

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*

**ChristIN
YouSeries**

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 25 Part 1²**

God is well, God! He has the right to say what is right and what is wrong. It might not line up with what we’d like right and wrong to be, but He is Sovereign. It’s His call.

Today we’ll notice something fascinating. God may punish His people. But you’d better not mess with His people by rejoicing in their punishment. The discipline might just come to you! Learn from this . . .and enjoy!

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

² New International Version (NIV)

Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

(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 25 New International Version (NIV)

A Prophecy Against Ammon

25 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites and prophesy against them.

It’s interesting to note that while “judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17) the nations don’t escape God’s judgment. We see judgment often negatively, perhaps because discipline is involved. But God sees judgment constructively, as a purging of what hurts. Let me quote all of 1 Peter 4:17:

1 Peter 4:17-18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin with God’s household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? ¹⁸ And,

“If it is hard for the righteous to be saved,
what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?”

This Scripture stems from this Scripture in Proverbs.

Proverbs 11:31 New International Version (NIV)

³¹ If the righteous receive their due on earth,
how much more the ungodly and the sinner!

The NIV note says “even Moses and David were punished for their sins.

Numbers 20:11-12	2 Samuel 12:10
<p>¹¹ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.</p> <p>¹² But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.”</p>	<p>¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.’</p> <p>Note: I think it’s interesting that God said “you despised me” and did this wrong thing. The word means “disesteem,” not valuing.</p> <p>David did say in his repentance prayer, “against you, you only have I sinned” Ps 51:4. All sin is against God!</p>

Now not only God’s people receive judgment, but the ungodly too. The NIV lists these Scriptures in Psalms for consideration.

Proverbs 1:18,31	Ps 11:6	Ps 73:18-19
<p>18 These men lie in wait for their own blood; they ambush only themselves!</p> <p>31 they will eat the fruit of their ways and be filled with the fruit of their schemes.</p>	<p>6 On the wicked he will rain fiery coals and burning sulfur; a scorching wind will be their lot.</p>	<p>18 Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin.</p> <p>19 How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors!</p>

The first one now being judged is Ammon. Ammon was immediately east of Israel and part of what is now modern Jordan. Here is some background history on them.³

Question: "Who were the Ammonites?"

Answer: Throughout the early history of Israel, we find references to the Ammonite people. Who were they, where did they come from, and what happened to them? The Ammonites were a Semitic people, closely related to the Israelites. Despite that relationship, they were more often counted enemies than friends.

Lot, Abraham’s nephew, was the progenitor of the Ammonites. After Abraham and Lot separated (**Genesis 13**), Lot settled in the city of Sodom. When God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because of their wickedness, Lot and his daughters fled to the hill country on the southern end of the Dead Sea. Probably thinking they were the only people left on the earth, Lot’s daughters got him drunk and had incestuous relations with him to produce children (**Genesis 19:37-38**). The older daughter had a son named Moab (“from father”), and the younger gave birth to Ben-Ammi (“son of my people”). The Ammonites, descendants of Ben-Ammi, were a nomadic people who lived in the territory of modern-day Jordan, and the name of the capital city, Amman, reflects the name of those ancient inhabitants.

In the time of Moses, the fertile plains of the Jordan River valley were occupied by the Amorites, Ammonites and Moabites. When Israel left Egypt, the Ammonites refused to assist them in any way,

Genesis 19:37-38 New International Version (NIV)

³⁷ The older daughter had a son, and she named him Moab^[a]; he is the father of the Moabites of today.

³⁸ The younger daughter also had a son, and she named him Ben-Ammi^[b]; he is the father of the Ammonites^[c] of today.

Footnotes:

1. **Genesis 19:37** *Moab* sounds like the Hebrew for *from father*.
2. **Genesis 19:38** *Ben-Ammi* means *son of my father’s people*.
3. **Genesis 19:38** Hebrew *Bene-Ammon*

³ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Ammonites.html>

1 Kings 11:1-8

11 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter—Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2 They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been. 5 He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and **Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites.** 6 So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the LORD; he did not follow the LORD completely, as David his father had done.

