

**graceWORKS ! GOING DEEPER<sup>1</sup> The Papou Study Bible** is a daily study provided by me to



help folks explore the depth and joy of the “conneXion” life of God. It’s my personal study, and is not intended as a doctrinal statement or statement of any church or denomination or congregation. It’s also my belief that “grace” works, and the servant of God should always want to go deeper. Multi-tasking as usual, I’m also calling this the “Papou Study Bible.” I’m writing it as if I were speaking to my girls who love me and any descendant they have that love their Papou too. And to anyone who wants to consider me a spiritual Dad or “Papou.” I want them to be able to study the Bible with Papou (grandpa in Greek) after I’m gone---and if they don’t, I’ll haunt them. The Scriptures say it’s noble to “search the Scriptures daily” to verify truth like the ancient Bereans did (Acts 17:11). My folks came from Berea. My incredible Dad (and your grandfather and great grandfather, guys), Vasil Charles Valekis taught me to do this like he did---every day until I die. He taught me and everyone I know to go to church no matter what and to put God first. While Mama (Maria Pagona Stratakis Valekis) never really did this, she made sure we listened to Daddy on this one. She would have hit us with a spatula or frying pan or worse if we didn’t. This is a simple sharing my “daily search.” And I’d like to think it is a continuation of God’s life through my Dad through me. Both my “Dads” by the way. And a way to honor him, mama and our loving “Dad”---God. And for all of us to be together, in Spirit, even when we I join them in heaven. I like to use the Blue Letter literal, very “visual,” Greek translation a lot to help “visualize” these truths the beautiful way Greek enables you to view. And I like to share this with folks serving in an elder capacity, or any capacity, to grow them, challenge them, and stretch them. But especially share it with anyone I’ve ever brought to Christ and family members who truly love me. And when you study these, I’ll make sure to connect with you from heaven. *Ever an orthodox Greek, Jim Valekis*



**ChristINYouSeries**

**Colossians 1:27 (King James Version)**

<sup>27</sup>To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory

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**Ezekiel 44 Part 2<sup>2</sup>**

**We stopped here yesterday:** <sup>5</sup> The LORD said to me, “Son of man, look carefully, listen closely and give attention to everything I tell you concerning all the regulations and instructions regarding the temple of the LORD. Give attention to the entrance to the temple and all the exits of the sanctuary. **We determined this was a call to look at Jesus and pay Him special attention as our Way into God’s Holy Temple. Let’s see what else God wants to show us.**

<sup>1</sup> **NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR UPLOADED TO WEB WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION OF AUTHOR.**

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## Ezekiel 44 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>6</sup> Say to rebellious Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Enough of your detestable practices, people of Israel! <sup>7</sup> In addition to all your other detestable practices, you brought foreigners uncircumcised in heart and flesh into my sanctuary, desecrating my temple while you offered me food, fat and blood, and you broke my covenant.

**This is a fascinating example of how the Bible says one thing in the language and metaphors of the people to whom the revelation is given, but it’s not meant to be taken literally.**

**Imagine being in the early church, and being at the council in Acts 15 which was over this issue.**

### Acts 15 (NIV)

15 Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: “Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.” <sup>2</sup> This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them.

**The apostle Paul was indignant about this. As he wrote to the Galatians about circumcision being required, he said this:**

### Galatians 5

5 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

**Notice how they would be burdened by a yoke of slavery.**

<sup>2</sup> Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that **if you let yourselves be circumcised,**

**Even though this Holy Scripture in Ezekiel spoke this way, Paul concluded this---it would be a sin to be circumcised now!**

Christ will be of no value to you at all. <sup>3</sup> Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. <sup>4</sup> You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup> For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. <sup>6</sup> For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.

