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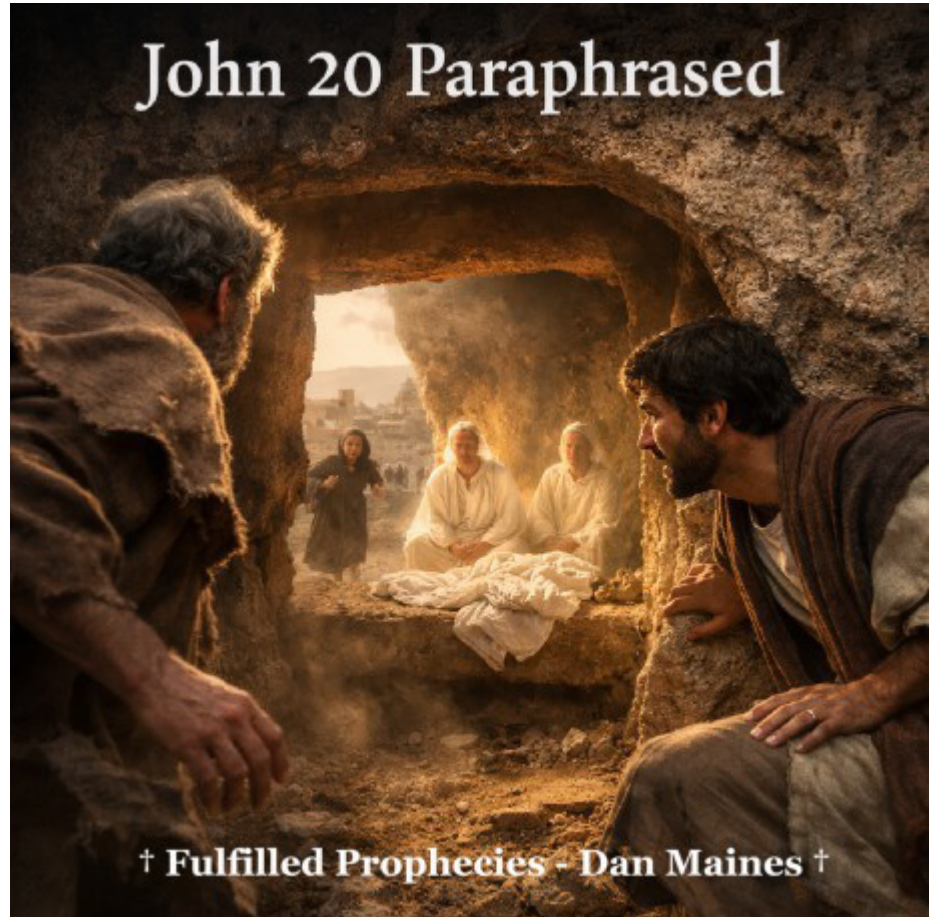
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John 20 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

John 20 Paraphrased

Introduction

† This chapter shows the turning point, the empty tomb, the risen Christ, and the beginning of the fulfilled reality.

† Everything Jesus promised comes into view here, not as future hope, but as present reality for those who saw it.

† This is where death is exposed as defeated, and the new covenant life begins to be revealed (2 Timothy 1:10).

John 20:1

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary

Magdalene came to the tomb and saw the stone had been taken away

† The empty tomb wasn't discovered by rulers or priests, but by a faithful follower.

† The removal of the stone shows that what was sealed by men couldn't hold what God raised.

† This moment begins the visible proof that death had no authority over Him (Acts 2:24).

John 20:2

She ran and came to Simon Peter and the other disciple whom Jesus loved and said they've taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they've laid Him

† At this point she assumes theft, not resurrection.

† Even those closest to Him didn't yet grasp what He had already told them.

† This shows how unexpected the resurrection was, even to His followers.

John 20:3

So Peter and the other disciple went out and were going toward the tomb

† The response is immediate, they run to see for themselves.

