

**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 7 & The Early Church Part 2<sup>2</sup>**

I’m also listening to the book of Mark as I get rejoice in the Easter season. Today, I read this verse in Mark 4:<sup>24</sup>“Consider carefully what you hear,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more. <sup>25</sup>Whoever has will be given more; whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.”**So, that’s why I study His word. Over and over. And hope to do so till I die. If no one ever reads these notes, who cares. If some stranger has just discovered this and is tracking with the output of God’s love through me, enjoy! Ask God to tell me hi, and I’ll smile at you from heaven.**

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

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## **So yesterday, I referenced this verse.**

Daniel 7

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

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.

## **I've wondered whether this verse refers to this moment:**

[John 20:17](#)

Jesus saith unto her, **Touch me** not; for I am not yet **ascended** to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

**Sometimes after His death, he must have ascended, because later He lets the ladies and the men touch Him.**

Matthew 28:9-10 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup>Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

[John 20:27](#)

Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my **hands**; and reach hither thy **hand**, and thrust it into my **side**: and be not faithless, but believing.

**At any rate, I wanted to continue yesterday's study---about what the early church father's believed about the "end times."**

**I found this source on the Web and although I now see I actually haven't used it before, it contained what I considered helpful information: [Bible Truths \(earlychurch.net\)](#)**

**About the Second Coming, it says this:**

1) The ante-Nicene church unanimously agreed that Christ would **return bodily** to the earth, and **establish his Kingdom on the earth.**

His Kingdom would be eventually given up to God the Father, which would consummate all of time by our reckoning. As far as the popular labels go, we could classify the ante-Nicene church as "Premillennial". (believing in a personal return of Christ before his 1000 year reign.)

**return bodily**

Acts 1 New International Version (NIV)

## Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven

**1** In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach <sup>2</sup>until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>After his suffering, he **presented himself** to them and gave many convincing proofs that **he was alive**. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while **he was eating** with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with<sup>[a]</sup> water, but in a few days you will be baptized with<sup>[b]</sup> the Holy Spirit."

<sup>6</sup>Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to **restore the kingdom to Israel**?"

**establish his Kingdom on the earth**

<sup>7</sup>He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

<sup>9</sup>After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

<sup>10</sup>They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. <sup>11</sup>"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, **will come back in the same way** you have seen him go into heaven."

2) Christ's return would involve cataclysmic events that would be evident to all of the world. The actual specifics of these events are in dispute, but the essence is that they are purposed for the destruction of the wicked and unrighteous. His subsequent physical return would be seen by all.

Matthew 24:27 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>27</sup>For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.

**Here is the statement we presented about what the early church fathers thought of this coming, and the prophecies in Daniel (emphasis mine throughout).**

Although there is nothing here that is foreign to what now is commonly held, one must note that there is absolutely no evidence that anyone in the early church believed in anything having any resemblance to a pre-tribulational rapture. As a matter of fact, it is virtually impossible to find the classifications and categories in the early church that are commonly associated with eschatology today. The eschatology of the church ran on to primary modes of thought; one that **emphasized the victory of the church in the last days**, and one that emphasized **the struggle of the church against the antichrist before Christ's final victory**. The former view has some general things in common with the opinion of dominion/reconstructionist theologians of today, while the latter has some resemblance to a "post-tribulational" viewpoint, although the correlation breaks down in many places.. An important yardstick is the interpretation of Daniel 9:24-27, the text which lays out the "70 week " prophecy regarding the coming of Christ.

Daniel 9:24-27 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>24</sup>“Seventy ‘sevens’<sup>[a]</sup> (probably 7 year periods of times) are decreed for your people and your holy city to finish<sup>[b]</sup> (or restrain) transgression, to put an end to sin, to atone for wickedness, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the Most Holy Place.<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>25</sup>“Know and understand this: From the time the word goes out to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One,<sup>[d]</sup> the ruler, comes, there will be seven ‘sevens,’ and sixty-two ‘sevens.’ It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of trouble. <sup>26</sup>After the sixty-two ‘sevens,’ the Anointed

One will be put to death and will have nothing.<sup>[e]</sup> The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed. <sup>27</sup>He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.'<sup>[f]</sup> In the middle of the 'seven'<sup>[g]</sup> he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And at the temple<sup>[h]</sup> he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him.<sup>[i]''[j]</sup>

**Footnotes:**

- a. **Daniel 9:24** Or 'weeks'; also in verses 25 and 26
- b. **Daniel 9:24** Or *restrain*
- c. **Daniel 9:24** Or *the most holy One*
- d. **Daniel 9:25** Or *an anointed one*; also in verse 26
- e. **Daniel 9:26** Or *death and will have no one*; or *death, but not for himself*
- f. **Daniel 9:27** Or 'week'
- g. **Daniel 9:27** Or 'week'
- h. **Daniel 9:27** Septuagint and Theodotion; Hebrew *wing*
- i. **Daniel 9:27** Or *it*
- j. **Daniel 9:27** Or *And one who causes desolation will come upon the wing of the abominable temple, until the end that is decreed is poured out on the desolated city*

Much modern eschatology uses this text to support the idea that there is a future seven year period in which God will revert back to His covenantal terms with Israel, chastise the world with a "Great Tribulation", and unleash an antichrist who will destroy a rebuilt Jewish temple in Jerusalem. **Almost every post-apostolic (early church Father) Christian would take issue with these concepts. Most early church fathers up until the early third century assumed that the prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled when the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D.**

**Note: It's a really complicated read.**

**But let me just share a few, and add relevant scriptures that come to mine.**

From Matthew 24 and 25, varied:

. . . you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him. . . **5** "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. <sup>4</sup>The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. . . "Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup>For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. . . many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. . . Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. . . many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other. . . they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>31</sup>And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.

