to let someone else get a word in edgewise in prayer times. Revelation, Paul says, I would not have you to be ignorant of this mystery, and every one of us knows the issue of mystery is the issue of revelation. You cannot deduce mystery by clinical cerebral activity.

It's revealed or it's not known. But what is the condition for the revelation of any mystery, and especially the mystery of Israel, which if we miss that, we become fixed in our own conceit, inflation, arrogance. It requires, I believe, a certain disposition of spirit of brokenness and humility, not just in general, but towards the Jew and even Israel in particular in their fallen condition, for which the God of yet waits.

Not an irritation toward them, but a brokenness toward them. The historic failure of the church, our identification with them in their own tragic history of such a kind that our spirits are broken and therefore open to the revelation of the mystery that God will not give and confer on those who are arrogant or hostile toward the Jew. I remember when I was a young believer, very young, and some nationally reputable minister came to our fellowship, and he's functioning today, divorced and remarried, but in a way that raises very serious questions about the expediency of that.

Nevertheless popular, and he had a nasty attitude toward Israel, in which he almost gloated for Israel's fallenness and saw it as a permanent defection, never again to be repaired or to be restored, and they deserve it. Good rhythms to bad rubbish. And I was listening to that, and I didn't know better, but my spirit crumpled at the arrogancy of his attitude.

But he left, and I went on, and some months later, there we were, both of us, at the same Jesus rally. I've only been to one or two, and we were, all the speakers were housed in the same building, and I came down for breakfast. There was only one seat open next to him, and I said to him in the course of conversation, even if you're right, and I don't know any better, I've never studied this subject, you may well be right, yes, Israel's finished, but the way in which you gloat about Israel's fall, to me, would ensure that if God has some other answer yet, you will never be in a position to receive it.

God's waiting for a certain attitude of heart and spirit to reveal what can only come as revelation. So, there's a Psalm 102 that has stirred my spirit today. Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come, for thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof.

This requires a little cunning exegetical examination. Notice that the affection of her stones and her dust is not for some etherealized, romanticized, or idealized Israel, but for the grit, the dust of the actuality of the nation, not her archaeology. The nation itself, not some romantic imagining about her, but the actual

nation, its history, its fallenness, its tragedy, its rejection of its prophets, its rejection of its Messiah, its stiff-necked obstinacy, its glories and its failures, the whole saga, the whole treatment, the whole corpus of the life of Israel.

When that dust and those stones will be dear to the church, when there'll be an identification with it, he shall arise and have mercy on Zion. This is perfectly in keeping with Paul's New Testament disclosure of the amazing doctrine that the church that has been obtained through Israel's fall is the agent also of their return. God makes the church the key, and when her servants will cherish Israel's stones and esteem her dust, whatever that means, I've never before ever spoken this.

I've never before ever considered this, but I know that there's a whole wholesale number of Christians who say, I'm not interested in that piece of real estate. God's not interested in real estate. I'm looking at the Jerusalem that cometh down from above.

Doesn't that sound so spiritual, so ethereal, so removed from the taint and the tincture of earthly conditions? God's looking for something else. That's a false, phony spirituality. What, cats, you're not looking for the Jerusalem that comes down from above? You better believe it, but I know it'll never come down from above until there's on the earth a servant people who will respect and esteem and mourn for Israel's stones and her dust.

And I don't know what that means, but let me read to you what I've written, trying to feel my way into this. What does that mean? It's not her archeology that God is talking about, the literal stones, but the condition, the grit of the actuality of the nation as she in fact is, and is unhappily increasingly becoming. The present Israel in her abject and melancholy condition is not to be blithely swept away in that apt turn of phrase that prefers, quote, the Jerusalem from above by disdaining the one that is presently below.

It's not even because Jesus once trod on her dust that her dust is to be esteemed, though that also, but because we have come down and surrendered to the embrace of the whole nation in the totality of her entire history of shameful apostasy as in her moments of glory, being completely identified with her in her humiliation as being altogether our humiliation as the Israel of God. I don't know what I'm saying, I'm over my own head, but it's picking up from last night. What, you like coming into the commonwealth of Israel? You like now to be a participant in her promises and in her covenants? Then that means you need to be a participant into her life, her history, her tragedy, her failure, her devastation, and her coming tribulation.