† Faith often begins with investigation before understanding fully develops.

† God allows evidence to be seen before truth is fully realized.

John 20:4

The two were running together and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first

† John outruns Peter, showing urgency and eagerness.

† Their race reflects the intensity of the moment.

† This wasn't casual curiosity, it was driven by shock and confusion.

John 20:5

He stooped and looked in and saw the linen wrappings lying there but he didn't go in

† The grave clothes remain, showing no struggle or theft.

† This detail proves the body wasn't taken in haste.

† The scene itself testifies to something supernatural.

John 20:6

Simon Peter came following him and entered the tomb and saw the linen wrappings lying there

† Peter acts boldly and goes straight in.

† The evidence is undeniable, the body is gone but everything else remains.

† This begins to confront their unbelief with reality.

John 20:7

And the face cloth which had been on His head not lying with the wrappings but folded up in a place by itself

† The folded cloth shows order, not chaos.

† This wasn't grave robbery, it was deliberate and calm.

† The resurrection didn't disturb the grave, it passed through it.

John 20:8

So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb also entered and he saw and believed

† Seeing led to belief, the evidence was enough.

† This is the first clear moment of recognition.

† Faith here is grounded in what was seen, not imagined.

John 20:9

For they didn't yet understand the Scripture that He must rise again from the dead

† They believed before fully understanding.

† Scripture often becomes clear after fulfillment, not before.

† This shows that prophecy was fulfilled beyond their

expectations.

John 20:10

So the disciples went away again to their own homes

† They leave still processing what they've seen.

† The full meaning hasn't settled in yet.

† Fulfillment often takes time to fully grasp.

John 20:11

But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping and as she wept she stooped and looked into the tomb

† Her grief keeps her near even after others leave.

† Love and sorrow hold her in place.

† She's about to witness something greater than she expected.

John 20:12

And she saw two angels in white sitting one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had been lying

† The presence of angels confirms divine activity.

† The empty space between them highlights the absence of death.

† Heaven is testifying that something has changed.

John 20:13

They said to her woman why are you weeping she said because they've taken away my Lord and I don't know where they've laid Him

† She still believes the body was moved.

† Her focus is still on loss, not resurrection.

† This shows how deeply grief can cloud understanding.

John 20:14

When she had said this she turned around and saw Jesus standing there and didn't know it was Jesus

† The risen body isn't immediately recognized.

† This shows a transformation, not just resuscitation.

† Recognition now depends on revelation, not just sight.

John 20:15

Jesus said to her woman why are you weeping whom are you seeking thinking He was the gardener she said sir if you've carried Him away tell me where you've laid Him and I'll take Him away

† She still sees Him through natural assumptions.

† Her devotion is evident, she's willing to carry Him herself.

† Even in misunderstanding, her love remains strong.

John 20:16

Jesus said to her Mary she turned and said to Him Rabboni which means teacher

† Recognition comes through His voice.

† Personal calling brings clarity.

† The relationship is restored instantly through recognition.

John 20:17

Jesus said to her stop clinging to Me for I haven't yet ascended to the Father but go to My brothers and say to them I ascend to My Father and your Father and My God and your God

† He redirects her from holding onto the physical.

† The relationship is now shared, His Father is now their Father.

† This marks the transition into the new covenant relationship (Hebrews 2:11).

John 20:18

Mary Magdalene came announcing to the disciples I've seen the Lord and that He had said these things to her

† She becomes the first witness of the risen Christ.

† Her testimony begins the spread of resurrection truth.

† God uses unexpected people to declare fulfilled promises.

John 20:19

So when it was evening on that day the first day of the week

and the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews Jesus came and stood among them and said peace be with you

† He appears despite locked doors, showing a transformed body.

† Fear is met with peace.

† His presence replaces anxiety with assurance.

John 20:20

And when He had said this He showed them both His hands and His side the disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord

† The wounds confirm identity.

