THE THIRD LETTER OF JOHN

Greek–English Interlinear with Koine Phonetics

NA28 Critical Text · Modern English Translation · Reconstructed First-Century Pronunciation

Part of the General Epistles · The New Testament Greek–English Interlinear Series

HOW TO USE THIS EDITION

Each verse appears in three lines:
LINE 1 — ENGLISH (black): Modern English translation from the NA28 critical text.
LINE 2 — GREEK (blue): NA28 text with diacritical marks.
LINE 3 — PHONETICS (grey italic): Reconstructed first-century Koine pronunciation.

PHONETIC KEY: a = 'father' | e = 'bed' | ī/ē = long 'ee' | o = 'hot' | ō = 'oh' | ū = 'moon'
ai = 'aisle' | ei → ī | oi = 'oil' | au → av/af | eu → ev/ef | ou → ū
β = 'v' | δ = 'th' (then) | θ = 'th' (thin) | φ = 'f' | χ = 'ch' (Bach) | ζ = 'z'
CAPITALS mark the stressed syllable. Initial h- = rough breathing.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

The Third Letter of John, the shortest book in the New Testament at 15 verses, is a private letter from 'the elder' to an individual named Gaius — the only NT letter addressed by name to a private individual other than Philemon, Philemon being written by Paul. Gaius is praised for his hospitality to traveling missionaries ('the brothers') and urged to continue supporting them despite the interference of Diotrephes, who 'loves to be first' (φιλοπρωτεύων, philoproteuōn — a word found nowhere else in ancient Greek literature), refuses to welcome the elder's emissaries, and has expelled those who do welcome them from the church.

The letter provides a uniquely concrete window into early church dynamics: the authority of a respected teacher (the elder), a local leader who resists that authority (Diotrephes), a hospitable church member who aligns with the elder (Gaius), and a third figure commended by all (Demetrius, v.12). The conflict is not primarily doctrinal — unlike the situation in 1 and 2 John — but concerns ecclesiastical authority, hospitality norms, and the relationship between traveling teachers and local congregational leadership. Some scholars see in Diotrephes the early emergence of monarchical episcopate — a single bishop asserting local authority against itinerant apostolic figures.

The letter's most quoted verse — 'I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth' (v.4) — distills the pastoral heart of the Johannine corpus. The closing of 3 John mirrors 2 John almost exactly: 'I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face' (v.14, cf. 2 John 12). The 'friends' greeting (v.15 — 'the friends here send their greetings; greet the friends there by name') is a distinctive Johannine touch, using φίλος (philos, friend) rather than the more common ἀδελφός (adelphos, brother).

3 JOHN: GAIUS, DIOTREPHES, AND DEMETRIUS

ENGLISH | **GREEK (NA28)** | ***KOINE PHONETICS***

[1] The elder, To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

Ὁ πρεσβύτερος Γαΐῳ τῷ ἀγαπητῷ, ὃν ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.

ho pres-VÝT-er-os Ga-Íl-ō tō a-ga-pī-TŌÍ, HÒN e-GŌ a-ga-PŌ en a-lī-THĪÍÎ-a.

[2] Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

ἀγαπητέ, περὶ πάντων εὔχομαί σε εὐοδοῦσθαι καὶ ὑγιαίνειν, καθὼς εὐοδοῦταί σου ἡ ψυχή.

a-ga-pī-TÉ, pe-RÌ PÁN-tōn EF-kho-maí se ev-o-DŪÍ-sthai ke hy-gi-ÉÍN-ein, ka-THŌS ev-o-DŪÍ-taí su hī psy-KHĪÍ.

[3] It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it.

ἐχάρην γὰρ λίαν ἐρχομένων ἀδελφῶν καὶ μαρτυρούντων σου τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, καθὼς σὺ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ περιπατεῖς.

e-KHÁ-rīn gàr LÍ-an er-kho-MÉN-ōn a-del-PHŌN ke mar-ty-RŪÍ-on-tōn su tī a-lī-THĪÍÎ-a, ka-THŌS SÝ en a-lī-THĪÍÎ-a pe-ri-pa-TŪÍIS.

[4] I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

μειζοτέραν τούτων οὐκ ἔχω χαράν, ἵνα ἀκούω τὰ ἐμὰ τέκνα ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ περιπατοῦντα.

mei-zo-TÉR-an TŪÍ-tōn ŪK ÉKH-ō kha-RÁN, HÍ-na a-KŪÍ-ō ta e-MÀ TÉK-na en tī a-lī-THĪÍÎ-a pe-ri-pa-TŪÍN-ta.

[9] I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us.

ἔγραψά τι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ· ἀλλ' ὁ φιλοπρωτεύων αὐτῶν Διοτρέφης οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται ἡμᾶς.

ÉG-rap-sá ti tī ek-klī-SÍ-a: all' ho phi-lo-prō-TÉF-ōn af-TŌN Di-ot-RÉ-phīs ŪK e-pi-DÉKh-e-tai hī-MÂS.

[11] Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.

ἀγαπητέ, μὴ μιμοῦ τὸ κακὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀγαθόν. ὁ ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστιν· ὁ κακοποιῶν οὐχ ἑώρακεν τὸν θεόν.

a-ga-pī-TÉ, mī mi-MŪÍ to ka-KÒN AL-là to a-ga-THÓN. ho a-ga-tho-poi-ŌN ek tū the-ŪÍ ÉS-tin: ho ka-ko-poi-ŌN ŪKH he-ŌÍR-a-ken ton the-ÓN.

[12] Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone — and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.

Δημητρίῳ μεμαρτύρηται ὑπὸ πάντων καὶ ὑπὸ αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας· καὶ ἡμεῖς δὲ μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ οἶδας ὅτι ἡ μαρτυρία ἡμῶν ἀληθής ἐστιν.

Dī-mī-TRÍ-ō me-mar-TÝR-ī-tai hy-PÒ PÁN-tōn ke hy-PÒ af-TĪS tīs a-lī-THĪÍÎ-as: ke hī-MĪÍS de mar-ty-RŪÍ-men, ke OÍD-as HÓ-ti hī mar-ty-RÍ-a hī-MŌN a-lī-THĪÍS ÉS-tin.

[14] I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.

ἐλπίζω δὲ εὐθέως σε ἰδεῖν, καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσομεν. εἰρήνη σοι. ἀσπάζονταί σε οἱ φίλοι. ἀσπάζου τοὺς φίλους κατ' ὄνομα.

el-PÍZ-ō de ev-THÉE-ōs se i-DĪÍN, ke STÓ-ma pròs STÓ-ma la-LĪÍ-so-men. ei-RĪÍ-nī soi. as-PÁZ-on-taí se hoi PHÍL-oi. as-PÁZ-u tūs PHÍL-us kat' ÓN-o-ma.