

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)

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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Ezekiel 23²

Sex---the Bible is very open about it, even in using it metaphorically. In this chapter, God describes His two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, as two women. They grew up in Egypt, and were sexually active apparently as young girls. And “embedded” promiscuous sexuality haunted them all their lives. Of course, it’s all a metaphor for Israel and Judah “cheating” on their Husband, God. But it has interesting allusions to healthy and unhealthy sexuality. I’m going to pursue that angle, and see where it goes. PG-13, at the very least!

¹ NOT TO BE REPRODUCED OR UPLOADED TO WEB WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION OF AUTHOR.

² 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 23 New International Version (NIV)

Two Adulterous Sisters

23 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, there were two women, daughters of the same mother. ³They became prostitutes in Egypt, engaging in prostitution from their youth. In that land their breasts were fondled and their virgin bosoms caressed.

Ok, let's jump right in boys! Imagine what it would be like teaching this chapter to teenage boys! But since I doubt any teenage boys will be reading this, let's get into it.

The more little Hebrew says this:

(CLV) Ezk 23:3

and they committed ^lprostitution in Egypt; in their youth they committed prostitution. There ^d their breasts were squashed, and there the nipples of their virginity were ^dhandled.

The CSB translation is even more graphic.

3 who acted like prostitutes in Egypt, behaving promiscuously in their youth. Their breasts were fondled there, and their virgin nipples caressed.

God is not afraid to mention “sexuality” to His people. There are beautiful ways of describing it, and not so beautiful. But God uses these analogies. In fact, it's interesting to me that God gets around to speaking about sexual intercourse in the very first chapter of Genesis.

Genesis 2:24 Young's Literal Translation (YLT)

²⁴ therefore doth a man leave his father and his mother, and hath cleaved unto his wife, and they have become one flesh.

(CLV) Gn 2:24

Therefore a man shall forsake [»]his father and [»]his mother; ⁺ he will cling ^lto his wife, and ⁷both of them ^{nc} will ^bbe [»]one flesh.

The word for “cling” is:

H1692 dabaq daw-bak'

a primitive root;

properly, to impinge, i.e. cling or adhere; figuratively, to catch by pursuit.

Men sometimes do have to chase their wives! ☺ And on good days, wives let them catch them! ☺

This is not just some spiritual metaphor. It really does mean what we call sex.

When God thinks of sex as He created, He doesn't think of some crude description that people say all the time "F....you."

To Him, it's more like "one flesh you."

"Become one."

Wouldn't that be an easier way to teach kids "the birds and the bees."

Doesn't seem as scary, does it?

It has spiritual implications. Note this reading of it by the Apostle Paul.

1 Corinthians 6:16-17 Young's Literal Translation (YLT)

¹⁶ have ye not known that he who is joined to the harlot is one body? `for they shall be -- saith He -- the two for one flesh.'

¹⁷ And he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit;

Notice how this breaks down.

he who is joined to the harlot	one body
the two	one flesh
he who is joined to the Lord	one spirit

"He who is joined to the harlot" equals "the two" equals "he who is joined to the Lord."

"One body" equals "one flesh" equals "one spirit."

The Greek words are interesting too.

"joined"	"body"	"flesh"
G2853 kollao kol-lah'-o from kolla ("glue"); to glue, i.e. (passively or reflexively) to stick (figuratively).	G4983 soma so'-mah from G4982 ; the body (as a sound whole), used in a very wide application, literally or figuratively.	G4561 sarx sarx probably from the base of G4563 ; flesh (as stripped of the skin), i.e. (strictly) the meat of an animal (as food)

Sexual union even represents being one with the Lord. So there's obviously nothing wrong with beautiful, created, holy sexuality. But there is something wrong with the wrong use of sexuality.

Let's start the chapter again and read it in this backdrop.

23 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, there were two women, daughters of the same mother. ³They became prostitutes in Egypt, engaging in prostitution from their youth. In that land their breasts were fondled and their virgin bosoms caressed.

So it's not the “what” that is wrong---the sexual actions. But the “how.” Engaging in prostitution. Specifically, “in their youth” they committed this prostitution.

Lesson 1: Youth is not a time for learning sexuality. Chances are, you're going to learn it the wrong way---and develop more “lust” than desire! There is a timing for sex and sexuality.

Song of Songs 2:7

Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or **awaken love** until it so desires.

