Lord of the Vineyard

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Preacher: Raymond Smith

[0:00] Thank you, Ron. Appreciate that this morning. Do you want to take your Bibles from Mark chapter 12 this morning? Mark chapter 12 as we continue on our series going through the book of Mark and just seeing how God has revealed His Son Jesus Christ to us through the Gospels.

And we find here in Mark chapter 12, we're in Tuesday of the last week here before the crucifixion. And Tuesday in the temple, we find here was a long day for our Lord as He was faced with multiple rounds of questioning.
And we're going to walk through those. And this is one of those days in the life of Jesus that has much recorded about it. And so we're going to begin here earlier in the day.
If you remember last week, the scribes and the elders and the chief priests had come and questioned Jesus about His authority. You know, who gives you authority to do these things?
And Jesus had replied back to them about the question of John the Baptist. By whose authority did He come? You know, who is He? And they thought they could bring everything to a stalemate by saying, we don't know.
[1:15] You know, but we're going to find here this morning that Jesus had much to say about this as He brings forth a parable to them about the landowner that planted a vineyard.

And He prepared and He protected the vineyard that He left in the hands of a husbandman. And this was something similar. We're going to find this idea and concept we're going to read about. Today we would call it sharecropping. You know, where you have a portion of land that somebody takes and produces on. And then the owner expects fruit or reward to be manifest from it.
And so Jesus brings them with a very familiar illustration that they would have known and understood in His day, which is really a dynamic that's very practical.
We understand the spiritual through the physical of the things that we can relate to with that. And so we need to understand, though, that as a parable, the Bible tells us here very clearly this is a parable.
[2:26] So we need to interpret it as a parable, okay? A parable is simply this. It's a parable is just a common, a fictitious narrative of common life conveying a moral.

You know, in other words, it's something about common life that everybody would understand that had a moral attached to it or some sort of moral reality attached to it to say, okay, you need to understand the principle here, and this will help you do it.
And so we see here this morning as Jesus is going to use this tool to help His disciples and help the leaders to grab a hold of that. And so if you found Mark chapter 12 this morning, we're going to stand together in honor of the reading of the Word of God.
And we're going to read down through this parable here that the Lord gave here this morning. And so we find here in Mark chapter 12, it says, And he began to speak unto them by parables.
A certain man planted a vineyard and set a hedge about it and digged a place for the vineyard and built a tower and led it out to husbandmen and went into a far country.
[3:32] And at the season he sent to the husband and the servant that he might receive from the husbandman of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him and beat him and sent him away empty.

And again he sent unto them another servant. And at him they cast stones and wounded him in the head and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another and him that they killed and many others beating some and killing some.
Having yet therefore one son is well beloved. He sent him also last unto them saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir, come let us kill him and the inheritance shall be ours.

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And they took him and killed him and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen and will give the vineyard unto others. And have ye not read this scripture? The stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing and is marvelous in our eyes.
[4:44] And they sought to lay hold of him but feared the people for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them. And they left him and went their way.

Let's pray. Heavenly fathers we come before you this morning Lord as we see here today the parable of the vineyard. The Lord of the vineyard. Lord we pray just would reveal those truths to us today Lord that we would need.
Lord to realize the facts about you that are revealed in it. To understand how those things apply to us as individuals even today. And Lord we pray just work in a mighty way.
We ask it all in your precious name. Amen. May you be seated. You know as we find here today we know from the end the parable definitely hit home. You know.
The Bible makes it clear that they knew the parable was spoken against them. You know those that had came and questioned Jesus' authority. Remember Jesus didn't directly answer the question of authority.
[5:46] But this parable is that. It gives them a practical application of the idea of authority. And the structure of why there is this level and this dynamics of authority.

