



Proverbs 1Q 2015 Lesson 5 The Blessings of the Righteous

SABBATH

Read memory text: “Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked.” (Prov 10:6 NKJV)

What does this mean?

- Why are blessings upon the righteous?
 - righteous means those who are right – but in what way?
 - right in heart with God, right in their heart motives of love, restored to at-one-ment with God
 - Why is there blessing in this?
 - Because God is the source of life and health and happiness – BECAUSE all creation is designed to exist and operate only in harmony with Him. Atonement with Him means coming back into unity with how life is built to operate and there is blessing.
- Why upon their heads?
 - Because the head is symbolic of the mind, it is where we think, feel, worship, exist – thus it is in our heads that we choose to surrender to Christ, to open our being to the healing power of the Holy Spirit and in our heads/minds where we are renewed to be like Christ.
 - In the New Testament the word for soul is psyche, it is our individuality our personhood, which is what is renewed to be like Christ here and now. We don’t get new biology until the second coming, we get a new heart and right spirit now!
 - The greatest blessing is to have a character like Jesus and a mind at peace!
- Why does violence cover the wicked?
 - What happens when a person steps off a speeding train?
 - What happens when someone smokes, does illegal drugs etc?
 - What happens to the heart, mind, character of rapist?
 - Activities that deviate from design destroy, i.e. are violent
- What does it mean it covers their mouth?
 - What comes out of the mouth of the wicked?
 - Lies, falsehood, deceit, self-promotion
 - and what do lies do? They break the circle of love and trust, they break the design and result in death, violence.

Read first paragraph “As the title...” What are the implication for our theology that the word which is translated *righteous* is the same word translated *justice*? Not only is it the same Hebrew word translated this way, but in the Greek it is the same, one word translated to two in English – what is the potential problem for us?



That it allows an entire way of thinking that was never intended by God or the inspired writers – specifically, the entire penal/legal way of thinking.

Righteousness is a condition of being right, right in heart, mind, character motive with God. Justice is the same word – so what does it mean?

It is the process of doing what is right in harmony with God and his methods of love!

The *just* are those who do the *right* thing, and the right thing is defined by God's law of love, which is God's design for how the universe operates, not a code of imposed rules.

The book of Proverbs is the instruction on what is *right*. In other words, on how things actually work, on the way things are designed to function.

It is not a book of imposed rules or laws. Look at the wisdom of the Proverbs, it is all about cause and effect, about how deviation from God's design results in harm, but harmony with God's design is life!

There is no place for imposed legal penal law constructs in God's government. These ideas are part of sin, are part of a fallen world. And translating the one word into two, is one factor, amongst many, that has allowed a false legal theology to overtake much of Christianity.

THURSDAY

What is the reward of the righteous?

Being restored to God's original design to live as God originally intended!

The second paragraph states, "though we are sinners, by faith we can be 'justified freely, by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.'"

What does this mean?

What does it mean to be justified?

Do you understand this from level four and below or level five and above?

Level four and below, it is a legal fiction, created in the minds of legal thinking theologians, that doesn't actually exist in reality. It can be a helpful metaphor for the immature but it is not the reality of the universe.

It is presented something like this: justification is the legal declaration of one to be righteous in God's accounting books, even though one has not yet been made righteous. This legal righteousness is allowed because Jesus is righteous and His achievements are legally credited to your account in heaven, if you accept Him.

They make it much too complicated, confusing, and convoluted. This legal concept introduces dangerous conflicts. For instance, it has God declaring righteous people who are not. This happens because, in the legal model, justify means something different than what the Bible teaches.

When you justify the margins on your Word document what are you doing? Setting them in line, putting them right. This is justification, taking what is out of harmony with God and putting it in harmony, setting sinners right with God.

Now, this setting right of the human species was done singularly by Jesus Christ, in His life, death and resurrection, He cured the sin condition of this species.

Setting right an individual, is when a person whose natural heart condition is against God, at enmity toward God, distrusting of God, and changing that heart condition to one that genuinely trusts God.

Thus, the heart against God as been *set right, put right or justified* when it is changed from distrust to trust. This is when God counts or recognizes or declares someone righteous or justified.

Thus in Romans chapter 4, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

From my paraphrase: "Abraham trusted God, and his trust was recognized as righteousness, because the distrust caused through Satan's lies had been removed, and through trust he was endowed with a new heart, right motives and Christlike principles."

Which came first, the change in Abraham's heart toward God, or God's recognition that Abraham was righteous?

