

James 3 — clausal layout

ΙΑΚΩΒΟΥ Γ΄

Each line is one clause or discrete phrase of the standard critical text, colored by syntactic type; indentation marks levels of subordination. The verse numbers sit in the left gutter; the small tag on each line names the clause type and its function.

independent

participial

relative

purpose

cause

conditional

phrase modifier

dashed = verbless / suspended

Flush-left = a main (independent) clause. Each dependent line begins directly beneath the word it attaches to in the line above — the anchor word is dotted-underlined, and lights up when you hover its dependent clause; each tag also names the attachment. A dashed border marks verbless, elliptical, or suspended lines. Where a long sentence's staircase runs wider than the page, the diagram scrolls sideways. (In print, or without JavaScript, lines fall back to stepped indent columns.)

The tongue — a small member, a great fire 3:1–12

VV. 1–2 — NOT MANY TEACHERS: WE ALL STUMBLE, AND THE MAN WHO NEVER STUMBLES IN WORD

- 1 Μὴ πολλοὶ διδάσκαλοι γίνεσθε, ἀδελφοί μου, independent — the prohibition — teaching weighed before it is taken up
| εἰδότες ὅτι μείζον κρίμα λημψόμεθα. participial — causal — the ground the teacher already knows (ὅτι-content kept within the line)

- 2 | **πολλὰ γὰρ πταίομεν ἅπαντες.** cause — the wider ground of the prohibition — ἅπαντες, James included
 | **εἴ τις ἐν λόγῳ οὐ πταίει,** conditional — protasis — leans on the verdict below
 | **οὗτος τέλειος ἀνὴρ,** independent — apodosis — verbless verdict: τέλειος ἀνὴρ
 | **δυνατὸς χαλιναγωγῆσαι καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα.** phrase modifier — apposition expanding the verdict — χαλιναγωγῆσαι plants the bridle image for v. 3

VV. 3–5 — THE SIMILES: THE HORSES' BITS, THE SHIPS' RUDDER, THE SPARK IN THE FOREST

- 3 | **εἰ δὲ τῶν ἵππων τοὺς χαλινούς εἰς τὰ στόματα βάλλομεν** conditional — protasis — leans on the apodosis below; the bridle of v. 2 made literal
 | **εἰς τὸ πείθεσθαι αὐτοὺς ἡμῖν,** purpose — εἰς τό + infinitive — why the bit goes in
 | **καὶ ὅλον τὸ σῶμα αὐτῶν μετάγομεν.** independent — apodosis — the whole animal turned by the smallest tackle
- 4 | **ἰδοὺ καὶ τὰ πλοῖα,** independent — ἰδοὺ — the subject suspended over its participles
 | **τηλικαῦτα ὄντα καὶ ὑπὸ ἀνέμων σκληρῶν ἐλαυνόμενα,** participial — concessive pair — size and storm both conceded
 | **μετάγεται ὑπὸ ἐλαχίστου πηδαλίου** independent — the suspended subject finds its verb — μετάγεται echoes v. 3
 | **ὅπου ἡ ὁρμή τοῦ εὐθύνοντος βούλεται.** relative — ὅπου — the rudder answers to one man's ὁρμή
- 5 | **οὕτως καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα μικρὸν μέλος ἐστὶν** independent — οὕτως καί — the similes land on the tongue
 | **καὶ μεγάλα αὐχεῖ.** independent — coordinate finite — μικρὸν against μεγάλα
 | **ἰδοὺ ἡλίκον πῦρ ἡλίκην ὕλην ἀνάπτει·** independent — the third simile — ἡλίκον...ἡλίκην, the spark and the forest

VV. 6–8 — THE TONGUE AS FIRE: SET AMONG OUR MEMBERS, AND UNTAMABLE

- 6 | **καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ,** independent — verbless metaphor — the simile hardens into identification
 | **ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας·** phrase modifier — apposition on πῦρ — ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, a whole unrighteous world in one member
 | **ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν,** independent — the placement — καθίσταται, stationed among the members
 | **ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα** participial — attributive — the stain spreads from the one member
 | **καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως** participial — attributive — τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως read as the whole course of life

καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γέεννης. participial — the passive twin — φλογίζουσα answered by φλογιζομένη: the arsonist is itself arson

7 πᾶσα γὰρ φύσις θηρίων τε καὶ πετεινῶν, ἐρπετῶν τε καὶ ἐναλίων δαμάζεται καὶ δεδάμασται τῇ φύσει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ. independent — γάρ — the taming premise: all four classes of creature, present and perfect

8 τὴν δὲ γλῶσσαν οὐδεὶς δαμάσαι δύναται ἀνθρώπων. independent — the antithesis — δέ against v. 7: the one untamable nature

ἀκατάστατον κακόν, phrase modifier — verbless apposition on τὴν γλῶσσαν — ἀκατάστατον, never at rest

μεστὴ ἰοῦ θανατηφόρου. phrase modifier — verbless apposition — the asp's venom (cf. Ps 140:3)

VV. 9–12 — BLESSING AND CURSING FROM THE SAME MOUTH: THE SPRING AND THE FIG TREE

9 ἐν αὐτῇ εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα, independent — the scandal, first limb — ἐν αὐτῇ: the tongue at worship

καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ καταρώμεθα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους independent — the scandal, second limb — the same instrument turned

τοὺς καθ' ὁμοίωσιν θεοῦ γεγονότας: participial — attributive — καθ' ὁμοίωσιν (Gen 1:26): cursing men reaches their Maker

10 ἐκ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στόματος ἐξέρχεται εὐλογία καὶ κατάρα. independent — the scandal stated — one στόμα, two streams

οὐ χρή, ἀδελφοί μου, ταῦτα οὕτως γίνεσθαι. independent — the verdict — οὐ' χρή, the letter's only use of χρή

11 μήτι ἡ πηγὴ ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ὁπῆς βρῦει τὸ γλυκὺ καὶ τὸ πικρόν; independent — μήτι — nature's first witness, expecting 'no'

12 μὴ δύναται, ἀδελφοί μου, συκὴ ἐλαίας ποιῆσαι ἢ ἄμπελος σῦκα; independent — μὴ — nature's second witness: each nature bears its own

οὔτε ἀλυκὸν γλυκὺ ποιῆσαι ὕδωρ. independent — elliptical close — οὔτε, δύναται carried forward: the mouth must choose its spring

The wisdom from above 3:13–18

VV. 13–16 — THE WISDOM FROM BELOW: JEALOUSY, AMBITION, DISORDER

13 Τίς σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων ἐν ὑμῖν; independent — the diatribe question — verbless: σοφὸς καὶ ἐπιστήμων, the teacher's own claim

δειξάτω ἐκ τῆς καλῆς ἀναστροφῆς τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ἐν πραΰτητι σοφίας. independent — the answer — δειξάτω: wisdom proved by conduct, in meekness

14 εἰ δὲ ζῆλον πικρὸν ἔχετε καὶ ἐριθείαν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑμῶν, conditional — protasis — leans on the prohibition below

μὴ κατακαυχᾶσθε καὶ ψεύδεσθε κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας.

independent — apodosis — such 'wisdom' may not advertise itself

15

οὐκ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ σοφία ἄνωθεν κατερχομένη,

independent — the disqualification — αὕτη, the jealous kind, denied the name ἄνωθεν

ἀλλὰ ἐπίγειος, ψυχική, δαιμονιώδης.

independent — the verbless triad — ἐπίγειος, ψυχική, δαιμονιώδης: each step lower

16

ὅπου γὰρ ζῆλος καὶ ἐριθεία, ἐκεῖ ἀκαταστασία καὶ πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα.

cause — ὅπου...ἐκεῖ — why it is disqualified: envy's soil grows

ἀκαταστασία (cf. ἀκατάστατον, v. 8)

VV. 17–18 — THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE: THE VIRTUE CATALOGUE AND THE HARVEST OF PEACE

17

ἡ δὲ ἄνωθεν σοφία πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή ἐστιν,

independent — the counter-portrait — πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή: purity before all else

ἔπειτα εἰρηνική, ἐπιεικής, εὐπειθής, μεστή ἐλέους καὶ καρπῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἀδιάκριτος, ἀνυπόκριτος.

phrase modifier — ἔπειτα — the

catalogue continues the predicate, ἐστίν carried forward

18

καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται τοῖς ποιοῦσιν εἰρήνην.

independent — the close — the harvest metaphor: peace-makers sow the

seed whose fruit is righteousness

Analysis. James 3 reads nothing like the Pauline chains: almost every line sits flush left, purple aphorism after purple aphorism, and the eye sees at once that this chapter argues by parataxis — simile set beside simile, verdict beside verdict — not by subordination (the deepest line in the whole chapter is a single purpose phrase at level 2). Three olive protases lean forward on their verdicts (vv. 2, 3, 14), and the two ἰδοὺ similes share one shape: a suspended subject (the ships) caught by its verb two lines later, μετὰγεται echoing the μετὰγομεν of the horses. The dashed verbless lines carry the chapter's most savage lines — ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ with its apposition ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, and the double indictment ἀκατάστατον κακόν, μεστή ἰοῦ θανατηφόρου hanging under τὴν γλῶσσαν; in v. 6 a teal participle triad descends from the stationed tongue — defiling, setting on fire, itself set on fire — the active φλογίζουσα answered by the passive φλογιζομένη from Gehenna. Interpretive choices the layout takes a side on: εἰ δέ at v. 3 is read as a true conditional (not the variant ἴδε); ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας is apposition to πῦρ rather than a new predication; τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως is rendered 'the course of life'; the ὅπου...ἐκεῖ line of v. 16 is kept whole as one verbless correlative grounding the triad of v. 15; and v. 17's ἔπειτα catalogue is

hung as an elliptical continuation of *πρῶτον μὲν ἀγνή ἐστιν* rather than a fresh clause, so the whole portrait of the wisdom from above stands under its one verb.

The clause segmentation, the type assigned to each line, and the indentation are interpretive — one defensible reading of the syntax, chosen to match the analysis in the chapter's interlinear (word-level syntax tier and discourse notes); other analyses divide or attach some lines differently. The Greek text is identical to the chapter data behind the interlinear and follows the standard critical text.