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Article 63: Second John at a Glance

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SECOND JOHN AT A GLANCE

This book was written to an unnamed godly mother, commending her for the way she had raised her children to love the truth, and to caution her not to have any fellowship whatsoever with all those who would corrupt the glorious gospel by their false teaching.

BOTTOM LINE INTRODUCTION

THE EPISTLE FROM AN ELDER TO AN ELECT LADY

FACTS REGARDING THE AUTHOR OF THIS BOOK

1. Who? **John**. Known as the “beloved disciple” (Jn. 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20, 24), and brother of James (Lk. 5:10). John was a follower of John the Baptist (Jn. 1:35-37), before being called to become one of Jesus’ twelve apostles (Lk. 5:10, 11; Mt. 10:2).
2. What? The books of John, 1, 2, and 3 John, Revelation.
3. When and where?
 - a. John: 90 A.D., from Ephesus.
 - b. 1, 2, 3 John: 92 A.D., from Ephesus.
 - c. Revelation: 95 A.D., from Isle of Patmos.
4. Why?
 - a. John: To present Christ as the eternal Son of God.
 - b. 1 John: A family letter from the Father to His children concerning the subject of fellowship.
 - c. **2 John**: To an elect lady concerning the subject of truth.
 - d. 3 John: Concerning right attitudes in the local church.
 - e. Revelation: The final action on the stage of divine prophecy.
5. To whom?
 - a. John—to the world.
 - b. 1 John—to the Father’s children.
 - c. **2 John**—to the elect lady.
 - d. 3 John—to Gaius.
 - e. Revelation—to the seven churches in Asia Minor.

KEY EVENTS

1. Reassuring “the chosen lady and her children”

KEY INDIVIDUALS

1. **John**, former fisherman, brother of James, and author of five New Testament books (including 2 John)
2. **Unnamed chosen lady**, the recipient of John’s second epistle

KEY PLACES

1. None referred to

UNIQUE FEATURES

1. 2 John is the only New Testament book specifically addressed to a woman.
2. There are (at least) three theories regarding the identity of this “chosen lady” (1:1):
 - A church in the vicinity of Ephesus
 - Martha of Bethany (traditional view)
 - A wealthy woman in the vicinity of Ephesus—the view of most conservative scholars today
3. It holds the same place in John’s writing that Philemon holds in Paul’s epistles
4. John is the second of two apostles to refer to himself as an elder (v. 1). For the other, see 1 Pet. 5:1.
5. The two key words in this epistle are doctrine (5 times), and truth (3 times).
6. It is the only Bible book besides 1 John to use the term *antichrist* (1:7).
7. It gives specific instruction concerning the believer’s attitudes and actions toward false teachers.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER BIBLE BOOKS

1. 1 John:

- 8 of 2 John’s 13 verses repeat the themes of 1 John.

2. 3 John:

- 2 John warns against entertaining false teachers; 3 John encourages entertaining true teachers.

TITLES FOR AND TYPES OF JESUS

1. The Lord Jesus Christ (1:3a)
2. The Son of the Father (1:3b)
3. Jesus Christ (1:7)