

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*



Christ IN You Series

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 33²

This is the “watchman” chapter. It’s about accountability before God. It’s about personal responsibility. We live and move and have our being in Christ, and we do share in what He’s doing. But our “doing” is important too. In this chapter, shows the personal responsibility and accountability of the person designated to “watch” and “warn,” and of the person receiving the warning. God actually uses the phrase “his blood will be on his own head.”

Do we have watchmen in our society? Pastors, prophets, scientists, leaders--- are they truly fulfilling their job to watch and warn. And are we heeding? 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 source for many of the study notes that accompany it, are taken from The NIV Study Bible, Copyright 1985,1995, 2002, 2008, 2011 . These notes re referenced throughout and paraphrased frequently in the notes.)

Ezekiel 33 New International Version (NIV)

The study Bible says chapters 33:1 – 37:28 are sermons and messages of comfort following the fall of Jerusalem, interspersed with words of warning and judgment.

Renewal of Ezekiel's Call as Watchman

33 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, speak to your people and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword against a land, and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, ³ and he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, ⁴ then if anyone hears the trumpet but does not heed the warning and the sword comes and takes their life, their blood will be on their own head. ⁵ Since they heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, their blood will be on their own head. If they had heeded the warning, they would have saved themselves. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes someone's life, that person's life will be taken because of their sin, but I will hold the watchman accountable for their blood.’

So there are several things to note here. The first is the LORD takes credit for bringing the sword against a land. It's not just “time” and “chance.” If God knows when a bird falls to the ground, He knows when warfare is imminent. God allows it. So God takes credit. God is in amazing control. See the text box.

⁷“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the people of Israel;

The word for watchman:

H6822 tsaphah tsaw-faw'

a primitive root;

properly, to lean forward, i.e. to peer into the distance; by implication, to observe, await.

This makes me think of the father in the prodigal son story. He knew he couldn't stop his son from leaving, and in fact he facilitated his leaving. But he was obviously watching, in the distance---a long way off---for his son to return.

so hear the word I speak and give them warning from me. ⁸ When I say to the wicked, ‘You wicked person, you will surely die,’ and you do not speak out to dissuade them from their ways, that wicked person will die for ^[a- or “in”] their sin, and I will hold you accountable for their blood. ⁹ But if you do warn the wicked person to turn from their ways and they do not do so, they will die for their sin, though you yourself will be saved.

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the **ground** outside your Father's care. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Matthew 10:29-30

while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him...

Luke 15

So here was this watchman’s role---“speak out” and “dissuade them from their ways.”

The word for speak out is cool, and takes the sense of “nagging” away from the concept of preaching.

H2094 zahar zaw-har'

a primitive root;

to gleam; figuratively, to enlighten (by caution).

KJV: admonish, shine, teach, (give) warn(-ing).

I like the concept of “gleaming” and “enlightening.” Puts a whole different spin on this concept, doesn’t it?

¹⁰“Son of man, say to the Israelites, ‘This is what you are saying: “Our offenses and sins weigh us down, and we are wasting away because of^[b-or “in”] them. How then can we live?’”

This is another concept of note. We are not just wasting away because of our sins. We are wasting away “in” them. Life is “ontological,” more a state of being in the Being of God and the being of the universe we have created. We don’t just commit a sin and have a legal penalty imposed because we’ve violated some stated, arbitrary rule. We run against the grain of “the life that is truly life” and “Reality”--Christ’s being, the blueprint and Template in which all things exist. And when we sin, we are “in” sin--in the “anti-Christ,” the “anti-Reality” we have created for ourselves.

... Reality. . . is found in Christ.
Colossians 2:17
...take hold of the life that is truly life.
1 Timothy 6:19
...not from God. . . the spirit of the
antichrist (antiReality) which you
have heard is coming and even now is
already in the world.
1 John 4:3

¹¹ Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, people of Israel?’

Sin is going against the grain of God’s life. Sin produces death.

