

**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 18<sup>2</sup>**

**What does it mean to be a man?**

**In this chapter, it talks about two men who were young lions. And whose roars were silenced on the mountains of Israel.**

**What was a man meant to be? What is God’s goal for the true “Wildman” that is in everyone’s heart? Or maybe could be. Or should be.**

**And what kind of journeys do young lions often go through. I’m looking at this chapter from a bit of a different slant. Let’s see where it goes. 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 19 New International Version (NIV)

### A Lament Over Israel's Princes

19 “Take up a lament concerning the princes of Israel <sup>2</sup> and say:

**So what’s a lament, and does God use them elsewhere? Here’s what the trusty NIV Bible study notes say: A lament is “A chant usually composed for the funerals of fallen leaders, but often used sarcastically by the OT prophets to lament or to ironically predict the death of a nation.**

<b>Isaiah 14:4</b>	<b>Amos 5:1</b>
<sup>4</sup> you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon:	5 Hear this word, Israel, this lament I take up concerning you:  <sup>2</sup> “Fallen is Virgin Israel, never to rise again, deserted in her own land, with no one to lift her up.”  <sup>3</sup> This is what the Sovereign LORD says to Israel:  “Your city that marches out a thousand strong will have only a hundred left; your town that marches out a hundred strong will have only ten left.”

**The word for taunt is translated “proverb” in the literal translation.**

**The word for lament:**

**H7015** qiy nah kee-naw'

from **H6969**;

a dirge (as accompanied by beating the breasts or on instruments).

**I know this is talking about the queen of Jerusalem and her two sons, one perhaps Jehoahaz and the other possibly Zedekiah (but possibly Jehoiachin)---parts of this lament seem applicable to both. I’ll put together a table below and discuss what we know briefly about all three, and allow the reader to determine who they think this might apply to.**

**I’ll also include some insights about mothers, manhood and kingship, that might have some modern day applications for men and mothers today.**

<b>Jehoahaz (2 Kings 24:8)</b>	<b>Jehoiachin (2 Kings 24)</b>	<b>Zedekiah (2 Kings 24, 25)</b>
<p><sup>31</sup> Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. <b>His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah</b>; she was from Libnah. <sup>32</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his predecessors had done. <sup>33</sup> Pharaoh Necho put him in chains at Riblah in the land of Hamath so that he might not reign in Jerusalem, and he imposed on Judah a levy of a hundred talents<sup>[a]</sup> of silver and a talent<sup>[b]</sup> of gold. <sup>34</sup> Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim son of Josiah king in place of his father Josiah and changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. But he took Jehoahaz and carried him off to Egypt, and there he died.</p>	<p><sup>8</sup> Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. <b>His mother's name was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan</b>; she was from Jerusalem. <sup>9</sup> He did evil in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father had done.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> At that time the officers of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and laid siege to it, <sup>11</sup> and Nebuchadnezzar himself came up to the city while his officers were besieging it. <sup>12</sup> Jehoiachin king of Judah, his mother, his attendants, his nobles and his officials all surrendered to him.</p> <p>In the eighth year of the reign of the king of Babylon, he took Jehoiachin prisoner. <sup>14</sup> He carried all Jerusalem into exile: all the officers and fighting men, and all the skilled workers and artisans—a total of ten thousand. Only the poorest people of the land were left. . .</p> <p><sup>15</sup> Nebuchadnezzar took Jehoiachin captive to Babylon. He also took from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother, his wives, his officials and the prominent people of the land.</p>	<p><b>24:</b> <sup>18</sup> Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eleven years. <b>His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah</b>; she was from Libnah.</p> <p><b>25:</b> So in the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon marched against Jerusalem with his whole army. He encamped outside the city and built siege works all around it. 2 The city was kept under siege until the eleventh year of King Zedekiah. . . 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.</p>

**I vote for the lament being a bit of a prophecy too, and speaking of Jehoahaz and of Zedekiah, both of whom had the same mother. Look at this “mothers” childrearing approach.**

“What a lioness was your mother  
among the lions!  
She lay down among them  
and reared her cubs.

