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Hosea

Chapter 1

¹This is the word of Yahweh that came to Hosea son of Beeri in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash, king of Israel. ²When Yahweh spoke at first through Hosea, Yahweh said to Hosea,

“Go, take for yourself a wife of harlotry
and have children of harlotry.

For the land is committing flagrant harlotry

by forsaking Yahweh.” ³So he went and took Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

⁴Yahweh said to him,

“Call his name Jezreel.

For yet a little while

I will avenge the blood of Jezreel

upon the house of Jehu,

and I will put an end

to the kingdom of the house of Israel.

⁵It will happen on that day

that I break the bow of Israel

in the Valley of Jezreel.” ⁶She conceived again and bore a daughter. Then Yahweh said to Hosea,

“Call her name Lo-Ruhamah,

for I will no longer have mercy

on the house of Israel,

that I should forgive them at all.

⁷But I will have mercy on the house of Judah,

and I will save them by Yahweh their God.

I will not save them

by bow, sword, battle, horses, or horsemen.” ⁸After she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, she conceived and bore a son.

⁹Then Yahweh said,

“Call his name Lo-Ammi,

for you are not my people,

and I am not your God.

¹⁰Yet the number of the sons of Israel
will be like the sand of the seashore,
which cannot be measured or counted.

In the place where it was said to them,
'You are not my people,'
it will be said to them,
'You are sons of the living God.'

¹¹The people of Judah and the people of Israel
will be gathered together.
They will appoint one leader for themselves,
and they will go up from the land,
for great will be the day of Jezreel.

Chapter 2

¹Say to your brothers, 'My people!'
and to your sisters, 'You have been shown compassion.'"

²Contend with your mother, contend,
for she is not my wife,
and neither am I her husband.

Let her put away her harlotry from her face,
and her adultery from between her breasts.

³If not, I will strip her naked
and expose her as on the day that she was born.
I will make her like the wilderness,
and make her like a parched land,
and I will make her die from thirst.

⁴I will have no mercy on her children,
because they are children of harlotry.

⁵For their mother has played the harlot,
and she who conceived them has acted shamefully.

For she said, "I will go after my lovers,
who give me my bread and my water,
my wool and my flax,
my oil and my drink."

⁶Therefore, I will hedge up her way with thorns.
I will build up a wall against her
so she cannot find her paths.

⁷She will pursue her lovers,
but she will not overtake them.
She will seek them,
but she will not find them.

Then she will say,
"I will go and return to my first husband,
for it was better for me then than it is now."

⁸For she had not known that it was I who gave her
the grain, the new wine and the oil,
and who lavished on her silver and gold,
which they then used for Baal.

⁹Therefore I will take back my grain in its time,
and my new wine in its season.
I will take away my wool and my flax
that were used to cover her nakedness.

¹⁰Now I will uncover her lewdness in the sight of her lovers,
and no one will rescue her out of my hand.

¹¹I will also put an end to all her mirth,
her feasts, her new moon celebrations, her Sabbaths, and all her appointed festivals.

¹²"I will destroy her vines and her fig trees,
of which she has said,
'These are my wages that my lovers gave me.'
I will make them a forest,
and the animals of the field will devour them.

13I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals,
when she burned incense to them,
when she adorned herself with her rings and jewelry,
and she went after her lovers and forgot me—
this is the declaration of Yahweh.”

14Therefore, behold, I am going to allure her. I will bring her into the wilderness
and speak tenderly to her.

15I will give her back her vineyards,
and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope.
She will answer me there as in the days of her youth,
as in the days that she came out of the land of Egypt.

16“It will be in that day—this is the declaration of Yahweh—
that you will call me, ‘My husband,’
and you will no longer call me, ‘My Baal.’

17For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth;
and they will be remembered by their names no more.”

18“On that day I will make a covenant for them
with the beasts in the fields,
with the birds in the sky,
and with the crawling things on the ground.
I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land,
and I will make you lie down in safety.

19I will betroth you to me forever.
I will betroth you to me in righteousness, in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy.

20I will betroth you to me in faithfulness,
and you will know Yahweh.