Yes. And when God sees the people who will love Israel's stones and her dust, embracing the actuality of the nation in the grit of everything that constitutes Israel as Israel, and not as we would have liked her to be, something comes out of Zion that is Israel's deliverance. You know what's wrong with us? You know why you're looking at me strangely? Because you have been shaped by the mentality of the world.

You have a mindset that is worldly, that thinks of cause and effect sequence, that if something happens, something must be related to it in a practical and causal connection. But that's not what the mystery of Israel is. In other words, God waits for something from his servants toward Israel.

Or the fullness of the Gentiles being come in is not the issue of Israel, but when the condition is obtained, the deliverer comes out of Zion by virtue of that thing. It's a mystery. It's a whole other mode of being, but we need to see it.

And whatever it takes for us to get there, where we would love her dust and cherish her stones, the deliverer from waits, who shall arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to favor her. Yet, yea, the set time is come. How does God know it? Because her servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof.

I wonder if this is part of the meaning of the phrase, the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. Is that something more than the numerical number of Gentiles were to be saved? Does fullness mean something more than is mathematical or quantitative? Is there a qualitative dimension to the fullness? Is this what it means that something happens to Gentiles who have come in that makes them more and other than what Gentile is? It's one thing for a Jewish believer, perhaps, to have a feeling toward the stones of his own people and their history and their dust. But for a Gentile to have equally such a passionate embrace of that nation that is other than itself, that releases the deliverer from Zion and also fulfills at the same time the reason for which God has created all things in order that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God might be demonstrated to the principalities and the powers of the air.

For that is that demonstration. Could this be part of the fullness of the Gentiles that releases the deliverer to come out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob? Our further incentive and altogether related to an intrinsic to the above is our apostolic jealousy for our God's honor for when the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. It's not for Israel's sake per se alone that we love her stones and her dust because we know that the issue of Israel is the issue of Israel's God.

It's the issue of Israel's Messiah who is scorned and blasphemed in the earth. It's the issue of his coming as king. It's the issue of his glory.

We're jealous for that glory. And verse 15 of Psalm 102 says, he shall appear in his glory. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth, his glory, when he shall arise and have mercy upon Zion for the time to favor her, the time has come.

I wish I had plenty of time to develop this. I wish that your minds were acute and free from all fatigue. And you can see the step-by-step divine logic of God.

God waits for something in his servant, the church. He gets it when he sees an authentic love that is not make-believe. It's not pseudo.

It's not some fanciful imagined thing of an idealized Israel. It's the grit of the dust of the stones. And when he sees it, he's released to be their deliverer.

And when he's released, at the same time, the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord and all the kings of the earth, his glory, for his glory will have been revealed in being Israel's deliverer out of Zion. Praise the Lord. This is on tape.

You need to contemplate this. And this is fresh. Just today, I've never before seen it, stated it.

So this is the further incentive that those who love Israel's stones and esteem her dust are equally the ones who are so jealous for God's glory. The one is the same as the other. The disposition for the one is the disposition for the other.

There's no love for Israel and for Israel's stones that is not also the consequence of the deepest love for God and the jealousy for his glory, which is the apostolic distinctive in itself. What is an apostolic church?

What is an apostolic man? It is that man and that body of people whose central impulse and principle of life and being and service is one thing only, the radical, total jealousy for the glory of God and nothing else. Whatever pertains to his glory, let you be the fool and Christ's fool and be made to look like an ass and suffer remarkable reproaches and slander and who knows what else, it does not matter.

If disobedience serves the purposes of his glory, that is the only issue at all. And you show me a saint of that totality and I'll show you a lover of Israel's stones and of Israel's dust. Because that kind of love is not some issue of affectation or sentimentality, it's an issue of union with God.

For to love his glory and be jealous for it is to love him in such a union with him that you love what he loves and esteem what he esteems, even the stones and the dust of a fallen backslidden and apostate nation who has no natural reason to commend itself to your affection because the whole thing is totally unnatural and supernatural by the power of God. So in summary then, the issue of eschatological climax, don't get scared by this language, that concludes the age and issues in the Lord's coming and kingdom is in Israel restored through the mercy of God released by the response of the church toward her. It is a set time in the sense of something positioned yet waiting upon an attitude of heart on the part of God's servants of the deepest kind that cannot be feigned or simulated.

This is so much above the so-called love for Israel that has titillated the last decades of charismatic saints who go tripping off to conferences in Israel and planting trees. This is a much deeper phenomenon. It's born out of union with God and not out of boredom with the church that seeks alleviation by finding something more exotic and interesting in Israel.