Song of Songs 3:5

Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you by the gazelles and by the does of the field: Do not arouse or **awaken love** until it so desires.

Song of Songs 8:4

Daughters of Jerusalem, I charge you: Do not arouse or **awaken love** until it so desires.

Let's continue. So Israel started off on the wrong sexual foot. What happened next?

⁴The older was named Oholah, and her sister was Oholibah. They were mine and gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah is Samaria, and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

Ok. So here is an interesting factoid.

Oholah	Oholibah
Means “her tent” and probably refers to the fact that Samaria had her own unauthorized sanctuary	Means “My Tent is in her” referring to the fact that in Judah God had set up the temple of the Lord

⁵“Oholah engaged in prostitution while she was still mine; and she lusted after her lovers, the Assyrians—warriors

The word for lust in Hebrew is very similar to the word in Greek, which basically connotes the sense of “heavy breathing” with desire.

H5689 `agab aw-gab'

a primitive root;

to breathe after, i.e. to love (sensually).

⁶ clothed in blue, governors and commanders, all of them handsome young men, and mounted horsemen. ⁷ She gave herself as a prostitute to all the elite of the Assyrians and defiled herself with all the idols of everyone she lusted after. ⁸ She did not give up the prostitution she began in Egypt, when during her youth men slept with her, caressed her virgin bosom and poured out their lust on her.

Interestingly, what you begin in your adolescence apparently often follows you into adulthood. Notice the difference between godly desire, and “pouring out lust” in sexual relationships. The literal Hebrew implies they “used” her rather than became “one flesh” with her. Wow. True sex is . . . dare I say it, Trinitarian! Becoming “one.” That ties into the Scripture in 1 Corinthians.

⁹ “Therefore I delivered her into the hands of her lovers, the Assyrians, for whom she **lusted**. ¹⁰ They stripped her naked, took away her sons and daughters and killed her with the sword. She became a byword among women, and punishment was inflicted on her.

Illegitimate sex ‘exposes’ the vulnerability of someone rather than enabling them to both “naked and without shame.” (Genesis 2, last verse)

¹¹ “Her sister Oholibah saw this, yet in her lust and prostitution she was more depraved than her sister. ¹² She too lusted after the Assyrians—governors and commanders, warriors in full dress, mounted horsemen, all handsome young men. ¹³ I saw that she too defiled herself; both of them went the same way.

¹⁴ “But she carried her prostitution still further. She saw men portrayed on a wall, figures of Chaldeans portrayed in red, ¹⁵ with belts around their waists and flowing turbans on their heads; all of them looked like Babylonian chariot officers, natives of Chaldea. ¹⁶ As soon as she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea. ¹⁷ Then the Babylonians came to her, to the bed of love, and in their lust they defiled her.

Wow. You can become one flesh, as a man and woman

2 Kings 5

Israel Looks to the Assyrians Rather than God

¹⁴ Then Menahem son of Gadi went from Tirzah up to Samaria. He attacked Shallum son of Jabesh in Samaria, assassinated him and succeeded him as king. . . ¹⁶ At that time Menahem, starting out from Tirzah, attacked Tiphseh and everyone in the city and its vicinity, because they refused to open their gates. He sacked Tiphseh and ripped open all the pregnant women.

Menahem King of Israel

¹⁷ In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria ten years. ¹⁸ He did evil in the eyes of the LORD. During his entire reign he did not turn away from the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit.

¹⁹ Then Pul king of Assyria invaded the land, and Menahem gave him a thousand talents of silver to gain his support and strengthen his own hold on the kingdom. ²⁰ Menahem exacted this money from Israel. Every wealthy person had to contribute fifty shekels of silver to be given to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria withdrew and stayed in the land no longer.

God calls relying on someone other than God “prostitution.”

should. Or defile someone in your lust.

After she had been defiled by them, she turned away from them in disgust.¹⁸ When she carried on her prostitution openly and exposed her naked body, I turned away from her in disgust, just as I had turned away from her sister.¹⁹ Yet she became more and more promiscuous as she recalled the days of her youth, when she was a prostitute in Egypt.²⁰ There she lusted after her lovers, whose genitals were like those of donkeys and whose emission was like that of horses.²¹ So you longed for the lewdness of your youth, when in Egypt your bosom was caressed and your young breasts fondled.

(CLV) Ezk 23:20

⁺ She | doted on concubinage with them, whose flesh was like the flesh of donkeys, and the effusion of horses was like their effusion.

