

**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 17 Part 2<sup>2</sup>**

I wanted to save the last bit of this chapter because Ezekiel starts pointing people toward Jesus! This prophecy of the Lord in this next session is beautiful allegorized, and I wanted to savor it with you.

The Old Testament is full of shadows that are eventually fulfilled in our reality, Jesus Christ. Let’s begin to explore this one, and see what else surfaces in Ezekiel’s work. **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 17 New International Version (NIV)

**I want to back up just a smidge and comment a bit more on the wrap up of the first section.**

<sup>19</sup>“Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

**Note: Something stands out here to me. God calls himself “Sovereign Lord.” The word “sovereign” means<sup>3</sup>:**

### ADJECTIVE

- possessing supreme or ultimate power.  
"in modern democracies the people's will is in theory sovereign"  
*synonyms:*  
**supreme · absolute · unlimited · unrestricted · unrestrained · unbounded ·**

**The Literal Hebrew simply says “Adonai Yahweh.”**

As surely as I live, I will repay him for despising my oath and breaking my covenant.

**It’s interesting that the Lord speaks of the king as “despising My oath” and “breaking My covenant.” God saw the King’s oath as “His.” The NIV study bible says He would have taken some kind of “self-maledictory” oath using the Lord’s name (the example given: “May the Lord slay me if I do not remain true to this treaty.”) These kinds of various covenant signs, which are “visible seals and reminders” of covenant commitments are exemplified in the book of Genesis in the table below.**

<b>Genesis 9:13</b>	<b>Genesis 15:17</b>	<b>Genesis 17:10</b>
<sup>13</sup> I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>4</sup>	<sup>17</sup> When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. <sup>5</sup>	<sup>10</sup> This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised.

**At any rate, God apparently took the king’s word to stay loyal to Babylon more than he did. And was going to punish him for it. It’s apparently important to God for us to keep our word too.**

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<sup>3</sup>

<https://www.bing.com/search?q=sovereign+definition&cvid=b599412b02924d7a8c83f14549e97a63&pglt=43&FORM=ANSPA1&PC=U531>

<sup>4</sup> This is a cool observation from the NIV study bible: “The rainbow probably represents the bow from which God shoots the arrows of His lightning bolts toward the earth. But after a rainstorm God’s bow is aimed away from the earth.” Hence the rainbow became a sign of the God’s covenant commitment to not destroy the earth.

<sup>5</sup> The NIV study note says God ministered to Abraham’s need for assurance by taking the kind of oath ancient parties used to sometimes solemnize their covenants. They would slaughter animals, make a gauntlet of their divided body parts, and say something like “May it be done so to me if I do not keep my pledge.” To think God, who could not die, would do that for a man to reassure Him!

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## 2 Kings 25:5-7 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup> but the Babylonian army pursued the king and overtook him in the plains of Jericho. All his soldiers were separated from him and scattered, <sup>6</sup> and he was captured.

He was taken to the king of Babylon at Riblah, where sentence was pronounced on him. <sup>7</sup> They killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes. Then they put out his eyes, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon.

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<sup>20</sup> I will spread my net for him, and he will be caught in my snare. I will bring him to Babylon and execute judgment on him there because he was unfaithful to me. <sup>21</sup> All his choice troops will fall by the sword, and the survivors will be scattered to the winds. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken.

**And as we saw yesterday, that's exactly what happened. See the sidebar for details.**

**Now, for a beautiful Messianic prophecy, which was "totally unexpected" according to the NIV study bible in this passage.**

<sup>22</sup> "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will take a shoot from the very top of a cedar and plant it;

**I'll use the NIV study bible notes a lot for this commentary. "The shoot" apparently represents a member of David's family.**

Isaiah 11:1	Zechariah 3:8	Zechariah 6:12
A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.	<sup>8</sup> "Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.	<sup>12</sup> Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.

**Notice the repeat of the word "Branch." I did not know this, or at least, it never registered that this prophecy in Matthew 2:23 may be related to this. First read it, and then I'll explain.**

<sup>23</sup> and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

**The word "Nazarene" most likely means from the town of Nazareth. But Matthew, NIV says, may be alluding to the Hebrew word "neser" which means "Branch" in "Targums," which are translations from Hebrew into Aramaic of OT books, and in the Dead Sea scrolls. The word was believed to refer to the Messiah.**

**So, roots, shoots and branches---God is the root of Israel, and of us all! Even when we're dead stumps, he can make life come out of us. Out of the blue, in this beautiful passage of Scripture, God is promising His Messiah in this beautiful terminology.**

I will break off a tender sprig from its topmost shoots and plant it on a high and lofty mountain.  
<sup>23</sup> On the mountain heights of Israel I will plant it; it will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar. Birds of every kind will nest in it; they will find shelter in the shade of its branches. <sup>24</sup> All the trees of the forest will know that I the LORD bring down the tall tree and make the low tree grow tall. I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish.

“I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.”

**Wow! God resurrects life from the dead. He did so with Christ. He'll do with us. Praise God!**

New International Version (NIV)

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