

**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)**

<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

**graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER**  
**Ezekiel 13 Part 3<sup>2</sup>**

So today we’ll see zone in on a Christ discovery I feel I’ve made. I believe the next three chapters have word pictures where Christ quite possibly got his “source” material for some of his brilliant alliterations. It’s fascinating to read the whole bible again, line by line, and sink in God’s words with greater depth and intensity at this phase of my life.

**Enjoy!**

<sup>1</sup> NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR UPLOADED TO WEB WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION OF AUTHOR.

<sup>2</sup> 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 13 New International Version (NIV)

Before I procede, just a couple of “wrap up” Scriptures on the Book of Life topic. The several passages I read in the NIV study notes on this topic said that forgiveness is pictured by the blotting out of sins. Two Scriptures were cited frequently, so I feel called to share them in the table below.

Jeremiah 18:23	Isaiah 43:25
23 But you, Lord, know all their plots to kill me. Do not forgive their crimes <b>or blot out their sins</b> from your sight. Let them be overthrown before you; deal with them in the time of your anger.	25 “I, even I, am <b>he who blots out your transgressions</b> <sup>3</sup> , for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.

It’s fascinating to me to picture this “scroll” that God keeps, writes things in, blots out and calls the “Book of life.” In Daniel 7 it pictures God at His throne, and it says this:



*A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and **the books were opened.***

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**Wow. Can’t wait to see that, and see God’s “library.”**

**Back to Ezekiel 13.**

10 “Because they lead my people astray, saying, “Peace,” when there is no peace, and because, when a flimsy wall is built, they cover it with whitewash,

**Note: First, let me comment on the “peace” aspect. Telling people simply what they want to hear is not God’s approach. There is a time to do that, when it’s time to comfort. But to lie, and say that a flimsy approach to life “covered” with whitewash will give you peace, does not please the Lord.**

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<sup>3</sup>One source says: to sin is to break a law of God, but to transgress may mean to go beyond a limit. I think sin is something that misses the mark of God’s life, but transgressions side steps a rule or limit that has been made known.

**And now let me comment on the topic of “whitewashed” walls. I’m intrigued with that because Jesus used that concept in describing the Pharisees and Paul called the High Priest Annanias that to his face.**

**Matthew 23:27**

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like **whitewashed** tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.

**Acts 23:3**

Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you **whitewashed** wall! You sit there to judge me according to the law, yet you yourself violate the law by commanding that I be struck!”

**I personally think that Jesus got the alliteration from this chapter. Look at the next verse, and see how it compares to another powerful analogy Jesus made in His speaking.**

11 therefore tell those who cover it with whitewash that it is going to fall. Rain will come in torrents, and I will send hailstones hurtling down, and violent winds will burst forth. 12 When the wall collapses, will people not ask you, “Where is the whitewash you covered it with?”

13 “Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: In my wrath I will unleash a violent **wind**, and in my anger hailstones and torrents of **rain** will fall with destructive fury. 14 I will tear down the wall you have covered with whitewash and **will** level it to the ground so that its foundation will be laid bare. When it[b] falls, you will be destroyed in it; and you will know that I am the Lord. 15 So I will pour out my wrath against the wall and against those who covered it with whitewash. I will say to you, “The wall is gone and so are those who whitewashed it, 16 those prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem and saw visions of peace for her when there was no peace, declares the Sovereign Lord.”

**Ok. So look at this powerful story that Jesus told in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7.**

24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The **rain** came down, the streams rose, and the **winds** blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a **great crash.**”

**But as you’ll see as we go on, God’s discipline (or even punishment) is restorative, not mainly retributive. He made us to share His life, and to be forgiven!**

## Ephesians 1:4 New International Version (NIV)

4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

**Let's continue. He's now going after women who prophesy. And note this, for all those who think the Bible is a patriarchal nightmare. There are women here who are "prophesying." Their sin is not the fact that they are prophesying. The apostle Paul made it abundantly clear that a woman might prophesy, and Huldah was a prophetess in ancient Israel.**

<b>1 Corinthians 11</b>	<b>Exodus 5</b>	<b>2 Kings 22:14</b>
5 But every woman who <b>prays or prophesies</b> with her head uncovered dishonors her head—it is the same as having her head shaved.	Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing.	Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan and Asaiah went to speak to the prophet <b>Huldah</b> , who was the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the New Quarter.

**So it wasn't wrong for them to prophesy. But it was wrong for them to do so out of their own imagination. Prophecy simply meant in Hebrew "to speak by inspiration." So it doesn't mean just telling the future.**

17 "Now, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people who prophesy out of their own imagination.

**Note: Hebrew, out of their own heart.**

Prophesy against them 18 and say, "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the women who sew magic charms on all their wrists and make veils of various lengths for their heads in order to ensnare people.

**Exactly what they were doing is not known. The NIV says the bible does not give explicit details about occult practices, probably to prevent repetition.**

Will you ensnare the lives of my people but preserve your own? 19 You have profaned me among my people for a few handfuls of barley and scraps of bread.

**Note: Involvement in religious matters for sheer gain is roundly condemned in the Bible.**

<b>Jer 6:13</b>	<b>Micah 3:5</b>	<b>Micah 3:11</b>	<b>Acts 8:18-22</b>	<b>2 Cor 2:17</b>	<b>Titus 1:11</b>
“From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit.	This is what the LORD says: “As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim ‘peace’ if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them.	Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they look for the LORD’s support and say, “Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us.”	<sup>18</sup> When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money . . . <sup>20</sup> Peter answered: “May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! . . .your heart is not right before God. <sup>22</sup> Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. <sup>23</sup> For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.”	<sup>17</sup> Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.	<sup>11</sup> They must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—and that for the sake of dishonest gain.

By lying to my people, who listen to lies, you have killed those who should not have died and have spared those who should not live. 20 “Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am against your magic charms with which you ensnare people like birds and I will tear them from your arms; I will set free the people that you ensnare like birds. 21 I will tear off your veils and save my people from your hands, and they will no longer fall prey to your power. Then you will know that I am the Lord. 22 Because you disheartened the righteous with your lies, when I had brought them no grief, and because you encouraged the wicked not to turn from their evil ways and so save their lives, 23 therefore you will no longer see false visions or practice divination (interpret by magical scroll is one source word for this). I will save my people from your hands. And then you will know that I am the Lord.”

**Again, the purpose: So you will know. I am the Lord!**

Footnotes:

a.Ezekiel 13:3 Or wicked

b.Ezekiel 13:14 Or the city