

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 Chapter 3²



So Jonah was thrown back into the chaos. But God protected Him in “Sheol,” and through prayer, his attitude sorted out. Now God is coming to Him a second time. And guess what. He’s going to get the same commissioning again!

Sometimes we think we “lose” every opportunity, only to find out God still has saved it for us still! We are His masterpieces, created to do good works prepared in advance for us to do, anyway! How great is our God!

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² 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.)

Jonah 3
New International Version

Jonah Goes to Nineveh

3 Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: ² “Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.”

The exact same job he was originally given. It was still there.

Nineveh is called a “great city.” We may have already noted this, but Nineveh was built by Nimrod and traditionally known as a great city. It was 500 miles away from Jonah’s hometown, Gath Hopher. Travel was slow.³

Genesis 10:12	Note:
¹² and Resen, which is between Nineveh and Calah—which is the great city.	Nineveh either alone, or with the surrounding urban areas.

Although the Biblical writers do not expand on this, look at what this historical account says about Nineveh.⁴

Sennacherib abandoned Sargon II's newly finished Dur-Sharrukin and moved the capital to Nineveh early in his reign. Anything which could be moved from Dur-Sharrukin was relocated to Nineveh. He built great walls around the city with fifteen gates, created public parks and gardens, **aqueducts**, irrigation ditches, canals, and greatly expanded upon and improved the structures of the city. His palace had eighty rooms and he proclaimed it "the palace without rival" - the same phrase used by his father to describe his own palace at Dur-Sharrukin.

The historian Gwendolyn Leick notes, "Nineveh, with its heterogeneous population of people from throughout the Assyrian Empire, was one of the most beautiful cities in the **Near East**, with its gardens, temples, and splendid palaces" (132) and further cites Nineveh as having a carefully planned and executed series of canals and aqueducts to ensure a steady supply of water not only for human consumption but also to keep the

³³ “an average pace of 2.5 mph, 20 miles a day” (**Biblical travel: How far to where, and what about the donkey?** (aleteia.org))

⁴ **Nineveh - World History Encyclopedia**

public parks and gardens irrigated; an aspect of urban life not every city attended to with as much care and planning.

His "palace without rival" was aptly named as it was the grandest structure standing in Mesopotamia at the time. Scholar Stephen Bertman describes it:

The building's main axis was one-third of a mile in length. It featured a portico consisting of solid **bronze** columns resting on the backs of solid bronze lions and bulls, each of which weighed 43 tons. Inside, the palace was adorned with carved reliefs showing the king in the process of erecting colossal monuments or waging **war** against **Assyria's** enemies. (27)

Rich. Proud. Haughty. But notice how they responded to the Lord.

³ Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it.

Again, that’s because it was a 4-city complex, or at least, the NIV Study Bible allows for that. It also mentions how the phrase “three days” may have been a conventional way of describing a medium-length distance, as in the Scriptures below.

Genesis 30:36	Exodus 3:18	Joshua 9:16-17
<p>³⁶ Then he put a three-day journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob continued to tend the rest of Laban’s flocks.</p>	<p>¹⁸ “The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, ‘The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.’</p>	<p>¹⁶ Three days after they made the treaty with the Gibeonites, the Israelites heard that they were neighbors, living near them. ¹⁷ So the Israelites set out and on the third day came to their cities: Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth and Kiriath Jearim.</p>

⁴ Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." ⁵ The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth.

Customary signs of humbling oneself and repentance.

1 Kings 21:27	Nehemiah 9:1
²⁷ When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.	⁹ On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and putting dust on their heads.



⁶ When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.

As proud as he was, he did that!

⁷ This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh:

"By the decree of the king and his nobles:

Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. ⁸ But let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let

them give up their evil ways and their violence.

I like the way this verse communicates what repentance looks like.

1. Do not let people or animals, herds or flocks, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink.

2. Let people and animals be covered with sackcloth.

3. Let everyone call urgently on God.

4. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence.

⁹ Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish."

¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

God responded to that! Specifically, that they had turned from their evil ways!