And it hit the point very directly to them. And he did this by pointing out three facts about God and what God has done. And what God is going to do.
You know we're going to look at those things that Jesus pointed out this morning that hit home with them. Because they're the same three things that are going to hit home with you and me. When we understand what Jesus was telling them about through this parable that is here.
You know we notice here as we begin in verse 1. When he spake to them he says a certain man planted a vineyard. You know. In other words we're going to see here this man planted a vineyard. And he prepared all the things that were necessary for it to succeed. You know as you read through verse 1 you find that he planted it. He put a hedge about it. That was a way of protection from the animals.
[6:52] He put a tower so they could watch over and protect and defend the vineyard. We're going to see here that all these things were prepared.

And so we're going to see here the first thing that Jesus is going to point out to them very clearly is God's goodness. The goodness of God is something where we need to start to understand that God is a good God.
He is good to us. And we're going to see here he was good to Israel because this idea of a vineyard is directly connected to Israel.
And we're going to look at that here in just a moment. But understand God's goodness to us. He starts out at this point with them because the leaders had just questioned his authority. And Jesus replies here using a picture of a vineyard.
Now I want you to understand in the temple they tell us that in Herod's temple on the front doors of the temple area there was a big grape vine that was engraved upon the doors.
[7:54] In other words this picture of a vineyard, a picture of grapes, a picture of all these things was very clear to the children of Israel what they were talking about and how it was connected.

And we find here that Jesus uses this picture of the vine and God had been good to Israel. And the picture here is that he had brought them out of Egypt into the land of promise and put them into the land.
You know, take a look over into Isaiah chapter 5 for a moment. Isaiah chapter 5 because Isaiah the prophet uses this same illustration. That Jesus brings forth.
That's the other reason I think they understood it very clearly because they would have known Isaiah's writings. And Jesus made a parable directly from this because you'll see the correlations that are here.
You know, Isaiah chapter 5 and verse 1. Notice what it says. Now I will sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard and a very fruitful hill.
[9:00] And he fenced it and gathered out of the stones thereof and planted it with the choicest vine. And built a tower in the midst of it and also among the winepress made a winepress therein.

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And he looked and it should bring forth grapes and it brought forth wild grapes. Verse 3. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard, what could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?
Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. You know, Jesus here is using this same illustration as the vineyard and the master of the vineyard.
The man who owned the vineyard, who took and planted and prepared and protected all the things that were there. It was a picture of Israel. And he says he lent it out to husbandmen.
And to understand, if we look down in Isaiah, look down in chapter 5, verse 7. It says, For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant.
[10:04] And he looked for judgment, but behold, oppression. For righteousness, but behold, a cry. You know, you see the parallels that Jesus uses here from Isaiah in this parable.

It stood out very clearly in their mind that what he was speaking of was them. You know, the parable is very direct here in this, because God's goodness is revealed that the vine was planted and protected.
It had the hedge to keep the wild beasts out. It had a wine press. That's that wine fat that's mentioned there. And a place, you know, it's a place to process the vineyard and along with the tower.
And clearly the Lord was good. You know, the Lord's been good to us by giving us all that we have. When we understand what he has given to us, God is good. Clearly he is good to us.
Even today, you think about all the things God gives to us. You know, we have all the things around us. We have the very creation. We have the things that God provides. You know, even the rain that falls and the sunshine we have is from the goodness of God.
[11:16] God gives it to us. But we see here the pictures of a man that left his vineyard in the hands of the husband to work the vineyard, giving them a share to enjoy.

Now, notice at the end of verse 1 here, he says this, You know, the husband here represent those that were to watch over the vineyard while the master was gone.
There was a direct connection between those leaders that had come and addressed him. It was their responsibility of their position to guide and direct the nation.
To guide and protect and oversee and to keep on track and to make fruitful the vine that the Lord had planted, and that is Israel.
And we see that bringing forth here. And as we see here that the harvest was prepared, and when this man sends his servant, which is a representative of the prophets, to receive his share, instead of giving what's owed, he gets a pretty cold reception.
[12:25] You know, we see here what happens. That husbandmen that were supposed to be willing to give back the reward of a portion of what they had been blessed, refused.

