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COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT, VOL 2
2 JOHN

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COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

VOL 2 HEBREWS-JUDE

HEBREWS (Apollos) — Perfection

JAMES — Practice

PETER — Fire

JOHN — Love

JUDE — Lightning

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PREACHER," ETC.*

2 JOHN

1. *“The elder to the elect Cyria and her children.”* Cyria is a Greek word, which means lady. Hence the English translation, which is incorrect, as the word is simply the name of the woman to whom he is writing, because she and her children were staunch friends of Jesus, the apostles and saints.
- 2, 3. The venerable apostle is overflowing with felicitous benedictions to all.
4. He joyfully congratulates Cyria upon the amiable fidelity of her children.
5. He still pours out his flooded emphasis on his great favorite dogma of divine love to one another, which is demonstrative proof that we are all right with God.
6. As all good works are the fruits of grace, so the normal effect of this divine love is to keep the commandments of God. We are saved by grace, *i.e.*, this divine love, and not by works. ⁴⁰⁰Ephesians 2:8. Meanwhile our faithful obedience to all the commandment of God shows forth the luscious fruits of perfect love.

ARGUMENT 15

THE CHRISTHOOD

7. *“Because many deceivers have come into the world, who do not confess that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh, the same is the deceiver and Antichrist.”*
8. *“Beware of them in order that you may ‘not destroy the things you may have done but may receive a full reward.’”*
9. *“Every one going forth and not abiding in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine hath both the Father and Son.”*

10. *“If any one cometh unto you and bringeth not this doctrine do not receive him into your house, and do not say unto him God speed.”*

11. *“He that saith to him God speed partaketh of his evil deeds.”* These five verses set forth a summary of John’s climacteric of the Christhood which he constantly emphasizes, as the citadel of revealed truth, and the palladium of the Christian’s hope. Unfortunately the seventh verse in English, “is come in the flesh,” is wrong, the true Greek, *erchomenon*, is “coming in the flesh,” being in the present tense. So important is this great doctrine of the Christhood, *i.e.*, that the God-man Christ has come on the earth, perfected the plan of salvation, ascended up to heaven, and is coming again in the flesh, *i.e.*, His glorified body, when the “Father has made His enemies His footstool,” to sit upon the throne of His glory and reign forever. Meanwhile the literal Christ encumbers the mediatorial throne in heaven, the spiritual Christ, in the person of the Holy Ghost (~~401~~ John 16:7), succeeds Him on the earth, calling out, inspiring and adorning His Bride to meet Him in holy wedlock, when He rides down on a cloud, and reign with Him forever. Since this glorious doctrine of the Christhood constitutes the essence of the redemptive scheme, we are to guard it as the apple of the eye, filled with spiritual discernment, ever ready to detect the cloven foot of Antichrist and the soft palaver of the false prophets, who in John’s day were making sad havoc with the Church. In our day they are innumerable as the locusts of Egypt, bidding defiance to every approach of simple, solid, Gospel truth. It is not only indispensable that we be born of God and sanctified wholly, but that we be fortified by all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, so beautifully described by Paul (~~402~~ 1 Corinthians 12 and ~~403~~ 1 Peter 1). If the Church had been true to the warning of John, pertinaciously standing aloof from and rejecting the Antichrists and false prophets of all ages, the millennium would have been here in all its glory before you and I were born.

12. John in this verse expresses an ardent hope to preach to the dear saints, though already about one hundred years old, flooded with the Holy Ghost, looking up to heaven, whither in his transfigured glory he soon ascended, as attested by the Apostolic fathers. As he was the last writer, of course we have no inspired record of his translation.

13. This verse contains the Christian greeting of the saintly household, doubtless extending their hospitality to the patriarch.

3 JOHN

1. Gaius was eminent for hospitality and other Christian graces.
2. John prays for the temporal prosperity of Gaius, harmoniously with the spiritual.
3. Brethren peregrinating have brought good news relative to Gaius, in which John rejoices.
4. Gaius and others to whom he writes are his spiritual children.
5. Divine love does not discriminate, but extends its benefactions to strangers.
6. Gaius has lodged and blessed strangers and sent them on their way rejoicing.
7. At this time Gentile converts were multiplying rapidly, which John appreciates, commending them to all of the churches.

