

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 2 Part 4²

So I waited to do this part, because it’s an epic biblical statement from God. It’s one of the most famous and profound prophecies in the Bible, Nebuchadnezzar’s famous statue with a head of gold and feet of iron and clay. It speaks volumes both prophetically and allegorically.

And it shows how God views the political system of this world.

We live in a spiritual, and now a digital Babylon. Let’s see what we can discern from this journey into the Word of God. Enjoy!

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Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

2²⁸ but there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries.

The phrase "God of heaven" is a Persian title for God. It's interesting that God speaks in the language of "Persian" and uses their concepts to reveal who the real God is.

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:

²⁹"As Your Majesty was lying there, your mind turned to things to come,

I like that phrase. "Your mind turned," it says. The interlinear original I use calls it the "ruminations" of your mind. The Hebrew word implies concepts like "grasp" and "mental conceptions" and "desire."

and the revealer of mysteries showed you what is going to happen. ³⁰As 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.

Or that "you should know the ruminations of your heart."

ruminat³ion

[,r̄oomə'nāSH(ə)n]

NOUN

1. a deep or considered thought about something.
"philosophical ruminations about life and humanity"
 - the action or process of thinking deeply about something.
"this film stuck out, demanding attention and rumination"
2. the action of chewing the cud.
"cows slow down their rumination"



³¹“Your Majesty looked, and there before you stood a large statue—an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. ³²The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, ³³its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay.

So the statue was:

- **enormous – in Hebrew, that’s “grand”**
- **dazzling – “aspect excelling”**
- **awesome in appearance – “terrifying”**



<https://www.freebibleimages.org/photos/nebuchadnezzar-s-dream/>

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CCC expresses gratitude to this wonderful sight.

³⁴While you were watching, a rock was cut out, but not by human hands.

Obviously that is Jesus.



It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. ³⁵Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were all broken to pieces and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.



So now let's learn the interpretation. God gave Daniel both the dream and the interpretation.

³⁶ "This was the dream, and now we will interpret it to the king. ³⁷ Your Majesty, you are the king of kings. The God of heaven has given you dominion and power and might and glory; ³⁸ in your hands he has placed all mankind and the beasts of the field and the birds in the sky. Wherever they live, he has made you ruler over them all. You are that head of gold.

The Gold Head represents the neo-Babylonian Empire.

The **Neo-Babylonian Empire**, also known as the **Second Babylonian Empire**^[5] and historically known as the **Chaldean Empire**,^[6] was the last of the **Mesopotamian** empires to be ruled by monarchs native to Mesopotamia.^[7] Beginning with **Nabopolassar**'s coronation as **King of Babylon** in 626 BC and being firmly established through the fall of the **Neo-Assyrian Empire** in 612 BC, the Neo-Babylonian Empire and its ruling **Chaldean dynasty** would be short-lived, being conquered after less than a century by the **Persian Achaemenid Empire** in 539 BC.

The defeat of the Assyrians and the transfer of empire to **Babylon** marked the first time the city, and southern Mesopotamia in general, had risen to dominate the **Ancient Near East** since the collapse of **Hammurabi**'s **Old Babylonian Empire** nearly a thousand years prior. The period of Neo-Babylonian rule thus saw unprecedented economic and population growth throughout Babylonia and a renaissance of culture and artwork, with the Neo-Babylonian kings conducting massive building projects, especially in Babylon itself, and bringing back many elements from the previous two thousand or so years of **Sumero-Akkadian** culture.

The empire retains a position within modern day cultural memory mainly due to the unflattering portrayal of Babylon and its greatest king, **Nebuchadnezzar II**, in the **Bible**, which is owed to Nebuchadnezzar's 587 BC **destruction of Jerusalem** and the subsequent **Babylonian captivity**. Babylonian sources describe Nebuchadnezzar's reign as a golden age which transformed Babylonia into the greatest empire of its time.

