

## King James Bible Study Correspondence Course

*An Outreach of Highway Evangelistic Ministries*  
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### The Book of John

Lesson 8

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Read John 3:1-11

**J**ohn 3:1. *There was a man* (where did we see that earlier? John the Baptist.) *of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi,* We all believe that the reason he came by night was because it was dark and that he did not want anyone to see him and you know it all sounds great, but the Bible does not say that. He may have just left work. A lot of times we read something in scriptures that really is not there. You could say that it is spiritually significant, it is dark and here is a man that is meeting Jesus who is the Light in the dark. That you could say. You know you can make application – but to say he came at night because he was afraid of anybody seeing him – that is not what it says. It just says he came by night.

*The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, WE know...* That is very significant. He did not say, I know. He said **We know...** who is Nicodemus? He is a Pharisee. He is a ruler of the Jews. So the Pharisees and the ruler of the Jews say *we know that thou art a teacher come from God:* Their consensus among the Pharisees and the rulers, is God sent Jesus. They may not agree to everything that He is about to declare – The Pharisees had a general idea of what was going on. *...for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.* Nicodemus says, you are from God; God is with you. What was the declaration of John 1? He is God. What is the declaration of John 2? He is God. Nicodemus had truth, he has light; but he does not have enough truth and have enough light at this point.

John 3:3 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Which is a remarkable statement when you think about it; because in Luke 17:21 says, the kingdom of God is not visible. It is invisible. It is within you. Once again Jesus is talking about something spiritual. Nicodemus is going to hear something physical. Jesus says, kingdom of God – a spiritual kingdom. Nicodemus makes a statement. He does not ask Him anything. He says, we know you are from God. We know God is with you. And Jesus said, that knowledge is good but you must be born again! If you do not get born again, you are not going to get spiritual truth. You are not going to see spiritual reality.

John 3:4 *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? What is he thinking? Physical. ...can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? What is he thinking? Physical.* You and I may understand what it means to be born again, but this is the first time Nicodemus has ever heard this term *...for no man can do these miracles that thou doest,* Remember John selected seven miracles to talk about but he says in chapter 21, If I wrote about everything he did the world could not contain it. So all these miracles are going on and Nicodemus comes out and says, “You must be of God!” And Jesus says, “you must be born again!” And Nicodemus says, how can a man *enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?* It is a physical understanding in response to a spiritual statement. Here is why this has to be a spiritual thing. If you did have a second physical birth, it would still be from Adam. If you had four physical births, reincarnations, they would still be from Adam. they would still be from Adam, you are still

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born dead in trespasses and sins. So the only way to see the kingdom of God, you must have a spiritual birth.

John 3:5 *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* There are a number of different views here, lets look at each of them and weigh them in the light of the scriptures. When Jesus says born of water

# 1 View: He is referring back to Genesis 1:20 where all physical life came out of the water. And Jesus is saying, if you could go all the way back and be the first man born, you would still have to be born a second birth or spiritual birth

# 2 View The third view is born of water meaning baptism. We are not born again by water baptism, I understand that, I trust by now that each of you know this also.

# 3 View:...in the water for nine months and then came out of the water and had a physical birth, you would still have to have a second birth or a spiritual birth.

Now, just step back from it a second and get what is important from the verse. Whatever you make of the water birth, it cannot save you. You must have a spirit birth. The reason that I think that a lot of people do not agree with me on it and that is okay because I do not believe it is the crucial point in the passage. The reason I think that Jesus is answering Nicodemus inquiry about coming out of your mother's womb is because of what he says in verse 3 and in verse 5 that are in agreement. John 3:3 *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Now, if you have to have a water baptism, in order to be born again, Jesus failed to give Nicodemus that information in verse 3. If you have to have a certain amount of scriptural knowledge and understanding in order to be born again Jesus failed to give Nicodemus that information in verse 3.

In John 3:5 Jesus (I believe) answers Nicodemus question, "yes, you have to be born of water, but as I said in verse 3, you have to be born of the Spirit to enter into the kingdom of God." My view is that Jesus is saying to Nicodemus, "I know you are thinking physical but I am talking spiritual." Again, look at John 3:6 seems to go along with that idea. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. That matches that water birth being a flesh birth. To bring spiritual from carnal is impossible. If you had a hundred births by flesh all they would be is births by flesh. They could not get you into the kingdom of God. But on the other hand, that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. If you have a spiritual birth, you can enter into a spiritual kingdom. By physical birth, you can enter a physical kingdom. That is why a person can enter into the millennium, for example, without being saved. Because a physical birth can get you into a physical kingdom.

