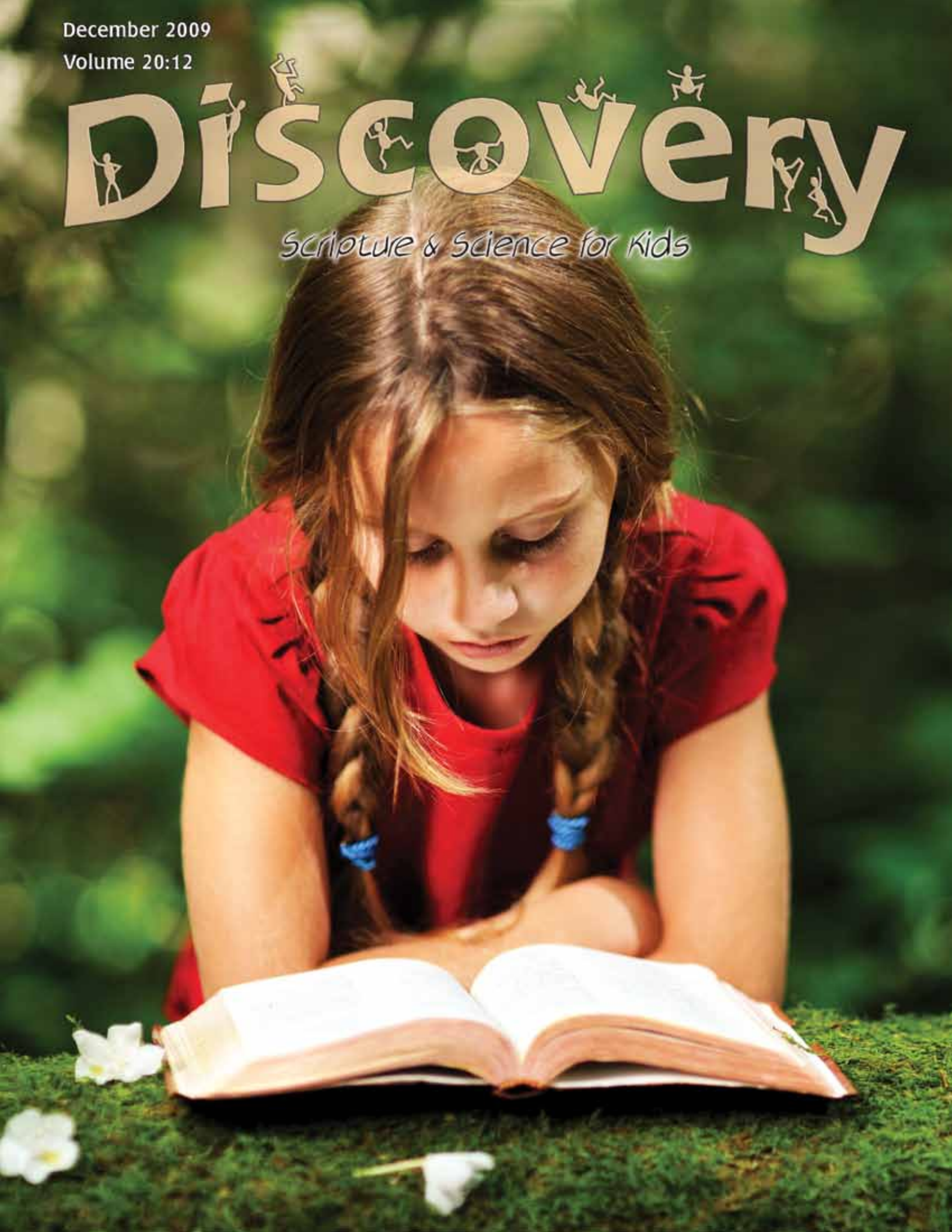


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Discovery

Scripture & Science for Kids



EARLY CHRISTIANS: STUDENTS OF THE SCRIPTURES

When the apostles and other first-century evangelists preached sermons and taught classes, they often talked about the Old Testament, and discussed lessons that could be learned from the prophets and judges of Israel. The people who heard these lessons were responsible for checking the Old Testament Scriptures, to make sure that they did not accept any false teaching as being true.

