

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

**graceWORKS! GOING DEEPER
Ezekiel 24 Part 4²**

Being a servant of God often includes a lot of sadness and drama in your life. In this particular case, the prophet will lose his wife---and can’t mourn her. Interesting statements are made in this section, and what a wife is to a man is described in touching detail. Also, the power of grief, and the sadness of unexpressed grief, is also alluded to. Let’s see what we can learn from the word of God.

Enjoy!

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 24:15-27 New International Version (NIV)

Ezekiel's Wife Dies

NIV study bible says this: “Following the series of messages concerning God’s judgment on Judah, Ezekiel’s action upon the death of his wife serves to symbolize how the exiles would react to the fall of Jerusalem.

My comment: The life of a servant of God is hard. Ezekiel is going to be asked to not grieve for his wife too much, to make a statement to the people about what will be happening to them when they lose the “delight of their eyes” (which is how Ezekiel’s wife is referred to in this prophecy)---their temple.

Servants of God do pay a bit of a price for being in the “fish bowl,” as it were. And so do their families. Let’s follow the story.

¹⁵ The word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁶ “Son of man, with one blow I am about to take away from you the delight of your eyes. Yet do not lament or weep or shed any tears.

God takes ownership of this action. He says “with one blow I am about to” cause you to lose your wife. NIV says the word “blow” speaks to “Some swiftly fatal disease, one that often reached plague proportions.” The Hebrew word used is:

H4046 maggephah mag-gay-faw'

a pestilence; by analogy, defeat.

The NIV gives the following Scriptural references:

Exodus 9:14	Numbers 14:37
¹⁴ or this time I will send the full force of my plagues (maggephah) against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth.	³⁷ these men who were responsible for spreading the bad report about the land were struck down and died of a plague (maggephah) before the LORD.

So God takes ownership of this death. That had to be hard for Ezekiel! He truly had to live the Scripture in the following text box out (entitled “Cost of Being a Disciple” in the NIV:

25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: ²⁶ “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. **Luke 14**

¹⁷ Groan quietly; do not mourn for the dead. Keep your turban fastened and your sandals on your feet; do not cover your mustache and beard or eat the customary food of mourners.”

“Groan quietly.” Wow. We’ll see later that not being able to lament does have a cost.

But let’s look at some of the customary grieving practices mentioned her.

Turban Removal	Removal of Sandals	Facial Hair protocols	Mourners food
<p>⁶ Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell facedown to the ground before the ark of the LORD, remaining there till evening. The elders of Israel did the same, and sprinkled dust on their heads. Jos 7:6</p> <p>You had to remove your head covering to sprinkle dust on your heads.</p> <p>¹² That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head. 1 Samuel 4:12</p>	<p>³⁰ But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went; his head was covered and he was barefoot. All the people with him covered their heads too and were weeping as they went up.</p> <p>⁸ Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. Micah 1:8</p>	<p>⁷ The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God.” Micah 3:7</p> <p>This apparently a gesture of disgrace.</p>	<p>⁷ No one will offer food to comfort those who mourn for the dead—not even for a father or a mother—nor will anyone give them a drink to console them.</p>

¹⁸ So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did as I had been commanded.

¹⁹ Then the people asked me, “Won’t you tell us what these things have to do with us? Why are you acting like this?”

This is interesting. His wife died the day the Temple was burned! It was August 14, 586 B.C. according to the NIV study notes! That’s fascinating. What a time to lose a loved one!

²⁰ So I said to them, “The word of the LORD came to me: ²¹ Say to the people of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am about to desecrate my sanctuary—the stronghold in which you take pride, the delight of your eyes, the object of your affection.

I think it is poetic that the sanctuary was described this way. I think it's even more beautiful that for a man, his wife is described as "The delight of your eyes, the object of your affection."

Here's a Scripture that refers to Samson's choice of a woman.

Judges 14:3 New International Version (NIV)

³ His father and mother replied, "Isn't there an acceptable woman among your relatives or among all our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to get a wife?"

But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me. She's the right one for me."

Literally: "She is right *in my eyes*."

The Temple was their pride, the delight of their eyes, the object of their affection.

The sons and daughters you left behind will fall by the sword. ²² And you will do as I have done. You will not cover your mustache and beard or eat the customary food of mourners. ²³ You will keep your turbans on your heads and your sandals on your feet. You will not mourn or weep but will waste away because of ^{a1} your sins and groan among yourselves.

Now here is something I think that is telling. "You will not mourn or weep but will waste away in your sins."

The Literal translation is "You will be putrified in your depravities."

They say unmourned griefs are hard on you. They "eat away" at you.

²⁴ Ezekiel will be a sign to you; you will do just as he has done. When this happens, you will know that I am the Sovereign LORD.'

²⁵ "And you, son of man, on the day I take away their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes, their heart's desire, and their sons and daughters as well— ²⁶ on that day a fugitive will come to tell you the news. ²⁷ At that time your mouth will be opened; you will speak with him and will no longer be silent. So you will be a sign to them, and they will know that I am the LORD."

See how else the "wife" is alluded to poetically:

their stronghold, their joy and glory, the delight of their eyes, their heart's desire,

Fascinating. Appreciate each other while you have each other.

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 24:23** Or *away in*