ARGUMENT 16

ECCLESIASTICAL TYRANNY

9. The Holy Ghost is the only legitimate Ruler of God's Church. Of course He uses such human instrumentalities as He can manage in harmony with the will of God. When unspiritual men get control they soon turn it over to Satan. Diotrephes is an example of ecclesiastical tyranny, which in the fallen Church always becomes the normal procedure.
10. The Holy Ghost ruled the Church through John and other holy people. The carnal administration of Diotrephes has characterized the worldly church in all ages, casting out and often killing the good and promoting the unspiritual, filling the world with ecclesiastical leprosy, developing in atrocious expulsions and decapitations of God's most efficient preachers and truest saints. Lift up your head, turn whithersoever you will, behold Diotrephes in all denominations, refusing to receive the brethren,

prohibiting them that want to receive them, and casting the brethren out of the church.

11, 12. We are to do right regardless of all the persecutions Diotrephes and Satan can inflict on us. Demetrius is commended as a true saint in contrast with Diotrephes, the tyrant.

13-15. The apostle and patriarch sends friendly greeting to all his friends, with the hope of meeting them.

APOLOGUE

Perhaps none of the epistolary writings are so little understood as the Johanic, owing to his wonderful and perpetual emphasis of the *agapee* divine love, which is not brought out in the English translation. John makes the whole problem of salvation to hang on it. The English is so weak, not discriminating between the human and the divine, as to not only mar the beauty and detract from the force of the letter, but to render it very monotonous. I hope and pray that my exposition may be used by the Holy Spirit to enable us to grasp the wonderful depth and height of this beautiful epistle. The venerable patriarch, having leaned on the breast of Jesus in his youth, enjoyed the Pentecostal sanctification twenty-five years, talked with the glorified Savior on the Isle of Patmos, looking into the open panorama of celestial glory, enjoys a richness of Christian experience with an inundation of heavenly love extraordinary and transcendent, enjoying an insight into Christian experience doubtless beyond that of any other mortal. Over and over he rings heavenly bells on divine love, magnifying the Christhood and warning all against Antichrists and false prophets, holding the divine *agapee*, indigenous only in the heart of God, and poured out in the human by the Holy Ghost in regeneration, and made perfect when depravity, its irreconcilable enemy, is expurgated in entire sanctification. This love, like God, takes in its enemies as well as its friends, casts out fear, filling and thrilling the entire being with a sweetness and fragrance akin to heaven. Since the *agapee* is the divine nature, is it not perfect love? Certainly. But your heart is not perfect. The wheat is as pure grain in the stock as in the bin. Yet it is mixed with chaff, straw and cheat. You need the steam engine to clean you, making no intrinsic change, but a wonderful extrinsic, removing all the impediments to its profitable use. So the divine *agapee* is the tree of life, caught by conserving angels from the *debris* of the fall, preserved in heaven from the collapse of earth, brought back and planted by the Holy Ghost in the soil of the fallen soul in regeneration. Here in California we have nearly all the valuable fruit trees of the old world flourishing and bearing their delicious and valuable fruit. But much labor must be expended to purify the soil of its indigenous filth and fertilize it. I labored nineteen years after the heavenly tree was planted in my heart to purify my soul-soil. Fortuitously

I read ~~4189~~ 1 Corinthians 3:9, “Ye are God’s farm.” Oh, what a surprise! I thought I was the farmer. I toss away my grub-ax, matlock, hoe and spade, and begin to shout. I know God wants a perfectly clean farm. Why these Spanish needles, cinch-bugs, thorns and briers? Since thou art the Farmer and I am the farm, I turn all over to the omnipotent Farmer. He breathes on the farm, and every obnoxious weed and bramble withers and dies, decomposing and enriching the soil. Twenty-eight years have rolled away, and oh, how wonderfully He has kept the farm clean! Satan comes round with his big bag of cockle briers and Spanish needles and many obnoxious seeds, sowing them over my fields, but the fires of perfect love burn them into ashes before they can reach the ground, the falling ashes constantly enriching my soul-soil. Glory to God for His transcendent grace, which has actually subordinated the devil till he has become a fertilizer of my soil!

~~4189~~ Romans 8:28. You can not have “all things” and leave the devil out. Therefore, in a most mysterious way the devil is made a great blessing to God’s true people. It is doubtful whether anything this side of heaven is more conducive to spiritual establishment than the terrible conflicts we have with the strong intellect of Satan. Oh, the transcendent glory of this wonderful salvation!