

graceWORKS ! GOING DEEPER¹ 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*

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Christ IN You Series

Colossians 1:27 (King James Version)

²⁷To 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 4²

I’ve come to see that God speaks in so many parables in the Old Testament meant to teach us something about our life in Christ. This futuristic temple is one. It has the fingerprints of Jesus sightings all over it. Yesterday I pondered what it was telling us about the Day of Judgment we will all face one day. I wondered if the “judgment” spoken of in this chapter about the Levites (their losing their right to serve in a certain way in this future temple). God tells them it’s because of the way they neglected their duty at the Temple in which they served. So in our Day of Judgment, will we “lose out” on certain blessings of responsibility because of wrong actions we’ve taken in this life? I wonder. Let’s study and see what happens next.

¹ **NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR UPLOADED TO WEB WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION OF AUTHOR.**

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Ezekiel 44 (NIV)

¹⁰“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. ¹¹ 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. ¹² 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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ And I will appoint them to guard the temple for all the work that is to be done in it.

This is the point I made in the introduction. Notice again what is happening to these Levites.

- The Levites who went far from me. . . must bear the consequences of their sin.
- They may serve in my sanctuary:
 - having charge of the gates of the temple
 - serving in it
 - they may slaughter the burnt offerings and sacrifices
 - and stand before the people and serve them.

But because they “served them in the presence of their idols” and because they “made the people of Israel fall into sin,” they would have a diminished role of responsibility in this future temple in the restored Israel. They could not “come near” and serve as priests. They could not come near any of God’s holy things and holy offerings. And here’s one telling phrase:

“they must bear the shame of their detestable practices.”

There are multiple stories of such reductions in blessing or responsibilities that come because of sinful actions.

One of many that comes to mind is Esau. The author of Hebrews cites his example as being relevant to Christians to ensure they don’t give away blessings they could never retrieve.

Hebrews 12:16-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ See that no one is sexually immoral, or is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. ¹⁷ Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.

The author’s encouragement in light of that is in the preceding verse of this chapter.

¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵ See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Look at that theme of holiness coming up in the New Testament. “Without holiness no one will see the Lord.” And the encouragement is to live in peace with everyone and to be holy. Not just let Jesus be holy for you. But to “be” holy---through Jesus, of course!

This also ties in with this concept about the Judgment, communicated by the Apostle Paul.

Speaking to the Corinthians church, and speaking to them about those who build on the Foundation of Jesus Christ Paul laid (in particular, church leaders), he said this:

⁵ What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. ⁶ I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. ⁷ So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. ⁸ The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. ⁹ For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.

¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

Notice this. The “builder” will “suffer loss.” Even though they are saved, they will suffer loss. That’s the case of the Levites. They still got to guard the future Temple. But they suffered loss---a diminishment of responsibility and status.

But the Levitical priests, descendants of Zadok, who “guarded my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray,” would get to come near to God and minister!

¹⁵ ““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. ¹⁶ They alone are to enter my sanctuary; they alone are to come near my table to minister before me and serve me as guards.

They alone! They alone! And they were supposed to be clothed in a special way.

¹⁷“When they enter the gates of the inner court, they are to wear linen clothes; they must not wear any woolen garment while ministering at the gates of the inner court or inside the temple. ¹⁸They are to wear linen turbans on their heads and linen undergarments around their waists. They must not wear anything that makes them perspire. ¹⁹When they go out into the outer court where the people are, they are to take off the clothes they have been ministering in and are to leave them in the sacred rooms, and put on other clothes, so that the people are not consecrated through contact with their garments.

This is interesting to me. The holiness of the Temple was transferable. People could be consecrated by simply coming into contact with the garments of the priests! Here is something to consider.

1. We are priests!

1 Peter 1

⁵ you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

2. We are holy!

Romans 1:7

To all in Rome who **are** loved by God and called to be his **holy** people: Grace and peace to **you** from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:19

Do **you** not know that **your** bodies **are** temples of the **Holy** Spirit, who is in **you**, whom **you** have received from God? **You are not your own.**

Ephesians 5:3

But among **you** there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these **are** improper for God's **holy** people.

3. Your holiness is transmissible

1 Corinthians 7:14

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were **your** children unclean; but now **are** they **holy**.

Acts 5:15

As a result, people brought the **sick** into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least **Peter's** shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.

Acts 19:12

so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him (Paul) were taken to the **sick**, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

We have such glory as God's people and priests!

²⁰““They must not shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but they are to keep the hair of their heads trimmed. ²¹No priest is to drink wine when he enters the inner court. ²²They must not marry widows or divorced women; they may marry only virgins of Israelite descent or widows of priests. ²³They are to teach my people the difference between the holy and the common and show them how to distinguish between the unclean and the clean.

So that is what we do. Help people distinguish the difference between holy and common and show them how to distinguish between the clean and unclean!

Did that still apply in New Testament times? The concept of clean and unclean, the concept of regarding the difference between the holy and the common?

Here are some Scriptures I've found that may apply.

Ephesians 5:26

to make her holy, **cleansing** her by the washing with water through the word,

Hebrews 9:14

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, **cleanse** our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!

Hebrews 10:22

let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to **cleanse** us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

2 Peter 1:9

But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been **cleansed** from their past sins.

Revelation 19:8

Fine linen, bright and **clean**, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)

Romans 12:1

[*A Living Sacrifice*] Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, **holy** and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

Ephesians 1:4

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be **holy** and blameless in his sight.

Ephesians 1:18

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his **holy** people,

Ephesians 2:21

In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a **holy** temple in the Lord.

Colossians 1:22

But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you **holy** in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, **holy** and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and **holy** in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his **holy** ones.

1 Thessalonians 4:4

that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is **holy** and honorable,

Here's one more Scripture.

CLV

for *God calls us, not ^{on}for uncleanness, but in holiness.

4:7	ου	γαρ	εκαλεσεν	ημας	ο	θεος	επι	ακαθαρσια	αλλ	εν	αγιασμω
	ou	gar	ekalesen	hEmas	ho	theos	epi	akatharsia	all	en	hagiasmO
	NOT	for	-CALLS	US	THE	God (PLACER)	ON	UN-cleanness	but	IN	HOLYing
	not	for	calls	us	the	God	on	uncleanness	but	in	hallowing

We'll see what else God has to say to us "priests" in the next portion of this chapter.