

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE



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GOG AND MAGOG

Will Russia attack Israel?



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MICAH AND THE CONDEMNATION OF ISRAEL'S RELIGIOUS LEADERS

ARE WE THERE YET?

Dear friend,

Shalom in His grace! Thank you for giving me a few moments to address a question that so many of us are asking at this critical point in time.

Do you recall in the Gospel of Matthew when the disciples were sitting on the Temple steps? They simply could not contain their curiosity about the coming of the kingdom. So they asked Jesus, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matt 24:3).

At this point, He had not yet been crucified nor raised from the dead, and, of course, He had not yet ascended to the right hand of the Father. But they were so eager for the establishment of the Davidic kingdom that they could not muster the patience needed to join Jesus on His journey to the cross and beyond.



FROM THE
PRESIDENT,
MITCH GLASER

We have the great advantage of looking back at these events. After a couple of thousand years of waiting, we have either developed the godly virtue of patience or perhaps, sadly, grown complacent about God’s coming kingdom. We might also have become too attached to a world that is passing away and tempted to try to hold on to what we have.

When I was a new believer, all I could think about was the return of Jesus. I was so eager for His appearing. But time can slowly diminish your hope until the burdens of this life suddenly awaken a more urgent desire to know when He will return: it could be sickness, the loss of a loved one, or a bitter disappointment. Yet, our faith teaches us that the Lord is gracious and uses the trials of life to remind us that something far better is coming!

Then again, God can also remind us of His return through His Word. The passage in Matthew commonly known as the Olivet Discourse reminds us that, as the return of the Lord grows near, we will see signs of increasing intensity, likened to childbirth. According to Matt 24:5–13 (as well as Luke 21 and Mark 13), these signs will include:

- False prophets and messiahs
- Wars and rumors of wars
- Nation rising against nation
- Kingdom against kingdom
- Famines
- Earthquakes
- Other types of plagues and natural disasters

But all these signs are merely the beginning. As believers, we will be persecuted, killed, hated, and tempted to fall away. We may even betray our fellow followers of Yeshua! Lawlessness will increase, love will grow cold, and soon after that, the end will come!

The Gospel writers record Jesus telling His disciples much more, as the Lord answers with far more detail than they might have expected. For example, Jesus told His disciples

that He expected them to pay attention to the signs of the times (Matthew 16:2–4) but that no one, not even He, knew the exact date of His return.¹

ROAD SIGNS TOWARD THE FUTURE

We might not be there just yet, but the signs are beginning to look like we are getting close!

Here are some of the most widely accepted indicators of the Second Coming that believers today hold:

- The Jewish people will return to the land of Israel in unbelief before Jesus returns (Ezekiel 36:22–24).
- All the nations of the earth will threaten Israel and gather to destroy her at the very end of days (Zechariah 12:3, 9–10).
- The end-time remnant of the Jewish people will accept Jesus (Zechariah 12, 19; Romans 11:25–29).

There are multiple other prophetic issues to discuss, including the timing of the rapture of believers (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). Godly and faithful believers take various positions as to when this event will occur—before, during, or after the Great Tribulation (Jeremiah 30:7). Other believers affirm a general resurrection, but not the concept of the rapture. The literalness of the kingdom described in the Hebrew Scriptures and the book of Revelation (Rev 20:1–3, 7) is also highly controversial. Chosen People Ministries’ staff affirm that God will fulfill His promises to Israel, but we also consider the evangelization and discipleship of Jewish people to be our mission’s priority.

GOG AND MAGOG: WHO, WHEN, AND WHERE?

Many also ask me today, and for good reason, if I believe the war that Russia initiated with Ukraine will one day bleed over to Israel and be the fulfillment of the biblically expected war between Gog and Magog?

Again, this is a fair and reasonable question. As mentioned, Jesus wants us to study the Bible and determine the signs of the times to ready ourselves for His return and be passionate about finishing the task of world evangelization. If He is coming soon, we need to follow His final marching orders to each of us: to make disciples of the nations—to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles (Matthew 28:19; Romans 1:16).

His coming should motivate us to make the Great Commission our life’s greatest priority!

The text inspiring the question of whether the war between Russia and Ukraine may lead to the final battle between Gog and Magog and Israel is in Ezekiel chapters 38–39.

*And the word of the Lord came to me saying, “Son of man, set your face toward **Gog** of the **land of Magog**, the prince of **Rosh, Meshech and Tubal**, and prophesy against him and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you,*

¹ Matthew 24:36, 42, 44, 25:13; Mark 13:32–37; Acts 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2.

