

**graceWORKS ! GOING DEEPER!** **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 Paige, Stephanie, and Ashley, and any descendant they have (particularly Nicole, Joey, Matthew, Dylan, Julianne, and Lizzie, who know me as “Papou”). 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 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 my girls. And when you study these, I’ll make sure to connect with you from heaven. *Ever an orthodox Greek, Jim Valekis*

**ChristIN  
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**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

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**Ezekiel 1 Part 4 Final<sup>2</sup>**

So we’re about to get a glimpse of God Himself, the way He described Himself to Ezekiel! There is a phrase in Hebrew I have found fascinating.

Hebrews 12:29 - “For our God is a consuming fire.”

He was in the Ezekiel description. He apparently still is. Let’s study this “consuming fire,” and other ways He’s manifested Himself in visions to prophets. Jesus is the Ultimate Revelation. But these are given to us as well. Let’s get to know our God more!

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

<sup>2</sup> New International Version (NIV)

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(Author’s note: This translation, and the study notes that accompany it in The NIV Study Bible, Copyright 1985,1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 are also referenced throughout and paraphrased frequently in the notes.)

John 1:18 (NIV)  
18 No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

## Ezekiel 1 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>25</sup> Then there came a voice from above **the vault** over their heads as they stood with lowered wings. <sup>26</sup> Above **the vault** over their heads was what looked like **a throne of lapis lazuli**, and high above on the throne was **a figure like that of a man**. <sup>27</sup> I saw that from what appeared to be **his waist up he looked like glowing metal**, as if full of fire, and that **from there down he looked like fire**; and **brilliant light surrounded him**. <sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of **a rainbow** in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him.

So let's break this up phrase at a time:

### **a throne of lapis lazuli**

**Note:** So the throne was made of “lapis lazuli.” The Blue Letter Bible translates it “sapphire.” I'll show a picture of both gems.

Lapis Lazuli



Sapphire



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... and high above on the throne was **a figure like that of a man**.

**Note:** So God appears in this vision “in our image” and “in our likeness.” We already saw the throne of Lapis in Exodus 24:10

## Exodus 24:10 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky.

“A likeness like the appearance of a human” is the way the Blue Letter Bible says it.

**Let me do some other “God-sightings” from the Scripture that speak of God appearing “like” a human.**

### Exodus 33

<sup>19</sup> And the LORD said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. <sup>20</sup> But,” he said, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.”

<sup>21</sup> Then the LORD said, “There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. <sup>22</sup> When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by. <sup>23</sup> Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

**So this Scripture reveals God has “a face” He Himself refers to, “a hand,” and a “back.”**

**Here is a listing of the visions of God in the Bible.**

### Eleven Visions of God<sup>3</sup>

1. Jacob dreamed of “a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven....And, behold, the Lord stood above it” (**Gen. 28:12, 13**).

**Note: The Lord is standing above a ladder here. And in this verse, it says He spoke.**

2. Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel...saw the God of Israel (**Ex. 24:9,10**).

<sup>9</sup> Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up <sup>10</sup> and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://bible.org/illustration/eleven-visions-god>

<sup>11</sup> But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.

**Note: Not much description here, except for the fact that He has “feet” that were on a lapis lazuli pavement. Again, that is translated “sapphire” in the Blue Letter Bible translation from the literal.**

3. Moses saw the back of God (**Ex. 33:23**).

**Note: I just quoted that Scripture.**

4. Micaiah “saw the Lord sitting upon his throne” (**2 Chron. 18:18**).

### Chronicles 18:18 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>18</sup> Micaiah continued, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing on his right and on his left. . . <sup>20</sup> Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, ‘I will entice him.’

**So here “the multitudes of heaven” are spoken of. A spirit “comes forward” out of the multitudes, and “stands.” Interesting.**

5. Isaiah “saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple” (**Isa. 6:1**).

**Note: The Lord is seated, and is “high and lifted up. He has a robe with a train. The Blue Letter Literal translation says “skirts.”**

6. Ezekiel saw “the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and...the likeness as the appearance of a man above it” (**Ezek. 1:26**).

