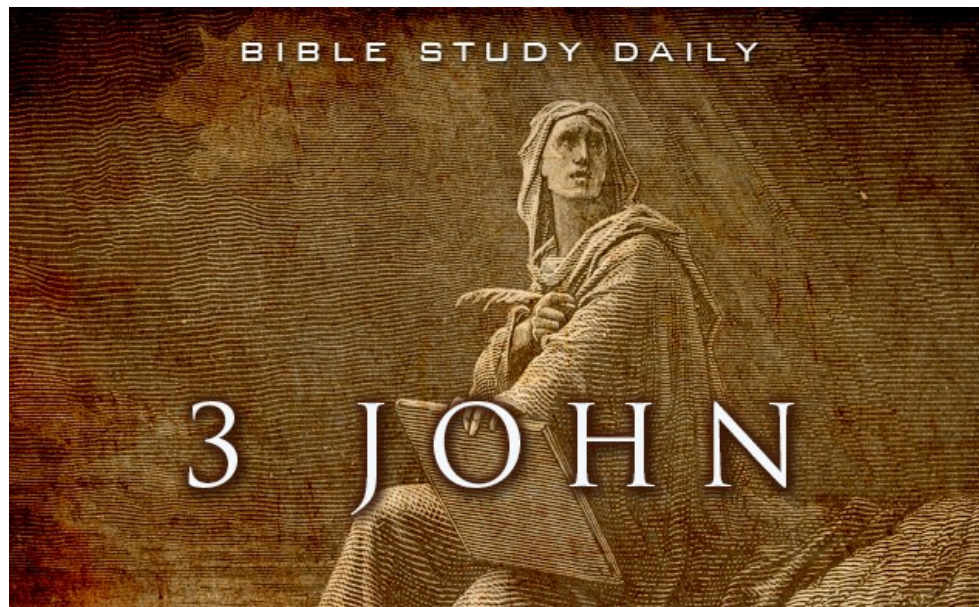




BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of 3 John as well as my study notes for the book.

Name

The title “3 John ” comes from John, the Son of Zebedee, and the author of the Gospel of John.

Author

Although John’s name does not appear in the letter, it is traditionally ascribed to him. The author identifies himself only as “the elder.”

External evidence comes from a number of early church fathers who ascribe authorship to John, including: Clement of Alexandria, Cyril, and Dionysius.

Genre

General Epistle

Literary Form

2 John bears the marks of a traditional letter format (an opening, the letter body, and a close). Its form is a personal letter.

Time Frame

There are some scholars who believe John’s three letters (1, 2, & 3 John) were written in the early A.D. 60’s. before the Roman destruction in A.D. 70. However, scholarly consensus is the letters were written from Ephesus sometime between A.D. 80-95. 3 John was probably written at the same time as 1 & 2 John or shortly thereafter.

Emphasis

The shortest book in the New Testament, the emphasis of 3 John is on accepting travelling ministers and spiritual leaders.

Outline

- Greeting (1-2)
- Commendation of Gaius, and Demetrius. Warning about Diotrephes (5-12)
- Closing farewell (13-14)

3 John 1

In verses 1-4 John introduces himself as “The Elder,” and addresses the letter to his dear friend Gaius.

Note: The Greek word for elder, *presbyteros*, could mean either an older man, an official position in the church, or both. In some older manuscripts all the original apostles were referred to as elders.

Note: The phrase “My dear friend” is a translation of the Greek *to agapeto*, meaning beloved. John addresses Gaius this way in verse 1, 2, 5, and 11.

- John offers prayers for Gaius’ health and prosperity, and is joyful to hear that Gaius is walking in the truth.
- John refers to Gaius as one of his children indicating Gaius may have been converted by John.

In verses 5-8 John commends Gaius for his faithfulness:


- You are showing faithfulness by what you are doing for the brothers, especially when they are strangers.
- They have testified of your love in the church.
- You will do well to send them on a journey worthy of God (physical and monetary provisions).
- They take nothing from the pagans.
- Therefore, we ought to support men such as this who are coworkers in the truth (spreading the Gospel).

Note: The idea of “support” means to be in partnership with men who are doing this work of spreading the Gospel.

In verses 9-11 John condemns Diotrephes and commends Demetrius:

- John indicates he has written to the church previously, but Diotrephes who puts himself first, does not receive the word from John.
- When I come I will remind him of the slandering and malicious words.
- He refuses to welcome the brothers and worse, prevents those who want to welcome them, and expels them from the church.
- Do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.
- The one who does good is of God. The one who does evil has not seen God.
- Demetrius has a good testimony from everyone, including myself, and you know my testimony is true.

In verses 13-14 John closes with a farewell greeting. He acknowledges that he has much more to tell him (Gaius), but hopes to see him in person and talk



face to face.

Note: The Demetrius John refers to here is not the same Demetrius the silversmith referred to in Acts 19:24.