### Didache (100 A.D.)

*Watch for your life's sake. Let not your lamps be quenched, nor your loins be unloosed, but be ye ready, for ye know not the hour in which our Lord cometh. But as often as you come together, seeking the things that are befitting to your souls: for that whole time of your faith will not profit you, if you are not made perfect in the last time. For in the last days false prophets and corrupters shall be multiplied, and the sheep turned into wolves, and love will be turned to hate; when the lawlessness increases, they shall hate and betray one another, and then shall appear the world deceiver as Son of God, and shall do signs and wonders and the world shall be delivered into his hands, and he shall do iniquitous things which have never yet come to pass since the beginning. Then the creation of men shall come into the fire of trial, and many shall be made to stumble and perish; but they that endure in the faith shall be saved from under the curse itself. And then shall appear the signs of truth; first, the sign of the outspreading in heaven; then the sign of the sound of the trumpet; and the third, the resurrection from the dead; yet not all, but as it is said: The Lord is coming and all his saints with Him, then the world will see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven."*

The Didache is what would be called historical Premillennial position.

Notice the distinction when compared with. . . **the source adds other writings that have a different slant.**

### Clement of Alexandria (The Stromata, 195 A.D.)

Most of Clement's writings are focused on refuting Greek mythology, but Clement does mention Daniel's 70th week prophecy. Clement goes into detail how the entire prophecy was fulfilled by the time the temple was destroyed (70 A.D.). . . the logical conclusion of this is that the popular "dispensationalist" view with a seven year period, end-times

temple in Jerusalem, and an antichrist who makes a covenant with Israel was not yet widely accepted.

### **Tertullian (On the Resurrection of the Flesh, 210 A.D.)**

*"In the Revelation of John, again, the order of these times is spread out to view...in order that the world may first drink the dregs of the plagues that await it..."*

Tertullian, like the majority of the fathers, also puts forth his research on how the 70 weeks of Daniel were completed with Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem. As above, this demonstrates that the "Dispensationalist" scenario, with a 7 year period of tribulation still in the future, was unknown at this time. . . Most other early writers (Epistle of Barnabas, Homilies of Clement, Shepherd of Hermas) reiterate the belief that there is not to be a literal temple again, for we are the temple of God. Because of the diversity of opinion, **it is difficult to try to determine what, if at all, was the unified apostolic "rule of faith" regarding the Second Coming.**

The two streams of thought:

- the victory of the church on the earth, and
- the increase of wickedness wrought by the antichrist (including violence against the church), seemed paradoxical.

In some of the more obscure writings we might find justification for almost any eschatological view. Amillennial. Post-millennial. Post-tribulational.

**Virtually all views, perhaps excepting the pre-tribulation rapture view.**

Isaiah 51:17

**Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.**

. . . Isaiah 63:6 King James Version (KJV)

<sup>6</sup>And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth. . .they, too, will **drink** the wine of God's fury, which has been poured full strength into the **cup** of his wrath. They will be tormented with burning sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and of the Lamb. Rev 14 . . . Then I heard another voice from heaven say: "'Come out of her, my people,' so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her **plagues** . . .Rev 18

In conclusion regarding this subject, we might say that the early church held to a confrontational rather than escapist view of the Second Coming.

...

we tend to think (and unfortunately, divide over) questions about when we are getting out of here, (Pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib), the early church was focused on being prepared for fulfilling their destiny in the midst of whatever might come.

The distinction in mentality we might liken to the Dunkirk vs. D-Day mentality. Both D-Day and Dunkirk were significant events in World War II. At Dunkirk, the allies were being driven into the ocean by the Nazis. Miraculously, an armada of ships was amassed in England to pick the tens of thousands of soldiers off the beach before the Nazis got them. It was a great rescue.

On D-Day, on the other hand, Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy and began the slow but relentless push to send Hitler back to Berlin, and ultimately, to defeat.

Modern day eschatology is Dunkirk. The devil is coming, and we need a rescue. The debates between Pre, Mid, or Post trib is merely a question of how many casualties we take before we get off the beach. The fact that we are being driven back and are failing is presumed.

In the early church, however, the eschatology was typified by D-Day. The apostles saw the "Last Days" as starting on Pentecost, and the invasion of the Kingdom of God onto this earth began. The early church fathers labored to drive back the enemy and had considerable success.

The differences in view as to the wrath of the antichrist was merely a question of how much we may need to endure on our way to success and dominion on the earth.

**I suspect they truly believed this: THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN HAD DRAWN NEAR IN CHRIST AND IN IT'S SPREAD THROUGH THE CHURCH!**

Matthew 3:2

and saying, "Repent, for the **kingdom of heaven** has come **near.**"

Acts 2 New International Version (NIV)

## The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

**2** When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. . . .<sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues<sup>[a]</sup> as the Spirit enabled them. . . .<sup>14</sup> Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd. . . .this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> **"In the last days,** God says,

**I will pour out my Spirit on all people.**



Matthew 4:17

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the **kingdom of heaven** has come **near**."

Matthew 10:7

As you go, proclaim this message: 'The **kingdom of heaven** has come **near**.'