

**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*

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**Christ IN You Series**

**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

**graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER**

**Daniel 2 Reprise Part 3<sup>2</sup>**

I want to savor this chapter more deeply. So I’m going to start from the beginning, and just “react” to the text. I love living by every word of God, and I’ve always believed that meant to make sure I paid honorable and deep attention to every word of God in the Bible. That’s what Christ did!

<sup>4</sup>Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” (Matthew 4)

I believe that means His written word, and whatever comes out of His mouth, His living Word. I’ll saunter through the opening, and then continue. Enjoy!

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

<sup>2</sup> 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's Dream

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

**This was interesting. Although he was despotic, powerful and dangerous, God was still after him---He was rattling His cage, so to speak.**

<sup>2</sup>So the king summoned the magicians, enchanters, sorcerers and astrologers<sup>1</sup> to tell him what he had dreamed.

**They had an elaborate system of what we would call "magic." Let me see what I can find on the Web about them.**

**This is from Wikipedia:**

**Babylonian astrology** was the first known organized system of astrology, arising in the second millennium BC.<sup>1</sup>

In **Babylon** as well as in **Assyria** as a direct offshoot of Babylonian culture, **astrology** takes its place as one of the two chief means at the disposal of the **priests** (who were called *bare* or "inspectors") for ascertaining the will and intention of the **gods**, the other being through the inspection of the **livers** of sacrificial animals (see **omen**).

ancient Babylonian astrology . . .was . . .almost wholly concerned with the welfare of the state and the king as the governing head of the nation.<sup>[11]</sup>

### Planets and gods

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The Patron God of Babylon was Marduk, and this god was recognized in Babylonian astrology as the planet Jupiter. Marduk was recognized as the most powerful god, but not the one and only god. The Babylonians were polytheistic, believing in many gods with different purposes, and they associated certain gods to certain planets.

The Babylonians used horoscopic astrology. By observing the seasonal movement of the sun, moon, and planets, the Babylonians connected their beliefs of divine intervention in their everyday life to space and time. They would forecast their future circumstances by observing space through time and relating ominous events, such as a lunar eclipses, to social, political, and environmental problems in aspects of their everyday lives, such as giving birth to deformed children. The Babylonians believed their gods' activities influenced their own lives. These celestial events were viewed by the Babylonians as divine intervention in their lives using the influence the sun, moon, and planets, and to communicate when bad or good events were going to occur. Horoscopic astrology is significant to Babylonian beliefs, because associating the sun, moon, and planets with their gods shaped the way the Babylonians lived their lives and viewed the world around them. The parallels between horoscopes and nativity omens from a Seleucid Tablet shows the benefic and malefic natures of the planets in Babylonian astrology. The Babylonians associated and created their beliefs around planets based on the nature of the god associated with it.

**Before I “blows this off” as irrelevant paganism, remember this story from the Jesus birth narrative:**

Matthew 2 New International Version (NIV)

## The Magi Visit the Messiah

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi<sup>[a]</sup> from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup>and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

**As we know, the star rose and led them directly to the house where Jesus was! So God was speaking to them through their belief system! Fascinating.**

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

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

**At this point and all the way through Chapter 7, the lingua franca of the day, Aramaic, is used. God was evangelizing the nations!**

<sup>5</sup>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.

**In other words, there would be no pay increases that year. 😊**

<sup>6</sup>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.”

**So . . . in spiritual and digital Babylon, what do you do when the boss asks for the impossible.**

**Here’s WHAT NOT TO DO.**

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

<sup>8</sup>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: <sup>9</sup>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.

**Hmmm. Misleading things. Things that "mislead" you to come to a wrong conclusion or make a wrong determination or decision.**

So then, tell me the dream, and I will know that you can interpret it for me."

<sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>What the king asks is too difficult.

**There answer was "no." And furthermore, not possible. And "too difficult." And "you are being unreasonable." This is not the way to answer a man who in effect was the Hitler of the day.**

**Maybe not quite, but powerful. Here is a fascinating Scriptural tidbit that I wonder if Daniel knew.**

Proverbs 15:1

A **soft answer** turneth away **wrath**: but grievous words stir up anger.

