

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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Daniel Part 2²

So with God on your side, and “in you,” you could even live faithfully in proximity to the ruler of Babylon. And you always figure out a way to do what God wants, without controversy if possible. One of the things required for living with leadership in a digital and spiritual Babylon is tact, and creativity. It reminded me of this Scripture:

Romans 12:18

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at **peace with** everyone.

Daniel 2 shows another way of creatively responding to today’s often crass and dog-eat-dog leadership. Enjoy!

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.)

Nebuchadnezzar II, sometimes alternately spelled Nebuchadrezzar, was king of Babylonia from approximately 605 BC until approximately 562 BC. He is considered the greatest king of the **Babylonian Empire** and is credited with the construction of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned by name around 90 times in the Bible, in both the historical and prophetic literature of the Hebrew Scriptures. Nebuchadnezzar receives the most attention in the book of Daniel, appearing as the main character, beside **Daniel**, in chapters 1–4. . . Nebuchadnezzar served as God’s instrument of judgment on Judah for its idolatry, unfaithfulness, and disobedience (**Jeremiah 25:9**).

Secular history records Nebuchadnezzar as a brutal, powerful, and ambitious king, and the Bible, for the most part, agrees.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Nebuchadnezzar.html>

Daniel 2 New International Version (NIV)

It’s not always possible to not confront. But notice the wisdom Daniel and crew use for this next crisis with “the boss” in Babylon.

Nebuchadnezzar’s Dream

2 In the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his mind was troubled and he could not sleep.

So let’s talk about this man. 605 B.C. was the first year of his reign. He reigned until 562 B.C. He conquered Jerusalem in 585 B.C. Daniel would have been through all of that. See sidebar for a bit of history on him. God shows Himself as LORD over Nebuchadnezzar. And He deals with him in various ways, even in a few sleepless nights. This was one of them.

2 So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers^[a] to tell him what he had dreamed.

The foot note at the word “astrologers” simply shows that the word “Chaldeans” is what was used here.

H3779 Kasday kas-dah'-ee

(Aramaic) corresponding to **H3778**;

a Chaldaean or inhabitant of Chaldea; by implication, a Magian or professional astrologer.

When they came in and stood before the king, 3 he said to them, “I have had a dream that troubles me and I want to know what it means.^[b]or what it was”

4 Then the astrologers answered the king,^[c] “May the king live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will interpret it.”

5 The king replied to the astrologers, “This is what I have firmly decided: If you do not tell me what my dream was and interpret it, I will have you cut into pieces and your houses turned into piles of rubble. 6 But if you tell me the dream and explain it, you will receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. So tell me the dream and interpret it for me.”

Well, there's a leadership lesson for you. Actually, about how NOT to be a leader. What words could we use to describe this? Autocratic? Despotic? Dictator? There was no astrologer's union to protect these guys, so they were stuck.

So are we sometimes . . . in spiritual and digital Babylon.

7 Once more they replied, "Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will interpret it."

8 Then the king answered, "I am certain that you are trying to gain time, because you realize that this is what I have firmly decided: 9 If you do not tell me the dream, there is only one penalty for you. You have conspired to tell me misleading and wicked things, hoping the situation will change. So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me."

Where do challenges like this come from? God? Satan? Man's neurotic self will? Either way, God is going to use this unreasonable request. Now notice how NOT to answer the King (or boss) in spiritual Babylon.

10 The astrologers answered the king, "There is no one on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. 11 What the king asks is too difficult. No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans."

Fascinating! Lesson 1: don't tell the boss no way. Even if it sounds impossible, or frankly, humanly, is impossible, don't tell the boss no.

Another insight---something the astrologers said is doing to be proven to be wrong. The gods---or rather THE GOD---does live among humans! And some are more aware of them than others!

12 This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. 13 So the decree was issued to put the wise men to death, and men were sent to look for Daniel and his friends to put them to death.

This was not a good day.

14 When Arioch, the commander of the king's guard, had gone out to put to death the wise men of Babylon, Daniel spoke to him with wisdom and tact.

Major life lesson---speak to the boss (or anybody for that matter)---with wisdom and tact.

The CLB translation from my Spiritual Interlinear Text analyzer says this:

ⁱ Then Daniel replied with counsel and tact to Arioch the grandee of the king's ^obodyguards ^fwho had come forth to despatch [']the wise men of Babylon.

The word for counsel (or wisdom in the NIV) is prudence. Tact is considered to be sensitive perception in dealing with others, and it also has associations with the word “touch” or “feel” or “felt.” Communicating in ways that are warmly “felt.”

15 He asked the king’s officer, “Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?” Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. 16 At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.

This was not a “No” to the boss. It was to have extra time to do what the boss wanted done!

So don’t tell the boss “No” so quickly in Babylon.

17 Then Daniel returned to his house and explained the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. 18 He urged them to plead for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that he and his friends might not be executed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 19 During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven 20 and said:

“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever;
wisdom and power are his.
21 He changes times and seasons;
he deposes kings and raises up others.
He gives wisdom to the wise
and knowledge to the discerning.
22 He reveals deep and hidden things;
he knows what lies in darkness,
and light dwells with him.
23 I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors:
You have given me wisdom and power,
you have made known to me what we asked of you,
you have made known to us the dream of the king.”

So. You can’t get out of needing God’s miraculous help to do the impossible in Spiritual and Digital Babylon.

We’ll continue with more next time.