

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 4 Part 3



So they prayed and paid, but their compartmentalization of doing “good” by simply praying and paying for others just wasn’t enough. Like the Pharisees, they did what they “for people to see.” God had used natural disasters in the past to discipline and warn His people. I wondered whether God still does that today. While I didn’t come to a dogmatic conclusion, I did find instances in the New Testament where God punished people pretty severely to uphold respect for His Spirit and the seriousness of what was to be kept holy in the church. No nation that I know of today has entered into a covenantal relationship with God. Our nation has declared its independence from what they considered tyrannical rule. It is founded on an individual’s free choice of worship. But it’s not a relationship that has been covenanted with God. So I can’t say that we are “the new Israel” and subjected to covenantal retorts by God. That being said, God is free to be God. Like He did with Herod. Let’s pick up where we left off.

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

Amos 4

So God spoke of a series of interventions He would make to get Israel's attention. They included:

- Empty stomachs in every city
- Lack of bread in every town
- Selective withholding of rain
- Droughts and lack of drinking water
- Destruction of gardens and vineyards with blight and mildew.
- Locust pestilences destroying fig and olive trees.
- Egyptian-style plagues.
- Death of the nation's young men
- Captured horses
- Destroyed sanitation ("i filled your nostrils with the stench of your camps")
- Sodom and Gomorrah type destruction.

He says He made them like a burning stick snatched from the fire

After doing all this, He said to them:

prepare to meet your God."

Like I noted last time, this Old Covenant approach was not His preferred way of dealing with His people. I personally think the Old Covenant was given because man chose to relate to God with the knowledge of good and evil.

Genesis 2	Genesis 2
⁹ In the middle of the garden were the tree of life	and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
Here is list other verses where the phrase "tree of life" is mentioned.	I contend the law was based on the knowledge of good and evil.
Proverbs 3:18 She (wisdom) is a tree of life to those who take hold of her; those who hold her fast will be blessed. It's interesting that it was Solomon saying this. He died rather legalistically oriented for	⁴ when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, anddesirable for gaining wisdom, she

all his pursuit of wisdom. David died praising God and simply being a man after God's heart.

Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous is

a **tree of life**

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is

a **tree of life.**

Proverbs 15:4

The soothing tongue is a **tree of life**, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.

But again, even though the above verses are primarily metaphorical, notice how in God's eternity, the tree of life figures predominantly.

Revelation 2:7

Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the **tree of life**, which is in the paradise of God.

Even in paradise, the tree of life will still be necessary for sustenance of eternal life.

Revelation 22:2

down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the **tree of life**, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the

took some and ate it.

Just knowing good and evil doesn't perfect you.

Romans 3:20

²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

²²Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

²³For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Hebrews 7:19

(for

the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.

We did not gain life by knowing god and evil. We gained death.

2 Corinthians 3

⁷Now if **the ministry that brought death**, which was engraved in letters

nations.

Revelation 22:14

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the **tree of life** and may go through the gates into the city.

Washing of the robes are necessary for the partaking of the tree of life.

Revelation 22:19

And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the **tree of life** and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, ⁸will not **the ministry of the Spirit** be even more glorious? ⁹If **the ministry that brought condemnation** was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! ¹⁰For **what was glorious has no glory now** in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹And if **what was transitory came with glory**, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

So God’s ministry is a ministry of life. He offered it to mankind immediately after its creation in the garden. Man chose the tree of knowledge instead. So I contend that God relates to us differently now, on the terms He wanted to from the beginning. Still it’s fascinating to see how he engaged with His ancient people, and I still don’t rule out Him acting on people throughout history with occasional punishments when necessary that might even include national disasters. He’s done it before.

Oh, if we could only access the truth of God! The prophet speaks to who He is.

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

That is a key phrase for sure! God reveals His thoughts to mankind..

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

Footnotes:

- a. **Amos 4:2** Or *away in baskets, / the last of you in fish baskets*
- b. **Amos 4:3** Masoretic Text; with a different word division of the Hebrew (see Septuagint) *out, you mountain of oppression*
- c. **Amos 4:4** Or *days*

Next time we'll see the kind of thoughts He reveals to mankind.