

**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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**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**

## **Amos Introduction Part 5<sup>2</sup>**

So the Israelites had fallen into a bad way of being. They had become “thoroughly paganized” the NIV study bible say. They had come to believe that the observance of religious rites at sacred places was all that God was interested in. Outside of their worship activities, they could do anything that they pleased. This was “an essentially pagan” notion. Without a commitment to God and His guidance and instruction, they had no basis for a standard of conduct. They made themselves rich at the expense of others. God warned that those who “had acquired great wealth at the expense of the poor and powerless . . . would lose everything. We live in a society that revels in luxury---are we doing on the backs of the “poor” somewhere in this world? Hmm . . .

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.)

**Again this study quotes heavily from the NIV Study Bible introduction notes for this book.**

"God's imminent judgment on Israel would not be a mere punitive blow to warn (as often before) . . . "

**Amos 4:6-11 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup>"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.

<sup>7</sup>"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.

<sup>8</sup>People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD.

<sup>9</sup>"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.

<sup>10</sup>"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.

<sup>11</sup>"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.

**Look at the various things the LORD says He did (or does).**

- empty stomachs
- withheld rain
- lack of drinking
- destroying gardens and vineyards with blight, mildew and locusts
- plagues
- killed young men
- captured horses
- nostrils filled with the stench of camps (failed sanitation)
- overthrew some as Sodom and Gomorrah overthrown

**God does punish. Even in the New Testament, some were actually stricken and died literally.**

Acts 5 New International Version (NIV)

**5** Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. **2** With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

**3** Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? **4** Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

**5** When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. **6** Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

**7** About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. **8** Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?"

"Yes," she said, "that is the price."

**9** Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also."

**10** At that moment **she fell down at his feet and died**. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. **11** Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

Acts 12:21-23 New International Version (NIV)

**21** On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. **22** They shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." **23** Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

Acts 13:9-12 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>9</sup>Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, <sup>10</sup>"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord? <sup>11</sup>Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be **blind for a time**, not even able to see the light of the sun."

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. <sup>12</sup>When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

1 Corinthians 11:29-31 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>29</sup>For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. <sup>30</sup>That is why many among **you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.** <sup>31</sup>But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.

**Back to the book of Amos.** "The unthinkable was about to happen. Because they had not faithfully consecrated themselves to his lordship, God your uproot his chosen people by the hands of a pagan nation. Even so, if they would repent, there was hope as stated in these verses:

Amos 5 New International Version (NIV)

## A Lament and Call to Repentance

**5** <sup>4</sup>This is what the LORD says to Israel:

**"Seek me and live;**

<sup>5</sup> do not seek Bethel,  
do not go to Gilgal,  
do not journey to Beersheba.

For Gilgal will surely go into exile,  
and Bethel will be reduced to nothing."

**<sup>6</sup>Seek the LORD and live,**

or he will sweep through the tribes of Joseph like a fire;  
it will devour them,  
and Bethel will have no one to quench it. . .

**<sup>14</sup>Seek good, not evil,  
that you may live.**

Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you,  
just as you say he is.

**<sup>15</sup>Hate evil, love good;**  
maintain justice in the courts.

**Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy  
on the remnant of Joseph.**

The LORD had a glorious future for his people.

Amos 9:11-15 New International Version (NIV)

**<sup>11</sup>"In that day**

"I will restore David's fallen shelter— I will repair its broken walls  
and restore its ruins— and will rebuild it as it used to be,  
**<sup>12</sup>so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that  
bear my name,<sup>[a]</sup>"** declares the LORD, who will do these things.

**<sup>13</sup>"The days are coming,"** declares the LORD, "when the reaper will be  
overtaken by the plowman and the planter by the one treading grapes.  
New wine will drip from the mountains and flow from all the hills,  
**<sup>14</sup> and I will bring my people Israel back from exile.<sup>[b]</sup>** "They will rebuild the  
ruined cities and live in them. They will plant vineyards and drink their  
wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit.

**<sup>15</sup>I will plant Israel in their own land, never again to be uprooted from the  
land I have given them,"** says the LORD your God.

- a. **Amos 9:12** Hebrew; Septuagint so that the remnant of people / and all the nations that bear my name may seek me
- b. **Amos 9:14** Or will restore the fortunes of my people Israel

God would not abandon His chosen people. He would redeem them! We'll finish up this introduction next time.