21On that day,
I will answer—this is the declaration of Yahweh—
I will answer the heavens,
and they will answer the earth.

22The earth will answer the grain, the new wine and the oil,

and they will answer Jezreel.

²³I will sow her for myself in the land,
and I will have mercy on Lo-Ruhamah.

I will say to Lo-Ammi,

'You are my people,'

and they will say, 'You are my God.'"

Chapter 3

¹Yahweh said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as Yahweh loves the sons of Israel, although they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes." ²So I bought her for myself for fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a lethek of barley. ³I said to her, "You must dwell with me many days. You will not play the harlot or belong to any other man. In the same way, I will be with you." ⁴For the sons of Israel will dwell for many days without a king, prince, sacrifice, stone pillar, ephod or household idols. ⁵Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek Yahweh their God and David their king, and in the last days, they will come trembling to Yahweh and to his goodness.

Chapter 4

¹Hear the word of Yahweh, O sons of Israel.

For Yahweh has a lawsuit against the inhabitants of the land,
because there is no faithfulness or steadfast love, no knowledge of God in the land.

²There is cursing, lying, murder, stealing and adultery.

They have broken all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed.

³Therefore the land mourns,

and all who live in it are wasting away,

along with the beasts in the fields and the birds in the sky,

even the fish in the sea, are being taken away. ⁴But let no one bring a lawsuit;

and let no one accuse.

For my contention is with you, O priests.

⁵You will stumble by day;

the prophets will also stumble with you by night,

and I will destroy your mother.

⁶My people are destroyed because of the lack of knowledge.

Because you have rejected knowledge,

I also reject you from being priests to me.

Because you have forgotten the law of your God,
I also will forget your children.

⁷The more they multiplied,
the more they sinned against me.
I will change their glory into shame.

⁸They feed on the sin of my people;
they are greedy for their iniquity.

⁹It will be like people, like priests:
I will punish them for their ways;
I will repay them for their deeds.

¹⁰They will eat but not have enough;
they will play the harlot but not increase,
because they have forsaken Yahweh to devote themselves to

¹¹harlotry, wine, and new wine, which take away the understanding.

¹²My people consult their wooden idols,
and their walking sticks inform them.

For a spirit of harlotry has led them astray,
and they have played the harlot, departing from their God.

¹³They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains
and burn incense on the hills,
under oaks, poplars and terebinths,
because the shade is good.

Therefore your daughters play the harlot,
and your daughters-in-law commit adultery.

¹⁴I will not punish your daughters when they play the harlot,
nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery.

For the men themselves go aside with harlots,
and they offer sacrifices with cult prostitutes.

So the people without understanding will be thrown down.

¹⁵Though you, O Israel, play the harlot,
let not Judah become guilty.

Do not go to Gilgal,
do not go up to Beth Aven,
and do not swear, saying, "As Yahweh lives."

16Israel is stubborn, like a stubborn heifer;
can Yahweh now feed them like lambs in a broad pasture?

17Ephraim is joined to idols;
leave him alone.

18Even when their liquor is gone,
they play the harlot continually;
her rulers dearly love their shame.

19The wind will wrap her up in its wings;
and they will be ashamed because of their sacrifices.

Chapter 5

1"Hear this, O priests!
Pay attention, O house of Israel!
Listen, O house of the king!
For the judgment is for you,
for you have been a snare at Mizpah
and a net spread over Tabor.

2The rebels stand deep in slaughter,
but I will discipline all of them.^[1]

3I know Ephraim,
and Israel is not hidden from me;
for now, O Ephraim, you have played the harlot;
Israel is defiled.

4Their deeds will not allow them to return to their God,
for a spirit of harlotry is within them,
and they do not know Yahweh.

5The pride of Israel testifies against him;
Israel and Ephraim will stumble in their guilt;

Judah also will stumble with them.

⁶They will go with their flocks and herds to seek Yahweh,
but they will not find him,
for he has withdrawn from them.

⁷They were unfaithful to Yahweh,
for they have borne illegitimate children.
Now the new moon will devour them with their fields.

