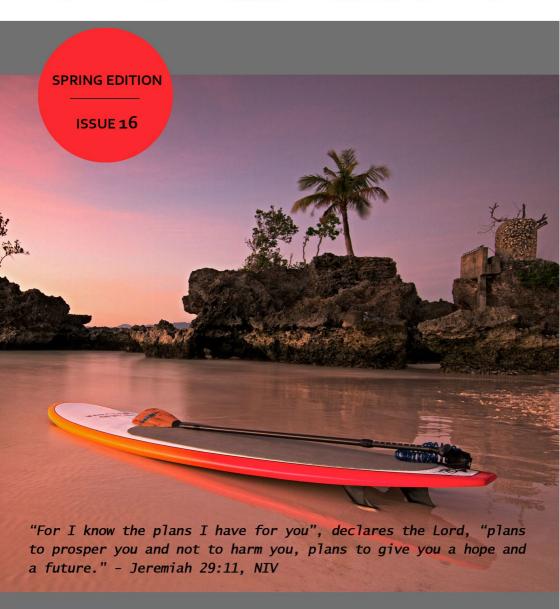
reach



Reach Community Church

2/177 Beavers Road Northcote VIC 3070

Tel: (03) 9481 6889 Email: info@reachcc.org www.reachcc.org

Pastor: Victor Soo

Church Administrator: Sharon Oen

CHURCH SERVICE

Celebration Service • Sunday | 1 10am - 12pm

REACH Kids • Sunday | | 11am - 12pm

Chinese Service • Saturday I 7pm - 9pm

PRAYER MEETING

Monthly Ministry & Prayer • 1st Friday of the Month
I 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Intercessory Prayer • Tuesday I 7.30pm - 9.30pm

BIBLE STUDY

Young Adults • Wednesday I 7.30pm - 9.30pm

University & Youth Groups • Friday | 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Family • Monday | 8pm - 10pm

Friday I 7.30pm - 9.30pm

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Praise Dance • Thursday | 10am - 12pm

MOPS (Mothers of Pre-schoolers) • Every 2nd & 4th Friday

I 10am - 12pm

Ladies' Meeting • Quarterly

Men's Breakfast • Quarterly

WELCOME

Welcome to the sixteenth issue of REACH. In this issue, we have lots for you – beware of getting what you want but losing what you had; if you feel stressed and anxious, we have the solution for you; learn to read the bible supernaturally; and find salvation in Christ; take the initiative; come, be blessed and be a blessing; and top it up with youth MasterChef recipe.

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God's plan over what we want

In 1969, the Rolling Stones had on their album Let it bleed, a song called "You can't always get what you want", written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. According to Mick Jagger, it was a song that he just happened to play casually on his guitar, one of those bedroom songs. It turned out to be a difficult groove especially trying to fit the lyrics in. Charlie Watts, the usual drummer, couldn't play and it ended up with Jimmy Miller, the producer of the Rolling Stones, playing drum for this song on the album. There was also an afterthought of having a choir for the song, probably a gospel choir according to Mick Jagger, which everyone thought was a ridiculous and laughable idea. They ended up having London Bach Choir in the song.

The song was named the 100th greatest song of all time by *Rolling Stone* magazine

in 2004, and was and is still the most influential song for the next 5 decades including the recent political campaign. The first three verses of the song focussed on the main issues of the days - love, politics and drugs. According to Wikipedia, each verse captures the essence of the initial optimism and eventual disillusion, followed by the resigned pragmatism of the chorus. The chorus goes like this: You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you might find, you get what you need.

Whether it was casual lyrics, a bedroom song or an afterthought, it was such a popular song not just because of its catchy groove, but because it resonated with the reality of life. To me, this is a perfect illustration of how we, as humans, have a deep longing in our heart for more, and the more we have, the more we want. We can't seem to get enough.

I wonder whether this song was kind of a follow up to the earlier song of Rolling Stones in 1965, "(I can't get no) satisfaction". It seems that Mick Jagger was on the life journey with an illusion that if we want all the things that life has to offer, somehow we can get them all, and if we work hard enough, or by luck, we will be fulfilled.

The Bible states in Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV), "For I know the plans I have for you", declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future." God has a unique plan and destiny for each of us. God says that "I created you uniquely". The word unique is being the only one of its kind, unlike anything else; and there is no comparison to that uniqueness. You can't compare unique with unique, it just doesn't work.