And they beat the servant and sent him away. God had been good to them, and they said, We don't care. You know, it's not unlike today.
Oftentimes we forget how good God is to us. And we look at him and say, I don't care. Jesus reminds them here of a very important fact that God gives us and reveals his goodness.
God is good to us. Jesus makes a very important point here in the fact that God is good. He is there. And we find, though, that they rejected him.
You know, we need to consider how good God has even been to us today. You know, look over in the New Testament. Look over at Colossians chapter 1 for a moment. Colossians chapter 1 tells us this.
[13:31] It's just a reminder for us here this morning. Notice here in verse 12, it says, You know, God's very salvation that he gives to us is proof of his goodness.

Of what he provides for us. But as we see here, this man that owned the vineyard sends his servant, and they beat his servant, and they send him away.
We find that we see the second fact about God that Jesus reveals. Because the second thing we see is God's grace. Because at the first rejection, did the owner not have a right to come and cast judgment just from one time?
He had a right to come and to retake and to regain his possession. To have judgment and authority over it. But I want you to see what happened here.
Because it's a picture of God's grace to us. You know, I'm thankful God's gracious to us. And we see here, notice, as we look through this passage here, notice in the end it says, And received from

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the vineyard the husband and the fruit of the vineyard.
[15:05] And they caught him, verse 3, And beat him and sent him away. You know, the first one was beaten. Verse 4, And again he sent unto them another servant. And at him they cast stones and wounded him in the head and sent him away, shamefully handled.

You know, here he is. He sends the first one that's beaten and returns. The second one has rocks thrown at him and is injured. And returns and tells.
And the master, they send another one. Look at verse 5. And again he sent unto them another servant. And at him they cast stones and wounded him in the head and sent him away.
Excuse me, verse 5. And again he sent another. And him they killed. And many others, beaten some and killing some. In other words, we don't even have a total of how many the master sent. And we see that he continued to send them and make a request. He says, Hey guys, this is what you need to be doing. Son, I'm calling out to you. And finally we find here in verse 6, the landowner sends his son.
[16:14] The last one to come is his son. Saying they will reverence my son. But we find here in verse 7, their response was not to accept the son as a landowner instead of plotting to kill the son and claim the grapevine as their own.

Now I want you to see here, this parable speaks directly to those religious leaders in the fact about God's grace to them. But it also speaks to us when we understand as they were listening to that there that day, we see a picture of God sent a man of God to Israel.
But Israel refused to heed the messenger. You know, oftentimes we forget how many times you read through the Old Testament, it's filled with prophet after prophet after prophet that God sent. Saying, repent and turn to me. The Old Testament's filled with prophets that were abused and rejected. Those that were denied what God has done.
And what God has proclaimed. And we see here as he's continually, he begins to send prophet after prophet. And they were beaten and killed and rejected. And then as we find in chapter 11, we find the last prophet there, John the Baptist.
[17:40] You know, John was the one who came calling for them to be prepared for the son. To be prepared for the last that was going to come.

But remember, they refused John also. You know, we looked at that last week in chapter 11, how the leaders rejected John.
Remember, they didn't know what to do with John. The people said he was a prophet, so we don't want to make the people mad. But, you know, we don't want to say he was a prophet, because that means we should have accepted him.
They were in a quandary. There was a problem that was there. And so when Jesus speaks this parable, you've got to remember it was immediately following.
So in other words, the conversation is still on their mind. This dynamic is directly connected. And we said that he sends John the Baptist, and as they refused him, and now they're faced with the last one, the son.
[18:42] Jesus had come, the very son of God, the well-beloved, had come and arrived on the scene, saying, they will reverence my son.