⁸Blow the horn in Gibeah,
and the trumpet in Ramah.
Sound the alarm at Beth Aven:

'We will follow you, O Benjamin!'

⁹Ephraim will become a desolation in the day of punishment.
Among the tribes of Israel I declare what is certain.

¹⁰The princes of Judah are like those who move a boundary.
I will pour out my wrath on them like water.

¹¹Ephraim is oppressed;
he is crushed in judgment,
because he was determined to go after idols.

¹²So I will be like a moth to Ephraim,
and like rot to the house of Judah.

¹³When Ephraim saw his sickness,
and Judah his wound,
then Ephraim went to Assyria,
and sent to the great king.
But he is not able to cure you
or heal your wound.

¹⁴For I will be like a lion to Ephraim,
and like a young lion to the house of Judah.
I, even I, will tear and go away;
I will carry off,
and there will be no one to rescue.

¹⁵I will go and return to my place,
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face,
until they earnestly seek me in their distress.”

5:2 ^[1]

Chapter 6

¹“Come, let us return to Yahweh.
For he has torn us, but he will heal us;
he has struck us down, but he will bandage us.

²After two days he will revive us;
he will raise us up on the third day,
that we may live before him.

³Let us know;
let us press on to know Yahweh.
His going forth is sure as the dawn;
he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.”

⁴O Ephraim, what will I do with you?
O Judah, what will I do with you?
Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

⁵Therefore I have cut them to pieces by the prophets,
I have killed them with the words of my mouth.
My judgments are like the light that goes forth.

⁶For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

⁷Like Adam they have transgressed the covenant;
there they were unfaithful to me.

⁸Gilead is a city of evildoers
with footprints of blood.

⁹As a band of raiders lie in wait for a man,

so the priests band together to commit murder on the way to Shechem;
surely they have committed shameful crimes.

¹⁰In the house of Israel I have seen a horrible thing;
the harlotry of Ephraim is there; Israel is defiled.

¹¹For you also, Judah, a harvest has been appointed.
When I restore the fortunes of my people,

Chapter 7

¹when I would heal Israel,
the sin of Ephraim is exposed,
as well as the evil deeds of Samaria,
for they practice deceit;
the thief breaks in,
and the marauding band raids outside.

²But they do not realize in their hearts
that I remember all their evil.
Now their deeds surround them;
they are before my face.

³By their evil they make the king glad,
and by their lies the princes.

⁴They are all adulterers,
like an oven heated by the baker,
who ceases to stir the fire
from the kneading of the dough until it is leavened.

⁵On the day of our king the princes became sick with the heat of wine.
He stretched out his hand with those who were mocking.

⁶For with their hearts like an oven,
they approach their intrigue.
Their anger smolders all night;
in the morning it burns like a flaming fire.

⁷All of them are hot as an oven,

and they devour those who rule over them.

All their kings have fallen;

none of them calls on me.

⁸Ephraim mixes himself among the peoples.

Ephraim is a flat cake that has not been turned over.

⁹Foreigners have devoured his strength,

but he does not know it.

Gray hairs are sprinkled on him,

but he does not know it.

¹⁰The pride of Israel testifies against him;

yet they have not returned to Yahweh their God,

nor have they sought him, for all this.

¹¹Ephraim is like a dove, silly and without sense,

calling to Egypt,

then going to Assyria. ¹²When they go, I will spread my net over them,

I will bring them down like the birds of the sky.

I will discipline them

in accordance with the report to their assembly.

¹³Woe to them!

For they have strayed from me.

Destruction to them!

For they have rebelled against me!

I would have redeemed them,

but they spoke lies against me.

¹⁴They do not cry to me with their heart,

but they wail on their beds.

They gather together for grain and new wine;

they turn away from me.^[1]

¹⁵Though I trained and strengthened their arms,

yet they plot evil against me.

¹⁶They return,

but not upward.

They are like a slack bow.

Their princes will fall by the sword

because of the insolence of their tongues.

This will be their derision in the land of Egypt.

7:14 ^[1]

Chapter 8

¹Put the trumpet to your lips!