O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. *I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords; **Persia, Ethiopia [Cush] and Put** with them, all of them with shield and helmet; **Gomer with all its troops; Beth-togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops**—many peoples with you.””
(Ezek 38:1–6, emphasis added.)*

The other passage that is relevant to our search is Revelation 20:7–8: “*When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*”

I believe this war to end all wars is coming! I am not sure we can prove that Rosh (“head” in Hebrew) is Russia, as we must work through entirely different languages to come to this conclusion. We know that Persia, or Iran, is an ancient and current enemy of Israel. Cush refers to Ethiopia, which is not currently an enemy. However, Put, which is Libya, could very well become more of an enemy in the days ahead. The Bible refers to territories that are north of Israel, which could include Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq—traditional enemies of the modern State of Israel. Russia has not been an outright enemy of Israel, although Vladimir Putin has sided with Syria and claimed some months ago that Israel stole the Golan Heights from Syria and should return it.

One point that makes me seriously think that this war will one day turn against Israel is the description of Israel’s security measures in Ezekiel 38:8 and 11: “*After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them. . . . And you will say, ‘I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates.’”*

One only needs to visit Israel today to see that it requires some of the most obvious and intensive security measures of any nation in the world. All you need to do is count the young soldiers on the streets of Tel Aviv or Jerusalem.

So, is it possible that this war is coming soon? Perhaps. But it seems to me that the table is not yet fully set.

I am sorry that I cannot provide a more definitive answer for you; I can pray that the Lord leads you to a deeper understanding of a complex biblical truth and offer a few suggestions for your personal study. I hope these suggestions help you on your journey:

Identify the key players by starting with a good Bible dictionary and an ancient world map.

- Read through Ezekiel 35–39 slowly, carefully, and at least a half dozen times to get the complete picture of what God is doing in these last days. Then do the same with Revelation 20.
- Draw a timeline for yourself and see if you can plot the various events of these days.
- Read through Zechariah 12–14, Romans 11, and Matthew 23:37–39 to see if these passages shed some light on the topic.

So, are we there yet? Only God knows, but the road signs indicate we are getting close! As Jesus said, “*Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door*” (Matthew 24:32–33).

Your brother in Messiah,

Mitch

**HIS SECOND
COMING
SHOULD
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US TO MAKE
THE GREAT
COMMISSION
OUR LIFE’S
GREATEST
PRIORITY!**



WHY JEWISH EVANGELISM?

FINDING THE REMNANT: ROMANS 11

Few passages in the Bible motivate Jewish evangelism more than the apostle Paul's words in Romans 11:25–29:

For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God’s choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers; for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

These verses serve as a crescendo for one of Paul's main themes in Romans: the faithfulness of God to both Jew and Gentile (Rom 3:3–4, 5:8, 8:28–30). Because of God's commitment to the Jewish people, we can have confidence and hope as we share the gospel message of forgiveness through Messiah.

We can see that God has not rejected the Jewish people despite Paul's acknowledgment that the Jewish people largely forsook the gospel (Rom 11:28). In God's providence, they became enemies of the gospel for the salvation of the Gentiles (Rom 11:11–12). On the other hand, Paul wrote that Israel is both an enemy of the gospel and beloved, separated from the New Covenant of salvation but still chosen according to the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God remains in covenant with them, despite their unbelief in Messiah, *“for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable”* (Rom 11:29). The people's disbelief has not altered God's promises for His estranged but chosen people.

Paul calls this situation a “mystery” that he wants his Gentile readers to understand (Rom 11:25). Usually, unbelief means separating oneself from relationship with God, but in the case of Israel, God promised never to separate Himself from His

promises to Israel. Therefore, their unbelief is only a “partial hardening.” Furthermore, Paul had already identified himself as a Jew who believes in Jesus (Rom 11:1), reminding his readers that God still saves Jewish people through the gospel. Just as Paul is part of the remnant, there are also other Jews awaiting the proclamation of the gospel. Because Israel's hardening is only partial, we can take heart that some will believe when we proclaim the gospel to them.

Even so, the glorious mystery deepens further. We should be encouraged that God has remained faithful to His people Israel, and He is still saving a Jewish remnant from their sins. But Paul, based on the Hebrew prophets, knew that the remnant of Jewish believers in Jesus would expand to the entire nation one day! After *“the fullness of the Gentiles has come in,”* the people of Israel will experience an outpouring of grace unlike ever before, *“and so all Israel will be saved”* (Rom 11:26; Isaiah 59:20; Zechariah 12:10–13:1).

