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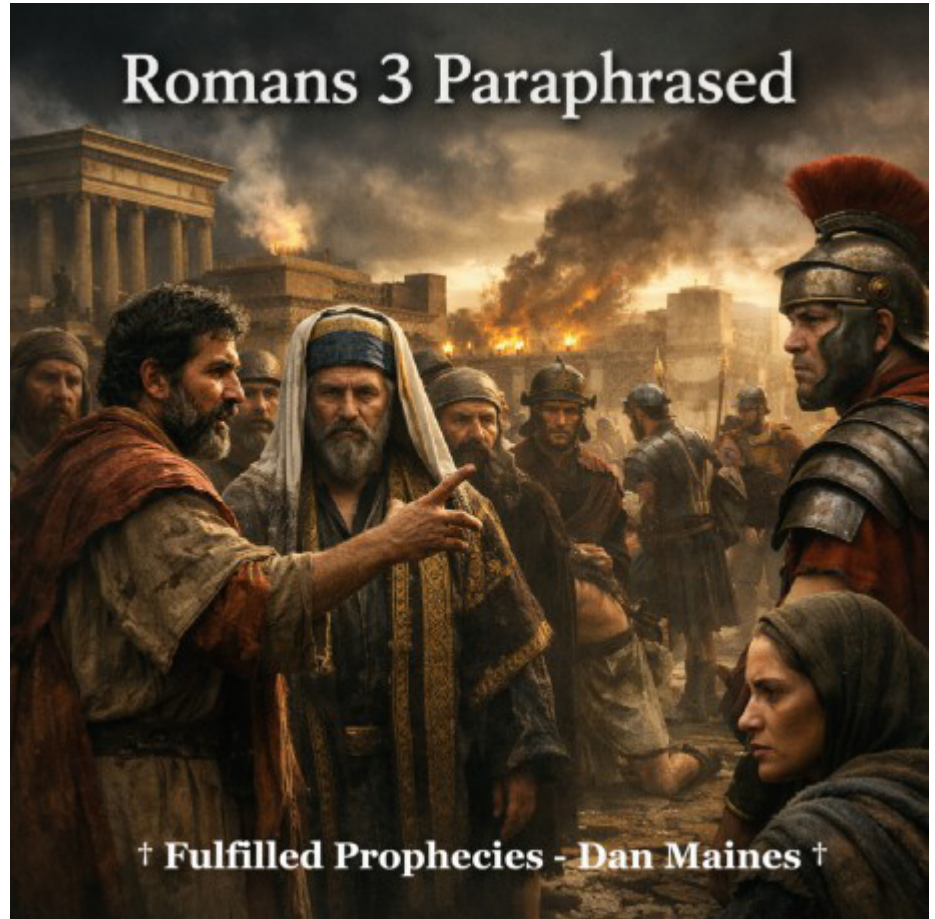
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Romans 3 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Romans 3 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Romans chapter 3 continues Paul's argument that both Jews and Gentiles stood guilty before God under the old covenant system.

† Paul isn't destroying the value of Israel's history, he's showing that privilege didn't remove accountability before God.

† The chapter builds toward the central message of the gospel, righteousness now comes through faith in Jesus Christ, not

through the works of the Law.

Romans 3:1

So what advantage did the Jews actually have, and what value was there in being circumcised?

† Paul begins by addressing the obvious question raised in the previous chapter, if the Law could not justify, then what benefit did Israel have? (Romans 9:4)

† The advantage was covenant privilege, they were entrusted with God's revelation and promises. (Deuteronomy 4:7-8)

† Yet privilege without obedience still resulted in judgment.

Romans 3:2

There was great benefit in every way, first of all they were entrusted with the very words of God.

† Israel's greatest privilege was stewardship of divine revelation, the Law, prophets, and promises came through them. (Psalm 147:19-20)

† This responsibility meant they were accountable for how they handled that truth.

† The gospel itself later went first to the Jew because of this historical role. (Romans 1:16)

Romans 3:3

But what if some of them were unfaithful, would their lack of faith cancel out God's faithfulness?

† Israel's failure did not cancel God's covenant promises. (2 Timothy 2:13)

† God remained faithful even when many in Israel rejected His Messiah.

† The promise would still stand through the faithful remnant.