If you line up, 3, 4, 5 and 6. it seems the right take on the water, verse 5, is physical birth.

Now, since we are here, why water baptism cannot save?

(1) Baptism in the Bible speaks of death and not birth. Romans 6. We are buried with Him in baptism. Baptism is not a picture of birth; it is a picture of death. So somebody says, "that born of the water, that means baptized..." Baptism is not born; it dies! "Oh look, we just had a baby son let's bury him!" You know that is not what you do. Burial speaks of death, not of birth. Baptism speaks of death, not of birth. It is the immersion, the burial.

(2) Nobody in the Old Testament could have been saved; because there is no baptism in the Old Testament. There was a nation baptized in the Red Sea. But they did not get in

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the water. None of them got wet! The ones that were immersed in the Red Sea were the Egyptians who were the enemies of God.

(3) Baptism is a human work and salvation is not of works in Ephesians 2:8-9. Can you see a baptism, yes, then you know it is not of faith because Hebrews 11:1 says *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* “Do you have to be baptized to be saved...” “No.” “How are you saved?” By faith, a salvation that includes faith plus baptism is false because Hebrews 11:1 says if you can see it, it is not faith.

(4) Christ came to save but He did not baptize anybody. Christ Jesus come into the world to save sinners? John 4:2 says Jesus Himself baptized not. Not with water.

(5) Baptism and the gospel are not the same. First Corinthians 1:17. Many of you know the verse. *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel:* So how can you say baptism is the gospel?

At this point Nicodemus must have had a strange look on his face. John 3:7 *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.* He is just standing there... “What? What are you talking about?” – Jesus Christ in John 3 is talking to a man of great learning; and He talks to him about simple birth. In chapter 4, he is talking to a simple woman at the well and He talks to her of matters of profound theology regarding the distinction between Jew and Gentile and the proper way to worship God. That is odd? What is the difference? John 2:25. He knows the heart! He knows what is lacking in each person. He knows what the need is in each person and so He zeroed in on it.

John 3:8 *The wind bloweth where it listeth,* “What is listing there sailor?” Like a ship listing to port. That leaning a direction. So the wind takes whatever direction it wants to take. If the wind wants to lean east, it is going to lean east. If it wants to lean west, it is going to lean west. And look, it is important to what He is saying. *and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth:* Here is what He is saying. *Listeth* – that is, it is moving things in a certain direction. *Hearest* – it is creating sound. He is saying, Nicodemus, there is no visible activity that precedes your new birth. But there will be evident activity following your new birth. Now think why that is so important. You have to have this passage, (most of you are witnesses for the Lord and I am so glad you are.) You need to have this. People want to see something and then they will latch on to what they saw and say, “okay, I will trust the Lord now.” The Lord says, “No! You have to trust me and then you will be something.” “I want to feel something.” The Lord says, “you have to trust me and then you will feel something!” “If I get peace about it...” You will not get peace about it. You have to believe and then you will have peace. “Well, if I could just be sure...” You will not be sure; you have to believe and then you will be sure.

Look, Nicodemus, do you see the wind? You must be born again – if you are born again then, there will be a listing – you are going to start leaning! You are going to start hearing. You are going to start feeling. Is that not what people want when you start witnessing to them? They want some experience; and then they are going to trust that experience. The Lord said, “trust me and then the experiences will kick in!” They will come later; they will come afterward! Thank God for that!

Jesus says, *so is every one that is born of the Spirit.* There is an effect wrought by the Holy Spirit in everyone that is born again. It might not be the same effect. It might not be the same measure. You will never be the same the day after you were saved as you were the day before you were saved. (John 3:8)

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John 3:9,10 *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?* Whenever statements like this show up you know someone is baffled. Let us turn to a few other verses. John 4:32 *But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.* Huh? And they say (in verse 33) *Hath any man brought him ought to eat?* What is He doing? He is talking spiritual here instead of physical. In John 6:51-52. *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* He is talking spiritual; they are hearing physical. John 7:38 *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* What? I am going to have a river where? He is talking spiritual; they are hearing physical. John 8:21-22. *Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.*

All through the book of John we see these types of statement that do not make sense in the physical, because Jesus is speaking in the spiritual. Nicodemus, says... *“How can these things be?* Here is what I want you to think about. Now Nicodemus is a ruler of the Jews. Nicodemus is a Pharisee. Jesus says, (look at verse 10) *Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* Now, Jesus in His reply, do you know what He just said? “Nicodemus, you are supposed to know this.

