

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

graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER
Ezekiel 10²

I am super pumped by this chapter. It’s another beautiful glimpse into the Throne room of God. In chapter 8, God lifted Ezekiel up Ezekiel by the hair of his head. He gave him visions of the corruption that had taken place in the heart of the Israelites, and then spoke of His judgment on the idolaters in chapter 9. Now, we’re getting a rare glimpse of the Throne of God. My friend John shares some amazing insights! Enjoy---and be encouraged at what’s going on “behind the veil” of our lives!

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 10 New International Version (NIV)

God's Glory Departs From the Temple

10 I looked, and I saw the likeness of a throne of lapis lazuli above the vault that was over the heads of the cherubim.

Note: I can't wait. I want to share what my brother in spirit John writes about this:



I think it is interesting that to Ezekiel, the throne of God was revealed in a color he described as lapis lazuli. This is a semi-precious stone that in its purest form is a beautiful, bright, purple or Royal Blue—historically a rather rare color,

as far as gems and dyes go. Only the wealthy could afford it for their garments. Kings and queens sought it and used it as a sign of authority and power.



Figure 1 lapis lazuli dreamstime_m_88329462 ID 88329462 © Su.Fi. Sa. Dreamstime.com

How fitting! How much more power and royalty can you get, than that of the Creator of all?

What a sight it must have been! God's version of the Fantastic Four! Fearsome beings with four heads and wings each. Facing outward in a square, they "had each others' backs," as we say. Four amazing beings surrounding, and surrounded by, a blazing spirit essence, glowing fiery yellow...all supporting above them a Throne, glowing radiant blue. To think we have the opportunity to have a relationship with the God of such glory! I know that I, as a poor, distracted human, do not ascribe to God nearly the glory that He is due.

Consider the manner in which the throne of God is transported. To use terms of mechanics or physics, it is moved by translation, without rotation. In other words, it does not spin or turn.

(Compare James 1:17, no shadow of turning with God's love for us). When it's time comes, each Cherub has the single-minded duty to go straight ahead, to press forward, following the will of the One on the throne.

Am I single-minded? Am I seeking and straight-ahead following the will of God, without turning away? Am I like Caleb and Joshua, spies who had the enthusiasm and faith it took to advise Israel to march unwaveringly into the Promised Land? Or do I allow the distractions and the fear of giants turn me from my path? (Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.)

God's Fiery coals can purify a prophet's unclean lips. God's fiery coals could purify the

Isaiah 6 New International Version (NIV)

Isaiah's Commission

6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

² Above him were seraphim, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. ³ And they were calling to one another: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;

the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁴ At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. ⁵ "Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty." ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar.

⁷ **With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."**

sinful city of Jerusalem, but I don't know if that is intended in this case. Perhaps it is only a punishment.

Those are my thoughts on chapter 10.


That is so cool. And so true! Thanks John! I'm going to get you to write (wright) a sermon for me and I'll deliver on Facebook Live.

Let's keep reading.

² The LORD said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the wheels beneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter them over the city." And as I watched, he went in.

Note: I want to key off what John wrote here:

God's Fiery coals can purify a prophet's unclean lips (See Isaiah 6 where this is recorded in the side bar).

Isaiah 6	Photo 108605306 © Vosslosh19 Dreamstime.com
⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. ⁷ With it he touched my mouth and said, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for."	

