

Scripture Text Commentaries

Patrick Damonse

2 Ioanne

Study Guide for 2 Ioanne 1

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Ekklesias in Cape Town.

Sonop Building, First Floor, 5 Louis Trichardt Street, Parow
7500

P. O, Box 489, Kuilsriver, 7579, Tel: 021 829 0311,
Cell: 061 427 1174 Fax: 086 6500 1084.

Website: www.ieso.co.za,

Email address: info@ieso.co.za

Registration Number: 2011/149093/07

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Walking In the Truth

“This epistle is more remarkable for the spirit of Follower love which it breathes than for anything else. It contains scarcely anything that is not found in the preceding; and out of the thirteen verses there are at least eight which are found, either in so many words or in sentiment, precisely the same with those of the first epistle.”

A. Greeting.

1. (2Ioanne 1:1-2) To the elect Kurhia and her children.

The Elder, To the elect Kurhia and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.

a. **The Elder:** The writer of this book identifies himself as the **Elder**. Presumably, his first readers knew exactly who he was, and from the earliest times, Followers have understood this was the Apostle Ioanne’s writing.

i. “Ioanne the apostle, who was now a very old man, generally supposed to be about ninety, and therefore uses the term elder, not as the name of an *office*, but as designating his advanced age. He is allowed to have been the oldest of all the apostles, and to have been the only one who died a natural death.” (Peter Damonse)

b. **To the elect Kurhia and her children:** Perhaps this was an individual woman Ioanne wanted to warn and encourage by this letter. Or, the term might be a symbolic way of addressing this particular congregation.

i. “The phrase is, however, more likely to be a personification than a person – not the Ekklesia at large but some local Ekklesia over which the elder’s jurisdiction was recognized, *her children* being the Ekklesia’s individual members.” (Stott)

ii. “This appears to have been some noted person, whom both her singular piety, and rank in the world, made eminent, and capable of having great influence for the support of the Follower’s interest.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **Whom I love in truth, and not only I:** Whom ever the **elect Kurhia** was, she was loved by all who **have known the truth**. If we know and love the truth, we will love those who also know and love the truth – **the truth which abides in us** also lives in others who know the truth.

i. We see Ioanne quite focused on the idea of truth, as he was in all of his writings. He used the word *truth* some thirty-seven times in his New Testament writings.

ii. This shows that what binds Followers together is not social compatibility or political compatibility or class compatibility. What binds us together is a common **truth**. This is why truth is important to Followers.

d. **Will be with us forever:** The truth does not change. The truth will be true **forever**, and we will have the truth forever in eternity. Many people today think that the truth changes from age to age and from generation to generation, but the Scriptures knows that the truth **will be with us forever**.

2. (2Ioanne 1:3) Ioanne’s salutation to his readers.

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from Aleim the Father and from the Ruler IESO The Anointed One, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

a. **Grace, mercy, and peace:** Ioanne presents a slightly expanded version of the standard greeting in New Testament letters. He didn’t just wish these for his readers; he confidently bestowed them by saying they **will be with you from Aleim the Father**.

b. **In truth and love:** Ioanne can hardly write a verse without mentioning these two of his favourite topics. The **grace, mercy, and peace** Aleim has for us are all given **in truth and love**. Apart from Aleim’s **truth and love**, we can never really have **grace, mercy, and peace**.

i. “What deep, sweet rhythm of meaning there is in the first three verses of this letter! One reads them over and over again. Oh, that the grace, mercy, and peace, may be with us, from Aleim the Father, and from IESO The Anointed One, the Son of the Father, in truth and in love.” (Edgar Phillips)

c. **The Son of the Father:** “The apostle still keeps in view the *miraculous conception* of The Anointed One; a thing which the *Gnostics* absolutely denied; a doctrine which is at the ground work of our salvation.”

B. How to walk.

1. (2Ioanne 1:4) Ioanne’s joy to find they are **walking in truth**.

I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.

a. **I rejoiced greatly:** This is a pastor’s heart – to know that his people are **walking in truth**. While **truth** is not the *only* concern of a pastor, it is a great concern; and it is a great comfort for a pastor to see those he loves and cares for **walking in truth**.

i. “The *children* mentioned here may either be *her own children*, or those *members of the Ekklesia* which were under her care, or some of *both*.” (Peter Damonse)

b. **I have found some of your children walking in truth:** Ioanne rejoiced because when Aleim’s people are **walking in truth**, they also abide in Aleim. The same idea is expressed in 1 Ioanne 2:24: *Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.* Truth is not only important for its own sake, but also our **walking in truth** shows we are walking with the Ruler.

i. Edgar Phillips on the idea of **walking in the truth**: “Not taking a step or two, not breaking or leaping over the hedge to avoid a piece of foul way, but persisting in a Follower’s course, not starting aside to the right hand or the left.”

