

## ***Who Will See the Kingdom of God? (John 3:1-15)***

Dr. John Niemelä

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

#### **REVIEW**

Nicodemus came (with disciples) to Him during the feast. *But* (or *Now*) in 3:1 introduces events of a night *during* the feast (April A.D. 30). In rural Judea (3:22), Jesus' disciples baptized many new believers like Nicodemus—even more than did John (4:1-2). This leads to three background conclusions:

2:24 refers to not entrusting new believers w/ ministry,

Nicodemus believed in Jesus during Passover A.D. 30

Nicodemus was not the fearful man that many allege

Nicodemus courageously defended Jesus in John 7:51

Joseph/Nic' gave royal burial, risking Rome's wrath (19:38ff)

#### **NEW MATERIAL**

Jn 12:42 (often seen to describe Nic'), is about Nic's disciples.

Yet, even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him publicly.

**Signs showed Nicodemus (etc.) that God sent Jesus (3:1-2)**

**Being born-again/from above needed to see God's Kngdm (3:3)**

John 1:12 says faith (alone) in Christ makes one God's child

**How one could be born again puzzled Nicodemus (3:4)**

**Jesus hints at His meaning by speaking of the Holy Spirit (3:5-8)**

Unfortunately, Nic' misunderstood *Spirit* as *wind*. *Pneuma* (the word *pneumatic* comes from it) allows either. He heard:

3<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I tell you, unless one is born of water/Water [Water stands for the Holy Spirit] and the wind/Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the wind/Spirit is wind/Spirit. <sup>7</sup> Don't be amazed that I told you, 'You all must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind/Spirit blows where it will, and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it is coming from and where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the wind/Spirit."

**1- Born of water is not H<sub>2</sub>O baptism (Churches of Christ view)**

Jn 1:12 says one becomes God's child (born again) at the time he/she believes in Christ, not at the time of water baptism

**2- Born of the Spirit cannot refer to a Pentecostal experience:**

Acts 2 (the coming of the Spirit and gifts) 3+ years later

**3- Water may refer to physical birth (water breaking) & Spirit to the Holy Spirit (I do not hold this view, but cannot disprove it).**

If so, being born of water & Spirit = born physically + born again

#### 4. Water & [wind] Spirit may refer to the lifegiving Holy Spirit 3

Isaiah 44<sup>3</sup> Fear not, O Jacob My servant; And you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. <sup>3</sup> For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; <sup>4</sup> They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses. <sup>5</sup> One will say, 'I am the LORD's'; Another will call himself by the name of Jacob; Another will write with his hand, 'The LORD's,' And name himself by the name of Israel.

Ezek 37<sup>8</sup> Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them. <sup>9</sup> Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.'""

If so, being born of water & Spirit = being born again by Spirit.

(Views 3-4 are within mainstream Baptist theology; 1-2 are not)

**Explaining v 8: Regarding believers, one may hear them speak of the Lord, but cannot see the Spirit who worked in them**

**Being born-again/from above still puzzled Nicodemus (3:9)**

**Jesus hints that any teacher of Israel should know this (3:10)**

Cf. Isaiah 44:3-5 and Ezekiel 37:1-14 (I cited 37:8-9) on p. 1

**Nic' & friends disbelieved His testimony of earthly things; so He cannot yet entrust them with heavenly things (3:11-12)**

Note that this explains John 2:24, where (even when people believed the basics, Jesus did not really entrust men with ministry (nor with advanced truths until the Last Discourse).

**Jesus, the Son of Man, is the only One who has both ascended to heaven and descended from heaven (3:13)**

Prov 30<sup>4</sup> Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His Son's name, If you know?

Daniel 7<sup>3</sup> I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.

<sup>14</sup> Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve [*pelah* = religious service, i.e., worship: cf. Dan 3:12, 14, 17f, etc.] Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

**Jesus will be lifted on cross (as Moses lifted bronze serpent), so believers in Him will have everlasting life (3:14-15)**

#### CONCLUSION

Nic' & friends (teachers of Israel) should have already known that God gives the dead life as in Isaiah & Ezekiel (born again).