

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 47 Part 2²

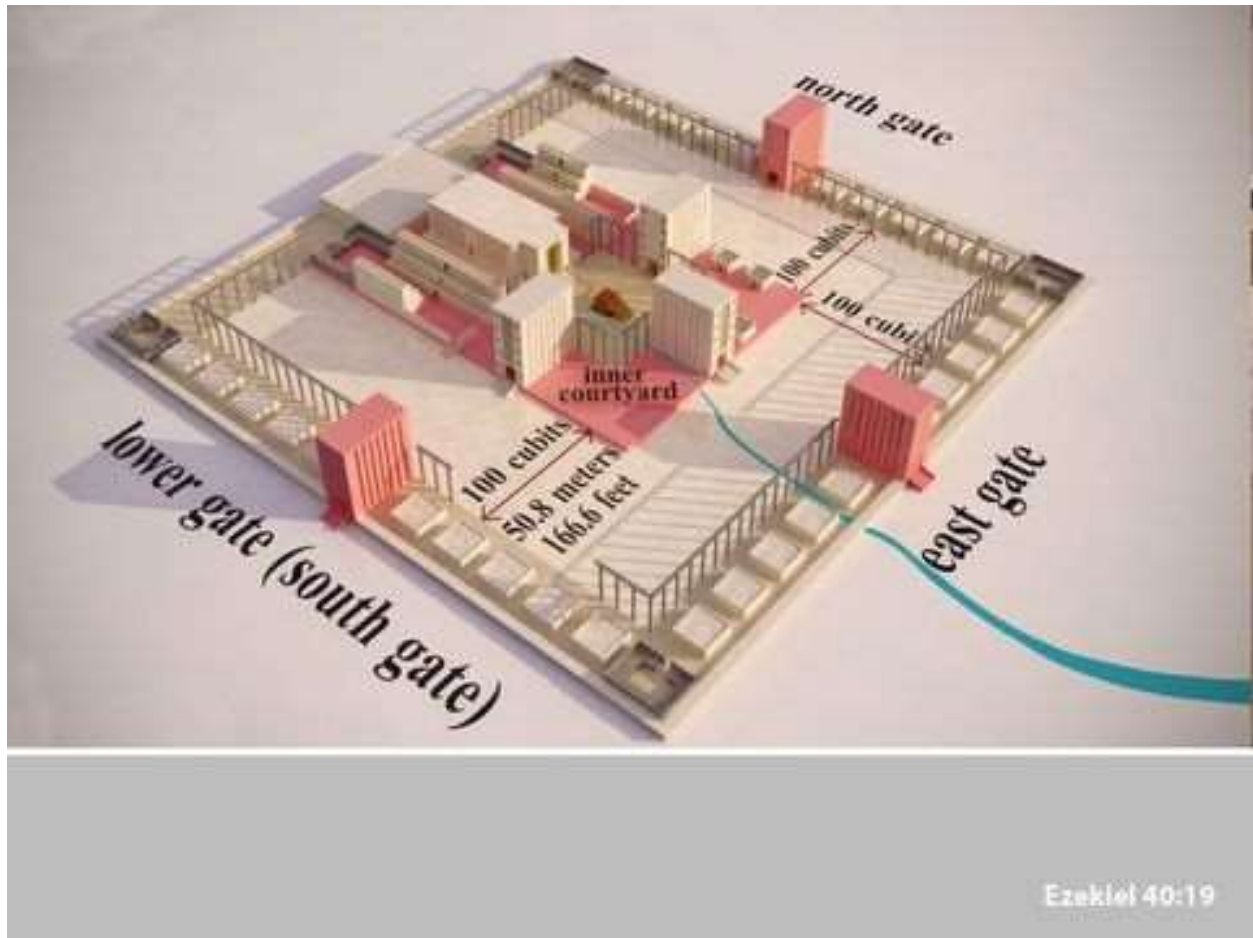
I loved reading about “The River of Life” yesterday both in Revelation and Ezekiel. The two are obviously connected. I now want to focus on what this prophetic parable means in a different way. The Ezekiel version mentions how that when the River enters the Dead Sea, the salty water will become fresh. But it mentions something very interesting. It says: ¹¹ But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt.

Why? Does it have something to do with the fact that some bitterness will endure for eternity---like little pockets of Hell? Let’s dive deeper 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)



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

Let's pick up here.

¹⁰ . . . 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.**

Why? The NIV Study Bible speculates that perhaps it is to provide the salt needed for sacrifices. But I want to propose another alternative. Remember the story about Lot's wife in the Old Testament, as he and his daughters were escaping Sodom?

Genesis 19:26 New International Version (NIV)

²⁶ But Lot's wife looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.

Christ felt very strongly about this example.

Luke 17:22-33 New International Version (NIV)

²² Then he said to his disciples, "The time is coming when you will long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, but you will not see it. ²³ People will tell you, 'There he is!' or 'Here he is!' Do not go running off after them. ²⁴ For the Son of Man in his day^[a] will be like the lightning, which flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other. ²⁵ But first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.

²⁶ "Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all.

²⁸ "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

³⁰ "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed. ³¹ On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. ³² Remember Lot's wife! ³³ Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.

Footnotes:

1. **Luke 17:24** Some manuscripts do not have *in his day*.

The lesson is that if you look "back" too much after beginning on a journey of "escape" and "freedom" with Christ, you will suffer loss! Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt.

I realize that the angel effectuated that literally. But symbolically, what might it mean? Some have described hell as being similar to black holes in the universe. There are pockets of isolated places from which light cannot escape. Well, what if this vision of life being restored to the Dead Sea pictures this? It's mostly alive----but there will be pockets of "death" and bitterness (marshes and swamps) that will not become fresh! Not because they couldn't if they wanted to! Here is another biblical example I think pertains.

Exodus 15 New International Version (NIV)

²² Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah. ^[f]) ²⁴ So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?”

²⁵ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a piece of wood. He threw it into the water, and the water became fit to drink.

Ok, perhaps I’m stretching it---but we have a piece of wood we can throw into the waters of our bitterness! It’s the cross of Christ! It represents forgiveness of those that have wronged you!

It was exhibited by Christ and Stephen.

Luke 23:34	Acts 7:60
³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” ^[a] And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.	⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.
Matthew 6:12	
And forgive us our debts , as we also have forgiven our debtors .	
Luke 11:4	
⁴ Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.	
Matthew 18:28-35	
that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.	
29 “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’	
30 “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. 31 When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.	
32 “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. 33 Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ 34 In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.	
35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”	
Mark 11:25	
25 And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your	

Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”

Ephesians 4:32

³² Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Here’s what the NIV Study Bible says here:

This basic Christian attitude, which is a result of being forgiven in Christ, along with being kind and compassionate, brings to others what we have received from God.

Colossians 3:13

¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

We’ll pick back up with Ezekiel 47 next week.