Religious policies introduced by the Neo-Babylonian Empire's final king, **Nabonidus**, who favored the moon god **Sîn** over Babylon's patron deity **Marduk**, eventually provided a *casus belli* which allowed the Achaemenid king **Cyrus the Great** to invade Babylonia in 539 BC, portraying himself as a champion of Marduk divinely restoring order to the region. Babylon remained culturally distinct for centuries, with references to individuals with Babylonian names and references to the **Babylonian religion** being known from as late as the **Parthian period** in the 1st century BC. Although Babylon would revolt several times during the rule of later empires, it never successfully restored its independence⁴.

³⁹ "After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours.

This is the Medo Persian Empire established in 539 B.C., the date of the fall of Babylon.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Babylonian_Empire

Question: "What is the significance of the Medo-Persian Empire in biblical history?"

Answer: The Medo-Persians, led by **King Cyrus II**, invaded Babylonia from the east in June of 539 B.C. and captured its capital, Babylon, in July of the same year. In biblical chronology, this occurred near the end of the **Babylonian exile**. Within a short time, **Daniel** became a trusted adviser to the new Medo-Persian Empire. This kingdom of the Medes and the Persians was later ruled by Artaxerxes II, or Ahasuerus, who married **Esther**. Today, Persia is essentially synonymous with modern Iran, and this was not so different in ancient times. However, Persia as an ancient *kingdom*, especially when referenced along with Media, encompassed Egypt in the west to parts of India in the east, and included Asia Minor from the eastern border of Greece to Tajikistan.⁵



Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth.

This is the Greek empire established by Alexander the Great.

⁴⁰ Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything—and as iron breaks things to pieces, so it will crush and break all the others.

This is the Roman Empire, forms of which some believe continue to this day. It's representative of a system of rule rather than the actual Roman Empire. It was composed of the strongest metal, symbolizing endurance and toughness. But, because it lacks the Spirit of God and the spirit of ConneXion, it will fail and be replaced by the "Stone" (Rock) cut without hands. And like the Scripture says, Christ is "that Rock."



⁴¹ Just as you saw that the feet and toes were partly of baked clay and partly of iron, so this

⁵⁵ [What is the significance of the Medo-Persian Empire in biblical history? | GotQuestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org/What-is-the-significance-of-the-Medo-Persian-Empire-in-biblical-history/)

will be a divided kingdom; yet it will have some of the strength of iron in it, even as you saw iron mixed with clay. ⁴²As the toes were partly iron and partly clay, so this kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle. ⁴³And just as you saw the iron mixed with baked clay, so the people will be a mixture and will not remain united, any more than iron mixes with clay.



Christ is "that Rock," and eventually grows up to be a mountain.

Genesis 49:24

But his bow remained steady, his strong arms stayed limber, because of the hand of the Mighty One of Jacob, because of the Shepherd, the **Rock** of Israel,

Deuteronomy 32:15

Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; filled with food, they became heavy and sleek. They abandoned the God who made them and rejected the **Rock** their Savior.

2 Samuel 22:32

For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the **Rock** except our God?

2 Samuel 22:47

"The LORD lives! Praise be to my **Rock**! Exalted be my God, the **Rock**, my Savior!

Psalm 18:31

For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the **Rock** except our God?

Psalm 18:46

The LORD lives! Praise be to my **Rock**! Exalted be God my Savior!

Psalm 19:14

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my **Rock** and my Redeemer.

Psalm 89:26

He will call out to me, 'You are my Father, my God, the **Rock** my Savior.'

Psalm 92:15

proclaiming, "The LORD is upright; he is my **Rock**, and there is no wickedness in him."

Matthew 7:24

[*The Wise and Foolish Builders*] "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the **rock**.

Romans 9:33

As it is written: "See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble and a **rock** that makes them fall, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame."

1 Corinthians 10:4

and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual **rock** that accompanied them, and that **rock** was Christ.

We'll press this more next time.

⁴⁴"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. ⁴⁵This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands—a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces.

"The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honor and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. ⁴⁷The king said to Daniel, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery."

⁴⁸Then the king placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men. ⁴⁹Moreover, at Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego administrators over the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at the royal court.

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.

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