Israel should have recognized Jesus. They had everything that they needed to recognize him.
God had given them everything they needed to make recognition and to acknowledge who he is. To understand who he is and why he came.
God had given them a witness about who and how things were going to be and how to identify the son. But instead of accepting the witness, they rejected him.
You know, I want you to understand, when it comes to God's grace, God's grace is tied to the witnesses that God leaves to us so we can understand who he is.
[19:43] Because we've rejected the Lord. We reject God and his authority. But we have witnesses that God gives to us.

You know, today we have, the two of the witnesses are exactly the same as they were and have been because, you know, the Bible tells us that we have a witness of creation. When you get out and see God's creation, there's no other explanation.
People try to explain away and they try to materialize creation. They try to say, you know, it was an accident. You know, and logically in the back of our mind, everybody understands that you don't get order out of chaos.

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I would love if it worked that way. You know, wouldn't it be great to throw things in the garage and they just put themselves away?
Or ladies, wouldn't it be neat, you know, especially if you got kids at home, if you threw clothes in the dryer and they came out folded and pressed? You know, we all understand logically that doesn't happen.
[21:00] You don't get order out of chaos. Order has to happen because of intention and something interacting and moving it that direction.

You know, consider what Romans chapter 1 and verse 20 tells us. It tells us this, for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.
I want you to understand, God gives us His creation as a witness to who He is. When you see the masterful handiwork of the Lord, of how everything, you know, oftentimes when we talk about that, we talk about the beauty and the things that we see that just make us awe-inspired.
But I want you to understand, it's everything in creation as you study it down all the way to the very means of how an atom is put together. You know, there's a lot of things we take for granted in science today that we have no idea how it works.
We have no idea. We might say, well, I understand how it works, but you don't know why it works. The why is still a problem. We don't understand magnetism or you don't understand those things.
[22:16] You understand the principles of what it functions, but you don't understand why it does it. The why is God. God designed it that way. His creation.

But how about our conscience? You know, those in Jesus, they had the world that they could see. They had a witness all around them. And we also have their conscience. You know, yes, God gives us a conscience.
Notice what it says in Romans chapter 2 in verse 14. It says, For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these things having not the law are law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.
I want you to see here, very importantly, that everybody has a sense of right and wrong. The problem with the conscience is a conscience can be twisted.
But I don't care who you are, if you pin people down, they have a conscience that says, there's some things that I believe are right, and I have some things I believe that are wrong. It's innately wired within us.
[23:35] God gives us a conscience to understand there are some things that are wrong and some things that are right. He gives us a conscience as a witness.

Your conscience bears witness to you. You know, we also wonderfully and thankfully we have the witness of the Word of God. You know, today we have the Word of God, the completed Word of God.
You know, when you understand in the Old Testament, there were some things, especially early on, that they didn't know or they didn't understand completely how we do today. You say, why not? Because God had not directly revealed that to them. But today, we have absolutely no excuse. We have the Word of God.
And notice how important it is. Ephesians chapter 1 and verse 13 says this, in whom ye also trusted, notice this, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also, after ye believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.
[24:43] I want you to understand it's the Word of God. Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God that makes a difference. It works upon our conscience. It works upon our being.

The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and we realize our need to turn to Him. You know, I want you to understand we also have a witness of believers.
Because your life ought to be a witness to those around you. A testament. And that witness ought to go forth.
You know, it's a great and wonderful thing. You know, Matthew 24, verse 14, it says, in this gospel, the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. I want you to understand we'll just talk a little bit here but that word preach just means proclaimed.

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Proclaimed means somebody went and said it. That proclamation comes from believers of who God is as we consider the grace of God.
[25:48] We see God's grace with us today. You know, as we walk through life we see God's grace played out and Jesus here is pointing to them and saying, guys, God has been good to you and you've seen His grace throughout time.

