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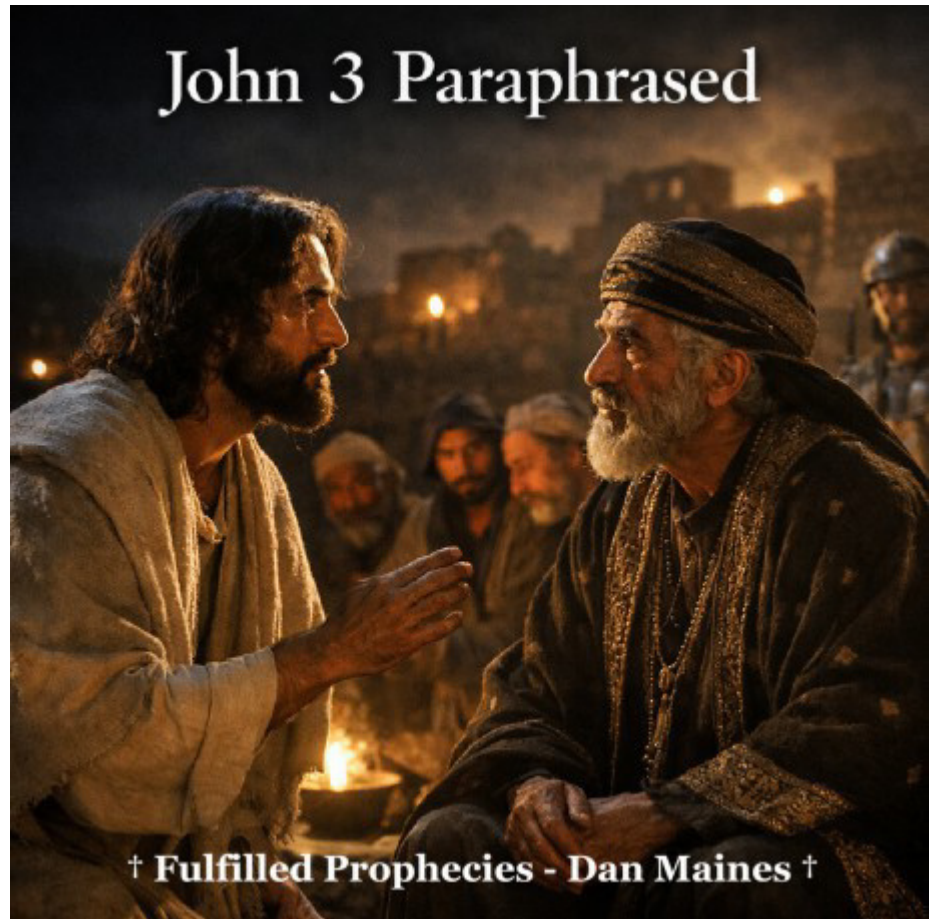
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John 3 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

John 3 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Jesus is revealing spiritual truth to a leader of Israel, showing that entrance into the kingdom was not about physical descent but about transformation.

† This chapter exposes the failure of Israel's leadership to understand the promises given to them.

† The focus is on transition, from fleshly identity under the Old Covenant to spiritual life in Christ before judgment came on that generation.

John 3:1

There was a man from the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler among the Jews

† This shows he had authority and knowledge, yet he still lacked understanding (Matthew 23:2-3)

† Leadership in Israel did not guarantee spiritual insight

† Even those teaching the law were in darkness without Christ

John 3:2

He came to Jesus at night and said, Rabbi, we know you are a teacher from God, because no one can do these signs unless God is with him

† Coming at night shows fear of men and lack of boldness (John 12:42-43)

† He recognized truth but had not yet submitted to it

† Many saw the signs but did not understand the purpose

John 3:3

Jesus answered him, unless someone is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God

† Jesus goes straight to the heart, not outward religion but inward transformation

† Seeing the kingdom was tied to spiritual rebirth, not lineage

† This was about entering the new covenant reality

John 3:4

Nicodemus said, how can a man be born when he is old, he cannot enter his mother's womb again, can he

† He is thinking physically, missing the spiritual meaning

† Israel often misunderstood spiritual truths (Isaiah 6:9-10)

† This shows the blindness of the leaders

John 3:5

Jesus answered, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God

† Water points to cleansing, Spirit points to transformation
(Ezekiel 36:25-27)

† This is covenant language, not physical birth

† It connects to promises God gave Israel about renewal

John 3:6

What is born of flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit

† Natural descent from Abraham was not enough

† Flesh refers to the old covenant identity

† Spirit refers to new life through Christ

John 3:7

Do not be amazed that I said you must be born again

† This should have been understood by a teacher of Israel

† The prophets already spoke of renewal

† Their surprise shows how far they had drifted

John 3:8

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound but do not know where it comes from or where it is going, so is everyone born of the Spirit

† The Spirit's work is unseen but real

† God moves beyond human control or expectation

† This emphasizes divine action, not human effort

John 3:9

Nicodemus answered, how can these things be

† Again, confusion shows lack of understanding

† He knew scripture but did not grasp its fulfillment

† Knowledge without revelation is empty

John 3:10

Jesus answered, you are the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things

