

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 “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 my girls. 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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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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Ezekiel 5²

So---God now has Ezekiel in a sort of “lock-down” mode for over a year!

In chapter 4, God gave Ezekiel even more stringent instructions.

lie on your left side and put the sin of the people of Israel upon yourself.^[a] You are to bear their sin for the number of days you lie on your side. . . 390 days . . . lie down again, this time on your right side, and bear the sin of the people of Judah . . .40 days.

In Chapter 5, it involves his personal appearance even changing! God tells him---get a haircut! With a sword---and a shave! Would you do that if the Lord told you to?

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 5 New International Version (NIV)

God's Razor of Judgment

5 “Now, son of man, take a sharp sword and use it as a barber’s razor to shave your head and your beard.

Note: This “razor of Judgment” was also used by Isaiah.

(CLV) Isa 7:20

In ^othat day ^sYahweh^{ph} shall shave ⁱwith a razor ^othat is hired, ⁱwith those across the Stream, ⁱwith the king of Assyria; ^othe head and the hair of the feet and even ^othe beard shall it sweep off.

Then take a set of scales and divide up the hair.

Note: Would you do this? In our day in age we question what God has actually told us. But not then. Ezekiel acted out the prophetic symbolism of Babylon being a sharp razor for Israel.

² When the days of your siege come to an end, burn a third of the hair inside the city. Take a third and strike it with the sword all around the city. And scatter a third to the wind. For I will pursue them with drawn sword. ³ But take a few hairs and tuck them away in the folds of your garment. ⁴ Again, take a few of these and throw them into the fire and burn them up. A fire will spread from there to all Israel.

Note: This is what was going to happen to Israel. From this I take it that a third of the people would die in the city, a third by the sword “all around the city,” and third would be scattered to wind, pursued by people chasing them with a sword. I’m not sure what the “few” that would be thrown into the fire and burnt up symbolize. Could it possibly be a few thrown in the refining fire of judgment and spreading a passionate fire for the Lord to the rest of Israel? I’ve always thought this Scripture referred to trails this way. Or to God’s judgment, which burns the chaff of our lives with refining fire.

1 Peter 1:7

These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than **gold**, which perishes even though **refined** by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

Matthew 3:11

“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s

work. ¹⁴If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

So . . . could the final surviving few, protected in Ezekiel’s garment, reflect a few people who would be refined, purged and purified by fire and spread a holy fire of zeal throughout God’s people?

⁵“This is what the Sovereign LORD says: This is Jerusalem, which I have set in the center of the nations, with countries all around her.

Note: God’s chosen people, Israel live at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa. She was to be a witness on display for all the nations. Israel had a responsibility to the Lord in a greater way than other nations. Her judgment would be more severe. But so would her blessing. In the book of Revelation, the name of Israel figures predominantly for the people closest to the Lord.

⁶ Yet in her wickedness she has rebelled against my laws and decrees more than the nations and countries around her. She has rejected my laws and has not followed my decrees.

Note: The Bible speaks of how in our broken human nature, just hearing the law brings out the worse in us. “Once I was alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died.” (Romans 7:9) So Israel was a symbol to the nations and an example. Her job was harder. So her reward will be greater. Christ Himself said this:

Luke 12:48 New International Version (NIV)

⁴⁸ But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

That’s Israel. Much was given her. So much was required.

⁷“Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: You have been more unruly than the nations around you and have not followed my decrees or kept my laws. You have not even^[a] conformed to the standards of the nations around you.

Note: Some manuscripts read “You have conformed to the standards of the nations around you.”

Look at what God will say later in this book through Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 16:46-48 New International Version (NIV)

⁴⁶ Your older sister was Samaria, who lived to the north of you with her daughters; and your younger sister, who lived to the south of you with her daughters, was Sodom. ⁴⁷ You not only followed their ways and copied their detestable practices, but in all your ways you soon became more depraved than they. ⁴⁸ As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never did what you and your daughters have done.

Kings 21:9 New International Version (NIV)

⁹ But the people did not listen. Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites

Back to chapter 5

⁸ “Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself am against you, Jerusalem, and I will inflict punishment on you in the sight of the nations. ⁹ Because of all your detestable idols, I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again. ¹⁰ Therefore in your midst parents will eat their children, and children will eat their parents.

Note: The horror of cannibalism.

2 Kings 6:28 New International Version (NIV)

²⁸ Then he asked her, “What’s the matter?”

She answered, “This woman said to me, ‘Give up your son so we may eat him today, and tomorrow we’ll eat my son.’”

It was prophesied long ago.

Deuteronomy 28:53 New International Version (NIV)

⁵³ Because of the suffering your enemy will inflict on you during the siege, you will eat the fruit of the womb, the flesh of the sons and daughters the LORD your God has given you.

There are gruesome reports of this happening in human history. How tragic.

I will inflict punishment on you and will scatter all your survivors to the winds. ¹¹ Therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your vile images and detestable practices, I myself will shave you; I will not look on you with pity or spare you.

This is where the analogy of the “razor of judgment” comes.

¹² A third of your people will die of the plague or perish by famine inside you; a third will fall by the sword outside your walls; and a third I will scatter to the winds and pursue with drawn sword.

Note: Ah! This is where the Lord explains the meaning of Ezekiel’s haircut.

¹³ “Then my anger will cease and my wrath against them will subside, and I will be avenged. And when I have spent my wrath on them, they will know that I the LORD have spoken in my zeal.

Note: “My anger will subside.” Ever notice how someone is mad until it’s just “over”? The Lord has a strong emotional base too! He has emotions that peak and then reside. Fascinating.

¹⁴ “I will make you a ruin and a reproach among the nations around you, in the sight of all who pass by. ¹⁵ You will be a reproach and a taunt, a warning and an object of horror to the nations around you when I inflict punishment on you in anger and in wrath and with stinging rebuke. I the LORD have spoken. ¹⁶ When I shoot at you with my deadly and destructive arrows of famine, I will shoot to destroy you. I will bring more and more famine upon you and cut off your supply of food. ¹⁷ I will send famine and wild beasts against you, and they will leave you childless. Plague and bloodshed will sweep through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I the LORD have spoken.”

Wow. Wow. Wow. What’s next? Israel had many blessings---many responsibilities---and much accountability as a result. We owe a lot Israel. And we owe more to Christ!

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 5:7** Most Hebrew manuscripts; some Hebrew manuscripts and Syriac *You have*