In the meantime, before Messiah returns, we can take heart that every generation in Israel's history—including today—contains *“a remnant according to God's gracious choice”* (Rom 11:5). It is time to share the gospel with the Jewish people and find that remnant!

A MINISTRY OF PROCLAMATION: ISAIAH 62

In the latter chapters of the book of Isaiah, the prophet paints a beautiful picture of God's kingdom and the events and circumstances leading up to its final establishment in Zion. The Lord Himself will restore and glorify the once wayward and trampled nation. Israel's Savior will heal, lift up, and exalt those once afflicted and downtrodden. The One who keeps Israel will stifle the nations that once attacked and oppressed God's people.

Amid such prophetic promises and descriptions, Isaiah mentions the unique role God's faithful followers play in unfolding His divine plan. Their refusal to stay silent will characterize the ministry of these followers. They will speak up! *“For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet”* (Isa 62:1a). Theirs will be a ministry of proclamation and intercession, specifically the declaration of the “good news” (Isa 61:1) that Israel's Savior is coming to her and that *“His reward is with Him, and His recompense before Him”* (Isa 62:11b). God's faithful will also continuously remind God in prayer of His commitment to make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

The Scriptures call believers today to proclaim the good news to Israel. We also find some helpful instructions in Isaiah 62

about another component of our calling: the need to pray for Israel's restoration and salvation. Isaiah 62:6–7 states, *“On your walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all day and all night they will never keep silent. **You who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourselves; and give Him no rest until He establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth**”* (emphasis added). This passage describes a sentry who faithfully and ceaselessly approaches the Lord—to the point of annoying Him—to remind Him of the promises He made concerning Israel! Like the woman from Jesus' parable in Luke 18:1–8 who incessantly appealed to the judge for justice, Isaiah helps us see the impact of our prayers on God to fulfill His promises to Israel.

Where will their proclamation and intercessory prayers lead, and when will they be complete? When God restores and saves Israel! *“Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, and her salvation like a torch that is burning”* (Isa 62:1b). The proclamation of this good news finds its fullness and completion only when Israel accepts her Messiah by faith and finds rest in His kingdom under His rule and authority.

We see this pattern in the New Testament as well. Paul spends a great deal of time in Romans 9–11 explaining God's ongoing plan for Israel:

- The nation rejected the King the first time He came (Rom 9:1–3, 10:1–2).
- Despite their rejection of Him, God's promises to them are still in effect (Rom 9:4–6, 11:1).
- The proclamation of the gospel to Israel is necessary and can lead them to salvation (Rom 10:8–17, 11:11).
- In the end, Israel's acceptance of Jesus will yield new life, restoration, and resurrection for the nation (Rom 11:12–15, 25–27), just as Isaiah describes.

Jesus also connects the ongoing proclamation of the gospel to the Jewish people with His second coming, asserting that the ministry to Israel will not be complete until He returns. *“But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes”* (Matthew 10:23).

In these days and always, we have a ministry of proclamation and intercession—proclaiming the good news to Israel and pleading with the Lord through prayer for Israel's salvation.

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL: ZECHARIAH 12:10

The prophet Zechariah told a rebellious Israel that there would come a time when they would finally turn back to the Lord. In Zechariah 12:1, the prophet said, *“Thus declares the Lord,”* clearly showing that God Himself is speaking. He described a day when Jerusalem and all the house of Judah would be attacked, and when all the world's nations will stand against

Israel and the Jewish people (Zech 12:3). During these dire circumstances, however, the Lord Himself will come and fight on Israel's behalf.

As believers, we are waiting for the establishment of the throne of David in Jerusalem. This throne represents the rule of Messiah Jesus, the ultimate and eternal Davidic king. The events described by Zechariah will lead to the restoration of the house of David, which Zechariah describes as being *“like God, like the angel of the Lord before them”* (Zech 12:8). This prophecy makes perfect sense, as Jesus will have returned to rule!

At that time, a great transformation will happen among the Jewish people. God said, *“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn”* (Zech 12:10). In that moment, Israel as a whole will realize that the one whom they had rejected for millennia was everything He said He was in the Bible: the Son of David, the Son of God, the promised Messiah of Israel. It may well have been this moment that Paul envisioned when he wrote the words, *“And so all Israel will be saved”* (Romans 11:26).