¹²“Therefore, son of man, say to your people, ‘If someone who is righteous disobeys, that person’s former righteousness will count for nothing. And if someone who is wicked repents, that person’s former wickedness will not bring condemnation. The righteous person who sins will not be allowed to live even though they were formerly righteous.’ ¹³ If I tell a righteous person that they will surely live, but then they trust in their righteousness and do evil, none of the righteous things that person has done will be remembered; they will die for the evil they have done. ¹⁴ And if I say to a wicked person, ‘You will surely die,’ but they then turn away

²⁰ When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹ What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? **Those things result in death!**
Romans 6

from their sin and do what is just and right—¹⁵ if they give back what they took in pledge for a loan, return what they have stolen, follow the decrees that give life, and do no evil—that person will surely live; they will not die.¹⁶ None of the sins that person has committed will be remembered against them. They have done what is just and right; they will surely live.

This seems to tie in to what we're talking about here. Sin is a state of being that produces death. If you step out of these ways of being, death ensues. If you step into them, life follows. God is a "Being-in-Act" theologians say. His Being produces certain kinds of actions. And stepping out of God's Being, stepping out of Reality, stepping into Anti-Reality, anti-Christ---these things produce death. God's ways are so much more than just "arbitrary" laws He's chosen to produce life. They are the fruits of life and ways of life. God's life always gives life. And His life is best exhibited by the cross, where He is always giving His all for us to the point of self-depletion (death)---and yet always re-generates, always self-renews, always resurrects. Christ most glorified God in His death.

¹⁷ "Yet your people say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' But it is their way that is not just.¹⁸ If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and does evil, they will die for it.¹⁹ And if a wicked person turns away from their wickedness and does what is just and right, they will live by doing so.²⁰ Yet you Israelites say, 'The way of the Lord is not just.' But I will judge each of you according to your own ways."

We are interconnected. We are not stand-alone individuals. We all live in ConneXion. But as the Father is distinct from the Son is distinct from the Spirit, ad infinitum, we are distinct. So our choices of "way" still matter. And God discerns. God judges. He is the Judge of all the Earth. The word for "judge" has multiple meanings.

H8199 shaphat shaw-fat'

a primitive root;

to judge, i.e. pronounce sentence (for or against); by implication, to vindicate or punish; by extension, to govern; passively, to litigate (literally or figuratively).

It's time to wrap up, so I'll quickly survey this next section.

Jerusalem's Fall Explained

²¹ In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month on the fifth day, a man who had escaped from Jerusalem came to me and said, "The city has fallen!"²² Now the evening before the man

²³ Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. ²⁵ Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

John 12

³⁰ As soon as Judas had taken the bread, he went out. And it was night.³¹ When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him.³² If God is glorified in him,^[c] God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

John 13

arrived, the hand of the LORD was on me, and he opened my mouth before the man came to me in the morning. So my mouth was opened and I was no longer silent.

A muteness had been imposed on Ezekiel at the beginning of his ministry. It was now over. From my brief investigation, I'm guessing it lasted 12 years! Wow!

²³ Then the word of the LORD came to me: ²⁴ “Son of man, the people living in those ruins in the land of Israel are saying, ‘Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land. But we are many; surely the land has been given to us as our possession.’ ²⁵ Therefore say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Since you eat meat with the blood still in it and look to your idols and shed blood, should you then possess the land? ²⁶ You rely on your sword, you do detestable things, and each of you defiles his neighbor’s wife. Should you then possess the land?’

²⁶ I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent and unable to rebuke them, for they are a rebellious people.

Ezekiel 3:26

²⁷ “Say this to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: As surely as I live, those who are left in the ruins will fall by the sword, those out in the country I will give to the wild animals to be devoured, and those in strongholds and caves will die of a plague. ²⁸ I will make the land a desolate waste, and her proud strength will come to an end, and the mountains of Israel will become desolate so that no one will cross them. ²⁹ Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have made the land a desolate waste because of all the detestable things they have done.’

³⁰ “As for you, son of man, your people are talking together about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses, saying to each other, ‘Come and hear the message that has come from the LORD.’ ³¹ My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to hear your words, but they do not put them into practice. Their mouths speak of love, but their hearts are greedy for unjust gain. ³² Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.

³³ “When all this comes true—and it surely will—then they will know that a prophet has been among them.”

Wow. What an indictment. What an interesting time and life Ezekiel lived in and had. God is fascinating.

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 33:8** Or *in*; also in verse 9
2. **Ezekiel 33:10** Or *away in*