7 On a hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molek the detestable god of the Ammonites. 8 He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

and God punished them for their lack of support (**Deuteronomy 23:3-4**).

³ No Ammonite or Moabite or any of their descendants may enter the assembly of the LORD, not even in the tenth generation. ⁴ For they did not come to meet you with bread and water on your way when you came out of Egypt, and they hired Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram Naharaim to pronounce a curse on you.

Later, however, as the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God instructed them, "When you approach the territory of the people of Ammon, do not harass them or contend with them, for I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession, because I have given it to the sons of Lot for a possession" (**Deuteronomy 2:19**). The Israelite tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half of Manasseh claimed the Amorite territory bordering that of the Ammonites.

The Ammonites were a pagan people who worshiped the gods Milcom and Molech. God commanded the Israelites not to marry these pagans, because intermarriage would lead the Israelites to worship false gods. Solomon disobeyed and married Naamah the Ammonite (**1 Kings 14:21**),

²¹ Rehoboam son of Solomon was king in Judah. He was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel in which to put his Name. His mother's name was Naamah; she was an Ammonite.

and, as God had warned, he was drawn into idolatry (**1 Kings 11:1-8**). (see sidebar)

Molech was a fire-god with the face of a calf; his images had arms outstretched to receive the babies who were sacrificed to him. Like their god, the Ammonites were cruel. When Nahash the Ammonite was asked for terms of a treaty (**1 Samuel 11:2**), he proposed gouging out the right eye of each Israelite man.

1 Samuel 11:2 New International Version (NIV)

² But Nahash the Ammonite replied, "I will make a treaty with you only on the condition that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you and so bring disgrace on all Israel."

Amos 1:13 says that the Ammonites would rip open pregnant women in the territories they conquered.

13 This is what the LORD says:

“For three sins of Ammon,
even for four, I will not relent.
Because he ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead
in order to extend his borders,

Under King Saul’s leadership, Israel defeated the Ammonites and made them vassals. David continued that sovereignty over Ammon and later besieged the capital city to solidify his control. After the split of Israel and Judah, the Ammonites began to ally themselves with the enemies of Israel. Ammon regained some sovereignty in the seventh century B.C., until Nebuchadnezzar conquered them about a hundred years later. Tobiah the Ammonite (**Nehemiah 2:19**) was possibly a governor of the region under Persian rule, but the inhabitants were a mix of Ammonites, Arabs, and others. By New Testament times, Jews had settled in the area, and it was known as **Perea**. The last mention of Ammonites as a separate people was in the second century by Justin Martyr, who said they were very numerous. Sometime during the Roman period, the Ammonites seem to have been absorbed into Arab society.

¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. “What is this you are doing?” they asked. “Are you rebelling against the king?”
Nehemiah 2:19

So here’s what God proclaimed against them.

³ Say to them, ‘Hear the word of the Sovereign LORD. This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because you said “Aha!” over my sanctuary when it was desecrated and over the land of Israel when it was laid waste and over the people of Judah when they went into exile, ⁴ therefore I am going to give you to the people of the East as a possession. They will set up their camps and pitch their tents among you; they will eat your fruit and drink your milk. ⁵ I will turn Rabbah into a pasture for camels and Ammon into a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I am the LORD. ⁶ For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because you have clapped your hands and stamped your feet, rejoicing with all the malice of your heart against the land of Israel, ⁷ therefore I will stretch out my hand against you and give you as plunder to the nations. I will wipe you out from among the nations and exterminate you from the countries. I will destroy you, and you will know that I am the LORD.’”

God may have been punishing Israel, but He was also going to punish those who rejoiced over their downfall.

The time had come for judgment against the House of God. And if those whom God considered the “righteous” were scarcely saved, look at what was about to happen to the ungodly and sinners!