

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 6²



I find this next section very interesting. It begins this way in the NIV study bible introduction notes: The God for whom Amos speaks is not just the God of Israel. He is the Great King who rule the whole universe. Because He is all-sovereign, the God of Israel holds the history and destiny of all peoples and of the world in his hands. Israel must know not only that he is Lord of her future, but also that he is Lord over all, and that he has purposes and concerns that reach far beyond her borders. Israel had a unique, but not exclusive claim on God.

In other words God is the Lord of all. And Jesus was going to come and expand who belonged in the Kingdom of God. Let’s look at the Scriptures cited. Enjoy!

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This Scripture shows God's universal sweep.

Amos 4:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³He who forms the mountains,
who creates the wind,
and who reveals his thoughts to mankind,

God "forms" mountains. Just take a quick read of the process geologists have discovered God uses.

Mountains are formed by movement within the Earth's crust. The crust itself is made up of several large plates, called tectonic plates, which are free floating. These huge chunks of the Earth's crust move within molten rock called magma, which allows them to shift and collide over time. Even though humans live on the crust, they do not often feel these movements as they are very slow, and the sheer size of each plate is so large. Nevertheless, these shifts still have great impacts on human life as the movement of plates is what creates changes in the geographical structure of the surface of the earth. In this way, mountains are created over time. When these plates collide, there is a great deal of mass and pressure which suddenly comes to a stop, and it is this movement that forces the Earth into buckles or protrusions which are known as mountains. Depending on how these plates move or collide, one of three types of mountains can be formed. The three types of mountains or mountain ranges are: volcanic, fold, and block mountains, each of which is formed in a different way.³

who turns dawn to darkness,
and treads on the heights of the earth—
the LORD God Almighty is his name.

The God of the Bible is the cosmic Creator. God exerted tremendous power when He created the Universe. Nothing but God existed before He brought creation into being. I like this explanation of how God created mountains, and all things over time.⁴

³ [How Are Mountains Formed? - WorldAtlas](#)

⁴ From [The Cosmic Christ — Center for Action and Contemplation \(cac.org\)](#)

The first and cosmic incarnation of the Eternal Christ, the perfect co-inherence of matter and Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-11), happened at the Big Bang 13.8 billion years ago.

Ephesians 1:3-11 New International Version (NIV)

³Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us **in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ**. ⁴For he chose us in him **before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight**. In love ⁵he^[a] predestined us for adoption to sonship^[b] through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, ⁹he^[c] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

¹¹In him we were also chosen,^[d] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

Footnotes:

- a. **Ephesians 1:5** Or *sight in love*. ⁵ He
- b. **Ephesians 1:5** The Greek word for *adoption to sonship* is a legal term referring to the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in Roman culture.
- c. **Ephesians 1:9** Or *us with all wisdom and understanding*. ⁹ And he
- d. **Ephesians 1:11** Or *were made heirs*

Colossians 1:15-17 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁵The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God and
the Word was God . . . The Word
became flesh . . . John 1:1, 14)

Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the

human incarnation of that same Mystery a mere 2,000 years ago, when we were perhaps ready for this revelation. Christ is not Jesus' last name, but the title of his historical and cosmic purpose. Jesus presents himself as the "Anointed" or *Christened One* who was human and divine united in one human body—as our model and exemplar. Peter seems to get this, at least once (Matthew 16:16), but like most of the church, he also seems to regress. Christ is our shortcut word for "The Body of God" or "God materialized." [2] This Christ is much bigger and older than either Jesus of Nazareth or the Christian religion, because **the Christ is whenever the material and the divine co-exist—which is always and everywhere.**

"At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove." Mark 1:9-10

Ilia Delio writes, "The conventional visualization of the physical world was changed by Einstein's special theory of relativity, which showed that matter itself was a form of energy. . . . For all practical purposes, energy is the 'real world.'" There it is: science revealing that everything is both matter and energy/spirit co-inhering as one; this is a Christocentric world. This realization changes everything. Matter has become a holy thing and the material world is the place where we can comfortably worship God just by walking on matter, by loving it, by respecting it. The Christ is God's active power inside of the physical world.

