

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*

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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Amos Introduction Part 4²



Yes, I’m going real slow through this. But I love savoring God’s word. Something in it gives me joy, completion, “fills” me. I feel God.

You don’t have to understand it perfectly to feel God’s presence through his Word. I like what Barth says, something about how the word of God becomes the word of God for you as He speaks to you through it. I somehow was blessed to learn to read it like this---with my “left” brain to understand the words, but to let it somehow penetrate my “right” brain and emotions. It’s like the song “give me the beat, boys that fill my soul, I want to get lost in your rock and roll.” Replace “beat” with “word” and you’ll get what I’m saying. Enjoy.

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² New International Version (NIV) Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. (Author’s note: This translation, and the source for many of the study notes that accompany it, are taken from The NIV Study Bible, Copyright 1985,1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 . These notes are referenced throughout and paraphrased frequently in the notes.)

So I'm still tracking with the NIV study Bible's introduction. I'm at the part where it says "Theological Theme" and message. I'll continue on this course where we left off yesterday. Here's an interesting comment:

"The Israelites came to believe that the observance of religious rites at the sacred places was all that God was interested in and that outside their worship activities they could do whatever they pleased---an essentially pagan notion.

Again, let's review how the Israelites version of religion started.

1 Kings 12 New International Version (NIV)

Israel Rebeled Against Rehoboam

12 Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone there to make him king.

David had died, and Solomon his son became king. But Solomon did not remain fully devoted to the Lord. As a result, God was going to divide the nation and leave Solomon's descendants only the tribe of Judah and Benjamin and the Levites.

I think it's interesting too that the consent of the people was involved in making the appointed heir the king.

In 2 Samuel 5:3 David became king over the northern tribes on the basis of a covenant.

I want to go on a little rabbit trail here. How were kings "selected" and ratified in God's nation. It seems like there was multiple step process. One was an anointing that took place, as in the case of King David, privately by the prophet.

1 Kings 11 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2 They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. 6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord; he did not follow the Lord completely, as David his father had done. . . 9 The Lord became angry with Solomon . . . 11 So the Lord said . . . I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates.

1 Samuel 2:10 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰ those who oppose the LORD will be broken.

The Most High will thunder from heaven;

the LORD will judge the ends of the earth.

“He will give strength to his king

and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

1 Samuel 9:16 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶“About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. Anoint him ruler over my people Israel; he will deliver them from the hand of the Philistines. I have looked on my people, for their cry has reached me.”

In other words, the individual became king by divine appointment, mediated through the recognized prophet.

Even though this anointing took place privately for David, in the presence of his family, the anointing ceremony is repeated for public recognition.

1 Samuel 16:13	2 Samuel 2:4
¹³ So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.	⁴ Then the men of Judah came to Hebron, and there they anointed David king over the tribe of Judah.

But back to 1 Kings 12, when it was time for Solomon’s son Rehoboam to become king, he specifically went to Shechem for Israel to anoint him as king over the 10 tribes of the northern part of the kingdom. Long story short, the NIV speculates that since David (his grandfather) was made king of the northern ten tribes of Israel by a covenant, suggested that their act of submission was to be renewed with each new king and that it was subject to negotiation. I find this an interesting “will of the people” style process, way before our democratic government.

As the story continues, Rehoboam is rejected by the northern 12 tribes and they sort of “vote in” Jereboam.

²⁰When all the Israelites heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. Only the tribe of Judah remained loyal to the house of David.

Jereboam had an immediate problem. He feared since the Temple was located in the Southern Kingdom, people would defect from him. So he made a “copy cat” version of the Jewish worship system that had pagan elements.

Golden Calves at Bethel and Dan

²⁶Jeroboam thought to himself, “The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. ²⁷If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam.”



²⁸After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, “It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” ²⁹One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. ³⁰And this thing became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other.^[d]



³¹Jeroboam built shrines on high places and appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites. ³²He instituted a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival held in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. This he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves he had made. And at Bethel he also installed priests at the high places he had made. ³³On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, a month of his own choosing, he offered sacrifices on the altar he had built at Bethel. So he instituted the festival for the Israelites and went up to the altar to make offerings.

So this ties back to the introduction comments in Amos. I'll quote it again.

"The Israelites came to believe that the observance of religious rites at the sacred places was all that God was interested in and that outside their worship activities they could do whatever they pleased---an essentially pagan notion.

Galatians 4:9-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁹But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces^[a]? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? ¹⁰You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

Footnotes:

a. **Galatians 4:9** Or *principles*

The NIV continues: "Without commitment to God's law, they had no basis for standards of conduct."

They made themselves rich at the expense of the poor and powerless.

Amos 2 - They sell the innocent for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. 7 They trample on the heads of the poor as on the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed.

God was not going to stand for this. God's judgment would not be a mere punitive blow. They were almost to experience total destruction.

"I gave you empty stomachs in every city
and lack of bread in every town,
yet you have not returned to me,"
declares the LORD.

⁷"I also withheld rain from you
when the harvest was still three months away.
I sent rain on one town,
but withheld it from another.

One field had rain;

another had none and dried up.

⁸People staggered from town to town for water

but did not get enough to drink,

yet you have not returned to me,"

declares the LORD.

⁹"Many times I struck your gardens and vineyards,

destroying them with blight and mildew.

Locusts devoured your fig and olive trees,

yet you have not returned to me,"

declares the LORD.

¹⁰"I sent plagues among you

as I did to Egypt.

I killed your young men with the sword,

along with your captured horses.

I filled your nostrils with the stench of your camps,

yet you have not returned to me,"

declares the LORD.

¹¹"I overthrew some of you

as I overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire,

yet you have not returned to me,"

declares the LORD.

"Return to Me!" God pleaded. Return to me! We'll finish up this introduction next time.