

## Introduction to NT Books

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### XXII. Second Epistle of John

#### A. The Authorship of Second John

1. External Evidence—even though the book is brief and private, early patristics attested to Johannine authorship, such as Irenaeus, Clement, and Origen.
2. Internal Evidence
  - a. The author called himself “*The elder*” (Ὁ πρεσβύτερος) referring to his age and his office.
  - b. All of the apostles were bishops (Acts 1:20) and elders (I Pet. 5:1-4) which supports Johannine authorship.
  - c. The author used common terminology with the Gospel and First Epistle of John, such as love, truth, new commandment, deceiver, and antichrist.

#### B. The Audience and time of Second John

1. The author addressed the “*elect lady*” (ἐκλεκτῆ κυρία) and her children.
2. Various views have been posited for her identity.
  - a. The universal church of the elect.
  - b. A woman who was the elect *Kuria*.
  - c. A lady who was *Eklekte*.
  - d. A reference to a local church using a feminine adjective and a feminine noun, since ἐκκλησία is a feminine noun. John was divinely commanded to love her (a woman or a local church?) in verse 5.
3. Presumably, if Johannine, it was written co-temporally with his other works (AD 90-95).

#### C. The Purpose of Second John

1. John warned the assembly about deceivers who are present with false teaching (v. 7).
2. He forbade them from allowing such to enter their homes (v. 10).
3. He wanted the church members to receive a “*full reward*” (μισθὸν πλήρη)<sup>1</sup> by not capitulating the doctrine of Christ.

#### D. The Characteristics of Second John

1. Believers and churches are to love one another in truth (vv. 1-3, 5).
  - a. Churches are the pillar and the ground of truth (I Tim. 3:15).
  - b. Christ loves His churches (Eph. 5:25).
  - c. One’s love for his church is evinced in faithful support physically, doctrinally, financially, and prayerfully.

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<sup>1</sup>At the βῆμα of Christ, Christians have the potential of losing rewards or partial rewards because of disobedient and hypocritical living and false teaching.

2. He rejoiced that his spiritual children walked in truth (v. 5). “*Truth*” (ἀληθεία) occurs 4x in Second John.
3. The heresy prevalent in this church was Docetic in nature, or the belief that Jesus Christ was a phantom<sup>2</sup> and not physical (v. 7; I Jn. 4:3).
4. Satan hates the doctrine of the incarnation because it requires resurrection and contradicts his flesh is evil deceit (v. 7). This heresy is the spirit of antichrist (v. 7; I Jn. 2:22).
5. Believers must not perpetuate Christological error in word or deed (vv. 10-11).

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<sup>2</sup>The disciples thought that the Lord was a φάντασμα or “*spirit*” (Mt. 14:26), but He spoke to them and touched Peter (v. 31).