Romans 3:4

Absolutely not. God must be true even if every human being turns out to be a liar. As the Scriptures say, so that You will be proven right in Your words and will win Your case when You are judged.

† Paul quotes Psalm 51:4 to show that God's justice is never dependent on human behavior.

† Even when men accuse God, His righteousness is always proven true.

† The fall of Jerusalem later demonstrated that God's warnings were not empty threats.

Romans 3:5

But if our wrongdoing highlights God's righteousness, what should we say then, is God unjust when He brings His wrath? I'm speaking in human reasoning.

† Paul anticipates an objection that human sin somehow makes God look better.

† Some twisted logic tried to argue that if sin glorifies God, then judgment would be unfair.

† Paul exposes that reasoning as flawed human thinking.

Romans 3:6

Absolutely not, because if that were true, how could God judge the world?

† Judgment proves that God is righteous, not unjust. (Genesis 18:25)

† Without divine judgment the world would descend into moral chaos.

† Paul's entire argument rests on God's role as righteous judge.

Romans 3:7

But if my lie increases God's truth and brings Him more glory, why am I still judged as a sinner?

† Paul again exposes the absurd argument used by critics of the gospel.

† Some falsely accused Paul of teaching that sin was acceptable if it produced a greater result.

† This twisting of grace was already circulating in the early church.

Romans 3:8

And why not say, let us do evil so that good may come from it? That is exactly what some people slanderously claim we say. Their condemnation is deserved.

† The gospel of grace was already being slandered by critics.

† Paul clearly states that those who distort the message of grace deserve judgment.

† Grace never becomes permission to practice evil.

Romans 3:9

So then, are we better than they are? Not at all. We've already shown that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin.

† This statement summarizes Paul's argument from Romans chapters 1 through 3.

† Both groups were guilty, pagans without the Law and Jews under the Law.

† Sin placed the entire human race under condemnation.

Romans 3:10

As it is written, there is no one righteous, not even one.

† Paul begins quoting a series of Old Testament passages describing human corruption. (Psalm 14:1-3)

† The point is universal guilt, no one achieves righteousness through their own effort.

† This prepares the reader for the need of God's righteousness through Christ.

Romans 3:11

There is no one who understands, no one who seeks after God.

† Sin darkens human understanding and distorts spiritual desire. (Isaiah 64:6)

† Humanity naturally drifts away from God unless God intervenes.

† This explains why salvation had to come through divine initiative.

Romans 3:12

All have turned aside, together they have become worthless, there is no one who does good, not even one.

† Paul continues quoting Psalm 14 showing the widespread corruption of humanity.

† Even Israel, with the Law, still fell into the same condition.

† The Law revealed sin but could not remove it.

Romans 3:13

Their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of snakes is under their lips.

† Paul describes the destructive power of human speech. (Psalm 5:9)

† Words reveal the corruption inside the human heart.

† The Law condemned these sins but did not transform the heart.

Romans 3:14

Their mouths are full of curses and bitterness.

† Human speech often reflects anger and hostility toward others. (Psalm 10:7)

† This demonstrates how deeply sin affects daily behavior.

† Paul shows that the problem isn't only external actions but internal corruption.

Romans 3:15

Their feet are quick to shed blood.

† Violence has always been a mark of fallen humanity. (Isaiah 59:7)

† From Cain onward human history proves this pattern.

† The Law restrained violence but never removed the sinful nature behind it.

Romans 3:16

Destruction and misery follow their paths.

† Sin doesn't only damage the sinner, it spreads suffering to others.

- † Entire societies collapse when injustice becomes normal.
- † Israel experienced this during the corruption leading up to AD 70.

Romans 3:17

They have not known the path of peace.

† True peace comes only through reconciliation with God. (Isaiah 59:8)

† Without that reconciliation mankind continually produces conflict.

† Christ came to establish the true peace promised in the prophets.

Romans 3:18

There is no fear of God before their eyes.

† The absence of reverence for God is the root of moral collapse. (Psalm 36:1)

† When people lose the fear of God, lawlessness increases.

† The prophets repeatedly warned Israel about this condition.

Romans 3:19

Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those under the Law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world becomes accountable to God.

† The Law exposed guilt rather than providing justification. (Galatians 3:19)

† Its purpose was to bring people face to face with their sin.

