

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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Jonah Introduction Part 5



Let’s continue our study. This study bible concludes that Jonah ministered for the half century that started in 800 BC and ended in 750 BC.

We’d already seen how his name does appear in the book of Kings in conjunction with a prophetic ministry. The restoration of Israel’s borders was predicted---not because of their righteousness, but because of God’s mercy. The current king, Jeroboam II, capitalized on God’s good providence on Assyria’s defeat of Damascus. The LORD had seen how bitterly everyone in Israel, whether slave or free, was suffering; there was no one to help them. And since the LORD had not said he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash. But instead of walking more humbly, Israel became arrogant and smug. Assyria remained a major threat to Israel. It was in this context that Jonah went to Nineveh.

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

Interpretation (from NIV Study Bible Introduction to Jonah)

Many have questioned whether the book of Jonah is historical. The supposed legendary character of some of the events (like the great fish) has caused them to suggest alternatives to the traditional view, that it is historical.

The options suggested include:

- A fictional short story
- A parable

Jesus Himself acknowledged his sometimes use of parables in Matthew 13:

13 . . . I speak to them in parables

Matthew 13:34

Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in **parables**; he did not say anything to them without using a parable.

Matthew 13:35

So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in **parables**, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

Mark 4:2

He taught them many things by **parables**,

1. Mark 4:11

He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in **parables**

Mark 4:33

With many similar **parables** Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand.

Luke 8:10

He said, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in **parables**, so that, "though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.'

That quick survey above is interesting. Because in one verse it says He said many things to them, as much as they could "understand." Then in another He said "I speak in parables so that though seeing, they may not see, though hearing, they may not understand.

At any rate, could the story of Jonah be a parable?

Whether the book is either a fictional short story or a parable, the assumption is the same---the account essentially sprang from the author's imagination, despite its serious and gracious message.

Such interpretations are often based on doubts about "the miraculous" that are too easy to dismiss.

But the NIV stresses:

(1) Similarities between Jonah and other parts of the OT.

(2) The pervasive concerns of the OT writers, especially the prophets, for history.

Here are some of my thoughts.

Jesus spoke of Jonah as if he were real.

Matthew 12:40-42

New International Version

⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. ⁴¹ The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here. ⁴² The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and

condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus also spoke of Adam and Eve as if they were real.

Matthew 19

⁴ "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'^[a] ⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'^[b]? ⁶ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

He also spoke of Noah and Lot

Matthew 24

³⁸ For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; ³⁹ and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

Luke 17:31-33

New International Version

³¹ On that day no one who is on the housetop, with possessions inside, should go down to get them. Likewise, no one in the field should go back for anything. ³² Remember Lot's wife! ³³ Whoever tries to keep their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life will preserve it.

Luke 17:28-30

New International Version

²⁸ "It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. ²⁹ But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.

³⁰ "It will be just like this on the day the Son of Man is revealed.

The NIV Study Bible notes offers thoughts on both sides of this question, including the proclivity:

- Of OT authors using the events surrounding the birth of a key figure to illumine events in their ministries or in future ministries

| Moses Rescue from the Nile | Israel's deliverance from the Red Sea |
|---|--|
| <p>Exodus 2 ³ But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket^(a) for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.</p> <p>⁵ Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. ⁶ She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.</p> <p>⁷ Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?"</p> <p>⁸ "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you." So the woman took the baby and nursed him. ¹⁰ When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses,^(b) saying, "I drew him out of the water."</p> | <p>Exodus 14 ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, ²² and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.</p> <p>²³ The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. ²⁴ During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. ²⁵ He jammed the wheels of their chariots so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt."</p> <p>²⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." ²⁷ Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward^(c) it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. ²⁸ The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen—the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them</p> |

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| | <p>survived.</p> <p>²⁹ But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. ³⁰ That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. ³¹ And when the Israelites saw the mighty hand of the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant.</p> <p>Footnotes</p> |
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That’s just one example. The ministries of Moses and Joshua also illumine those of Elijah and Elisha.

I guess I will call this the “like unto” concept.

Acts 3:22

For Moses truly said **unto** the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up **unto** you of your brethren, **like unto** me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say **unto** you.

Acts 7:37

This is that Moses, which said **unto** the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up **unto** you of your brethren, **like unto** me; him shall ye hear.

God historically sets up “examples” in the past, perhaps even “types” of prophets, whose ministries get fulfilled in other ways in the future through other people. It shows God’s abilities to even direct history in such a way that future prophets fulfilling even greater roles are typed by earlier prophets.

More in this next time.