You've seen the grace of God as God continued to have mercy upon you. As He sent the prophets to proclaim and now finally He sent His Son.
when we see here the reality as we consider God's grace He's still patiently waiting for us to call upon Him because He will save.
You know, what grace that He would even call us to keep calling us to Him for salvation. What grace that He would keep seeking and calling and loving and drawing until we come to Him.
You know, God's grace is prevalent today. Consider 2 Peter chapter 3. 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 9 tells us this, the Lord is not slack concerning His promises as some men count slackness.
[27:08] You know, sometimes people confuse God's grace and mercy for God's slackness of accountability. don't be confused because they are different.

God's grace we ought to be thankful because none of us would be here today if God's grace was not in full effect. Because it wasn't for God's grace the moment you sin you'd be totally 100% condemned.
It wouldn't just be a sentence it would be the sentence carried out. Notice what He says but long suffering toward us. In other words God says I know that you've sinned but I still want to give you an opportunity to call upon Me to repent of your sin and turn to Me.
Because notice why is He saying He's not willing that any should perish. You know a lot is said today about God's love that's God's love. God's love He's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
God says I'm going to extend My grace to them I'm going to display My love to them through that and have mercy upon them. for all those who will call upon Him Jesus makes it you know we need to understand that if we come to Him Jesus is clear the rest of the New Testament is clear the Old Testament is clear if you come to God and call upon Him as Savior He will save.
[28:49] He is clear. I want you to look here at verse 9 in our text it says what shall therefore the Lord of the vineyard do?

Because we see that Jesus has revealed God's goodness He reveals God's grace but I want you to see Jesus now points that God will be glorified above all.
He reveals the glory of God. God's glory is revealed that He will hold to account He will hold all mankind to account.
Notice what He tells us here how is the answer? You know what should the Lord of the vineyard do? Well what's the premise of that? How should the Lord of the vineyard respond when the one sent have been beaten and killed and rejected?
and when they take the one that He sent His well beloved His only beloved Son when Jesus came and then they took here in just a few short days you're going to find that these men took Jesus and they nailed Him on a cross they rejected once again they rejected the Son Jesus was telling them what was going to happen He understood the hardness of their hearts notice what He says here He says He will come and destroy the husband and will give the vineyard unto another notice what's happening here after repeated attempts to come and to reconcile and to make provision He says finally it's too late I want you to understand there's coming a day it's too late it's going to be too late to repent we understand that without a doubt the leaders caught the moral of the story they understood the authority that Jesus had had and who gave him that authority as Jesus reveals these things this morning because after repeated attempts finally
[31:25] God says that those that have rebelled against the Lord's command are going to face judgment accountability you know God cannot be a just God if he doesn't hold to account justice requires accountability now where we get caught up in that often times is we think God ought to do it right now the problem with that is have you ever noticed that when we want God's judgment right now it's usually on somebody else you ever notice that that's exactly in our mind isn't it they deserve it the reality is what I deserve it I deserve

God's judgment but the good news is is Jesus came Jesus is the one who took care of the judgment for me when we understand that they had rebelled against the Lord and faced judgment

