

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

graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER

Ezekiel 47 Part 1²

I used to sing a song called “The River of Life”! It was so much fun and filled with so much joy. I still look forward to seeing this “river” in the creaturely manifestations of God’s truth that we’ll see in heaven.

There are many deep analogies from which we can mine truth in this portion of the prophetic parable.

The difference between being life giving and life constricting. The danger of turning to a source of bitterness, a pillar of salt. Let’s dive into the River of Life!

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

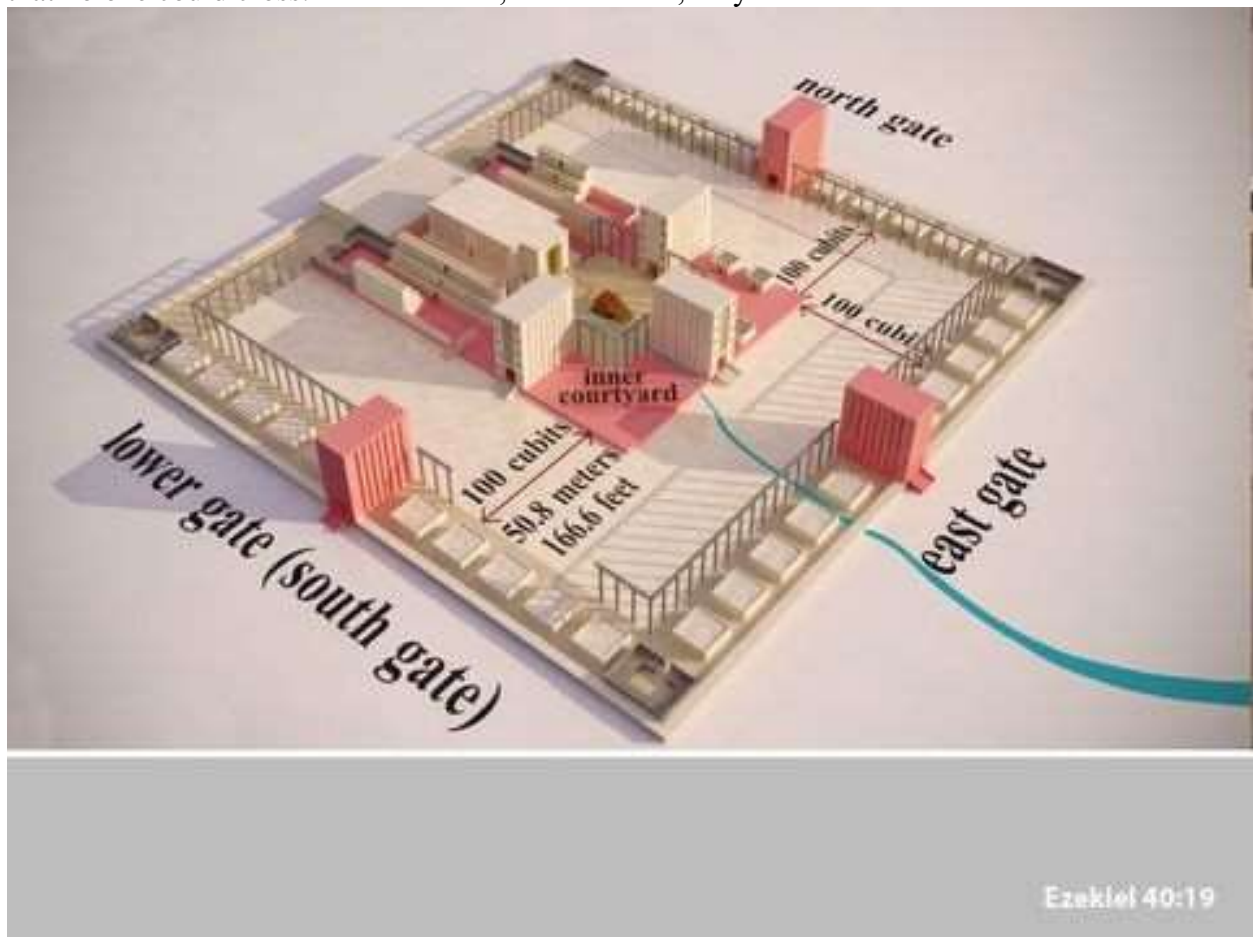
² New International Version (NIV) Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. (Author’s note: This translation, and the source for many of the study notes that accompany it, are taken from The NIV Study Bible, Copyright 1985,1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 . These notes are referenced throughout and paraphrased frequently in the notes.)

Ezekiel 47 New International Version (NIV)

The River From the Temple

47 The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. ² He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side.

³ As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits^[a] and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. ⁴ He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. ⁵ He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross. ⁶ He asked me, “Son of man, do you see this?”



<https://freebibleimages.org/illustrations/ezekiel-40-temple/>

Eden Restored

22 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. 3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. 4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Now the Scripture says the water was coming down from under the south side of the Temple and this picture shows the water south of Eastern Gate, but not technically from the south side (at least to me). At any rate, let's go with it and consider.

“The River of Life.” Deep enough to swim in! Healing and nurturing water comes from this River! And it gives life. Just like the River mentioned in Revelation 22 (see sidebar). This obviously is a Scripture that is connected, and the theme is complete restoration and renewal of life given by God. Obviously it's symbolic (that's why I call it a prophetic parable). There are differences between the two. Notice the ways the tree(s) are described.

Ezekiel 47:7,12	Revelation 22
<p>⁷When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. . . ¹²Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”</p>	<p>2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.</p>

The one says “a great number of trees.” The other says “the tree of life.” I don't suppose that precludes there being a “great number” of “trees” of life.

I guess the point I'm getting is that this is not some stray prophecy that only had “comforting” power for ancient Jews. This speaks to our future in Christ. Even though a Temple is being depicted with offers sacrifices (all fulfilled and being constantly offered in Christ), it pictures something about our Christian future. I wonder if it's where they got the concept of “the fountain of youth.”

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. ⁷When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. ⁸He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, ^[b] where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. ⁹Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish,

An additional inspiration may have been taken from the account of the **Pool of Bethesda** where a **paralytic man was healed** in the **Gospel of John**. In the **possibly interpolated John 5:2–4**, the pool is said to be periodically stirred by an angel, upon which the first person to step into the water would be healed of whatever afflicted him or her. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fountain_of_Youth

because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

The NIV says this is reminiscent of Genesis 1:20-21 and points to a new (I would say renewed) creation. I would add to this the Scripture in John which talks about the Rivers of Living Waters flowing from our hearts.

¹⁰ Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets.

NIV study Bible says “En Gedi” means the “spring of the goat.” It is a strong spring on the western side of the dead Sea. It was actually an oasis, watered by this strong spring.



Figure 1 En Gedi dreamstime_m_66817044

En Eglaim means “spring of the two calves” and it might be a spring on the northwestern corner of the Dead Sea.

The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Mediterranean Sea. ¹¹ But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. ¹² Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their

fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”

Fruit for food and leaves for healing. Life abundant! What does the fact that some areas will be left for salt? I have an idea. I’ll share it tomorrow.

20 And God said, “Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.” 21 So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:20-21

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”^[c] ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 7