One like a vulture is over the house of Yahweh

because they have transgressed my covenant

and rebelled against my law.

²They cry out to me,

'My God, we in Israel know you.'

³Israel has rejected the good;

the enemy will pursue him.

⁴They have set up kings,

but not by me.

They have appointed princes,

but I did not know.

With their silver and gold

they have made idols for themselves,

so that they might be cut off."

⁵Your calf has been rejected, O Samaria.

My anger burns against them.

How long will they be incapable of innocence?

⁶For from Israel is even this;

a craftsman made it;

it is not God!

Surely the calf of Samaria will be broken to pieces.

⁷For they sow the wind

and reap the whirlwind.

The standing grain has no heads;

it yields no flour.

If it were to yield,

strangers would devour it.

⁸Israel is swallowed up;

they are now among the nations like a vessel in which no one delights.

⁹For they have gone up to Assyria,

a wild donkey all alone.

Ephraim has hired lovers for herself.

¹⁰Even though they hire lovers among the nations,

I will now gather them together.

They will begin to waste away

because of the burden of the king of princes.

¹¹Since Ephraim has multiplied altars for sin offerings,

they have become altars for sinning for him.

¹²Were I to write for him my law ten thousand times,

they would be regarded as something strange.

¹³As for my sacrificial gifts,

they sacrifice meat and eat it,

but Yahweh does not accept them.

Now he will remember their iniquity

and punish their sins.

They will return to Egypt.

¹⁴Israel has forgotten his Maker

and has built palaces.

Judah has multiplied fortified cities,

but I will send fire on his cities;

it will devour his fortresses.

Chapter 9

¹Do not rejoice, O Israel,
with joy like the peoples.

For you have played the harlot,
forsaking your God.

You have loved the wages of a harlot
on all the threshing floors.

²The threshing floor and the winepress will not feed them;
and the new wine will fail them.

³They will not remain in the land of Yahweh;
instead, Ephraim will return to Egypt,
and they will eat unclean food in Assyria.

⁴They will not pour out wine offerings to Yahweh,
neither will their sacrifices be pleasing to him.

It will be like the bread of mourners to them:
all who eat it will be defiled.

For their bread will be for themselves only;
it will not come into the house of Yahweh.

⁵What will you do on the day of an appointed festival,
and on the day of a festival for Yahweh?

⁶For behold, they go away from destruction,
but Egypt will gather them,

Memphis will bury them.

As for their treasures of silver—
sharp briars will possess them,
thorns will be in their tents.

⁷The days of punishment have come;
the days of retribution have come.

Let Israel know these things.

The prophet is a fool,
the man of the spirit is insane,

because of your great iniquity
and great hostility.

⁸The prophet is the watchman with my God over Ephraim.

But the snare of a fowler is on all of his ways,
and hostility in the house of his God.

⁹They have deeply corrupted themselves
as in the days of Gibeah.

He will remember their iniquity,
he will punish their sins.

¹⁰Like grapes in the wilderness, I found Israel.

Like the first fruit on the fig tree in its first season, I saw your fathers.

But they came to Baal Peor,
and they devoted themselves to that shameful thing.
They became detestable like that which they loved.

¹¹As for Ephraim, their glory will fly away like a bird--
no birth, no pregnancy, and no conception.

¹²Even if they bring up their children,
I will bereave them until no one is left.

Yes, woe to them indeed when I turn away from them!

¹³Ephraim, as I have seen, is like Tyre planted in a meadow;
but Ephraim will bring out his children to him who slaughters."

¹⁴Give them, O Yahweh—what will you give?
Give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.

¹⁵"All their evil is in Gilgal,
indeed I came to hate them there.
Because of the wickedness of their deeds,
I will drive them out of my house.
I will love them no more;
all their princes are rebels.

¹⁶Ephraim is stricken;
their root is dried up;

they will bear no fruit.

Even if they give birth,

I will kill the precious ones of their womb.”

¹⁷My God will reject them

because they have not listened to him.

They will become wanderers among the nations.

Chapter 10

¹Israel is a luxuriant vine that produces his fruit.