† The same Jesus who was crucified is now alive.

† Joy replaces fear when truth is seen.

John 20:21

So Jesus said to them again peace be with you as the Father has sent Me I also send you

† Their mission now begins.

† They are sent just as He was sent.

† Fulfillment leads directly into purpose.

John 20:22

And when He had said this He breathed on them and said receive the Holy Spirit

† This echoes the creation of Adam, new life is given.

† This marks the beginning of spiritual life in fulfillment.

† The new creation is now active (2 Corinthians 5:17).

John 20:23

If you forgive the sins of any their sins have been forgiven them if you retain the sins of any they have been retained

† Authority is given concerning forgiveness.

† This reflects the message of the gospel being proclaimed.

† Forgiveness is now declared through the fulfilled work of

Christ.

John 20:24

But Thomas one of the twelve called Didymus wasn't with them when Jesus came

† Thomas misses the first appearance.

† His absence sets up a deeper lesson on belief.

† Not all witnesses saw at the same time.

John 20:25

So the other disciples were saying to him we've seen the Lord but he said unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails and put my finger into the place of the nails and put my hand into His side I won't believe

† Thomas demands physical proof.

† His doubt represents many who require evidence.

† This sets up a powerful confirmation of truth.

John 20:26

After eight days His disciples were again inside and Thomas with them Jesus came the doors having been shut and stood among them and said peace be with you

† Jesus meets Thomas where he is.

† The same greeting is repeated, peace remains central.

† His patience shows grace toward doubt.

John 20:27

Then He said to Thomas reach here with your finger and see My hands and reach here your hand and put it into My side and don't be unbelieving but believing

† Jesus addresses Thomas directly.

† The invitation removes all doubt.

† Belief is now grounded in undeniable reality.

John 20:28

Thomas answered and said to Him my Lord and my God

† This is a full confession of His identity.

† Thomas moves from doubt to complete belief.

† The resurrection confirms His divinity.

John 20:29

Jesus said to him because you've seen Me have you believed
blessed are they who didn't see and yet believed

† This extends beyond the first witnesses.

† Future believers are included in the blessing.

† Faith now rests on testimony, not physical sight.

John 20:30

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the
presence of the disciples which aren't written in this book

† Not everything was recorded.

† What is written is selective and purposeful.

† The focus is on what leads to belief.

John 20:31

But these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus
is the Christ the Son of God and that believing you may have
life in His name

† The purpose of the account is clear, belief leading to life.

† Life is found in His name, not in future expectation.

† This is the fulfilled reality offered to all who believe.

Historical References

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, confirms the historical
context of Jerusalem and the events surrounding that
generation.

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies, affirms the resurrection as central
to the faith delivered to the early church.

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, records the spread of belief
in the risen Christ throughout the first century.

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, speaks of the knowledge of

Christ as fulfilled truth, not future speculation.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We're not waiting for life, it's already been given through the risen Christ (John 5:24).

† We don't need physical proof, we have the completed testimony.

† Fear is replaced with peace when we understand what has been fulfilled.

† Our mission continues just as He sent them, to proclaim what has already been accomplished.

† The resurrection isn't future, it's the foundation of our present life in Him.

Q & A Appendix:

Q: When did the resurrection life begin?

A: It began when Christ was raised and revealed Himself to His disciples (John 20:22; 2 Timothy 1:10).

Q: Why didn't they recognize Him immediately?

A: His body was transformed, requiring revelation to recognize Him (John 20:14; Luke 24:16).

Q: What does believing without seeing mean?

A: It means trusting the testimony that has been given (John 20:29; Romans 10:17).

Q: Did the disciples fully understand right away?

A: No, understanding came after seeing fulfillment (John 20:9; Luke 24:45).

Q: What does this mean for us today?

A: It means we live in the reality of what has already been accomplished (John 20:31; 1 John 5:11-12).

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

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† John 20

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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