Israel's recognition of the Messiah is both heartwarming and heartbreaking. God's chosen people finally seeing the Light is nothing less than life from the dead (Romans 11:15)! Yet the tone of Zechariah's words is one of utter grief and mourning. How sad that our people took so long to see what God has been trying to show them from the beginning: *“Salvation is from the Lord”* (Jonah 2:9)! The best news is that we do not have to wait for that day to see the Jewish people come to faith!

Neither Paul's prophetic claim that, one day, all Israel will be saved nor Zechariah's description of that day clearly state that every Jewish person who ever lived will somehow attain salvation. Rather, these prophecies may refer to all those Jewish people who are alive at the time of His return receiving that “Spirit of grace and supplication” to see the truth of Messiah (Zech 12:10). That means that Jewish people alive today who will not get to see that “great and terrible day” (Malachi 4:5) will need to decide for Messiah beforehand. That is where we can make a difference.

We do not know when the day Zechariah describes will arrive. As a result, we must act **today** to share the Jewish Messiah with God's chosen people, and not wait. We know that every day brings us closer to His return. Until the prophecy of Zechariah 12:10 comes to pass, we must look for **and work toward a present fulfillment of God's words to Isaiah—that the Jewish people “might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed”** (Isa 6:10).

“ IT IS TIME TO SHARE THE GOSPEL WITH THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND FIND THAT REMNANT! ”

Micah 3:5-8 The Condemnation of Israel's Religious Leaders

In our previous study in the book of Micah, God warned against the corruption of the civil leaders of Israel. Now, Micah reveals the Lord's message against the false prophets who were misleading and mistreating His people. *"Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who lead my people astray; when they have something to bite with their teeth, they cry, 'Peace,' but against him who puts nothing in their mouths they declare holy war"* (Mic 3:5).

These false prophets gave blessings of peace to those who provided for them but cursed those who would not give them anything with a holy war. Greed and self-interest motivated these self-proclaimed prophets rather than the fear of the Lord.

It was not unusual or inappropriate for a prophet to receive compensation for services rendered to those to whom he was ministering. Yeshua affirmed in Luke 10:7, *"Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages."* But without the motivating fear of the Lord, the temptation for the false prophets was to tie their message to monetary gain. Unfortunately, some ministers will favor those who treat them well and neglect, or even worse, mistreat those who do not.

As a consequence of abusing their prophetic positions of influence, the Lord would withhold prophetic revelation from them. Micah 3:6 says, *"Therefore it will be night for you—without vision, and darkness for you—without divination. The sun will go down on the prophets, and the day will become dark over them."* Rather than seeing the guiding light of God, they would flounder and grope in the darkness. The sun, a symbol of the light of God that bestows blessings and favor, would not shine on them, and the ungodly prophets would have to live in the darkness of the Lord's disfavor.

Seers and diviners were supposed to hear from God when people wanted to know God's will for a particular situation. But God humiliated these false prophets due to their inability to ascertain the future: *"The seers will be ashamed and the diviners will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will all cover their mouths because there is no answer from God"* (Mic 3:7). They suffered embarrassment because they could not prophesy any word from the Lord when the people asked for it. Covering the face was

a sign of mourning among the Israelites. As these false prophets were motivated by greed and illicit gain, God took their livelihoods away, and they could not perform their work.

True prophets had godly insight into Israel's history and future. False prophets could not discern the hand of God in history or ascertain the future because they saw life through their own vested interests. While true prophets connected the nation's well-being with its faithfulness to the Lord, false prophets arrogantly conditioned Israel's well-being on their dedication to the prophets. True prophets will always seek the Lord's gain; false prophets will pursue their own.

In contrast to these false prophets, full of greed, Micah was filled with God's Spirit, and God inspired his prophecies. His words were not pleasant; they included calling out Israel for her sin and rebellion: *"On the other hand I am filled with power—with the Spirit of the Lord—and with justice and courage to make known to Jacob his rebellious act, even to Israel his sin"* (Mic 3:8). The Holy Spirit empowered Micah to speak harsh but truthful words to the people of Israel.



A total solar eclipse.