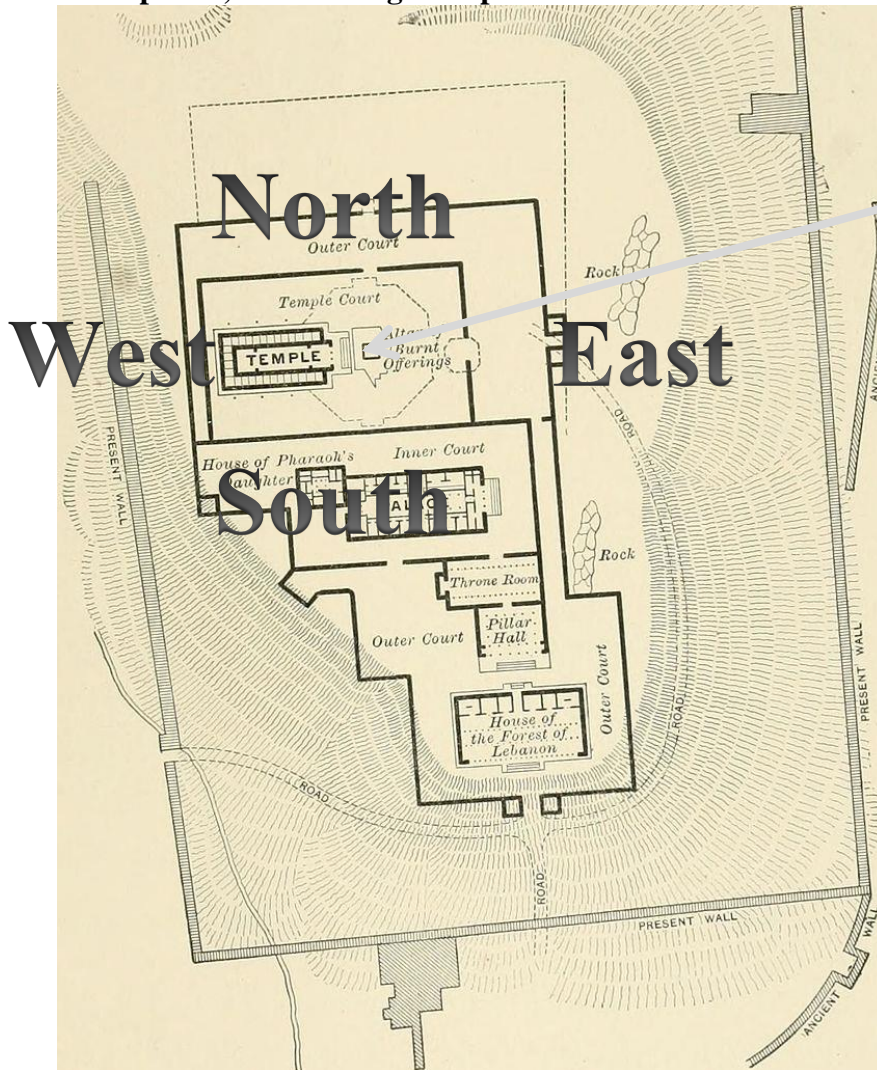
God's fiery coals could purify the sinful city of Jerusalem, but I don't know if that is intended in this case. Perhaps it is only a punishment. **I agree John. But I think God's punishment is always purifying and restorative, not ever really retributive. Think about this verse.**

1 Corinthians 3
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. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

Back to Ezekiel.

³ Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court.

Note: I've found a free-to-use diagram of the temple from some pious person in 1905. Remember, the temple faces East, so you can get your north-south-west from that. I have a hard time figuring out exactly where the cherubim were standing at these different descriptions, but this might help a bit.



what looked like human hands.)

⁴ Then the glory of the LORD rose from above the cherubim and moved to the threshold of the temple. The cloud filled the temple, and the court was full of the radiance of the glory of the LORD. ⁵ The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard as far away as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty [El Shaddai, possibly meaning He Who Suffices, or He who is (or says) Enough! and limits chaos and destruction] when he speaks.

⁶ When the LORD commanded the man in linen, "Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim," the man went in and stood beside a wheel. ⁷ Then one of the cherubim reached out his hand to the fire that was among them. He took up some of it and put it into the hands of the man in linen, who took it and went out. ⁸ (Under the wings of the cherubim could be seen

Note: The book or Revelation in Greek is Apocalypse, meaning "lifting the veil" or "uncovering" or something like that. It lifts the veil of dim-eyed humanity to help us to see the power, the glory, the Kingdom, the authority---all the wonderful and beautiful power that is there, going on behind the scenes, and the God who is a Consuming Fire, empowering the Universe and all being with the Fire of His Being! Talk about "Holy Smoke!" That's because there is Holy Power empowering existence, and purifying it, and keeping it going!

