

**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 who love me and any descendant they have that love their Papou too. 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 anyone I’ve ever brought to Christ and family members who truly love me. 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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**Christ IN You Series**

**Colossians 1:27 (King James Version)**

<sup>27</sup>To 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 36 Part 3 RECAP<sup>2</sup>**

I’m stuck on this chapter. For whatever reason I want to review it again. I’m going to do so, and see what shakes. This time, I’ll just read through it again. I’ll try to key off of phrases that I haven’t touched before, but I just don’t feel like I’ve given God his proper due on this one.

So here goes.

Enjoy!

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## Hope for the Mountains of Israel

36 “Son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say, ‘Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.

**Cool. What jumps out this time is the word “mountains.” What mountains are in Israel? Just curious. <https://www.deadsea.com/articles-tips/mountains-in-israel/>**

. . . While the geography of Israel is diverse, much of the region is comprised of hills and mountains that are occasionally broken up by valleys and plains. . . The Judean Hills is central to the region and history of Israel. The mountain range was home to the Kingdom of Judah and the earliest Jewish settlements. . . To the north is the Mount Carmel mountain range. It stretches from the Mediterranean Sea and is covered in lush vegetation. During Biblical times, the caves were used by criminals. . . After the Mount Carmel mountain range, you reach the Jezreel Valley and the hilly region of Galilee. The hilly area includes Mount Meron, one of the tallest peaks in Israel. Masada is an isolated rock plateau and former fortification found on the eastern edge of the Judean Desert. It overlooks the Dead Sea . . . one of the most famous of Israel’s mountains, Mount Sodom contains the world’s largest salt cave. . . The Eilat Mountains are a mountain range located in the Negev (southern Israel), between Mitzpe Ramon and Eilat, some 200 kilometres south of the Dead Sea. The mountains (Harei Eilat in Hebrew) offer some of the most spectacular views and triking routes in the country. The range includes the breathtaking Red Canyon – a geologically unique region with incredible desert scenery, as well as the Timna Valley ranges. Atop the highest peaks in the mountain range, one can (on a clear day), see four different countries at the same time – Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia. . . Herodium, Har Hordos in Hebrew, is an ancient citadel, located some 12 kilometres south of Jerusalem. The mountain stands at 2,487 ft above sea level and is the highest peak in the Judean Desert. . . Mount Meron is considered the highest mountain in Israel. . . Mount Hermon borders Golan Heights. Portions of the mountain range extend into Lebanon and Syria. In the Book of Enoch, the mount is where the fallen angels descended to Earth. . . Located in northeast Jerusalem, Mount Scopus offers amazing views of the city. It is one of the three peaks that comprise the Mount of Olives range

2 This is what the Sovereign LORD says: The enemy said of you, “Aha! The ancient heights

**Hebrew – “The eonian elevations . . .”**

have become our possession.”” 3 Therefore prophesy and say, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because they ravaged and crushed (**desolation and gasping**) you from every side so that you became the possession of the rest of the nations and the object of people’s malicious talk and slander,

**They ravaged and crushed you from every side. Wow.**

4 therefore, mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign LORD: This is what the Sovereign LORD says to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys, to the desolate ruins and the deserted towns that have been plundered and ridiculed by the rest of the nations around you— 5 this is what the Sovereign LORD says: In my burning zeal I have spoken against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, for with glee and with malice in their hearts they made my land their own possession so that they might plunder its pastureland.’ 6 Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel and say to the mountains and hills, to the ravines and valleys: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I speak in my jealous wrath because you have suffered the scorn of the nations. 7 Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I swear with uplifted hand that the nations around you will also suffer scorn.

**“they shall bear confounding of them”**

8 ““But you, mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home. 9 I am concerned for you and will look on you with favor; you will be plowed and sown,

**I like the way the more literal reads: “you will be SERVED and sown.” We are to serve nature, not own it and plunder it. We are to dress and keep the garden. Look at the instruction Genesis to mankind.**

(CLV) Gn 2:15

<sup>†</sup>Then Yahweh Elohim <sup>l</sup>took <sup>”</sup>the human and <sup>l</sup>settled him in the garden of Eden to serve it and to keep it.

