

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)

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

graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER
Ezekiel 3 Part 2²

We’re still coursing through Chapter 3. We left off here.

° Do not be afraid of them or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious people.”

God strengthens his prophet, because He says, they won’t listen. They are hard headed and obstinate.

Maybe you have a tough life mission too! Perhaps you’ve been given the duty of prophesying to folks who simply won’t listen. God doesn’t want you to weaken. He’ll strengthen you! Let’s read knowing this isn’t just history, but our story too! In Christ.

¹ NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR UPLOADED TO WEB WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION OF AUTHOR.

² 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.)



Ezekiel 3 New International Version (NIV)

3 ⁸But I will make you as unyielding and hardened as they are. ⁹I will make your forehead like the hardest stone, harder than flint.

Note: The literal translation says "like corundum" which is either a thorn or probably a diamond, which is multi-faceted, by the way.



Diamonds are beautiful. Multifaceted. Hard. I think it's a cool visual to think of having a forehead as hard and multifaceted as a diamond when it comes to being strong in God's word, and defiant of rebellious attitudes. A diamond forehead spiritually . . . hmmm 😊.

Do not be afraid of them or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious people."

The word for "rebellious" in Hebrew is also the word for "bitter." It looks to me like the word they get the name "Mary" or "Maria" from. Interesting. Bitterness is apparently a kissing cousin of rebellious. Makes sense when you think about Cain and Abel.

Let's pick up Ezekiel's story.

¹⁰ And he said to me, "Son of man, listen carefully and take to heart all the words I speak to you.

Note: "Listen carefully" God says. "Take heart to all the Words I speak to you." Take heart!

¹¹ Go now to your people in exile and speak to them. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says,' whether they listen or fail to listen."

Note: Here's a message to this prophet, and to all of God's prophets. And honestly, I don't think that's just someone behind a pulpit. A mom might be a prophet to her children. A husband to his wife, a wife to a husband. A father to a daughter. Whatever prophetic role God has put you in, be sincere and brave in it---and if God lays something on your heart, be willing to speak "whether they listen or fail to listen."

¹² Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a loud rumbling sound as the glory of the LORD rose from the place where it was standing.^[a]

Note: The footnote in the NIV translation brings out that the probable reading of the Masoretic text³ is ". . .I heard a loud rumbling sound---may the glory of the Lord be praised from this place."

Here's the Blue Letter Bible Translation:

(CLV) Ezk 3:12

⁺Then the spirit | lifted me up, and I | heard ^{of} behind me the sound of a great quaking [~] at the raising up of [~] the glory of Yahweh from its ^r place

¹³ It was the sound of the wings of the living creatures brushing against each other and the sound of the wheels beside them, a loud rumbling sound. ¹⁴ The Spirit then lifted me up and took me away, and I went in bitterness and in the anger of my spirit, with the strong hand of the LORD on me.

³ Masoretic Text – Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masoretic_Text The Masoretic Text (MT or מַסֹּרֶת) (הַמְסֹרֶת נֹסַח) is the authoritative Hebrew and Aramaic text of the 24 books of Tanakh in Rabbinic Judaism. The Masoretic Text defines the Jewish canon and its precise letter-text, with its vocalization and accentuation known as the Masorah.

Note: Why was Ezekiel mad? The NIV says, “the prophet, knowing the righteousness of the Lord’s anger, personally identified with the Divine Emotions.”

For some reason, I don’t buy that! I think he was mad, maybe a bit like Moses, who didn’t particularly want this mission from God!

Exodus 4

¹³ But Moses said, “Pardon your servant, Lord. Please send someone else.”

Here’s the Blue Letter Bible literal version.

(CLV) Ezk 3:14

⁺ The spirit lifted me up and I took me, and I went, bitter in the fury of my spirit, ⁺ while the hand of Yahweh was unyielding upon me.

¹⁵ I came to the exiles who lived at Tel Aviv near the Kebar River. And there, where they were living, I sat among them for seven days—deeply distressed.

Note: “Tel Aviv” means mound of deluge in Babylonian. It was used to refer to ancient cities that had been reduced to mere mounds. The modern city of Tel Aviv takes a different shade of meaning from its use of the word---it means “hill of new growth.” The word “Aviv” which is also used for the first month of the Hebrew year is a Canaanite name and means “head of young grain.” I don’t know why this etymology works this way, but it would be interesting to find out some day. Words can have different, sometimes exactly opposite, meanings, apparently. Maybe the lesson is---don’t get too hung up on words.

Now let’s look at “Ezekiel’s Task as Watchman”

¹⁶ At the end of seven days the word of the LORD came to me:

Note: So Ezekiel had a seven day period of distress.

¹⁷ “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel; so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ¹⁸ When I say to a wicked person, ‘You will surely die,’ and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade them from their evil ways in order to save their life, that wicked person will die for^[b] their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. ¹⁹ But if you do warn the wicked person and they do not turn from their wickedness or from their evil ways, they will die for their sin; but you will have saved yourself.

²⁰ “Again, when a righteous person turns from their righteousness and does evil, and I put a stumbling block before them, they will die. Since you did not warn them, they will die for their sin. The righteous things that person did will not be remembered, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. ²¹ But if you do warn the righteous person not to sin and they do not sin, they will surely live because they took warning, and you will have saved yourself.”

²² The hand of the LORD was on me there, and he said to me, “Get up and go out to the plain, and there I will speak to you.” ²³ So I got up and went out to the plain. And the glory of the LORD was standing there, like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I fell facedown.

Note: Interesting reaction. The glory of the Lord knocks you facedown. But the Spirit (next verse) raises you to your feet.

²⁴ Then the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet. He spoke to me and said: “Go, shut yourself inside your house. ²⁵ And you, son of man, they will tie with ropes; you will be bound so that you cannot go out among the people. ²⁶ I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent and unable to rebuke them, for they are a rebellious people. ²⁷ But when I speak to you, I will open your mouth and you shall say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says.’ Whoever will listen let them listen, and whoever will refuse let them refuse; for they are a rebellious people.

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 3:12** Probable reading of the original Hebrew text; Masoretic Text *sound—may the glory of the Lord be praised from his place*
2. **Ezekiel 3:18** Or *in*; also in verses 19 and 20

My brother John (spiritual brother) who is tracking with this study adds this for consideration:

This makes me think of Jonah. Jonah was given a task to go to the people of Nineveh and preach to them that they might repent. Jonah didn't want to go and God had to force him. This was to a foreign peoples who eventually repented. In contrast, Ezekiel obeyed God and was taken and lifted up and placed in front of the Israelites. He was no longer enamored with the mode of transport but he went in bitterness of spirit. He was full of anguish, knowing that many of his brethren would not heed the words of God.

I'll pick up here tomorrow.