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look in Romans chapter 11 for a moment because Romans 11 deals with Israel and we see here some things it says well because of unbelief they were broken off and thou standest by faith be not high-minded but fear for if God spared not the natural branches take heed lest he also not spare not thee I want you to understand what's taking place here is a warning to even us today to understand to understand the importance of what God has done his goodness and his grace to us this final messenger the son the one whom they rejected we're going to find here that
God removes Israel Israel's cut off this is Daniel chapter 9 happening that Israel is cut off for a time I want to make that clear because God says he gave it to another he didn't create a replacement for Israel he put Israel on hold because one day God's going to finish holding them to account when we understand what's happening I want you to understand that we are now the vineyard of the Lord in holding the truth of the word of God and proclaiming it the local church is the foundation of those things when we understand the importance here look over in 1 Peter because remember Jesus said that they were going to come and condemn the husband and give it unto another I want you to understand
New Testament believers have been given this responsibility and we have the same responsibility that those in Israel had we have the same accountability 1 Peter chapter 2 look at verse 9 it tells us this but ye are a chosen generation a royal priesthood a holy nation a peculiar people that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God which had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy I want you to understand that God took and Israel is on hold God has removed that from them and has given it unto his church unto the believers today and we understand the importance of it I want you to know this morning as we look at this the reality of God's goodness God has been good to us
God's been gracious to us those same facts hold true today just as Jesus was calling them to repentance I want you to understand Jesus wasn't condemning them directly in the sense of saying I'm picking you I've rejected you no the fact is they rejected him he gave them a parable that they might understand that their conscience might work that the Holy Spirit might prick their heart and say you know what he's right you know what he's accurate about what he's saying you know what I'm guilty the reality of that that mercy that God gives
[36:48] I want you to know that very clearly that God is good and God is gracious but I want you to understand he also is going to hold sin to account his glory demands an accounting look back in Romans for a moment Romans chapter 11 again look down at verse 22 look at the beginning of this verse you know behold therefore the goodness and severity of God I want you to understand when God judges God judges accurately and completely you know today we have a lot of question about judges and courts and legal systems but I want to tell you there's no fancy lawyer going to get you off the hook when it comes to standing before the

Lord they might try to sweet talk themselves out of things or try to manipulate or maneuver but the Bible tells us there's coming a day and God's going to open up a book a book in which your life and every thought everything of your life has been recorded I want you to understand that look how Jesus replies to them look down here in verse 10 and have ye not read this scripture now that was kind of a rhetorical question considering the crowd when you got the chief priests and the scribes and the elders there of Israel it's really a rhetorical question because all of them have probably read this many times now look what Jesus says the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner this was the Lord's doing and is marvelous in our eyes you know
Matthew's account of this adds this he says this about it in Matthew 21 44 it says whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken but whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder the reality is this Jesus is the corner stone he is the stone you either fall upon it for mercy or later it falls upon you now logic if you're a logical person I would much rather be on top of the stone calling for mercy than it would be to be under the stone Jesus is asking you today to fall upon the stone of him to understand that he is the one just as the leaders there that day had to make a choice you and I have a choice to make today that's what everything came down to either you will fall on Jesus and be broken in conviction and repent and turn to him or one day the stone is going to fall upon you and crush you to powder the choice is yours the choice is yours because God's offering you a chance to be saved he's offering you a chance to have all your sins forgiven he's offering you an opportunity to avoid hell and make heaven with him your eternal home

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God is there he's calling you the question is how are you going to respond because you got two choices you can either come to him or reject him that's where those men stood that day look at verse 12 look at their response and they sought to lay hold on him but they feared the people here they are living their life based on opinion again opinion and perception sadly today opinion and perception keep many people from Christ because they're more worried about what somebody else thinks than what and where they stand between them and
God for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them and they left him and went their way I want you to understand today that you have a choice you can either turn to God or you can walk away the reality is everybody in the room here makes a choice today there's going to be a choice made what choice will you make this morning if you need to come to the Savior I encourage you to come we can have somebody show you clearly from God's word how you can be saved because I want you to understand it's not my way it's not the preacher's way it's not a historical way it's
[43:05] God's way there's no other way I encourage you not to walk away but maybe you're here today and you know that you've called upon him that you've been mercifully upon the stone been broken by the conviction of the Holy Spirit maybe you know clearly there's a time in your life when you called upon him as Savior maybe you just need to take a few moments today to remember God's goodness to you and his grace that we ought to come to him heavenly father as we just finish here this morning lord with an opportunity an opportunity to respond to your word lord I pray that you have your hand upon each heart each life here today you know each one just as you knew the hearts of those men there that day you know the hearts of each individual in the auditorium this morning lord I pray that your spirit would work in a mighty way you know the need of each one lord we just ask that be met today and that we would respond to you and lord as we turn this invitation to you and your spirit lord we pray that you just work mightily in hearts here today and this we ask in the precious name of Jesus amen heads are bowed and eyes are closed

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