† This is a rebuke of Israel's leadership

† They had the scriptures but missed their meaning

† Their failure led the people astray

John 3:11

Truly, truly, we speak what we know and testify what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony

† Jesus speaks with authority from God

† Israel rejected the testimony of truth

† This rejection leads to judgment

John 3:12

If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things

† They could not understand basic truths

† Deeper revelation was beyond them without faith

† This exposes hardened hearts

John 3:13

No one has ascended into heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man

† Jesus alone has authority from heaven

† He is the mediator of truth

† This points to His unique role

John 3:14

Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up

† This connects to Numbers 21:8-9

† The lifting up points to the cross

† Those who look in faith receive life

John 3:15

So that whoever believes will have eternal life in Him

† Eternal life is covenant life, not just future existence

† It begins in Christ

† This was being offered before judgment came

John 3:16

For God loved the world in this way, He gave His only Son so that everyone believing in Him would not perish but have eternal life

† World includes Jews and Gentiles

† Perishing refers to covenant judgment

† Life is found only in Christ

John 3:17

God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but so that the world might be saved through Him

† His first coming was for salvation

† Judgment would come later on that generation

† Salvation was being offered before destruction

John 3:18

The one who believes in Him is not judged, but the one who does not believe has already been judged

† Judgment was already set for unbelief

† Rejecting Christ sealed their fate

† This points to the coming destruction of Jerusalem

John 3:19

This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light

† Light is Christ

† Darkness is rejection and sin

† Israel chose darkness

John 3:20

Everyone who does evil hates the light and does not come to the light

† Sin avoids exposure

† Truth reveals the heart

† This explains rejection of Christ

John 3:21

But the one who practices truth comes to the light

† True believers are drawn to Christ

† Their works are revealed as from God

† This shows genuine faith

John 3:22

After this Jesus and His disciples went into the land of Judea, and He was spending time with them and baptizing

† Ministry continued among the people

† Baptism represented transition and repentance

† This was preparation before judgment

John 3:23

John was also baptizing in Aenon near Salim because there was much water there

† John's ministry was still active

† He prepared the way for Christ

† This shows overlap in ministries

John 3:24

John had not yet been thrown into prison

† This marks the timeline

† It shows the transition period

† God's plan was unfolding

John 3:25

There arose a discussion about purification

† The focus was still on external cleansing

† They missed the deeper meaning

† True cleansing is spiritual

John 3:26

They came to John and said, the one who was with you is baptizing and all are going to Him

† Jealousy and comparison arose

† People were shifting to Christ

† This fulfilled John's role

John 3:27

John answered, a person cannot receive anything unless it has been given from heaven

† All authority comes from God

† John understood his place

† This shows humility

John 3:28

You yourselves are witnesses that I said I am not the Christ, but I have been sent ahead of Him

† John never claimed to be the Messiah

† He pointed to Christ

† This confirms his mission

John 3:29

The one who has the bride is the bridegroom

† Christ is the bridegroom

† The people are the bride

† This is covenant imagery

John 3:30

He must increase, but I must decrease

† Christ takes center place

† John fades as his role ends

† This shows fulfillment

John 3:31

He who comes from above is above all

† Christ's authority is supreme

† He is from heaven

† No one compares to Him

John 3:32

He testifies what He has seen and heard, yet no one accepts

His testimony

- † Truth was rejected by many
- † This shows hardness of heart
- † It leads to judgment

John 3:33

The one who has accepted His testimony has affirmed that God is true

- † Belief confirms God's truth
- † Faith aligns with God
- † This separates believers from unbelievers

John 3:34

He whom God sent speaks the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure

- † Christ speaks fully from God
- † He has complete authority
- † The Spirit rests fully on Him

John 3:35

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand

- † Christ has full authority over all
- † This includes judgment and salvation
- † He is the center of God's plan

John 3:36

The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him

- † Life is present for believers
- † Wrath remained on that generation rejecting Him
- † This connects directly to the coming judgment in AD 70

Historical References

- † Josephus describes the judgment that came upon Jerusalem in AD 70, showing the wrath that remained on that generation

† Eusebius records the destruction as fulfillment of Christ's warnings

† Irenaeus speaks of Christ as the one bringing life through belief

† Clement of Alexandria connects spiritual rebirth with transformation in Christ

How it applies to us today

† We are not saved by heritage or religion, only by being made new in Christ

† True life is found in believing Him, not just knowing about Him

† We must walk in the light, not hide in darkness

† Christ is the center, we decrease and He increases in our lives

† We live in the fulfilled reality of what He established

Q & A Appendix

Q What does born again mean

A It means being spiritually transformed by God, not physically reborn (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Q What is the kingdom of God in this chapter

A It is the covenant life and reign established through Christ (Luke 17:20-21)

Q What does perish refer to

A It refers to covenant judgment on that generation (Matthew 23:36-38)

Q What is eternal life here

A It is present spiritual life in Christ, not just future existence (John 5:24)

Q What does the wrath of God remaining mean

A It means judgment was already set for those rejecting Christ (Matthew 24:34)

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

Prophecies †

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Source Index

† John 3

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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