I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. (Psalm 139:14)

Unless and until we know who we are in Jesus Christ and what He has done for us, we will forever be chasing the wind. God is our portion and that is enough even when we feel we don't have enough or feel that we are not enough. Having and remaining in God's Love will truly lead to finding fulfilment in the things we do. We might even try to sing this song in our head that "you can't always get what you want", but if we walk with Jesus, we will get what we need.

God's promises over what we see

With everything that God has for us, His Characters and attributes, His promises; as children of God, we can be assured that God has our best intentions in His heart. He is a God who does not lie and He intends to see through ALL His promises. Even with that

assurance, as human nature, we are never satisfied. And this leads me to a song from Queen, "I want it all and I want it now". The song writer, Brian May, claims that this song is about having ambitions and fighting for one's own goal.

This song again reinforces what is known to human nature - whatever feels good, whatever I want, I will do whatever I can to get it. I want to make it clear that I'm not discrediting the song but to point out the fact that they do strike the chords in our souls.

You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure. (James 4:2-3, TLB)

The Bible clearly warns us not to walk by sight but by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7). A sight to see that our neighbour has what we do not have - more wealth, more power, more popularity. The problem is we see and hear too much and we are under the pressure to make sure that we keep up with the Joneses or the Kardashians. Everybody has an opinion of how to get rich and be happier. We hear it and we see it on social media. With the recent information technology revolution, we are bombarded with various sights of social media. We see the posts from other people and we feel like we are missing out and we start to compare. And when we post, if we don't get enough "likes", it leaves us feeing dejected and emptied. It has become what we see determines who we are rather than who God says we are.

Reach Message

There is a story in the Bible, recorded in Genesis 25:29-34. It was a story about a set of twins, Esau and Jacob, who were born of Isaac. Esau had the birthright, a right that was bestowed upon him at birth. Double portion of blessings fell on his laps just because he was the firstborn. Jacob had the look and was cunning. One evening Esau saw the stew in Jacob's cooking and wanted it so badly that he was willing to do anything to get it. Esau was probably singing the song, "I want it all and I want it now." He was more than willing to sacrifice his birthright for the pot of stew. Esau got what he wanted and lost what he had, his birthright, which in hindsight was much more valuable than a pot of stew.

When we truly understand who God is and what His promises are for us, we don't have to worry about seeing what we do or do not have. God will have a way to deliver what He promised to us, on time, more than we could ever understand or imagine.

The question for us is, "What's brewing in your stew that you want someone's stew so badly? So badly that you are willing to sacrifice or do anything to get it." A few foods for thought:

- Promotion in your career that takes you away from the time with your family.
- Pleasure in sins but lose your eternity.
- Rather than building strong relationship and nurture your marriage, you choose to cheat on your spouse and in the end, lose your family. Is that worth it?
- Consider and count the costs before making choices. The Bible says, "Consider your ways."
- Don't act rashly on your wants but consider your needs.
- Put values on your blessings and give thanks for them.

Treasure what you have before it is gone, when it is too late. More often than not, we have more than we appreciate. When we lose our perspectives on God's promises, we start to believe the lie that we have less. The anonymous quote "It is contentment that gives true fulfilment" has much truth in it. Learn to be grateful and contented with all that God has for you and you will never have to live a day without fulfilment.



Come, be blessed and be a blessing

By Amelin Soo

Editor's note - MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) is a group held in the church twice per month, catered for mothers with pre-school age children. Here, Amelin shares with us what they do in the group, and how it has benefited her.

Through the ups and downs of motherhood, no one better understands what it takes to be a mother than other mothers. At MOPS, women meet together to be supported, encouraged and equipped as they raised the world together. Women with preschoolage children, school-age children, or even women who are expecting, are all welcomed at MOPS, to share their life journey and experiences with each other. Remarkable things happen when mothers find their place in a mothering community and discover that we are not alone.



MOPS has been hosted at Reach Community Church since 2016. Through the years of attending MOPS, I feel that this is where I can truly make meaningful contributions and develop true friendships; a group that is different from the typical mother's group, organised by the local council. While we connect and share our mothering experiences, our littles ones are offered fun-filled program in a separate room – which often is what we all need (a break!).

At each meeting, we chat through a topic of focus, from parenting to spouse related issues, and more importantly, our own emotional and mental wellbeing. While it doesn't sound like much, each time I walk out of the place, I am happy, recharged and ready to take on the world. And I find myself looking forward to the next meeting.

Whether it is meeting new visitors or seeing familiar faces at MOPS, my heart anticipates to connect with the other mothers, who are all playing the same role in their humble homes. Not only that I am encouraged by the regular members who come and join in the meaningful conversations, I am hugely inspired and moved by those mothers who sowed selflessly of their times, even though their children are way beyond preschool age. They come to share their invaluable experiences, care for our children, bring a plate of food, and even just be present to hear us out.