The issue of God's mercy is the issue of God for nothing so reveals him in what he is in himself than his mercy. Israel's qualification for his mercy is her disqualification, for it is only in the context of disobedience that mercy has relevance and meaning. Mercy is of such a character, I'm quoting another writer here, that disobedience is its complement or presupposition and only as exercise to the disobedient does it exist and operate.

What he's saying in so many words is this, mercy is only mercy when it is tended and offered to the undeserving, that the qualification for mercy is your disqualification, that your disobedience is your qualification, that you don't deserve is your deserving, and by the mercy shown to the Gentiles that Israel's conversion is realized. If all mankind is to have hope, because the issue of Israel's redemption is the issue of God's hope for all mankind, for Israel is nothing more nor less than mankind rolled up in one. It's the issue of man and God's dealing with man as exemplified in one test case, a nation that he has chosen because it is so utterly human, all too human, and if God can succeed in his mercy with them, with the lousiest of all track records, purely on the basis of an undeserved mercy, there is hope for all mankind.

So what are you saying that our involvement with the issue of Israel is really our involvement with the issue of the world, with mankind, with the nations, with the total redemptive program of God for his whole creation? Yes, and you can know that and be bored, and tell me that you're bored as a Christian, and the whole thing is centered in the Jew. You can't have the embrace of the cosmic interest, the nations, and sidestep and circumvent the Jew. They are the issue of the nations.

God has made them central to the nations. He has established the number of the nations and the boundaries of the nations according to the sons of Israel, Deuteronomy 32, 12. Israel is a statement of all mankind, the paradigm, the model.

It's not enough for God's mercy to be stated abstractly as a principle. It has to be showed in that nation most disobedient and least deserving that mercy might be mercy. It's not enough to have a principle in the book.

It has got to be demonstrated that God might be God, and this is the mystery of Israel's calling and election. Not because of its virtue, but because of its failure, that God might have an object of mercy by which he can demonstrate what he is as God. And yet, you know, the first thing that many Christians will say when you say, and God will have mercy upon whom we have mercy, and you're speaking about the Jew, something involuntarily rises up out of the depths of their Gentile hearts that subscribes to the doctrine of grace technically and says involuntarily without thinking, but they don't deserve it.

What mercy did you deserve? And maybe the issue of Israel would make you re-examine the basis of your own supposed salvation and bring you to a place of brokenness, at the mercy that has come to you that is as undeserved as that which comes to Israel. And if you but knew it, you would not so, what's the word, would not be so cheap, so, there must be a word in Yiddish for this, that stingy in that they should receive also the unmerited mercy and grace of God. That's Israel's calling.

Israel was called to demonstrate God, and she more demonstrates God in her fallenness than ever she would have done in her success. So the accent now falls upon the determinant action of God. He has shut up all unto disobedience that he might have mercy on all.

What is the significance for the world in Israel's restoration? For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? Seeing that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, there cannot be an irremediable rejection of Israel. The holiness of theocratic consecration is not abolished and will one day be vindicated in Israel's fullness and restoration. She must be restored.

God's name, his honor, and the efficacy of his word and his power to fulfill his word is supremely at stake in one last demonstration before the age ends. The issue of Israel, Israel's restoration, the issue of God. The engrafting of Israel is for this reason the action which of all actions is consonant with the unfolding of God's worldwide purpose of grace.

If God could use the tragedy of Israel's rejection to bring salvation to the Gentiles, with what further blessing could he not enrich the world through Israel's acceptance and fullness? If the casting away of them has been the riches of the Gentiles, what shall their return be but life from the dead? This is the most elaborate language that Paul can employ. And again, there's not an asterisk with a footnote to explain what that life from the dead means. In a very literal way, it means that those that are in the graves and asleep in Christ rise.

It means that because of Israel's restoration, the Lord comes with a shout and with a trumpet, those that are asleep in Christ rise and those that are barely surviving follow them. It's the resurrection of the faithful dead. It's the coming of the Lord and of the King.

And it's Israel coming into its apostolate of which Paul said, I'm a man born out of time and out of joy. You ain't seen nothing yet. You're impressed with me and fall on my neck when I tell you that you'll not see my face again and weep as Gentiles who did not withhold from you the full counsel of God night and day, both in public places and from house to house.