The Bible metaphor for sin is leprosy – when did the High Priest declare, or account, or reckon someone clean, before or after they were made clean? Christ cleansed the lepers and then told them to go to the priest to be "declared" clean. When was Abraham "accounted" righteous, before or after he trusted God?

thoughts?

SUNDAY

The lesson asks us to read Proverbs 10:1-7: "A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son brings grief to his mother."



- Isn't this how it always is, when the son does something great dad says "That's my boy," when he messes up dad turns to mom and says, "Look what your son has done now."

² Ill-gotten treasures have no lasting value, but righteousness delivers from death.

- Why? Because ill-gotten is obtained from means outside God's design and results in damage to the soul and eternal loss, What does it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul?
- righteousness is being set right, put right, or restored to the way God constructed life to operate and thus delivers from death

³ The Lord does not let the righteous go hungry, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

- Is this speaking of physical food?
- Do righteous people ever starve?
- Did Jesus go hungry in the wilderness?
 - While God does provide the sunshine and the rain it is for both the righteous and the wicked.
 - The people operating at level two would take passages like this and turn them into a Bible promise book and claim them, and then when things happen that don't fit their understanding they lose faith and walk away from God.
 - No one was more righteous than Jesus and He went hungry for physical food, but He never went hungry for spiritual food.
 - "Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. (John 4:21-24)
- What does it mean to thwart the cravings of the wicked? What do the wicked crave? How are those cravings thwarted?
 - By God's divine weapons – truth thwarts lies, freedom thwarts coercion, and love thwarts selfishness. God's goal is to thwart the wicked by replacing lies, fear and selfishness with truth love and freedom in the hearts of the wicked.

⁴ Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.

- What does this mean?
- Is it always true?
- If you see someone in poverty does that always mean they are lazy?
- It is a general principle that no effort in doesn't generally result in positive results out
- Or is this not talking about physical wealth at all, but spiritual wealth, is it true that laziness will result in poverty of soul, but diligence to do the Lord's will results in wealth of character?



⁵ He who gathers crops in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

- What is this verse about?
- Is it about farming?
- Or is it about fulfilling one's duties?

⁶ Blessings crown the head of the righteous, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked

- Why?

⁷ The name of the righteous is used in blessings, but the name of the wicked will rot.

- What does this mean?
- What is the significance of the name?
- It is a reflection of the character
- Thus, the character of the righteous will be a blessing – to whom?
 - To themselves, others and to God think 3 angels, to give glory to God by revealing Him in their character
- The character of the wicked rots, which means what?
 - It decays, corrodes, is destroyed by its own condition

MONDAY

The lesson speaks about how important the mouth is, how powerful, why?

The mouth communicates ideas; it is a distribution point of concepts, beliefs, thoughts, which can infect the minds of others.

Consider a virus infecting your computer – false ideas can infect the mind and corrupt one's peace, break relationships, turn people, if the person hasn't, in a relationship with the God of heaven, developed the ability to think and reason for themselves.

Consider how many young people are convinced to join various violent extremist groups. Why? How does this happen? By using the mouth, to speak words, to convey falsehood which infect the vulnerable minds of others ultimately destroying. Proverbs 10:11 states:

“The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.”

What does it mean? How is the mouth of the righteous a fountain of life?

John 8:32 – you will know the truth and the truth will set you free – free from what?



To what do we need to be freed?

- Lies about God
- Fear and selfishness (carnal nature)

How does truth do this? What truth? The truth about God as revealed in Christ destroys the lies and wins us to trust, in trust we open the heart and experience God's love and trust and fear and selfishness are overcome.

How does the mouth of the righteous connect with this? Because the mouth of the righteous shares the truth about God, His methods, principles, and lead people out of the lies back to the source of life.

How does the mouth of the wicked conceal violence?

- By lying – how, what lies?
- Blame, displacement, externalization, distortion
- By lying about sin – sin isn't harmful, sin doesn't destroy, God is harmful, God destroys, God must punish sin. These lies conceal the true destructiveness of sin and trap people in cycles of violence

Read last paragraph, "Remember too..." What does this mean?

Does sustaining everything by his powerful word mean by his powerful speech? Or does word in this context represent something more than just speech, such as God's authority?

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. Heb 11:3

Does God's command have to be verbal, spoken?

There is a certain deliverance theology in which people take passages like this concretely and teach it is the words spoken are somehow powerful and if one speaks the right words they gain power or mastery over something or get what they name. It is a deception, there is no magic in the right words one says, it is in the truth, the meaning, the understanding, which heals the mind and restores one to the source of all truth. And it is God's ability, His authority by which He created.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson is about truthfulness versus lying. Read first paragraph, "Philosopher Sissela Bok..." What is lying?