Luke wrote about one special group, the Bereans, who were especially faithful to check the preachers' message, to make sure it matched the message of the Old Testament. Luke wrote that the fact that these people studied the Old Testament more

than some other Christians made them more "noble" or "fair-minded" (Acts 17:11).

Why was it so important that the Bereans study the Old Testament? After all, the Bereans did not have to obey the Old Law. [Neither do we—while we should learn lessons from the people who lived under the Old Law, the Law itself was nailed to the cross of Christ—see Romans 15:4; Colossians 2:14.] The Bereans had studied the Old Testament enough to know that it prophesied of a New Covenant, a New Kingdom, and the Son of God in human form, Who would die to fulfill the Old Law, making it no longer necessary to follow Moses. But they also eagerly studied the Old Testament daily to learn valuable lessons, and to make sure that they believed the truth.

We must be careful to avoid assuming that everything a preacher or teacher says or writes is correct, just because he says it or writes it. We must study our Bibles, including the **New Testament**, so that we can tell what is true and what is false. There are many religious leaders who try to deceive young people into believing false religious ideas. These "wolves in sheep's clothes" often make bad ideas sound true, and sometimes even appealing. Study God's Word, so you'll be ready to defend your faith against their attacks (1 Peter 3:15).



Teaching with Boldness and Strength

Arnold Schwarzenegger won the Mr. Universe title in 1969 and 1970 for his huge muscles. His strength will go down in history, and people will remember him for years to come. If there was a Mr. Universe award for speaking, then members of the church should take first place. Just like Arnold's physical strength, we need to be spiritually strong when we teach the Gospel to other people.

When we teach, we should do so with as much strength and boldness as we can. Peter and John are great examples of boldness. They had been put in prison for preaching the Gospel to the people in Jerusalem. As they stood in front of the rulers of the city, both Peter and John spoke so bravely that the rulers wondered how they did it (Acts 4:13). Peter and John barely had any education, and yet they could impress some of the most educated people in the city, because they had been so dedicated to the Gospel! We as Christians should try to live up to the example of Peter and John.

Strength, though, is not enough. We need to be kind to people

when we teach them the Gospel. Jesus was a great example when it came to having compassion for others. In Mark 6:34, when Jesus' apostles had returned to tell Him of their work in other cities, huge crowds of people followed Him. While He was sailing away from the shore, He noticed that people from several cities were gathered around the water. The same verse says that He "was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things." Why does the Bible tell us that He had sympathy for these people? Because God wants us to be concerned for people who are lost!

Being bold and having sympathy at the same time can be difficult, but we have to remember what God wants from us. We have to keep all of God's commandments in mind, and follow every one of them. In this case, we should follow Paul's words when he told Timothy, "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2).

BE HUMBLE



There are many attitudes that Jesus intended for His church to have, but there is none more personal than the attitude of humility. The church is not the building, but the people. Therefore, the attitude of the church must be a collection of the attitudes of the people who make up the church. Together, the church can decide to be generous, and give as it should. Together, the church can study the Bible and teach others about Jesus and the Gospel. However, it is the individuals in the church who must decide to be humble.

Humility is an important theme throughout the Bible. In the Old Testament, the book of Proverbs repeatedly encourages us to be humble. Sometimes the book of Proverbs directly teaches us about humility. In Proverbs 15:33, the Bible says that “before honor is **humility**.” In other words, before you can have honor, you must have humility. Another proverb states: “By **humility** and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life” (22:4). That proverb is very direct, but many times in the book of Proverbs, humility is taught indirectly when it teaches us about pride (the opposite of humility). For example, Proverbs 8:13 states that God **hates** pride. Since we do not want God to hate what we do, we should avoid being prideful. The Old Testament definitely teaches us about humility, but so does the New Testament.

In the New Testament, Jesus once said: “Therefore whoever **humbles** himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4). The kingdom of heaven that Jesus was discussing is the church. So then, just by reading one verse we learn that Jesus wanted His church to be humble.