7. Ezekiel again had a similar vision (**Ezek. 10:1**).

### Ezekiel 10 New International Version (NIV)

#### God’s Glory Departs From the Temple

10 I looked, and I saw the likeness **of a throne of lapis lazuli** above the vault that was over the heads of the cherubim. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said to the man clothed in linen, “Go in among the wheels beneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter them over the city.” And as I watched, he went in.

<sup>3</sup>Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court. <sup>4</sup>Then the glory of the LORD rose from above the cherubim and moved to the threshold of the temple. The cloud filled the temple, and the court was full of the radiance of the glory of the LORD. <sup>5</sup>The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard as far away as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty<sup>[a]</sup> when he speaks.

**Note: This is very similar to the vision in Ezekiel 1. Glory is associated with the Lord. A loud voice that is very powerful. In the Blue Letter Literal, it speaks of “fire” and power-generating things being in the Presence of the Lord. It speaks of His glory like this:**

(CLV) Ezk 10:4

<sup>†</sup>Then the glory of Yahweh rose <sup>l</sup>high from <sup>on</sup> the <sup>7</sup>cherubim <sup>~ on</sup> to the sill of the house, and the house was <sup>l</sup>filled <sup>»</sup>with the cloud, and the court was full of <sup>»</sup>the bright light of the glory of Yahweh.

**The “bright light” of the glory of Yahweh. God Almighty comes from the phrase “El Shaddai,” and means “El Who Suffices.”**

8. Daniel “beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit” (**Dan. 7:9**).

**This next one is fascinating. Notice Jesus is shown in this last and final one in the Old Testament.**

## Daniel 7:9-28 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>“As I looked,

“thrones were set in place,  
and **the Ancient of Days** took his seat.  
His clothing was as white as snow;  
**the hair of his head was white like wool.**  
His throne was flaming with fire,  
and its wheels were all ablaze.

<sup>10</sup> A river of fire was flowing,

**coming out from before him.**

**Thousands upon thousands attended him;**

**ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.**

The court was seated,

and the books were opened.

<sup>11</sup> “Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. <sup>12</sup> (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

<sup>13</sup> “In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man,<sup>[a]</sup> coming with the clouds of heaven.

**Son of Man:** The Aramaic phrase *bar enash* means *human being*. The phrase *son of man* is retained here because of its use in the New Testament as a title of Jesus, probably based largely on this verse.

He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. <sup>14</sup> He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

**So He has brilliantly white hair and white clothing. He sits, and myriads attend to Him or are before Him. A Human (Jesus, the Son of Man) is brought to Him. He is giving dominion, everlasting dominion, and a kingdom that will never be destroyed.**

9. Stephen “looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God” (**Acts 7:55**).

10. Paul wrote that he “knew a man” (likely himself), who was “caught up to the third heaven” (**2 Cor. 12:2**).

11. John “was in the spirit; and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne” (**Rev. 4:2**).

## Revelation 4 New International Version (NIV)

### The Throne in Heaven

4 After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.”<sup>2</sup> At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it.<sup>3</sup> And the one who sat there had the appearance of **jasper** and **ruby**. **A rainbow that shone like an emerald encircled the throne.**

**So let’s wrap up this vision in Ezekiel.**

<sup>27</sup> I saw that from what appeared to be **his waist up he looked like glowing metal**, as if full of fire, and that **from there down he looked like fire**; and **brilliant light surrounded him**.<sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of **a rainbow** in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him.

**So here’s how the Blue Letter Bible says it.**

(CLV) Ezk 1:27

And I | saw what was like the sparkle of amber, like the appearance of fire enclosed round about ’ it, from the appearance of His waist and upward; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw what was like the appearance of fire; and there was a bright light round about ’ Him.

**I’m trying to visualize what “the appearance of fire enclosed round about” looks like, and “the sparkle of amber.” Let me get a picture of amber, and think about that for a while.**

**Our God is amazing!**



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