

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

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Ezekiel 32 Part 1²

Egypt and Pharaoh get so much play in the Bible. Not as much as Israel. But a lot of chapters speak of this ancient nation. You see, God is involved in all the nations. He wants all to reach out for Him and find Him, although He’s not very far from all of us. Egypt had its day in the sun millennia ago---but a new day for them is coming. He says this in Isaiah 19:25: The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, “Blessed be **Egypt** my people, **Assyria** my handiwork, **and** Israel my inheritance.” **Whenever God does anything, even correct His people, it’s out of love. Let’s see what He says to Egypt, “his people”---in Christ today. Enjoy!**

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Ezekiel 32 New International Version (NIV)

A Lament Over Pharaoh

32 In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month on the first day, the word of the LORD came to me:
2 “Son of man, take up a lament concerning Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him:

A lament is a chat usually composed for a funeral or fallen leaders but is often used by prophets sarcastically to lament and predict the fall or death of a nation. Egypt had such splendor and grandeur. But she was going to fall.

“You are like a lion among the nations;
you are like a monster in the seas
thrashing about in your streams,
churning the water with your feet
and muddying the streams.

The NIV thought is that this “monster” is a crocodile. Maybe this is what Job is speaking of when he speaks of the “leviathan” (Job 41). Look at this verse, and NIV note about it below.

Psalm 74:13-14

13 It was you who split open the sea by your power; you broke the heads of the monster in the waters.

14 It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan and gave it as food to the creatures of the desert.

The NIV verse note says the imagery is borrowed from the Near Eastern creation myths, in which the primeval chaotic waters were depicted as many-headed monster that the creator god overcame, after which he established the created order. That’s fascinating to me, because immediately after the original creation, we read the earth was “void and without form, and darkness was over the face of the deep.” But God said “let there be light.” It’s also fascinating to me because when Israel escaped the land of “pleasures” and “treasures” (Egypt, Hebrews 11:25-26) they had to face the Red Sea (Exodus 14)---an impassable mass of chaos, that God once again got them through! God saves us from Chaos and Nothingness. God is a God of life, and of the resurrection of the dead! Also of note is that in Revelation 13 a monster having several heads (often translated dragon) is depicted.

(CLV) Re 13:1

And it was standing on the sand of the sea. And I perceived a wild beast ascending out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads, and on its ^{horns} ten diadems, and on its ^{heads} blasphemous names.

It’s also interesting to me that dragons look like dinosaurs. I just wonder if Satan had defiled the created order from the get-go, and God was transforming it as depicted in Genesis 1 and frankly the rest of the Bible! That makes sense of Genesis 3, when a “very good” creation (man) is immediately confronted by embedded rebellion in the “serpent” in the created order.

I also love the imagery of the monster thrashing about in the river and muddying the waters.

³“This is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“With a great throng of people
I will cast my net over you,
and they will haul you up in my net.

⁴I will throw you on the land
and hurl you on the open field.

I love the visual of that---ancient people working together with a net to capture a monster of some sort (or a crocodile in the Nile).

I will let all the birds of the sky settle on you
and all the animals of the wild gorge themselves on you.

⁵I will spread your flesh on the mountains
and fill the valleys with your remains.

⁶I will drench the land with your flowing blood
all the way to the mountains,
and the ravines will be filled with your flesh.

I know God hates bloodshed. When Cain killed Abel, God said to Cain “your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.” (Genesis 4:10)

Originally, God hadn’t even given mankind animals to eat---he’d only given them “every seed-bearing plant and every tree that has fruit in with seed in it.” (Genesis 1:28)

The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the **lion** will eat **straw** like the ox, and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain,” says the Lord.
Isaiah 65

See the verse in the Text Box. God does not like bloodshed. He doesn’t like it when we “harm” and “destroy.”

⁷When I snuff you out, I will cover the heavens
and darken their stars;

I will cover the sun with a cloud,
and the moon will not give its light.

⁸All the shining lights in the heavens
I will darken over you;
I will bring darkness over your land,

declares the Sovereign LORD.

The NIV study bible says this is a piling up of metaphors associated with the Day of the Lord.

Joel 2:2	2:10	2:31	3:15	Amos 5:18	Zep 1:15
a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times nor ever will be in ages to come.	Before them the earth shakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine.	Before them the earth shakes, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars no longer shine.	The sun and moon will be darkened, and the stars no longer shine.	Woe to you who long for the day of the LORD! Why do you long for the day of the LORD? That day will be darkness, not light.	That day will be a day of wrath— a day of distress and anguish, a day of trouble and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness—

These verses sound like the unraveling of creation. Just like the “flood” came when sin reigned. Sin produces death, destruction and chaos. Jesus said even the last days will be like this.

Matthew 24

²⁹ “Immediately after the distress of those days

“the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

But as in Genesis 1, God will always resurrect. God will always say “Let there be light.”

That’s the miracle of Easter. The Son always Rises.

Matthew 28 New International Version (NIV)

28 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.² There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.³ His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow.⁴ The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.⁵ The angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified.⁶ He is not here; he has risen, just as he said.