† When Jerusalem fell in AD 70 the old covenant system that revealed sin finally ended.

Romans 3:20

Because no one will be declared righteous in His sight by works of the Law, through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

† The Law functioned as a mirror revealing sin. (Galatians 3:24)

† It never provided the power to remove that sin.

† This verse dismantles the belief that law keeping could

produce salvation.

Romans 3:21

But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.

† The gospel didn't contradict the Old Testament, it fulfilled what the Law and prophets foretold. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

† A new covenant righteousness had now appeared through Christ.

† This transition was unfolding in the first century.

Romans 3:22

This righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe, because there is no distinction.

† The barrier between Jew and Gentile was removed through faith. (Galatians 3:28)

† Faith became the basis of righteousness, not covenant lineage.

† This was revolutionary in the first century Jewish world.

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.

† Both Jews and Gentiles shared the same problem, universal sin.

† This verse summarizes the human condition under the Law.

† No one could stand before God based on personal merit.

Romans 3:24

They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

† Justification means being declared righteous by God.

† Redemption refers to the liberation purchased by Christ's sacrifice.

† The cross accomplished what the Law never could.

Romans 3:25

God presented Him as the sacrifice of atonement through faith

in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness because in His patience God had passed over the sins previously committed.
† Christ's sacrifice revealed God's justice and mercy together.
† The sacrificial system pointed forward to this final atonement. (Hebrews 10:1-4)
† God delayed judgment until the fulfillment came through Christ.

Romans 3:26

This was done to demonstrate His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and also the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.
† God remained perfectly just while providing forgiveness.
† The cross satisfied divine justice while offering mercy.
† This balance lies at the center of the gospel.

Romans 3:27

So where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? The law of works? No, but by the law of faith.
† Faith eliminates human boasting because salvation isn't earned.
† The system of works was replaced by the principle of faith.
† This humbles both Jew and Gentile before God.

Romans 3:28

We conclude that a person is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.
† This statement summarizes Paul's teaching about justification.
† Salvation comes through trusting Christ, not through legal obedience.
† This truth later became central to Christian teaching throughout history.

Romans 3:29

Or is God the God of Jews only? Isn't He also the God of Gentiles? Yes, of Gentiles also.
† The gospel revealed that God's plan always included the

nations. (Isaiah 49:6)

† Israel's role was to bring the knowledge of God to the world.

† Christ fulfilled that global mission.

Romans 3:30

Since there is one God, He will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through the same faith.

† The same path of salvation applies to everyone.

† Circumcision no longer defined covenant membership.

† Faith in Christ became the defining mark.

Romans 3:31

Do we then overthrow the Law through faith? Absolutely not.

Instead we establish the Law.

† Faith doesn't destroy the Law's purpose, it fulfills it. (Matthew 5:17)

† The Law pointed forward to Christ all along.

† When Christ fulfilled it, the Law's testimony was confirmed.

Historical References

† Josephus records the corruption and lawlessness in Jerusalem leading up to its destruction in AD 70, showing how Israel had fallen into the very sins Paul described.

† Irenaeus wrote that Christ fulfilled the Law and brought its promises to completion through His death and resurrection.

† Eusebius documented the destruction of Jerusalem as divine judgment fulfilling Jesus' warnings to that generation.

How it applies to us today

† We must never place confidence in religious systems or traditions instead of Christ.

† Faith in Jesus remains the only basis for righteousness before God.

† The gospel humbles everyone because salvation is entirely by grace.

† Understanding this frees us from legalism and restores

confidence in what Christ already accomplished.

Q & A Appendix

Q: Why did Paul spend so much time proving everyone was guilty of sin?

A: Because without recognizing universal guilt, people won't see their need for the righteousness that comes through Christ (Romans 3:19-23).

Q: Does Romans 3 teach that the Law was useless?

A: No. The Law revealed sin and pointed people toward the need for redemption (Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:24).

Q: Why is faith emphasized instead of works?

A: Because human effort cannot produce righteousness before God, salvation must come through grace (Romans 3:24-28).

Q: Does the gospel only apply to Israel?

A: No. The gospel was always intended for both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 3:29-30).

Q: Did Christ fulfill the purpose of the Law?

A: Yes. Jesus fulfilled everything the Law and prophets pointed toward (Matthew 5:17; Romans 3:31).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Romans 3

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

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