What will you do when a whole nation of Paul's is released in the power of God to be to the Gentiles, what they were called to be as a nation of priests and a light unto the world. No more Freud's and Karl Marx's and Oppenheimer's and atomic bombs and Spielberg's and E.T.'s. But Paul's in full apostolic breadth and power and authority coming into the nations. Selfless men loving the people to whom they are sent who formerly would have not given them a moment's consideration as Gentiles beneath their contempt and disdain are transformed resurrected nation in the character of God of which Paul was a down payment and a foretaste.

Our world is decrepit and it stinks. It's collapsing for the want of such a priestly nation to the nations. That's why the Gentiles from 10 nations will clutch the skirt of one Jew.

And we're catching a little glimpse of it tonight. It's life from the dead saints. So one recent commentator speaks of Israel's return as the eschatological miracle when the full number of Gentiles comes in.

It's like a nuclear reaction reaching critical mass. And this will finally provoke the juice to jealousy and to belief in Christ in large numbers. The latter in turn will signal or correspond with life from the dead the resurrection of all believers and thus with the return of Christ.

Israel's last day's restoration to the church is the climax of the ages. It precipitates the millennial kingdom and the glory. The role of the church in this is supreme and ultimate requiring a sanctification of a final and ultimate kind of which we are getting some installments in our morning sessions.

I never thought about this. I never expected this. But what an emphasis God is putting on dealing with us in the inner man of release from bondages from things that have crippled that that if we had continued in that what what value in in revelatory statements of this kind there's no way that we can embrace them and carry them we're too loaded with contradiction.

God is cleaning our house and getting the crud out and lining us up and bringing about an authentic sanctification and purity of heart and soul and mind and spirit of a mindset that is apostolic and holy and prophetic and totally God-centered. The role of the church in this is supreme and ultimate requiring a sanctification of a of a comparable kind. Its fulfillment of the mandate of Israel can only be on the ground of resurrection itself.

By this mandate through the word of the Lord the church is itself provoked to a ground which you would not otherwise have sought nor obtained and that prepares it now for its own millennial destiny and blessedness. You think you're ready now to go on to be with the Lord? You think you're ready to rule and reign with Christ from heavenly places? The enormous demand the radical ultimacy of Israel's final demand upon the church is our finishing school. It trains us it brings us to discipline it requires the church to be church not the the individual virtuosos here and there but the corporate genius of the church speaking as one voice in in relationship integral the the genius of what God speaks in Ephesians as the one new man or it's not the church at all.

We've got to be that we cannot succeed to Israel. I remember when June Volk we were talking once about going back to New Jersey 20 miles from New York from which we had come and having a ministry to the Jews she said you're going to have to take a segment of the body with you. I said what for? You know hotshot virtuoso kid cats I can handle this because she said the only thing that will move them to jealousy is the revelation of the glory of God and the body especially a diverse body of Gentiles and Jews and the elderly and the young and the the educated and the not so educated and all of the diversity that is even in

our congregation in these days here at this camp.

Boy I'll tell you God has really put it together. So the church is itself provoked to a ground which it would not otherwise have sought for itself nor obtained who would have desired this and equally it prepares it now for its own millennial destiny and blessedness. Israel comes into her destiny to rule and reign from the earthly place the law goes forth out of Zion the word of God of Jerusalem a nation of priests proliferated through the nations but where are we in our glorified bodies ascending and descending upon the son of man aiding and abetting in the establishing of his millennial rule throughout his creation in concert with restored Israel as the one Israel of God.

Thus has Israel even in its apostasy and fallenness played a critical though unwitting role in the divine saga that concludes the age and introduces the ages to come in which it will be eternally grateful for the role of the Gentile church toward itself through which it obtained mercy. Oh the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out for of him and through him and to him are all things including tonight's speaking to whom be glory forever. I'll tell you saints I know from my own experience there's not one occasion when I'm ever called to speak on the mystery of Israel that I myself am required to speak it and never will it ever come out twice the same way.

It's God's speaking I know this sounds brash it sounds audacious odd come on now it sounds so much like you. Well the accent that may be mine but the impetus the life the energy the inspiration the insight the revelatory power is his it's a mystery. He is so jealous over this final and conclusive epoch of the ages that he reserves the right himself alone to speak it.

How much then will he reserve the right to fulfill it? Don't think that you and your well-meaning religious intention can ever do it. For this mystery is of him through him and to him to whom alone be glory forever. Let's bow our heads before so great a call.

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