It seems sex is to be enjoyed, but it was created for an exercise of spiritual and emotional and physical union, not just a pouring out of “lust” or self-oriented, greedy desire.

²² “Therefore, Oholibah, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will stir up your lovers against you, those you turned away from in disgust, and I will bring them against you from every side—²³ the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, the men of Pekod and Shoa and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, handsome young men, all of them governors and commanders, chariot officers and men of high rank, all mounted on horses.²⁴ They will come against you with weapons, chariots and wagons and with a throng of people; they will take up positions against you on every side with large and small shields and with helmets. I will turn you over to them for punishment, and they will punish you according to their standards.²⁵ I will direct my jealous anger against you, and they will deal with you in fury. They will cut off your noses and your ears, and those of you who are left will fall by the sword. They will take away your sons and daughters, and those of you who are left will be consumed by fire.²⁶ They will also strip you of your clothes and take your fine jewelry.²⁷ So I will put a stop to the lewdness and prostitution you began in Egypt. You will not look on these things with longing or remember Egypt anymore.

It seems like people have to grow out of immature sexuality they learn in their adolescence. We need to figure out better ways to help our youth in our society, because we’ve validated lust and promiscuity.

²⁸ “For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am about to deliver you into the hands of those you hate, to those you turned away from in disgust.²⁹ They will deal with you in hatred and take away everything you have worked for. They will leave you stark naked, and the shame of your prostitution will be exposed. Your lewdness and promiscuity³⁰ have brought this on you, because you lusted after the nations and defiled yourself with their idols.³¹ You have gone the way of your sister; so I will put her cup into your hand.

³² “This is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“You will drink your sister’s cup,
a cup large and deep;
it will bring scorn and derision,

for it holds so much.

³³ You will be filled with drunkenness and sorrow,
the cup of ruin and desolation,
the cup of your sister Samaria.

³⁴ You will drink it and drain it dry
and chew on its pieces—
and you will tear your breasts.

I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD.

³⁵ “Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Since you have forgotten me and turned your back on me, you must bear the consequences of your lewdness and prostitution.”

³⁶ The LORD said to me: “Son of man, will you judge Oholah and Oholibah? Then confront them with their detestable practices, ³⁷ for they have committed adultery and blood is on their hands. They committed adultery with their idols; they even sacrificed their children, whom they bore to me, as food for them. ³⁸ They have also done this to me: At that same time they defiled my sanctuary and desecrated my Sabbaths. ³⁹ On the very day they sacrificed their children to their idols, they entered my sanctuary and desecrated it. That is what they did in my house.

When we lose the sense of holiness, everything becomes animalistic and desecrated.

⁴⁰ “They even sent messengers for men who came from far away, and when they arrived you bathed yourself for them, applied eye makeup and put on your jewelry. ⁴¹ You sat on an elegant couch, with a table spread before it on which you had placed the incense and olive oil that belonged to me.

⁴² “The noise of a carefree crowd was around her; drunkards were brought from the desert along with men from the rabble,

The Hebrew word for “rabble” is “multitude.” Perhaps just people from “the crowd.”

and they put bracelets on the wrists of the woman and her sister and beautiful crowns on their heads. ⁴³ Then I said about the one worn out by adultery, ‘Now let them use her as a prostitute, for that is all she is.’ ⁴⁴ And they slept with her. As men sleep with a prostitute, so they slept with those lewd women, Oholah and Oholibah.

Just for their own use and pour out their desire for greedy pleasure.

⁴⁵ But righteous judges will sentence them to the punishment of women who commit adultery and shed blood, because they are adulterous and blood is on their hands.

⁴⁶ “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Bring a mob against them and give them over to terror and plunder. ⁴⁷ The mob will stone them and cut them down with their swords; they will kill their sons and daughters and burn down their houses.

⁴⁸ “So I will put an end to lewdness in the land, that all women may take warning and not imitate you. ⁴⁹ You will suffer the penalty for your lewdness and bear the consequences of your sins of idolatry. Then you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD.”

I’m not wanting to wander into waters too deep here, but there is holy sexuality and depraved sexuality. The former produces holiness, and pictures our relationship with God. The latter, depravity and greed.

Ephesians 5:2-5 New International Version (NIV)

² and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.^[a]

Footnotes:

1. **Ephesians 5:5** Or *kingdom of the Messiah and God*

See how what’s called sexual immorality is associated with “greed”? Interesting.