Now that we know that the church should be humble, what is humility? A good definition of humility is found in Philippians 2:3: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.” Basically, we are humble when we consider others better than ourselves, and do everything without selfishness or pride.

There is no doubt that the church as a whole should be humble, but this can only be achieved when **every** individual in the church chooses to be humble.



Brotherly Love



Do you love your brothers and sisters? Sure, they may bother you sometimes, but they likely are very close to you because they are family. Brothers and sisters have a special bond that is really meaningful. Spiritually speaking, all those who have obeyed the Gospel are brothers and sisters in Christ. Christians are children of God, and thus the church consists of our brothers and sisters—all of whom make up God’s family. Paul told the Galatians, “you are all one in Christ Jesus” (3:28). We are to show as much love (and more!) toward our Christian family as we show to our physical families.



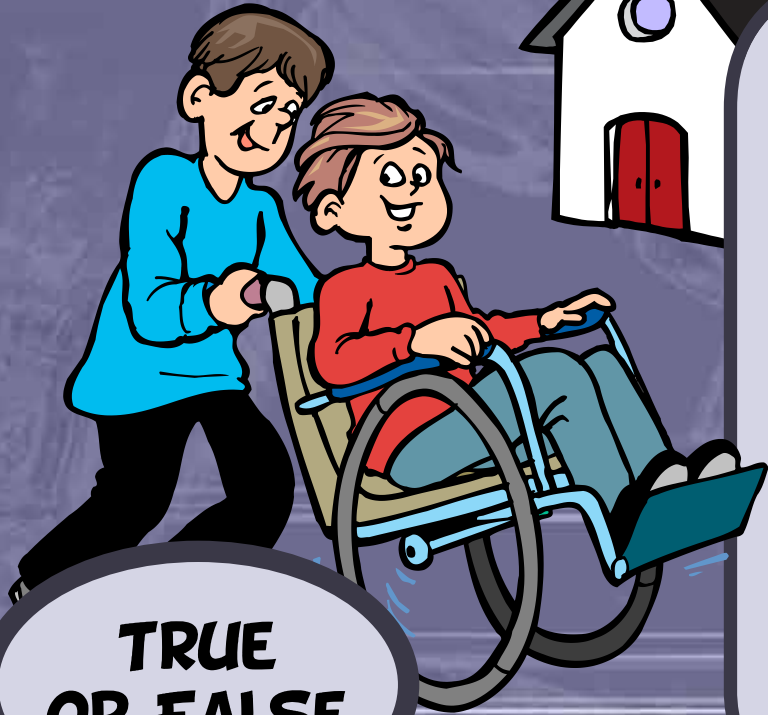
Long ago, in Genesis chapter 4, Cain committed the first murder. After the evil deed was done, God asked Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?” Cain replied to God by asking Him, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Cain had a very bad attitude, and no respect for his family. Christians are part of God’s family. We are not supposed to have the attitude of Cain, but, rather, we are to be kind and loving to one another. The apostle John said, “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death” (1 John 3:14). Christians also are instructed to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2).

First-century Christians were taught to be humble and loving. The early church was expected to possess true love, which does not give up on its brethren. True love for our Christian brothers and sisters is selfless. “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3-4).

Paul encouraged the Ephesians: “Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you” (Ephesians 4:32). The early church had brotherly love. Brotherly love does not let little things tear people apart. Instead, those with brotherly love do the little things that build people up. Always do your best to encourage your friends to do the best that they can.



ACTIVITY PAGES



TRUE OR FALSE

- We should study our Bibles to defend against false teachers.
- We need to be bold and loving in our teaching of the Truth.
- Not all Christians have to be humble.
- The Bible tells us to be generous in all that we have.
- Godly people are to focus on spiritual things.
- Cain really loved his brother Abel.
- John encouraged his readers to have brotherly love for one another.
- The church only needs to be generous during certain times of the year.

SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE

U N S S N V Z T H H A G I S
 T R R H O L C S Z T H E T D
 I N O N L L F I A O S L O W
 I J E I Z N F W O N X U J V
 R H J W M N A D A D O I L L
 H W F W T L G E C A I N H G
 U E H O D E R Z Z J P H H K
 F Y Y L J E S S S Y F A F G
 K H O P B O E T U Q U U U H
 R R F U L L H U A I K P E L
 E R P F S E E Z T M J F Y R
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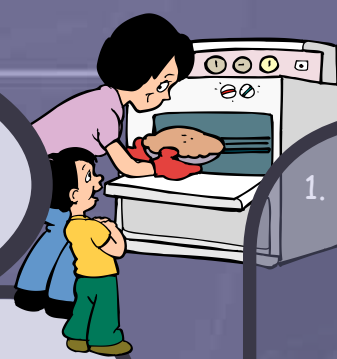
- Killed his brother Abel _____
- "Searched the Scriptures daily" _____
- The opposite of humility _____
- Has been nailed to the cross of Christ _____
- The law under which Christians live today _____
- Two apostles who preached with boldness (Acts 4-5) _____ and _____
- The apostle who wrote about being angry but not sinning _____

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES (NKJV)

- "But Peter and John answered and said to them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you _____. For we cannot but _____ the things which we have seen and heard'" (Acts 4:19-20).
- "Preach the word! Be ready in _____ and out of season. Convince, _____, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2).
- "Let nothing be done through selfish _____ or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem _____ better than himself" (Philippians 2:3).

ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER

- List several important characteristics of a Christian.
- Write one paragraph about the value of studying the Old Testament.



Dear Digger Doug,

Is it okay to be angry sometimes?

Dear Reader,

To the church in Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote: "Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (4:26; Psalm 4:4). The psalmist wrote: "God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked everyday" (7:11). We know that God is righteous and cannot sin, so if He is angry, it is not wrong. But, unlike man, God does not get angry over trivial earthly matters like who wins football games or who burns biscuits. God and His righteous servants become angry at wickedness.

In Galatians 5:23 Paul said that self-control is part of the fruit of the Spirit. When we are angry, we must practice self-control. Also, be careful not to get angry at your brethren, as Jesus gave serious warnings to those who become upset and call names (Matthew 5:21-26).



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 Associate Editor: Eric Lyons, M.Min.
 Layout and Design: Rob Baker, M.Ed.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Generous Church

Has anyone ever gone out of his or her way to bake you cookies, wash your clothes, or do you a huge favor when you had a need? If someone has, didn't that feel great?! Although those friendly people did not **have** to do those nice things for you, the church **has** been given specific charitable duties. The first-century church was a great example of generosity. Luke wrote: "All who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need" (Acts 2:44-45). Faithful Christians showed their love for each other when they sold their possessions and gave the money to those who were in need. By giving material possessions to others, especially our brethren, we can show the same type of self-sacrificial love that Christ showed for us on the



cross. A great church is a generous church!

The early church was described as a great people. They "were of one heart and one soul...had all things in common...and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:32-33). Not all people in the church are as generous, kind, and loving as was the early church. Church members who are materialistic are those who are too concerned with wealth and possessions. They do not fully understand what God has given to them. A charitable, godly church not only gives things to needy people, but also cares for them. That is how we should live our lives.

Worldly people lack spirituality, and are devoted to material possessions. Godly people are to focus on spiritual things, and should be devoted to heavenly treasures. Paul wrote: "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Romans 12:2). Christians should be generous, kind, compassionate, charitable, and loving.

A generous church is made up of generous individuals. The Bible tells us to be generous in all that we have, whether it is our riches, time, or love. Just as you enjoy others doing nice things for you, you should also do good things for others. Jesus set the perfect example of generosity by dying on the cross for our sins. One way we can express our gratitude for His generosity is to be generous to others, "especially those of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10).



ANSWERS

COMPLETE THE BIBLE VERSES: 1. judge; speak; 2. season; rebuke; 3. ambition; others.
 TRUE OR FALSE: 1. T; 2. T; 3. F; 4. T; 5. T; 6. F; 7. T; 8. F.
 SOLVE, FIND, AND CIRCLE: 1. Cain; 2. Bereans; 3. pride; 4. Old Law; 5. New Law (New Testament); 6. Peter; John; 7. Paul.
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