Ok, that was a brief diversion. But let's continue in Amos. And let's think of God's greater purposes for the world that is greater than even Israel.

Amos 5:8 New International Version (NIV)

⁸He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns midnight into dawn
and darkens day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out over the face of the land—
the LORD is his name.

Amos 9:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵The Lord, the LORD Almighty—
he touches the earth and it melts,
and all who live in it mourn;

the whole land rises like the Nile,
then sinks like the river of Egypt;
⁶he builds his lofty palace in the heavens
and sets its foundation on the earth;
he calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out over the face of the land—
the LORD is his name.

The NIV study bible continues:

He is the all-sovereign God. He holds the history and destiny of all peoples and of the world in His hands. He is not only the LORD of Israel's future, but the LORD over all. He has a purpose that reaches far beyond Israel's borders.

Amos 9:5-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁵The Lord, the LORD Almighty—
he touches the earth and it melts,
and all who live in it mourn;
the whole land rises like the Nile,
then sinks like the river of Egypt;
⁶he builds his lofty palace^[a] in the heavens
and sets its foundation^[b] on the earth;
he calls for the waters of the sea
and pours them out over the face of the land—
the LORD is his name.

Footnotes:

- a. **Amos 9:6** The meaning of the Hebrew for this phrase is uncertain.
- b. **Amos 9:6** The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.

Here are a few other concepts the introduction directs our attention to, from the introduction to the book of Psalms in a section entitled "Major Themes." I'll briefly summarize them and include on Scripture for each.

1. The gravitational center of life and history and the whole creation (heaven and earth) is God, Yahweh,.

Deuteronomy 6:4 New International Version (NIV)

⁴Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.^[a]

Footnotes:

- a. **Deuteronomy 6:4** Or *The LORD our God is one LORD*; or *The LORD is our God, the LORD is one*; or *The LORD is our God, the LORD alone*

He created all things and preserve them. They are robe of glory with which He has clothed himself. I will add He plans to “fill” all things.

Ephesians 1

²²And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

2. God will not tolerate any worldly power that opposes or ignores him.

Romans 14:11

It is written: “As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every **knee** will **bow** before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.”

3. He opposes the proud, those who rely on their own resources (and/or the gods they have contrived).

James 4:6

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God **opposes** the **proud** but shows favor to the humble.”

4. He is the ultimate Executor of justice among humans (to avenge oneself is an act of the proud).

Romans 12:19 [Full Chapter]

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it **is** written: “It **is mine** to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

5. The Lord has chosen the Israelites to be his servant people, his inheritance among the nations.

Exodus 19:3-6 New International Version (NIV)

³Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ⁴"You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, ⁶'you' will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

6. God chose the Davidic to be his royal representative on earth.

Psalms 2:6-9 New International Version (NIV)

⁶"I have installed my king
on Zion, my holy mountain."
⁷I will proclaim the LORD's decree:
He said to me, "You are my son;
today I have become your father."
⁸Ask me,
and I will make the nations your inheritance,
the ends of the earth your possession.
⁹You will break them with a rod of iron^[a];
you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

Footnotes:

a. **Psalm 2:9** Or *will rule them with an iron scepter* (see Septuagint and Syriac)

7. God also chose Jerusalem (the city of David) as his own royal city. There in his palace (the temple) he sat enthroned among his people.

Revelation 21 New International Version (NIV)

A New Heaven and a New Earth

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,”^[a] for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ²I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. . . .²²I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

So the book concludes:

Israel had a unique claim on God. But not an exclusive claim on God. She needed to remember not His covenant commitments to her, but her covenant obligations to Him.

We’ll actually begin in the first chapter next time.