**How could they conclude this in spite of this very clear Scripture? They learned what one of my friends called “the highest view of Scripture.” They learned how to lens the Scripture through God’s ultimate revelation, Jesus Christ!**

**Jesus spoke to us often “in parables.” Perhaps that Scripture has a broader meaning than we’ve allowed before. What if He was trying to show the disciples that even much of the writings in the Old Testament were simply “parables.” So to be “circumcised in flesh and heart” didn’t have to mean literal circumcision or even moderately literal circumcision. Not how we participate in the “circumcision” of Christ.**

<sup>10</sup> The disciples came to him and asked, “Why do you speak to the people in parables?” Matthew 13

## **Colossians 2**

<sup>11</sup> In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by <sup>[c]</sup> Christ, <sup>12</sup> having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead.

**Jesus told the Jews:**

## **John 5**

39 You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

**One of the most striking examples of this is in the story of the Magi. The Jews could tell the Magi from Scripture where “the Messiah would be born.” (Matthew 2:4)**

<sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup> “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel. <sup>[a]</sup>”

*Footnotes:*

1. **Matthew 2:6** Micah 5:2,4

**But even though they could tell them where the Messiah would be born from their diligent study of the Scriptures, they did not join the Magi to go to Him and offer Him gifts and worship Him!**

**This is an example of coming the Scriptures, but not coming to Christ. And by the admission of the author of Hebrews, the revelation of Christ was greater than the revelation of the Scriptures given to the prophets/fathers.**

## Hebrews 1 New International Version (NIV)

### God's Final Word: His Son

<sup>1</sup> In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, <sup>2</sup> but **in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. <sup>3</sup> **The Son is** the radiance of God's glory and **the exact representation of his being**, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. <sup>4</sup> So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

**So the Scriptures are definitely infallible and inerrant in the sense that they contain exactly what was conveyed by God in the way He wanted it to be conveyed to the ones receiving them. But they still are not as complete and total a revelation as is the Living Word become flesh, Jesus Christ.**

### Back to Ezekiel 44.

<sup>8</sup> Instead of carrying out your duty in regard to my holy things, you put others in charge of my sanctuary. <sup>9</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says: No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and flesh is to enter my sanctuary, not even the foreigners who live among the Israelites.

**I wonder if this aspect of the “judgment” day being pictured here is an incident of what it was like for Esau, who gave away a blessing he could not get back. I wonder if this is God's way of saying what you do in this life really does matter in regards to what you are going to be able or get to do in the next.**

<sup>34</sup> When Esau heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, “Bless me—me too, my father!”

<sup>35</sup> But he said, “Your brother came deceitfully and took your blessing.”

Genesis 27

**So, look at what the Lord says will happen to the Levites in the “perfect temple” of the future.**

<sup>10</sup> “The Levites who went far from me when Israel went astray and who wandered from me after their idols must bear the consequences of their sin. <sup>11</sup> They may serve in my sanctuary, having charge of the gates of the temple and serving in it; they may slaughter the burnt offerings and sacrifices for the people and stand before the people and serve them. <sup>12</sup> But because they served them in the presence of their idols and made the people of Israel fall into sin, therefore I have

sworn with uplifted hand that they must bear the consequences of their sin, declares the Sovereign LORD. <sup>13</sup> They are not to come near to serve me as priests or come near any of my holy things or my most holy offerings; they must bear the shame of their detestable practices. <sup>14</sup> And I will appoint them to guard the temple for all the work that is to be done in it.

**God gives them a limited version of what could have been theirs for eternity. I don't know if this is exactly how the judgment will work. But it gives me pause to at least speculate.**

<sup>15</sup> ““But the Levitical priests, who are descendants of Zadok and who guarded my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, are to come near to minister before me; they are to stand before me to offer sacrifices of fat and blood, declares the Sovereign LORD. <sup>16</sup> They alone are to enter my sanctuary; they alone are to come near my table to minister before me and serve me as guards.

**This shows how certain ones will be rewarded for what they did in spite of the apostasy all around them. Again, I'm taking the vantage point that God is speaking to us in parables here. But I'm open to my “guess” or even inspired speculation being off base. God is God. He'll make it all plain one day, when we no longer know just in part.**

<sup>9</sup> For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup> but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears.

1 Corinthians 13

**So Scripture is not an inerrant revelation. It's just a partial, limited both by what words cannot convey and what those that received them could work with!**

**But in Christ, all fullness of Revelation comes!**