As a mother, to other mothers out there, there is no better way in tackling motherhood than surrounding yourself with supportive mothers who can encourage and sustain you. Mothering matters, and we are privileged to be called to such a role, to be entrusted with lives in our hands, to grow, to nurture and to flourish. What a God's given privilege!



MOPS here at Northcote welcomes you. Whether you know Christ or not, MOPS welcomes mothers of all faiths, or no faith. Its purpose is to empower women in their mothering journey so that they have a chance to thrive and flourish. Come, be in this journey with MOPS or if you know anyone who will benefit from the goodness of MOPS, we meet here at the Reach Community Church on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month at 10am, email mopsnorthcote@reachcc.org for more details.

Reading the bible supernaturally

Author: John Piper, Reviewed by Lee Chyi

This is the second of John Piper's book that I had read. Each time, his book revealed his brilliant mind and his humble heart. When I read a great book, it will often just be that: a great book. But reading Piper's book, it is not just a great book, but a great book written by an author who has a great mind, and this great mind comes from a deep and passionate relationship with a great God.

Reading the bible supernaturally is divided into three parts:

Part 1 – The ultimate goal of reading the Bible In this session Piper proposed that the ultimate goal in reading the Bible is that "God's infinite worth and beauty would be exalted in the everlasting, white-hot worship of the blood-bought bride of Christ from every people, language, tribe, and nation". I know, it is a mouthful



He then expounded God's purpose for the Bible in the next ten chapters: "to reveal God's infinite worth and beauty as the ultimate value and excellence in the universe, to open the eyes of his people to see that glory in the Scriptures, so that we savor the excellence of God above all created treasures, and, by beholding and being satisfied with God, be changed from glory to glory, until the bride of Christ – the family of God across all centuries and cultures – is complete in number and beauty for the white-hot worship of God forever and ever." What amazes me is how Piper explained this in such a logical way, using bible verses to support this proposal.

Part 2 – The supernatural act of reading the Bible

Piper explained that due to our sinful nature (internal) and the corrupted world we live in (external), we cannot read the Bible without supernatural help.

Part 3 – The natural act of reading the Bible supernaturally

Piper devoted fourteen chapters in this section to teach the readers how to read the Bible supernaturally through the natural act of reading. It is impossible for me to summarise them in this brief review. But I want to mention that Piper included an important chapter here to awaken our desire for God's word, "loss of interest in the word of God is loss of interest in God."

Piper is a great teacher who teaches from his heart. And the result is a brilliant (but imperfect) book, written by a brilliant (but imperfect) mind, with the aim to spur the readers to yearn to read the brilliant (and perfect) book – the Bible – inspired by the brilliant (and perfect) God.

The Bible aims to create authentic people who are so satisfied in God that their outward behaviour shows that God is their greatest treasure... God's value is supreme in the heart, and this has changed everything. – John Piper

Reach Recipe

Beef and Hokkien Stir Fry Noodle

By Reach Community Church Youth MasterChef winner



On 28th of June this year, the Reach Community Church youth group held their very own MasterChef competition. Eight teams competed in two challenges. The first one was a pressure test, where the teams needed to make the best banana bread in a limited time. The second one was the mystery box challenge, which involved the teams producing their own dish using selected ingredients. The winning team, comprised of a group of year 7-9s, created the Beef and Hokkien stir fry noodles. Here we want to share with you the MasterChef recipe, we hope you enjoy the dish.





Ingredients:

- 500 g beef rump
- Cooking oil
- 450 g Hokkien noodles, separated
- Half a bunch of Kale
- 1 onion sliced
- 2 cloves of garlic crushed
- ½ cup oyster sauce
- 2 tbsp sov sauce
- ½ cup beef stock or water
- 1 tbsp cumin powder
- 2 tbsp paprika

Method:

- 1. Coat beef rump with cumin powder, paprika and a pinch of salt and pepper. Rub deeply into the meat. Allow to sit for 10-15 minutes before cooking.
- Place noodles in a large heat-proof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand for 2-3 minutes or until noodles soften. Drain and set aside.
- Cook the beef medium rare as a steak by putting it on a hot pan with a little bit of oil.
 Slice the beef thinly and set aside.
- 4. Heat the wok with 1 ½ tbsp of oil. Add kale and stir-fry for 2 minutes or until beginning to wilt.
- 5. Add onion and garlic and continue to stir fry for 1-2 minutes.
- Add noodles, oyster sauce, soy sauce and beef stock, and toss to warm through and coat in sauce.
- 7. Serve with chili and shallots if desired.

vation in Christ How I found the one and only living God By Aguek Akhuar



I came to Australia in the year 2000 with my uncle's family. Most of my family and relatives are from a catholic background and we went to church only on major Christian celebrations such as Christmas and Faster.