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MINISTRY NEWS BRIEFS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

PRAYER ANSWERED—ISRAELI COMES TO FAITH

Angelina,* a friend of one of our missionaries, is a Ukrainian immigrant now living in Toronto. Her brother Alex,* who is disabled, got stuck in Mariupol. Angelina was worrying about him, and our missionary prayed for Alex to be able to leave Ukraine. The Lord answered the prayer! Alex was evacuated out of the war zone! He is safe and well-provided for in a European refugee camp! He said it was a miracle, and he did not have to do anything or pay any money. Volunteers just took him from one place to another into safety. Praise the Lord with us for this miracle and pray that Alex accepts the Lord as his Savior. This same missionary also has an Israeli friend, Olesia,* who visited our staff member in Toronto. Olesia's friend, Leah,* also an Israeli immigrant, spent an evening with our missionary, who witnessed to her, and she accepted the Lord!

MESSIANIC MISSIONARY DEVELOPS NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHABAD MISSIONARY

Recently, one of our staff connected with the local Chabad rabbi and missionary in his area. Chabad missionaries typically reach out to secular Jews to encourage them to become more religious. The rabbi had advertised a course on the medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides, who remains very influential today. By God's grace, our missionary was able to attend the entire six-week course in the rabbi's own home—with only two other students! Even though our missionary was forthright about being a believer and even a seminary professor, the rabbi eagerly invited him to come to the class, despite his background! Please pray for our brother as he navigates this new relationship.

SPONSORING APARTMENTS FOR UKRAINIANS AND MINISTRY TO THE HOMELESS

In Israel, Chosen People Ministries is renting apartments to help Ukrainians in transition. Many Ukrainian immigrants in Israel are mothers whose husbands or sons had to stay in Ukraine. They had to flee alone with their other children. Closer to the war zone, Chosen People Ministries aided dozens of unaccompanied children and youth, whose terrified parents sent them alone to Poland.

The Tel Aviv outreach to the homeless also continues. Some of the people we minister to have

*names changed

been in prison. Many of the women are also trapped in prostitution. Some have prayed to receive Jesus during our outreach and are willing to enter a program where they can get off drugs and change their lives.



PASSOVER SEDER RAISES QUESTIONS

In September of last year, a staff member had the privilege of baptizing a new Jewish believer. The young new believer invited his unbelieving Jewish mother, Rose, to attend the baptism, and she did. When he invited her to visit the Messianic congregation, she simply smiled and refused to give a solid "yes" or "no." After seven months, her son was finally able to convince her to attend our annual Passover Seder. As the Passover Seder began, Rose was letting those around her know what she was thinking. It was not bad or rude; she just made comments like, "Oh, that's interesting," and "Why did he do it like that?" About halfway through the evening, as our missionary was making clear connections between the Passover meal and the Last Supper and clearly presenting the gospel, Rose fell silent. She listened intently as he explained Jesus' statements about the matzah and the cup in familiar Passover terms, highlighting the redemption and freedom that is available to us through the blood of Jesus. By the end of the evening, she left the meal commenting on how much she has to think about. Please continue to pray for Rose.

Here Are Some Basic Tools for JEWISH EVANGELISM



Isaiah 53 Explained

Do you have questions about the meaning of life and spirituality? Maybe it is time to go right to the source and rethink your relationship with the Creator. *Isaiah 53 Explained* will help start your personal pilgrimage and introduce you to a chapter in the Scriptures that has the potential to revolutionize your life! *Isaiah 53 Explained* makes the story of the Bible understandable, practically and simply explaining how you can have a soul-satisfying relationship with God and revealing the surprising key that makes this relationship possible.

PRICE: \$12.95^{us}



How to Introduce Your Jewish Friends to the Messiah

We often find it difficult to share the gospel with those whom we do not know or feel we do not understand. This manual, *How to Introduce your Jewish Friends to the Messiah*, will help you reach Jewish people with the message of salvation! A must read.

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Evangelistic Tool Kit

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- Equip people to evangelize to the Jewish people
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- Advocate for Israel and against antisemitism

We are grateful for your love of the Jewish people!

We invite you to consider expanding the impact of your generosity through the tax-wise option of giving from your IRA. Here is some helpful information and first steps you can take.

- If you are age 70½ or older, you can transfer up to \$100,000 from your traditional individual retirement account (IRA) to a qualified charity like Chosen People Ministries without adding a penny to your taxable income.
- Even if you do not itemize deductions, giving in this way allows you to receive a tax benefit for your generosity.
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For more information on giving through your IRA or other planned giving options through Chosen People Ministries, contact Cindy Forbes today at 212-223-2252, ext. 1208 or cforbes@chosenpeople.com!

THE
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A higher standard.
A higher purpose.

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