

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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Micah 1 Part 4²



So Micah wrote to Samaria and Jerusalem. Both had become citadel cities representing the nations of which they were capitals. Jerusalem and the City of David were built on a site was less than 11 acres in size. It could well defend itself against attacks. It had walls upon steep canyons and shafts reaching to an underground water source. It was called the “citadel” city of David.

We’ll look a bit closer at Samaria this time, and move into the contents of Micah 1.

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Micah 1

New International Version

1 The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah—the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.

The City of Samaria was apparently adorned with fine building to rival those of Jerusalem. Again, the northern kingdom had not only broken off from Judah and Jerusalem politically, but religiously as well.

Look at this Scripture.

1 Kings 12

²⁵ Then Jeroboam fortified Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim and lived there. From there he went out and built up Peniel.^[a]

²⁶ Jeroboam thought to himself, “The kingdom will now likely revert to the house of David. ²⁷ If these people go up to offer sacrifices at the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, they will again give their allegiance to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah. They will kill me and return to King Rehoboam.”

This summarizes Jeroboam’s, and Samaria’s problem. They did not trust God to sustain his rule, as He promised to do so in 1 Kings 11: 38

Instead, he took action to preserve his rule himself. By doing so, he forfeited the theocratic basis for his kingship.

1 Kings 11:38NIV

38 If you do whatever I command you and walk in obedience to me and do what is right in my eyes by obeying my decrees and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to you.

²⁸ After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves. He said to the people, “**It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.** Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.” ²⁹ One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. ³⁰ And this thing

became a sin; the people came to worship the one at Bethel and went as far as Dan to worship the other.

It's interesting how whenever Israel decided to take worship into its own hands, they'd almost do exactly what Aaron did when Moses was on the mountain getting the Ten Commandments.

³¹ Jeroboam built shrines on high places and **appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites.** ³² He instituted a festival on the fifteenth day of the

eight month, **like the festival held in Judah**, and offered sacrifices on the altar. This he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves he had made. And at Bethel he also installed priests at the high places he had made. ³³ On the fifteenth day of the eighth month, **a month of his own choosing**, he offered sacrifices on the altar he had built at Bethel. So he instituted the festival for the Israelites and went up to the altar to make offerings.

Exodus 32:4-5 NIV

4 He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." 5 When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced,

"Tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord."

So look at what was wrong with this system. I'll repeat the phrases I highlighted and comment on each.

1. It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.

Note that he made serving God an "easier" way an issue. He said what they were probably thinking: "It is too much" for you to go up to Jerusalem. Serving God does come with some intentionality and effort. He wanted to make it "convenient" for people who didn't want to make that effort to feel like they were still serving God.

2. He appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites.

I've seen this happen before in church situations. People who truly were not qualified or even called offered the opportunity for a position of importance to ensure their continued engagement in the system. It's a cheap shot, and shouldn't be done.

3. He instituted a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival held in Judah.

Notice the criteria. It was "like" the festival in Judah, but not exactly the same. It makes me think of this Scripture.

2 Timothy 3:5

Having a **form of godliness**, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

4. He chose a month of his own choosing.

Again, God's preeminence is emphasized. Not our "choosing," but God's.

Here's another resource to consider. It's from a bible tool I like to use off the web called "GotQuestions.org."³

Samaria was both a region and a city that experienced many changes throughout biblical history. In Hebrew, the name *Samaria* means "watch-mountain" or "watch-tower," which correlates with its hilly features (*Easton's Bible Dictionary*, "Samaria"). The place is referred to as "the hill of Samaria" in **1 Kings 16:24**. The city of Samaria was located in central Israel, about 30 miles north of Jerusalem and about 6 miles northwest of Shechem.

Samaria's hilly geography matches the ups and downs of its history. As the Israelites were dividing the Promised Land, the region of Samaria was given to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. **King Omri**, the sixth king of the northern kingdom of Israel, bought a hill in the Valley of Shechem in the region of Samaria and built the city of Samaria, which became his capital city (**1 Kings 16:23–24**). Eventually, the name of the capital was applied to the entire northern kingdom. Omri's son, **King Ahab**, erected a temple to Baal in the city of Samaria (**1 Kings 16:32**).

³ [What is the importance of Samaria in the Bible? | GotQuestions.org](https://www.gotquestions.org/What-is-the-importance-of-Samaria-in-the-Bible/)

1 Kings 16:23-32 King James Version

²³ In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah.

²⁴ And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria. . . ²⁸ So Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead. . . ³¹ And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. . .

³² And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.

This is significant because look at what Micah opens with in Chapter 1.

1 The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah—the vision **he saw concerning Samaria** and Jerusalem.

² Hear, you peoples, all of you, listen, earth and all who live in it, that the Sovereign LORD may bear witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

Judgment Against Samaria and Jerusalem

³ Look! The LORD is coming from his dwelling place; he comes down and treads on the heights of the earth. ⁴ The mountains melt beneath him and the valleys split apart, like wax before the fire, like water rushing down a slope.

⁵ All this is because of Jacob's transgression, because of the sins of the people of Israel. What is Jacob's transgression? **Is it not Samaria?**
What is Judah's high place? **Is it not Jerusalem?**

Samaria was Jacob's real transgression. Even Jerusalem had become "it's" "high place"---a fabricated and modified version of His way of worship! God is precise in the way He is accessed. Let's see what we can learn as we go along.