**Here's a huge part of this story.**

No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among humans."

**The God of Israel DID live among humans.**

Leviticus 26:12

And I will walk **among you**, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

Deuteronomy 23:14 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>14</sup>For the LORD thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee;

John 14:23

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and **make our home** with them.

John 17

21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— 23 I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity.

### **God did live among the humans! Here's the CLB translation of this verse.**

The matter that the king is asking is <sup>7</sup>heavy and <sup>o</sup>extraordinary. <sup>+</sup> There is no <sup>t</sup>other <sup>t</sup>who shall disclose it <sup>pc</sup>before the king, only the elohim <sup>t</sup>whose abode actually is not with <sup>7</sup>any <sup>o</sup>flesh.

### **God's abode was indeed with the royal sons of Judah!**

### **But not with the astrologers. The "boss" gets really mad!**

<sup>12</sup>This made the king so angry and furious that he ordered the execution of all the wise men of Babylon. <sup>13</sup>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. <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>He asked the king's officer, "Why did the king issue such a harsh decree?" Arioch then explained the matter to Daniel. <sup>16</sup>At this, Daniel went in to the king and asked for time, so that he might interpret the dream for him.

### **Remember, Daniel had "pull." He had impressed the King at his initial interview.**

<sup>17</sup>Then Daniel returned to his house and explained

(CLV) Dn 1:19

<sup>+</sup> The king <sup>l</sup>spoke <sup>»</sup>with them, and <sup>f</sup>of them all, none was found <sup>as</sup>like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

<sup>+</sup>Therefore they were standing before the king.

the matter to his friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. <sup>18</sup>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.

**He urged them to “plead for mercy.”**

**The Hebrew says “petition for compassions.”**

<sup>19</sup>During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven <sup>20</sup>and said:

“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever;  
wisdom and power are his.

<sup>21</sup>He changes times and seasons;  
he deposes kings and raises up others.

He gives wisdom to the wise  
and knowledge to the discerning.

**This is something you want to be---wise and discerning.**

<b>Wise</b>	<b>Discerning</b>
<p><b>“the ability to think and act using knowledge”</b> <b>“the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgment; the quality of being wise”</b></p>	<p><b>“the ability to understand or comprehend something”</b> <b>sympathetically aware of other people's feelings; tolerant and forgiving.</b></p>

<sup>22</sup>He reveals deep and hidden things;  
he knows what lies in darkness,  
and light dwells with him.

**“In Him was light . . . the light is the life of men.”**

<sup>23</sup>I thank and praise you, God of my ancestors:

You have given me wisdom and power,

**Notice this. POWER is associated with wisdom.**

you have made known to me what we asked of you,  
you have made known to us the dream of the king.”

## Daniel Interprets the Dream

<sup>24</sup>Then Daniel went to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to execute the wise men of Babylon, and said to him, “Do not execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I will interpret his dream for him.”

<sup>25</sup>Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, “I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the king what his dream means.”

<sup>26</sup>The king asked Daniel (also called Belteshazzar), “Are you able to tell me what I saw in my dream and interpret it?”

<sup>27</sup>Daniel replied, “No wise man, enchanter, magician or diviner can explain to the king the mystery he has asked about, <sup>28</sup>but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.

**Daniel gave God the credit and the glory. He evangelized Nebuchadnezzar about His God. He witnessed to God, who reveals “mysteries.”**

**The word for mysteries simply implies something “hidden.”**

He has shown King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in days to come. Your dream and the visions that passed through your mind as you were lying in bed are these:

<sup>29</sup>“As Your Majesty was lying there, your mind turned to things to come, and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen.

**The “Revealer of Mysteries.”**

<sup>30</sup>As for me, this mystery has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than anyone else alive, but so that Your Majesty may know the interpretation and that you may understand what went through your mind.

**God did this for you! We’ll pick up here next time.**

**Footnotes:**

- a. **Daniel 2:2** Or *Chaldeans*; also in verses 4, 5 and 10
- b. **Daniel 2:3** Or *was*
- c. **Daniel 2:4** At this point the Hebrew text has *in Aramaic*, indicating that the text from here through the end of chapter 7 is in Aramaic.