⁹ I looked, and I saw beside the cherubim four wheels, one beside each of the cherubim; the wheels sparkled like topaz.



Topaz --- Various Colors³

¹⁰ As for their appearance, the four of them looked alike; each was like a wheel intersecting a wheel. ¹¹ As they moved, they would go in any one of the four directions the cherubim faced; the wheels did not turn about^[b] as the cherubim went.

Note: I like what John said here: Consider the manner in which the throne of God is transported. To use terms of mechanics or physics, it is moved by translation, without rotation. In other words, it does not spin or turn. (Compare James 1:17, no shadow of turning with God's love for us). When it's time comes, each Cherub has the single-minded duty to go straight ahead, to press forward, following the will of the One on the throne.

James 1:17 King James Version (KJV)

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

³ By Michelle Jo - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9725342>

The cherubim went in whatever direction the head faced, without turning as they went. ¹² Their entire bodies, including their backs, their hands and their wings, were completely full of eyes, as were their four wheels.

Note: I take that to mean the God and His ministering spirits see all, everywhere. God misses nothing! And loves all!

¹³ I heard the wheels being called “the whirling wheels.”

Note: The Literal translation I use say “the Roller.” So God is a Holy Roller. There you have it!

¹⁴ Each of the cherubim had four faces: One face was that of a cherub, the second the face of a human being, the third the face of

Matthew 10:29 King James Version (KJV)

²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

¹⁰ Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left **the face of an ox**; each also had the face of an eagle. (Ezekiel 1)

a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

Note: The Ox is the main face of the Cherub, apparently, since that’s the only one that left from the Ezekiel 1 vision of the four faces.

¹⁵ Then the cherubim rose upward. These were the living creatures I had seen by the Kebar River. ¹⁶ When the cherubim moved, the

wheels beside them moved; and when the cherubim spread their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels did not leave their side. ¹⁷ When the cherubim stood still, they also stood still; and when the cherubim rose, they rose with them, **because the spirit of the living creatures was in them.**

Note: One day, your wheels won’t need gas. They’ll just need your spirit! Wow!

¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim. ¹⁹ While I watched, the cherubim spread their wings and rose from the ground, and as they went, the wheels went with them. They stopped at the entrance of the east gate of the LORD’s house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

²⁰ These were the living creatures I had seen beneath the God of Israel by the Kebar River, and I realized that they were cherubim. ²¹ Each had four faces and four wings, and under their wings was what looked like human hands. ²² Their faces had the same appearance as those I had seen by the Kebar River. Each one went **straight ahead.**

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 10:5** Hebrew *El-Shaddai*
2. **Ezekiel 10:11** Or *aside*

Note: For the sake of time, we’ll stop here. But I love what John concludes here:

Notice that the concept of “straight ahead” is referenced more than once in speaking of these Cherubim.

Ezekiel 1:9

and the wings of one touched the wings of another. Each one went **straight ahead**; they did not turn as they moved.

Ezekiel 1:12

Each one went **straight ahead**. Wherever the spirit would go, they would go, without turning as they went.

Ezekiel 10:22

Their faces had the same appearance as those I had seen by the Kebar River. Each one went **straight ahead**.

Referencing the Cherubim, who are always looking straight ahead (and this emphasized several times in the descriptions) he writes:

Am I single-minded? Am I seeking and straight-ahead following the will of God, without turning away? Am I like Caleb and Joshua, spies who had the enthusiasm and faith it took to advise Israel to march unwaveringly into the Promised Land? Or do I allow the distractions and the fear of giants turn me from my path?

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (Matthew 6:8)

And I'll add, march straight ahead! Amen