**The word for “serve” in both cases:**

**H5647** `abad aw-bad'

a primitive root;

to work (in any sense); by implication, to serve, till, (causatively) enslave, etc..

KJV: X be, keep in bondage, be bondmen, bond-service, compel, do, dress, ear, execute, +

husbandman, keep, labour(-ing man, bring to pass, (cause to, make to) serve(-ing, self), (be, become) servant(-s), do (use) service, till(-er), transgress (from margin), (set a) work, be wrought, worshipper,

### **We are to serve the earth.**

10 and I will cause many people to live on you—yes, all of Israel. The towns will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. 11 I will increase the number of people and animals living on you, and they will be fruitful and become numerous. I will settle people on you as in the past and will make you prosper more than before. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

### **For some reason, I wonder if this alliterates to the bearing of the fruits of the Spirit.**

12 I will cause people, my people Israel, to live on you. They will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; you will never again deprive them of their children.

13 “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Because some say to you, “You devour people and deprive your nation of its children,” 14 therefore you will no longer devour people or make your nation childless, declares the Sovereign LORD. 15 No longer will I make you hear the taunts of the nations, and no longer will you suffer the scorn of the peoples or cause your nation to fall, declares the Sovereign LORD.”

**A church I pastored was accused of that. We stood by true Biblical standards for being Christian, and if people weakened and drifted away, we were accused of “losing” people. We lost no one in the true sense. People, asserting their independence and non-Trinitarian individualism, often drifted away.**

### **Israel’s Restoration Assured**

16 Again the word of the LORD came to me: 17 “Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their own land, they defiled it by their conduct and their actions. Their conduct was like a woman’s monthly uncleanness in my sight. 18 So I poured out my wrath on them because they had shed blood in the land and because they had defiled it with their idols. 19 I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. 20 And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, ‘These are the LORD’s people, and yet they had to leave his land.’ 21 I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. 22 “Therefore say to the Israelites, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone.

**It wasn’t that God didn’t care for Israel. He did. But his people did not deserve what He was about to do.**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 5

**It's just like God says in this verse:**

### **Deuteronomy 9:4-6 New International Version (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> After the LORD your God has driven them out before you, do not say to yourself, "The LORD has brought me here to take possession of this land because of my righteousness." No, it is on account of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is going to drive them out before you.

<sup>5</sup> It is not because of your righteousness or your integrity that you are going in to take possession of their land; but on account of the wickedness of these nations, the LORD your God will drive them out before you, to accomplish what he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

<sup>6</sup> Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people.

**God does what He does for pure grace. God will vindicate His holy name.**

23 I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I am proved holy through you before their eyes.

**When I am proven holy "through" you. The word for minister or deacon in the New Testament is "dia-konos" and it literally means "through servant" or a servant "through whom" God serves!**

24 "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

**God made man flesh. Flesh was "very good." A heart of flesh, the way man made it, and not of stone, is part of the miraculous transformation here.**

27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

**Flesh coupled with Spirit---the Holy Spirit! That's what living by the tree of life would have been like.**

28 Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. 29 I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. 30 I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. 31 Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices.

**“Detestable practices” – Translated “depravities” in the original. This comes from a root that implies “crookedness,” as in a rod that bent.**

32 I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, people of Israel!

33 “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: On the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will resettle your towns, and the ruins will be rebuilt. 34 The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. 35 They will say, “This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden; the cities that were lying in ruins, desolate and destroyed, are now fortified and inhabited.” 36 Then the nations around you that remain will know that I the LORD have rebuilt what was destroyed and have replanted what was desolate. I the LORD have spoken, and I will do it.’

**The nations will know God has done the rebuilding and the replanting. Praise God for His amazing mercies!**

37 “This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Once again I will yield to Israel’s plea and do this for them: I will make their people as numerous as sheep, 38 as numerous as the flocks for offerings at Jerusalem during her appointed festivals. So will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

**New International Version (NIV)**

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