**An empowered, courageous woman. She was not meek and mild as a mouth. But a “power” woman---a lioness. Like many women today. And she had a certain approach to her sons development. She lay down “among the lions”---exposed them to brave and strong males, who in turn, inspired by her and perhaps by them, to be a “strong lion” of a man, like is described below. In the case of both Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, the name of the mother is listed when their names are introduced. This I think means she had a strong influence on her son, and his future. She raised her son to be a strong man. She raised them to be lions.**

**And the presence of young lions among the other lions of the lions of the “system” was not welcomed.**

<sup>3</sup> She brought up one of her cubs,  
and he became a strong lion.  
He learned to tear the prey  
and he became a man-eater.

<sup>4</sup> The nations heard about him,  
and he was trapped in their pit.  
They led him with hooks  
to the land of Egypt.

**That did happen to Jehoahaz. That does happen to day. Out of envy, other established rulers always get “threatened” by the new cub on the block. And want to neutralize him.**

<sup>5</sup> “When she saw her hope unfulfilled,  
her expectation gone,  
she took another of her cubs  
and made him a strong lion.

**Zedekiah.**

<sup>6</sup> He prowled among the lions,  
for he was now a strong lion.  
He learned to tear the prey  
and he became a man-eater.

<sup>7</sup> He broke down<sup>[a]</sup> their strongholds  
and devastated their towns.

The land and all who were in it  
were terrified by his roaring.  
<sup>8</sup> **Then the nations came against him,**  
those from regions round about.  
They spread their net for him,  
and he was trapped in their pit.  
<sup>9</sup> With hooks they pulled him into a cage  
and brought him to the king of Babylon.  
They put him in prison,  
so his roar was heard no longer  
on the mountains of Israel.

**We were created to be rulers---to kings and priests! This world resents that. It attempts to neutralize us---I may suggest, neuter-ize real masculine manhood. They attempt to tame the Wildman out of us.**

**Mothers have a profound role in the future leadership that can be exercised by a son.**

<sup>10</sup> “Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard<sup>[b]</sup>  
planted by the water;  
it was fruitful and full of branches  
because of abundant water.  
<sup>11</sup> Its branches were strong,  
fit for a ruler’s scepter.

**Perhaps meaning (at least to me) that she raised “leaders” and “rulers” and provided scepters!**

It towered high  
above the thick foliage,  
conspicuous for its height  
and for its many branches.  
<sup>12</sup> But it was uprooted in fury  
and thrown to the ground.  
The east wind made it shrivel,  
it was stripped of its fruit;  
its strong branches withered  
and fire consumed them.  
<sup>13</sup> Now it is planted in the desert,  
in a dry and thirsty land.  
<sup>14</sup> Fire spread from one of its main<sup>[c]</sup> branches  
and consumed its fruit.  
No strong branch is left on it  
fit for a ruler’s scepter.’

“This is a lament and is to be used as a lament.”

**So we’re talking about two kings of Israel---but I can’t help but wonder if we’re talking about the men of today. Mothers may raise them to be powerful men, but this society sure doesn’t support that! The rulers of this age want to neutralize the “Wildman” in males. Don’t get me wrong. The lion must learn to be gentle. He must learn to protect sheep rather than devour them!**

### Isaiah 11:6 New International Version (NIV)

<sup>6</sup>The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling<sup>[a]</sup> together;  
and a little child will lead them.



**Men must learn to tame their wildness and protect and lead (not devour and dominate). But that being said---does God really want lionhearted men out there willing to be his true sons, take on this world and conquer for His kingdom?**

**I believe He does! And I want to be a part of helping make that happen! Like the lament ends---this deplorable state of affairs needs to be lamented. And healed.**

**Here’s one Lion we can all count on.**

#### **Revelation 5:5**

Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the **Lion** of the **tribe** of **Judah**, the Root of David, has triumphed.

**He has triumphed. And He’s a Lion who is Good Shepherd too!**

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#### *Footnotes:*

1. **Ezekiel 19:7** Targum (see Septuagint); Hebrew *He knew*
2. **Ezekiel 19:10** Two Hebrew manuscripts; most Hebrew manuscripts *your blood*
3. **Ezekiel 19:14** Or *from under its*