The more his fruit increased,

the more altars he built.

As his land prospered,

he improved his pillars.

²Their heart is deceitful;

now they must bear their guilt.

He will break down their altars;

he will destroy their pillars.

³For now they will say,

“We have no king,

for we do not fear Yahweh,

and a king—what could he do for us?”

⁴They speak mere words,

they make covenants with worthless oaths.

So judgment springs up

like poisonous weeds in the furrows of a field.

⁵The inhabitants of Samaria will be afraid

for the calf of Beth Aven.

Indeed, its people will mourn over it,

as will its idolatrous priests who had rejoiced over it

and over its splendor,

for it has departed from them.

⁶The thing itself will be carried to Assyria
as tribute for the great king.
Ephraim will receive shame,
and Israel will be ashamed of its idol.

⁷The king of Samaria
will be cut off,
like a twig on the face of the waters.

⁸The high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, will be destroyed.
Thorns and thistles will grow up on their altars.
Then they will say to the mountains, "Cover us!"
and to the hills, "Fall on us!"

⁹"O Israel,
you have sinned since the days of Gibeah;
there they have remained.
Will not the war against the sons of injustice overtake them in Gibeah?

¹⁰When it is my desire, I will discipline them;
and the nations will be gathered against them
when they are bound for their double iniquity.

¹¹Ephraim is a trained heifer that loves to thresh,
and I spared her fair neck;
but I will harness Ephraim;
Judah will plow;
Jacob will harrow for himself.

¹²Sow for yourselves righteousness;
reap in accordance with steadfast love.
Break up your fallow ground,
for it is time to seek Yahweh,
until he comes and rains righteousness on you.

¹³You have plowed wickedness;
you reaped injustice.
You have eaten the fruit of lies

because you trusted in your way,
in your many warriors.

¹⁴Therefore a tumult will rise among your people,
and all your fortresses will be destroyed,
as Shalman destroyed Beth Arbel on the day of battle,
when mothers were dashed to pieces with their children.

¹⁵So it will be done to you, O Bethel,
because of your great wickedness.

At dawn the king of Israel will be completely cut off."

Chapter 11

¹"When Israel was a child I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

²The more they called them,
the more they went away from me.

They kept sacrificing to the Baals
and burning incense to idols.^[1]

³Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk.

I took them by their arms,
but they did not know that I healed them.

⁴I led them with cords of human kindness,
with bands of love.

I was to them like someone who eased the yoke on their jaws,
and I bent down to them and fed them.

⁵They will not return to the land of Egypt;
but Assyria--he will be their king,
because they refused to return to me.

⁶The sword will whirl against their cities,
and destroy the bars of their gates,
and devour them
because of their own plans.

⁷My people are bent on turning away from me.

Though they call to the Most High,
he will not raise them up at all.

⁸How can I give you up, O Ephraim?

How can I hand you over, O Israel?

How can I make you like Admah?

How can I make you like Zeboyim?

My heart is turned over within me;

all my compassions are aroused.

⁹I will not execute my fierce anger;

I will not again destroy Ephraim.

For I am God

and not a man,

the Holy One in your midst,

and I will not come in wrath.

¹⁰They will go after Yahweh;

he will roar like a lion.

When he roars,

his sons will come trembling from the west.

¹¹They will come trembling like a bird from Egypt,

like a dove from the land of Assyria.

I will settle them in their homes—this is the declaration of Yahweh.

¹²Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,

and the house of Israel with deceit.

But Judah still goes about with God,

and is faithful to the Holy One.”

11:2 ^[1]

Chapter 12

¹Ephraim feeds on the wind

and pursues the east wind all day.

He multiplies lies and violence.

They make a covenant with Assyria
and olive oil is carried to Egypt.

²Yahweh also has a dispute with Judah,
and will punish Jacob according to his ways;
he will repay him according to his deeds.

³In the womb he took his brother by the heel,
and in his manhood he struggled with God.

⁴He struggled with the angel and prevailed.
He wept and begged for his favor.
He found him at Bethel;
and there he spoke with us.

⁵Yahweh, the God of hosts;
Yahweh is his memorial name.