I had always felt some sort of emptiness inside me which I couldn't understand, until I found Jesus. I thought that life would be good if I was good to people and was perceived as a nice and kind person, and I thought that the living God would see my good works.

When we settled in our new home in Australia, I spent a lot of times helping relatives and those around me navigating settlement process such as accessing social services. This was one of the ways I wanted to demonstrate my goodness to others. I lived my life as normal as possible, thinking that I was safe and would definitely go to heaven, because I was a good person, surely God saw and accepted my good works.

I met my wife when I was 20 years old and we got married three years later. At that point, life was good but the empty feelings inside me did not go away. After we settled down, my wife was invited to Reach Community Church by one of her friends, and she started attending church every week.

On Sundays I played soccer and stayed at home, my wife did not try to force me to go to the church with her. However, I started to see the changes God made in her life, evident by her unexplainable joy. Then one day, she asked me if I would like to go to church with her. "Sure." I said. For some reason I wanted to check the church out

From that time, I kept going to church week after week, because the word of God did something in my heart. I ended up giving my life to Jesus Christ and received Him as my Lord and Saviour. That was in the year 2007. Since then my world changed for the better and now I understand these verses deeply:





The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9, NIV)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16, NIV)

Today I am very thankful to my Father in Heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ for saving me and blessing me and my Family.

Reach Insight

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Stress and anxiety - in search of an answer

By Kemi Aibinu



Living in modern society these days means it is becoming so hard to stop. With instant coffee, instant meal, instant messaging and almost instant everything, it is almost impossible to slow down.

The human brain seems to be working at the fastest rate than it has ever been. Pastor Rick Warren mentioned in his message "how to keep from stressing out" that the level of human stress in America has now reached the highest since World War II, with suicide being the number one injury death.

Although we are getting everything faster than ever before, the quality of most things is being compromised including the quality of our lives. Not only are the quality of most products these days are very poor compared to how it used to be 30 years ago, the quality of our relationships with one another has diminished significantly. No wonder high rates of depression and

anxiety is recorded in the recent years more than ever before. Statistic showed that 1 in 16 Australians are currently experiencing depression and 1 in 7 will experience depression in their life time¹. The same statistic source pointed out that the estimated population treatment rate for mental disorders in Australia increased from 37% in 2006–07 to 46% in 2009–10. It is a modern epidemic that has plagued us and it is hard to get out of it.

It is becoming common in workplaces to include stress management as part of professional development for staff. I wonder if this is in response to the number of staff managing stress related issues. What is the answer and where is the answer? People are looking for answers from medical science, but medical science can't provide all the answers, so people are being referred to yoga and meditation specialist.

¹ Statistics source: Beyond Blues statistics retrieved from: https://www.beyondblue.org.au/media/statistics

Reach Insight

The good news is that the answer can be found in Christ. In fact, Christ alone is the answer to all the problems in the world today.

We all experience stress in one way or another and at one point in our lives. Apart from mental health issues, the fact that we live in a fallen world makes us prone to situations that could cause stress. Issues such as sickness in our bodies or sickness of our loved ones, stress at work, conflicts with our friends or family members, medical conditions etc could cause stress in our lives. How then do we manage this? I will share my thoughts on the Biblical way to manage stress.

Christ-centred meditation and mindfulness based on biblical principles

One of the popular ways to manage stress these days is mindfulness and meditation. Various scientific research has proven this to be very effective and it is being recommended more and more by health professionals in the recent years.

Because meditation and mindfulness work well in relieving stress and relaxing the mind, it is likely that Christians also seek answers from such practises. Christians need to know that they have a better mindfulness option that is real, based on biblical principles and that could daily remind us of our identity in God, rather than a wishful state of mind characterised by most mindfulness practises.

In fact, meditating on God's word is the greatest mindfulness tool that anyone could ever have. We need to know how to incorporate biblical mindfulness into our

daily lives in a way that it takes our minds off our source of stress and unto God who alone is our comfort. Meditation through yoga is based on channelling energy by emptying ourselves and detaching from reality; whereas Christian meditation is intentional and active and not passive, it is about filling ourselves with God's power and love and attaching to God's promises.

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27)

On many occasions in the Bible, God calls His people's attention to being mindful of the things He made.

Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens, who created all these? (Isaiah 40:26a, NIV)

Behold the birds... and your heavenly Father feedeth them... Consider the lilies... (see Matthew 6:26-34, ASV)

Go watch the ants... Watch what they do and be wise. (Proverbs 6:6, NCV).

These are few examples of how God invited His children to go on a mindful journey with Him by considering the things He made. God uses examples of the complex system of nature to remind us of how much He cares for us.

To me, there is no better way of relieving stress and anxiety than to remember that the maker of the heaven and earth is mindful of us. As we look at the things He made and how He sustains them all, we should remember that our lives are in the hand of a loving father and nothing whatsoever can separate us from His love.

Reach Insight

So next time you feel stressed, take a walk into the lovely natural environment and think about (or be mindful of) the incredible work of God in these things.

Remember that you are more precious in God's eyes than them. Remembering who we are helps us to put our lives into a better perspective and helps us see reasons to revere God even in our difficult situations. It helps us to know how to enjoy the moment and not worry about the past or the future.

Focusing on God in this manner allows us to simply enjoy Him as a good God and not worry about unanswered prayers which could be another source of stress. When the Bible says, "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things... And the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:8-9, NIV), the Bible is showing us a great mindfulness tool. Since only God has all the above

characteristics, we should think about God only. It means bringing our mind into the reality of God through considering His character and holiness.

Although this seems easier said than done, with constant practice, we will get better at it. It needs to be learned with constant practice until it becomes part of us so much that stress, worries and anxiety do not find a place in our lives anymore.

Relaxation

The bible says in Proverbs 17:22 (NASB) that "a joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones". When we have pain in our body or mind, it is usual to focus on the pain and find it hard to see the good things about life. We might also find it difficult to relax and rest on God. Psalm 62:5 (NIV) says, "Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him."



Using Biblical mindfulness with breathing exercises can calm our mind when it is clouded with anxiety which makes it difficult to think correctly or to take a rest in God. It also works for pain, which makes it hard to relax. Sit in a comfortable position and breathe in, hold it for 5 seconds and breathe out. As you do this over and over, focus on the love of Christ for you. Remind yourself of all the wonderful promises and repeat this breathing exercise again and again until you feel relaxed. As you breathe in and out, you increase the level of oxygen that goes into your brain which improves your ability to think correctly; it also awakens hope in the Lord. It helps you to regain strength to be joyful again. But remember, this needs to be done in the context of God's promises; otherwise, it is empty and loses its substance. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11: 28)

In conclusion, the greatest antidote for stress and worry is found in Philippians 4 and it could be summarised as follows (excerpt from Pastor Rick Warren's sermon "how to keep from stressing out").

- 1. Worry about nothing (v6).
- 2. Tell God about everything (v6).
- 3. Give thanks in everything (v4, 6).
- 4. Think about worthwhile things (v8).
- 5. Be content in everything (v11-13).
 Remember that contentment doesn't mean no ambition. Paul, who spoke about contentment, is a very ambitious man when it comes to preaching the gospel.
 Contentment simply means enjoying our current situation while we trust God for a better one. It means we do not attach our happiness to a better circumstance. It means we seek to be as happy as we will be when our situation becomes better

The bible says in Philippians 4:7 that when we learn to do all these, that the peace of God will keep our mind in Christ Jesus. If we want to enjoy true peace in this increasingly stressful world, we need to find the true answer in God's unfailing word. We need to seek God for concrete solution which is eternal rather than a temporal and shadow solution that the world offers.



Practise Initiative

Initiative is not often on people's mind when asked to list good character qualities. However, it is an important one to help us to live a fruitful life for God. Initiative is defined as "recognising and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it" by the Character Training Institute, Inc.

Identify the needs of others before being told.	Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. (Philippians 2:4)
Nurture a 'shepherd' mentality.	Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds. (Proverbs 27:23)
Implement your good intentions and ideas.	Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it. (James 4:17, NLT)
Think ahead.	So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. (2 Corinthians 9:5, NIV)
Initiate to repair broken relationship.	Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (Matthew 5:23-24)
Advocate for the marginalised group in your society.	Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you. (James 1:27, NLT)
Train yourself to be observant of the things of God.	Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it." (Luke 10:23-24)
Improve your time management.	Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5:15, ESV)
Volunteer to help others.	God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. (1 Peter 4:10, NLT)
Establish a lifestyle that incorporates giving your time, talent and treasure to others.	And let our people also learn to maintain good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. (Titus 3:14)

Reach / Spring 2019

JACOB & ESAU WORD SEARCH

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BLESSING
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YOUNGEST



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