- telling falsehood
- partial truth but not all the truth?
- body language intending to deceive?
- withholding information with the intent to deceive?
- telling something false while thinking it is true?
- telling a falsehood to advantage self?

Read second paragraph, “Ellen G. White wrote:...” Lying is an abomination – what constitutes lying? Does it require purposeful intent? Is it a lie if one innocently gets their facts wrong? Any Bible examples?

- Abraham – told Pharaoh that Sarah was his sister – was this a lie?
- Rahab – stated the spies were not hidden in her place – was this a lie?
- Which was the more blatant falsehood?
- Who was chastised by God?
- What makes the difference?

The lesson quote states “dissembling to suit one’s own selfish plans...”

- Abraham lied to protect self, based on fear, distrusting God to protect him
- Rahab lied to protect others, aligning herself with God and trust Him

Where do we find her in Hebrews? Why is she in the hall of faith? Did it take faith, belief in the true God to hide the spies and side with them and lie to the guards? Did God condemn her for her lie? Did God commend her for lying? Did He commend her for her faith? What did Rahab know about God and His kingdom? Very little, but she did choose to side herself with God and put herself in harms way to be on His side. In other words the lies were not designed to protect herself, they actually put her in danger for the sake of God and others. Perhaps, had she had more time to grow in God’s ways she would have said something else, but this is an example of faith.

Consider the issue of lying in light of the commandments and the seven levels of development – first is there a commandment that says, “Thou shall not lie”?

It actually says, “Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Is there a difference? What difference?

All the commandments are expressions of love: take no action that is harmful, against love toward God and man. Thus, breaking the commandment is making false statements that are against someone, which is not simply against their person or reputation, but providing them with false information that could injure them.

Those operating at level four and below approach the commandments, including this one, from a self-centered point of view.



- How do I keep this so I don't break the rules,
- so no sin is recorded in my record books,
- so I don't get in legal trouble with God,
- so I won't do anything wrong,
- so God can't punish me.
- It is not through the lens that loves others, glorifies God and fulfills His purpose.

Consider this Bible story from 1 Kings 22:

For three years there was no war between Aram and Israel. ² But in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went down to see the king of Israel. ³ The king of Israel had said to his officials, "Don't you know that Ramoth Gilead belongs to us and yet we are doing nothing to retake it from the king of Aram?"

⁴ So he asked Jehoshaphat, "Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?"

Jehoshaphat replied to the king of Israel, "I am as you are, my people as your people, my horses as your horses." ⁵ But Jehoshaphat also said to the king of Israel, "First seek the counsel of the Lord."

⁶ So the king of Israel brought together the prophets—about four hundred men—and asked them, "Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?"

"Go," they answered, "for the Lord will give it into the king's hand."

was this lying bearing false witness or if they believed what they said is it not a lie?

⁷ But Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there not a prophet of the Lord here whom we can inquire of?"

Why did Jehoshaphat ask for a prophet of the Lord, didn't he already ask for one? Then was it an attempt to deceive him when they brought the 400? Would that be a violation of the commandment?

⁸ The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is still one man through whom we can inquire of the Lord, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah son of Imlah."

"The king should not say that," Jehoshaphat replied.

⁹ So the king of Israel called one of his officials and said, "Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once."

¹⁰ Dressed in their royal robes, the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the entrance of the gate of Samaria, with all the prophets prophesying before them. ¹¹ Now Zedekiah son of Kenaanah had made iron horns and he declared, "This is what the Lord says: 'With these you will gore the Arameans until they are destroyed.'"

¹² All the other prophets were prophesying the same thing. "Attack Ramoth Gilead and be victorious," they said, "for the Lord will give it into the king's hand."



were these men lying, bearing false witness?

¹³ The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, as one man the other prophets are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably.”

Is he encouraging Micaiah to lie?

¹⁴ But Micaiah said, “As surely as the Lord lives, I can tell him only what the Lord tells me.”

Does this mean what Micaiah says later is from the Lord?

¹⁵ When he arrived, the king asked him, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain?”

“Attack and be victorious,” he answered, “for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand.”

¹⁶ The king said to him, “How many times must I make you swear to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the Lord?”

was Micaiah’s initial answer a lie? Was Micaiah lying to Ahab or telling the truth? Then why did Ahab respond by saying he had to get Micaiah to swear to tell the truth? Didn’t Micaiah just agree with the other 400? Do you think Micaiah’s tone said something that made it clear his words were sarcastic, mocking or not to be taken seriously and Ahab knew it? Why would he do this? Could it be to draw contrast to the flattering false prophecies the 400 had been telling Ahab and what Micaiah was about to tell him? Was this statement factually true? But was it a lie?

