

3 Yochanan

In your home life, consider how you can support those in need, as **Gaius** did for his brother **Believers**. If you notice a family member struggling with isolation or discouragement, invite them for a meal or coffee this week. Create a space in your home where they feel valued and heard. This act of hospitality doesn't just meet their physical needs; it nurtures their soul and reinforces the bonds of community **God** desires for us.

Introduction

The shortest book in the **Brit Hadasah**, **3 Yochanan** is a letter with a kind but businesslike tone. "**The Elder**" sought to encourage **Gaius**, who was perhaps a pastor under his oversight. The epistle gives mostly positive counsel but also warns against a power-hungry leader named **Diotrephes**. Truth, love, and **God's** goodness are predominant themes.

¹ From: The Elder To: Dear Gaius, whom I love in truth:

Gaius. A common name in the **Brit Hadasah**; see 1 Corinthians 1:14–17. Because of **Yochanan's** language in v. 7, I take it that this **Gaius** was a **Messianic Jew**. **Truth**. Used five times in vv. 1–4, 12; see 2 Yochanan 1.

² Dear friend, I am praying that everything prosper with you and that you be in good health, as I know you are prospering spiritually. ³ For I was so happy when some brothers came and testified how faithful you are to the truth, as you continue living in the truth.

"**Happy**" appears in the openings of all **Yochanan's** letters (1 **Yoch.** 1:4; 2 **Yoch.** 4). **Yochanan's** concerns did not rob him of his delight in the **Messianic** faith.

⁴ Nothing gives me greater joy than hearing that my children are living in the truth.

My children may point to the fruit of **Yochanan's** patient and faithful pastoral labors. Some may have been converts, while others may have been believers encouraged by his ministry. Walking in the truth means living in a way that honors and pleases **God**. It could even refer to living "in **Messiah**" since He is "**the truth**" (**Yoch.** 14:6; 1 **Yoch.** 5:20).

⁵ Dear friend, you are faithful in all the work you are doing for the brothers, even when they are strangers to you.

Faith is not merely mental but is demonstrated by how Believers live. **Yeshua** taught that His followers should be gracious to everyone, including strangers, and not just to their friends and relatives.

⁶ They have testified to your love in front of the congregation. You will be doing well if you send them on their way in a manner worthy of God,

Sending them on their way includes physical and monetary provision, not just verbal good wishes. These laborers for the **Lord** deserved support worthy of **God** because they were doing **God's** work (Matityahu 10:10).

⁷ since it was for the sake of HaShem that they went out without accepting anything from the Goyim. ⁸ It is we, therefore, who should support such people; so that we may share in their work for the truth.

For the sake of HaShem, literally, "**for the sake of the name.**" "**HaShem**," like "**Adonai**" (see Matityahu 1:20), is a **Jewish** euphemism for "**YHVH**," **God's** personal name. Hence **Yochanan** means "**for the sake**

of God.” Alternatively, “**the name**” may be a code for “**Yeshua**,” reflecting the danger of referring to him explicitly in a written message (2 Yochanan 1). They, **Messianic Jews**, went out without accepting anything from the **Goyim**, that is, from pagans; **Messianic Gentiles** are surely not counted as **Goyim** in this context. And that is as it should be, since the middle wall of partition has been broken down (Ephesians 2:11–16), and in the **Messiah** there is neither **Jew** nor **Gentile** (Galatians 3:28). It is we, therefore, who should support such people, we **Jews** and **Gentiles** who believe in **Yeshua**. In colloquial language, we should put our money where our mouth is.

⁹ I wrote something to the congregation; but Diotrephes, who likes to be the macher among them, doesn't recognize our authority. ¹⁰ So if I come, I will bring up everything he is doing, including his spiteful and groundless gossip about us. And as if that weren't enough for him, he refuses to recognize the brothers' authority either; moreover, he stops those who want to do so and tries to drive them out of the congregation!

Macher, Yiddish for “*big shot, real operator*”. **Diotrephes** is the perfect example. Not only does he not recognize **Yochanan's** authority, but he also uses lashon hara against him, gossip that is not only spiteful but groundless. He won't submit to the other brothers' authority either; indeed, he will not have anyone around him who accepts the biblical principle of submission to authority (Ephesians 5:21, Messianic Jews 13:17). Unless **Diotrephes** is stopped, only blind followers will be left in this congregation; and he will turn it into a cult, in the modern sense of the term.

¹¹ Dear friend, don't imitate the bad, but the good. Those who do what is good are from God; those who do what is bad are not from God. ¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius, and so does the truth itself. We vouch for him, and you know that our testimony is true.

Demetrius may have given ordinances to the community that Diotrephes and his clique did not accept. Or he may have brought the letter to **Gaius**. According to an early **Messianic** writing, **Kefa** ordained a man called Demetrius as first bishop in Philadelphia (Apostolic Constitutions 7:46).

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¹³ I have much to write you, but I don't want to write with pen and ink; ¹⁴ however, I am hoping to see you very soon, and we will speak face to face.

Shalom to you. Your friends send you their greetings. Greet each of our friends by name. ¹

With the words “*don't want to write*”, **Yochanan** indicated that this epistle was a stopgap measure until he could pay a personal visit to his readers. **Shalom**, indicating **God's** living presence and blessing. **Greetings** by name remind us that one of the great joys of the household of **God** is the fellowship of shared commitment to **Yeshua HaMashiach**.

As you engage in public debates or discussions, let the principles of 3 Yochanan guide your approach. Focus on maintaining respect and grace, even when disagreements arise. Rather than seeing opposition as a chance to win an argument, see it as an opportunity to model Messiah-like humility and patience. Share your views without attacking others' character, affirming that loving dialogue is key in a world full of division.

¹ 3 Yochanan