⁶But you must return to your God.
Keep covenantal love and justice,
and wait continually for your God.

⁷A merchant has false scales in his hands;
he loves to oppress.

⁸Ephraim said, "Surely I have become rich;
I have found wealth for myself.
In all my labors they will not find iniquity in me,
which would be sin."

⁹"I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt.
I will again make you live in tents,
as in the days of the appointed festival.

¹⁰I spoke to the prophets,
and I multiplied visions.
By the hand of the prophets I gave parables."

¹¹If there is iniquity in Gilead,
surely they are worthless.

In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls;
their altars also will be like heaps of stone beside the furrows of the fields.

¹²Jacob fled to the land of Aram;

Israel worked for a wife;
and for a wife, he kept sheep.

¹³Yahweh brought Israel up from Egypt by a prophet,
and by a prophet he was kept.

¹⁴Ephraim has bitterly provoked to anger.

So his Lord will leave his bloodguilt on him
and will turn back his reproach to him.

Chapter 13

¹“When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling.

He exalted himself in Israel,
but he became guilty through Baal and died.

²And now they sin more and more,
and they make for themselves cast metal images,
idols skillfully made from their silver,
all of them the work of craftsmen.

They say of them,
‘Those who sacrifice people kiss calves.’

³Therefore they will be like the morning clouds,
and like the dew that goes away early,
like the chaff that swirls from the threshing floor,
and like smoke from a window.

⁴But I am Yahweh your God from the land of Egypt;
and you were to know no god except me,
for there is no savior besides me.

⁵I knew you in the wilderness,
in the land of drought.

⁶When they had their pasture, then they became full;

they were filled, and their heart became lifted up.

Therefore they forgot me.

⁷So I will become like a lion to them;

like a leopard I will lurk along the path.

⁸I will encounter them like a bear robbed of her cubs.

I will rip open their chests,

and there I will devour them like a lion,

as a wild beast would tear them apart.

⁹He destroys you, O Israel;

for you are against me, against your helper.

¹⁰Where now is your king,

that he may save you in all your cities,

and your rulers, about whom you said,

'Give me a king and princes?'

¹¹I gave you a king in my anger,

and I took him away in my wrath.

¹²The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up;

his sin is stored up.

¹³Pains of childbirth will come on him,

but he is an unwise son,

for at the right time he does not present himself at the opening of the womb.

¹⁴Will I ransom them from the hand of Sheol?

Will I redeem them from death?

Where, O Death, are your plagues?

Where, O Sheol, is your destruction?

Compassion is hidden from my eyes."

¹⁵Though he flourishes among his brothers,

an east wind will come;

the wind of Yahweh will come up from the wilderness.

His fountain will dry up,

and his spring will be parched.

It will plunder his treasury of every precious object.

¹⁶Samaria will be held guilty,

for she has rebelled against her God.

They will fall by the sword;

their young children will be dashed to pieces,

and their pregnant women will be ripped open.

Chapter 14

¹Return, O Israel, to Yahweh your God,

for you have stumbled because of your iniquity.

²Take with you words and return to Yahweh.

Say to him, "Take away all iniquity

and accept what is good,

so that we may offer the fruit of our lips.^[1]

³Assyria will not save us;

we will not ride on horses.

Neither will we say anymore to the work of our hands,

'Our God,'

for in you the fatherless finds compassion."

⁴I will heal their apostasy;

I will love them freely,

for my anger has turned away from them.

⁵I will be like the dew to Israel;

he will blossom like the lily

and take root like the cedar of Lebanon.

⁶His shoots will sprout;

his beauty will be like the olive trees,

and his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon.

⁷Those who live in his shadow will return;

they will revive like the grain

and blossom like the vine.

His fame will be like the wine of Lebanon.

⁸O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols?

It is I who answer and look after him.

I am like a luxuriant cypress;

from me comes your fruit.”

⁹Whoever is wise, let him understand these things;

whoever is discerning, let him know them.

For the ways of Yahweh are right,

and the righteous will walk in them,

but transgressors will stumble in them.

14:2 ^[1]

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