¹⁷ Then Micaiah answered, “I saw all Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd, and the Lord said, ‘These people have no master. Let each one go home in peace.’”

¹⁸ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Didn’t I tell you that he never prophesies anything good about me, but only bad?”

¹⁹ Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the Lord: I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the host of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left. ²⁰ And the Lord said, ‘Who will entice Ahab into attacking Ramoth Gilead and going to his death there?’

“One suggested this, and another that. ²¹ Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the Lord and said, ‘I will entice him.’

²² “ ‘By what means?’ the Lord asked.

“ ‘I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,’ he said.

“ ‘You will succeed in enticing him,’ said the Lord. ‘Go and do it.’

²³ “So now the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours. The Lord has decreed disaster for you.”

Is Micaiah lying? Does the Lord send angels to be lying spirits? So if the Micahiah is not lying, but the Lord doesn’t send lying spirits, what is going on? Micaiah is telling a “story” for the purpose of

communicating a truth, one truth, the answer to the question – should Ahab go to battle, will he be victorious. This question was answered truthfully and accurately, the rest of the story was told, not to accurately represent how the falsehood got into the prophecy of the other prophets, but to present the fact that what Ahab was previously told was a lie in the most convincing way to Ahab. To warn him.

²⁴ Then Zedekiah son of Kenaanah went up and slapped Micaiah in the face. “Which way did the spirit from the Lord go when he went from me to speak to you?” he asked.

Is Zedekiah lying when he claims to have the spirit of the Lord speak through him?

²⁵ Micaiah replied, “You will find out on the day you go to hide in an inner room.”

²⁶ The king of Israel then ordered, “Take Micaiah and send him back to Amon the ruler of the city and to Joash the king’s son ²⁷ and say, ‘This is what the king says: Put this fellow in prison and give him nothing but bread and water until I return safely.’”

²⁸ Micaiah declared, “If you ever return safely, the Lord has not spoken through me.” Then he added, “Mark my words, all you people!”

What does it mean to break the commandment? Did Micaiah break the commandment of God while fulfilling God’s purpose as His prophet? Do we ever think too childishly, too concretely, too much focus on self and our behavior and less on motive and mission? “I love Ahab and Israel and want to protect him/them from doing something foolish, so I will tell truthfully that his going to war is a mistake, but will put it in a story setting designed to convince him of its veracity”

With this in mind, what course of action should we take when God’s Law is in conflict with man’s rules, regulations, code of conduct or ethical requirements?

I am a psychiatrist. There are manmade rules, laws, which govern patient confidentiality. In addition, I have given my word and promise to my patient to protect their confidentiality... Imagine your pastor comes to see me as a patient because he is struggling with an addiction. The only time I have ever met your pastor is as my patient. I come and do a seminar in your city, but not at your church, and during one of the breaks you ask me, “Do you know Pastor _____?” What do I say? Do I say,

“I’m sorry, but because medical ethics, rights of patient confidentiality I am not allowed to answer your question”?

“I have much to tell you but you cannot yet bear it?”

“I have never met him outside my office”?

Do I say, yes or no?

If I say yes in a way that allows the idea that he might be my patient, not only do I harm your pastor, what if you were in marriage counseling with your pastor and he was really helping you, but you



now were to discover he was in counseling for some mental health problem, might that undermine your confidence in him and harm you? And might you get less out of his sermons? And might you be tempted to gossip and tell what you know? And might others get harmed in the church with this news?

What is the principle? Love your neighbor which means what? Don't take actions that harm, take actions that protect, heal, restore. Here is another comment from EGW:

The command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," means very much more than we realize. **False witness** is borne again and again in flippant speech concerning even the workers whom God has sent. **The seeds of envy, of evil thinking and evil speaking, germinate and produce a harvest of their kind, to be garnered by the one who planted the seed.** "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Letter 9, 1892). {1BC 1106.4}

What do you hear is the root of false witness? Envy, evil thinking and speaking. What makes it evil? Selfishness, so speech designed to hurt another is false witness. But did you notice something else quite profound is in this quote?

The harvest is reaped by those who planted the seed – in other words, she is saying those who bear false witness, who speak in envy, reap the results of what they have done. What does this mean? Why do they reap the results?