In Jeremiah 31:33 *But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Jeremiah 32:39-40. *And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me*

Ezekiel 11:19-20 *And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.*

Ezekiel 18:31 *Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?* Look at that. “Nicodemus, have you not ever read about me taking a man and putting life inside that man, putting truth inside that man; having a relationship with a man in his inner being; not something physical but something inward? Nicodemus, why are you looking at me like that?” How about that? A new heart. A new spirit. Even in the Old Testament, God is writing about and foretelling an offering an inward change inside a man that will believe that changes his heart, that changes his spirit, that changes his life. He said, “Nicodemus, you do not know this? How come you do not know this?” What has happened?

Look back here in the Old Testament. Ezekiel 36:25-27 *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.* John is standing in that Jordan River and he says, there is one coming after me that will not baptize you with water, He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Now, Jesus says, “Nicodemus, you did not go home and find out what he was talking about? You did

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not go back to headquarters – the guy is been preaching down there for months and you guys never bothered to unroll those scriptures and find out what he was talking about... about being baptized with the spirit? Nicodemus, what have you been doing. For months the forerunner has been telling you somebody is coming to baptize with the spirit, And if he had search the scriptures what would he have found? Who is talking here? Look at verse 22. **Thus saith the Lord GOD...** Verse 23. **I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD...** “What am I going to do? I am going to give you a new spirit. I am going to put a new spirit in you. I am going to give you my spirit.”

Do you know what Jesus is doing? He is standing right there and He is saying, “Nicodemus, I am the God of Ezekiel 36. I have come here to give you anew heart and to put my spirit in you. Nicodemus, how come you do not know these things?” Because they are neglecting the scripture. And because of their neglect of the scripture, they missed the Saviour!

David understood it. Psalm 51:10 *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.* My heart is dirty; my spirit is not right. God, would you give me a new one? Could I have a new spirit? David is asking for one. Jesus shows up and, “Nicodemus, do you want one? David wanted one. Do you want one?” It is not supposed to be a secret; it is supposed to be light. How come Israel does not know it? Because they forsook the word.

John 3: 10 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?* Christ met this man on his own ground. And He made this man’s language a channel of approach to his heart. Nicodemus said in verse 2, *we know*; Jesus said in verse 11, *We speak that we do know*. Nicodemus said in verse 2, *Thou art a teacher*; Jesus says in verse 10, *Art thou a teacher?* Nicodemus said in verse 3, *Except God be*; Jesus said in verse 3, *Except a man be*. Do you see what He is doing? That is how you witness. He is playing on what this man says. He is giving it right back to him. Nicodemus says in verse 4, *how can a man be born*; Jesus says in verse 5, *except a man be born*. Nicodemus says in verse 4, *can he enter*; Jesus says in verse 5, *he cannot enter*. Nicodemus says in verse 9, *how can these things be*; Jesus says in verse 12, *how shall you believe*. Never mind figuring out how they can be, Nicodemus, just believe me! Nicodemus says in verse 9, *how can these things be*; Jesus says in verse 10, *knowest not these things?* Do you see what He is doing? Nicodemus says something and Jesus takes it and puts it right back on him.”

John 3: 11 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.* Now, I am going to say something here and I do not know that anybody agrees with me, but in your Bible, verses 11 to 21 in most Bibles are in red letters being attributed to what Jesus said to Nicodemus. It does not look that way to me. And I will tell you why. John 3: Verse 11 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, WE speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not OUR witness.* That sounds like John, writing in the gospel of John, not Jesus talking to Nicodemus. Now, if it is Jesus talking to Nicodemus and John not recording the Holy Spirit’s commentary, why is Jesus speaking in the plural? Well, I would say he is making reference back to the quotations of the Old Testament prophets. But it just seems odd to me that Jesus puts Himself here as one testifying and one bearing witness, when in actually He is the one that everyone is testifying about and bearing witness to.

Notes

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**The Book of John**

## Lesson 8

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Read John 3:1-11**

1. What are the three different views on Baptism?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. Explain why each view is true or false.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
3. What is the definition of listing?
4. Explain Psalms 51:10
5. Nicodemus did not understand, Why?
6. What is the common belief as to why Nicodemus came at night?
7. What was significant about Nicodemus's response "We know"?

