

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 34 Part 1²

So what are God’s shepherds supposed to do?

This is a classic Scripture sharing the role of a shepherd of the Sheep of God, His people. We are His flock, and the sheep of His pasture. He plainly says this in this chapter:

the Israelites, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. ³¹You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

All true “shepherds” are simply serving under the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. We’re always under His watchful care. 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 34 New International Version (NIV)

The LORD Will Be Israel's Shepherd (see Sidebar --- The Lord is our Shephard!)

34 The word of the LORD came to me: ²“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves!’

Shepherds are those responsible for providing leadership, especially the kings and their officials but also the prophets and priests.

Notice the role of true Shepherds.

Should not shepherds take care of the flock?

Here's the word for “taking care of the flock.”

H7462 ra`ah raw-aw'

a primitive root;

to tend a flock; i.e. pasture it; intransitively, to graze (literally or figuratively); generally to rule; by extension, to associate with (as a friend).

Notice that ramification. As a friend you associate with, you help “Shepherd” them.

³ You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock. ⁴ You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost.

Notice the responsibilities.

- strengthened the weak
- heal the sick
- bound up the injured.
- brought back the strays³
- searched for the lost

Hebrew word for heal:

H2388 chazaq khaw-zak'

to fasten upon; hence, to seize, be strong (figuratively, courageous, causatively strengthen, cure, help, repair, fortify), obstinate; to bind, restrain, conquer.

Psalm 23 King James Version (KJV)

23 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

³ The Hebrew says the ones being “pushed out.”

All people are God's sheep. We need to shepherd all we come in contact with, and especially help the lost find their way back home!

You have ruled them harshly and brutally.

Notice this translation, which accompanies a Hebrew Interlinear.

(CLV) Ezk 34:4

”The ailing you do not make steadfast, and ”the ill^l you do not heal, and ’ the broken^l you do not bind up; + ” the outcast^l you do not bring back, and ”the lost^l you do not seek, + but ⁱ with brunt force you hold sway ” over them, and ⁱ with rigor.

“You hold sway over them with rigor.”

⁵ So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. ⁶ My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them.

When sheep are scattered from the fold of the flock, they become fodder for all the wild animals out there. In our world, the demons and those influenced by them.

I want to make this point to. As a pastor, there are some that have been “pushed” out by church politics, whatever. I was one of those! But those pushed out are not the same as those who deliberately choose to become slack in their love for God! Sometimes pastors get heat for not chasing after those folks, but to quote the eagle’s song, they are “prisoners of their own device.” All you can do is wait, watch, and love as you see them make their way home, like the father did with the prodigal son. By the way, parents are shepherds of their children, and chances are, you’ve been good ones. But sometimes adult children become narcissistic, and deeply hurtful. There is help out there for folks struggling from that.

<https://www.rejectedparents.net/forums/topic/narcissistic-adult-daughter/>

⁷ “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸ As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, ⁹ therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁰ This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock. I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

Matthew 25

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Matthew 2:6

““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.””

Matthew 9:36

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Matthew 25:32

All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

John 10:11

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:12

The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

John 10:14

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

John 10:16

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

This is huge. Whatever you do for God’s flock, it has to be for them! It can’t be about the money, some emotional gratification you get from them, some “self” need that “you” get for them. Of course, that doesn’t mean the joy of doing ministry through God is deprived from you as you take care of God’s people. It simply means that you “feed” off of them rather than feed them and care for them in God’s name.

¹¹ ““For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. ¹² As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. ¹³ I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. ¹⁴ I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. ¹⁶ I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice.

Jesus spoke of His approach to His sheep at the end time. Notice the sidebar story. It perfectly matches the next phrase.

¹⁷ ““As for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will judge between one sheep and another, and between rams and goats. ¹⁸ Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? ¹⁹ Must my flock feed on what you have trampled and drink what you have muddied with your feet?

²⁰ ““Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

²¹ Because *you shove with flank and shoulder*, butting all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them away, ²² I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. ²³ I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David,

NIVstudy Bible says a ruler like King David or one from his line.

Psalm 89:4	Psalm 89:20	Psalm 89:29	Jeremiah 23:5-6
‘I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.’”	20 I have found David my servant; with my sacred oil I have anointed him.	29 I will establish his line forever, his throne as long as the heavens endure.	5 “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up for David ^[a] a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior. <i>Footnotes:</i> 1. Jeremiah 23:5 Or up from David’s line

and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. ²⁴ I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken.

In my way of thinking, this is a clear reference to Jesus.

Luke 1 “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

²⁵ “**I will make a covenant of peace with them** and rid the land of savage beasts so that they may live in the wilderness and sleep in the forests in safety. ²⁶ I will make them and the places surrounding my hill a blessing. ^[a] I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. ²⁷ The trees will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and

rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. ²⁸They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid. ²⁹I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations. ³⁰Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the Israelites, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. ³¹You are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

Footnotes:

1. **Ezekiel 34:26** Or *I will cause them and the places surrounding my hill to be named in blessings* (see Gen. 48:20); or *I will cause them and the places surrounding my hill to be seen as blessed*

²⁵ **“I will make a covenant of peace with them**

The NIV Study Bible says this: All of God’s covenants aim at peace. This covenant (the “new covenant” spoken of by Jeremiah 31:31-34) looks to final peace initiated by Christ (Phil 4:7) and still awaiting final fulfillment. The “peace” (Hebrew shalom) envisioned here is that of a restored relationship with God and the secure enjoyment of a life made full and rich through his blessings. None of the threats to life experienced under God’s judgment will mar this peace.

We’ll press this further in the next study.