We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death. {1SM 235.2}

When we act selfishly we change us; when we foster envy, speak evilly, those actions become more deeply rooted in us. This results in greater fear and insecurity. We become more afraid that others will find out what evil we have said, that we will experience reprisal or retaliation, our reputation will be hurt etc. so we become more selfish, seek to protect self more and act more evilly toward others, unless we genuinely repent.

The bottom of the second paragraph pointed this out as well, in different words it said this, "but he finally reaches the place where he can trust no one. Himself a falsifier, he has no confidence in the words of others."

This is reaping the seeds of one's own sin, changing one's own mind, altering the ability to discern truth and error. Psychologically, this is an example of projection, in which one's own defect of character is so intolerable that one projects it out on others and believes everyone else would do to you the same evil you would do to them.



TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “The integrity...” What does this mean?

What is the source of destruction according to this text? Does destruction come from God? What other evidence from Scripture?

- Wages of sin is death Rom 6:23
- sin when full grown brings forth death Jm 1:15
- Those who sow to the carnal nature from that nature reap destruction Gal 6:8

Have you ever seen this?

- What happens to the person who cheats, not once and repents, but who lives as a cheat?
- What happens to the person who steals, not once or twice and repents, but who lives as a thief?
- What happens to the sensualist?
- What happens to the bigot, sexist, racist?

Do we see, that people who deviate from God’s design of love, are damaged and destroyed over time?

Read second paragraph, “The sense...” What motive is this appealing to? What level of development? Is such a person spiritually mature? What is the difference between this and Christian maturity?

Does this give insight as to why the Scripture teaches those still on milk, immature, are not acquainted with righteousness?

Last paragraph, “On the other...” So what is the difference in these two paragraphs between the wicked and the righteous?

The righteous – according to the lesson, have the ability to look into the future and delay immediate gratification for better long-term payout, whereas the wicked can only think of the right now, immediate reward.

Do the wicked ever make long-term plans, delay immediate gratification for a greater later gratification?

While the generalizations have some truth in them, they miss the point. The issue is about motive, do we love God and others and seek to do His will in helping others, or are we seeking PRIMARILY for self? The wicked seek to gratify and protect self at the expense and exploitation of others,



whether immediate gratification or delayed. Generally, those who are seeking to gratify self lose self control and become more and more indulgent and impulsive, but others do not.

Read second paragraph in FRIDAY's lesson, "The greatest deception..."

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2 in Friday's lesson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Opportunity to Share:

The General Conference of SDA will have its meeting (which occurs every five years) in San Antonio Texas, July 1-12, 2015. 50,000-70,000 Adventist from all over the world are expected to attend. This presents an opportunity to share this healing message about God in a most impactful way.

We plan on giving away our DVDs, Dr. Jennings' Book *Could It Be This Simple?* and other materials. This will be an enormous project. If you would like to share in this opportunity, you can do so by making donations to *Come and Reason Ministries* either via Paypal, or check mailed to our address below.

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And in Australia or New Zealand email australia@comeandreason.com and Thanks to Simon Harrison who manages our ministry down under. Dr. Jennings will be going back to Australia/New Zealand spring 2015. If you are interested in Dr. Jennings speaking at your group please contact Simon at this email address.



Jan 24, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Monterey Peninsula SDA Church

February 21, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be presenting the God and Your Brain Seminar at Shilo Inn. 3223 Bret Clodfelter Way, The Dalles, Oregon. For more info for this free conference contact Joyce Browne at 541-300-0111.

March 13-14, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking in NYC at the Advent Hope Outreach Health Event.

March 27-28, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the University of Tennessee Health Science, Psychiatry and Family Medicine Conference in Memphis, TN.

April 10-11, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Yuba City, SDA Church, Yuba City, CA.

April 13, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the meeting of Adventist Health Systems West, Sacramento, CA.

April 13, 2015 (7 p.m.): Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Carmichael SDA church in Sacramento, CA.

April 23, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Faith and Mental Health Board in Goshen Indiana.

May 1-2 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Springwood SDA Church Brisbane, Australia.

May 3, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at St Andrews Anglican Church Lutwyche, Australia.

May 5-9, 2015: Dr. Jennings will speak in Australia specific venues pending for these dates

May 11-12, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Peer Psychology Group Seminar, Melbourne, Australia, For info contact Tamara Auora-McCulloch at ladytamara.amcc@gmail.com

May 15, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW, Australia.

May 16, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be doing an all day seminar at Maitland SDA Church, Australia

May17-20, 2015: Dr. Jennings will be speaking to the Adventist Education Department, Auckland, New Zealand.

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