

**graceWORKS ! GOING DEEPER<sup>1</sup> 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)**

<sup>27</sup>To 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 7 Part 3<sup>2</sup>**



**Micah chapter 7 ends with an interesting statement that again, makes it into the telling of the Jesus story in Luke. It’s where Mary sings her “song of praise” in Elizabeth’s presence. She mentions a phrase that ends very similarly to the way this book ends, referencing God’s promise to Israel (or Jacob) and its father Abraham.**

**I’ve been struck by how the people of Christ must have really known this book, and looked for its promises to be fulfilled. I’m glad for the chance to know it as well! Enjoy!**

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## Micah 7 New International Version

### Israel's Misery

**7** What misery is mine!

I am like one who gathers summer fruit  
at the gleaning of the vineyard;

there is no cluster of grapes to eat,  
none of the early figs that I crave.

**2** The faithful have been swept from the land;  
not one upright person remains.

Everyone lies in wait to shed blood;  
they hunt each other with nets.

**Since the days of Cain, we've been in competition with our brothers and sisters for God's attention and "first place" love. That's all the more tragic when you realize that all have had it from the very beginning. We're all uniquely unique points of light in the life of God, and we fit together in a kaleidoscope of beauty in God's amalgamation of images known as His body.**

**But we tend to vie with our fellow humans sometimes rather than honor them or compliment them.**

**3** Both hands are skilled in doing evil;  
the ruler demands gifts,  
the judge accepts bribes,  
the powerful dictate what they desire—  
they all conspire together.

**4** The best of them is like a brier,  
the most upright worse than a thorn hedge.  
The day God visits you has come,

This reminded me of the story where Jesus looked for fruit from the fig tree on the way to the Temple on Passion Week, and cursed it because it wasn't there. It was symbolic of the Temple system being destroyed like John the Baptist said, "the ax was at the root of the tree." (Luke 3:9) It's interesting to consider that Christ was the "the Root" of the Tree of Israel, just like He was the "Root of Jesse."

### Romans 15:12

And again, Isaiah says, "The **Root of Jesse** will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope." To me, this says that Jesus took the punishment of Israel completely upon Himself---and our punishment too!

Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. 10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; 11 there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. 12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one." 13 "Their throats are open graves; their tongues practice deceit." "The poison of vipers is on their lips." 14 "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." 15 "Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 ruin and misery mark their ways, 17 and the way of peace they do not know." 18 "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Romans 3

the day your watchmen sound the alarm.

Now is the time of your confusion.

**I think this describes us all in our false selves.**

<sup>5</sup> Do not trust a neighbor;  
put no confidence in a friend.

Even with the woman who lies in your embrace  
guard the words of your lips.

<sup>6</sup> For a son dishonors his father,  
a daughter rises up against her mother,  
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—  
a man's enemies are the members of his own household.

<sup>7</sup> But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD,  
I wait for God my Savior;  
my God will hear me.

**Israel Will Rise**

<sup>8</sup> Do not gloat over me, my enemy!  
Though I have fallen, I will rise.  
Though I sit in darkness,  
the LORD will be my light.

**I love this Scripture. Even when you are in darkness,  
the Lord will be my light. Praise be to God for that!**

<sup>9</sup> Because I have sinned against him,  
I will bear the LORD's wrath,  
until he pleads my case  
and upholds my cause.  
He will bring me out into the light;  
I will see his righteousness.

**What a promise of hope! We might have to bear His wrath, but the Lord is always merciful. He sometimes even will say "Enough!" and shorten the punishment, like He did for David when he was being punished for taking a census one time.**

**2 Samuel 24:16**

When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand."

These are the Scriptures we've focused on the last several studies. They made their way into the mouth of Jesus in describing the divisions in families that would take place over Him. Obviously, Jesus was very aware of this book. I would like to suggest so was His mother, Mary. In fact, I wonder if she taught Him Scriptures from infancy, like Lois and Eunice taught Timothy.

**2 Timothy 1:5**

I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother **Lois** and in your mother **Eunice** and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

**2 Timothy 3:15**

and how from infancy you have known the Holy **Scriptures**, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

<sup>10</sup> Then my enemy will see it  
and will be covered with shame,  
she who said to me,  
“Where is the LORD your God?”  
My eyes will see her downfall;  
even now she will be trampled underfoot  
like mire in the streets.

**I think the “she” here is the city of Judah!**

<sup>11</sup> The day for building your walls will come,  
the day for extending your boundaries.  
<sup>12</sup> In that day people will come to you  
from Assyria and the cities of Egypt,  
even from Egypt to the Euphrates  
and from sea to sea  
and from mountain to mountain.  
<sup>13</sup> The earth will become desolate because of its inhabitants,  
as the result of their deeds.

**Prayer and Praise**

<sup>14</sup> Shepherd your people with your staff,  
the flock of your inheritance,  
which lives by itself in a forest,  
in fertile pasturelands.  
Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead  
as in days long ago.  
<sup>15</sup> “As in the days when you came out of Egypt,  
I will show them my wonders.”  
<sup>16</sup> Nations will see and be ashamed,  
deprived of all their power.  
They will put their hands over their mouths  
and their ears will become deaf.

People, indeed, will come to the Lord from all nations after Christ has received the punishment of Israel fully for her! I still find this Scripture fascinating---the earth will become desolate because of her inhabitants, and as a result of her deeds. Does this Scripture refer to that?

**2 Peter 3**

<sup>10</sup> But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.<sup>11</sup> Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup> as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup> But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

**Our God is a consuming fire.  
(Hebrews 12:29, Deuteronomy 4:24)**

<sup>17</sup> They will lick dust like a snake,  
 like creatures that crawl on the ground.  
 They will come trembling out of their dens;  
 they will turn in fear to the LORD our God  
 and will be afraid of you.

**Wow. What goes around does indeed come around!**

<sup>18</sup> Who is a God like you,  
 who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
 of the remnant of his inheritance?  
 You do not stay angry forever  
 but delight to show mercy.  
<sup>19</sup> You will again have compassion on us;  
 you will tread our sins underfoot  
 and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Our enemies “slithering” like snakes makes me think of this prophecy in the Garden.

Genesis 3:15 New International Version

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.

15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers: he will crush your head,

**And will tread our sins underfoot too, because Satan is the “accuser” of the brethren. (Revelation 12:10)**

**What a comforting picture.**

Isaiah 38:17	Psalm 103:12
<p><sup>17</sup> Surely it was for my benefit that I suffered such anguish.            In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction;            you have put all my sins behind your back.</p>	<p><sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.</p>

**I’ll do a special focus on this Scripture next time. I will show how it parallels what Mary said in Luke. Then we’ll see how physical Israel is superseded by spiritual Israel.**

<sup>20</sup> You will be faithful to Jacob,  
 and show love to Abraham,  
 as you pledged on oath to our ancestors  
 in days long ago.