2. (2Ioanne 1:5) The commandment to love one another.

And now I plead with you, Kurhia, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another.

a. **I plead with you, Kurhia:** Ioanne was not too proud to beg on such an important matter – not when it came to something as vital in the Follower’s life as the **commandment** that we must **love one another**.

b. **Not as though I wrote a new commandment:** Ioanne knew this was nothing new to his readers (he repeated the theme all through 1 Ioanne and his Glad Tidings). Yet because it was so essential, it had to be repeated and used as a reminder.

c. **That we love one another:** The integrity of our Follower life can be measured by our love for one another (as in Glad Tidings of [Ioanne 13:35](#) and [1 Ioanne 4:20-21](#)).

3. ([2Ioanne 1:6](#)) Showing the love of Aleim.

This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

a. **This is love, that we walk according to His commandments:** If we love Aleim, we will obey His commandments. We do this not because we think His commandments are heavy burdens, but because we see that they are best for us. They are guides and gifts to us from Aleim.

b. **Walk according to His commandments:** Real love will walk this way. Perhaps Ioanne warned against those who thought the only important thing in the Follower life was a vague love that had no heart for obedience.

i. "Perhaps you fail to distinguish between love and the emotion of love. They are not the same. We may love without being directly conscious of love, or being able to estimate its strength and passion. Here is the solution to many of our questionings: They love who obey." (Edgar Phillips)

4. ([2Ioanne 1:7-9](#)) A warning against the presence and dangers of false teachers.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess IESO The Anointed One as coming in the flesh.

This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of The Anointed One does not have Aleim. He who abides in the doctrine of The Anointed One has both the Father and the Son.

a. **Many deceivers have gone out into the world:** Ioanne was aware false teachers were a danger to the Ekklesia in his day.

i. "The immediate problem in [2 Ioanne] is that of traveling teachers or missionaries. According to Follower ethics all who thus traveled about were to be shown hospitality by Followers in the town to which they came." (Phillip Prins)

b. **This is a deceiver:** Ioanne mainly had in mind the danger in his own time, the danger of those who thought that IESO, being Aleim, could have no *real* connection with the material world. They said that He only had an *apparent* connection with the material world.

i. To combat this, Ioanne made a plain declaration: we must **confess IESO The Anointed One as coming in the flesh**. This means IESO came as a real man in His first coming, but also means He will come as a human being – although glorified humanity, and that added to His eternal deity – a real flesh and blood IESO will come to the earth.

c. **This is a deceiver and an antichrist:** Against this false idea of IESO, Ioanne insists those **who do not confess IESO The Anointed One as coming in the flesh** are the deceivers and have the spirit of the **antichrist**.

i. Ioanne warned us against these antichrists in his first letter ([1 Ioanne 2:18-23](#), [4:3](#)). They are those who not only oppose IESO, but also offer a substitute "The Anointed One."

ii. This spirit of antichrist will one day find its ultimate fulfillment in *the Antichrist*, who will lead humanity in an

end-times rebellion against Aleim.

d. **Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of The Anointed One does not have Aleim:** There is nothing noble, sincere, courageous, or admirable in a *false* IESO. To deny the Scriptural IESO is *always* to reject the Father and the Son both. Ioanne here draws a critical line of truth, over which it is heresy to *transgress*.

i. In our own day, we must deal with modern denials of the Scriptural IESO with the same passion Ioanne did in his day. Today, with our "scholarly" denials of IESO and the historical record of the Glad Tidings, it is more important than ever to know who the true IESO is according to the Scriptures and to love and serve the true IESO.

ii. "To say *no* to Aleim's way of revealing Himself is to say *no* to Aleim Himself, for He will not let Himself be known by men except on His own terms." (Virgil Damonse)

e. **Transgresses:** The word *transgresses* has the idea of "going beyond a boundary." We never go "beyond" the teaching of IESO, of who He is and what He has done for us. Anyone who thinks we have or should go beyond what the Scriptures plainly says about IESO *transgresses*.

i. "There is a true progress in the Follower' life, but it is progress based upon a deeper knowledge of the historical, Scriptural Anointed. Progress on any other ground may be called progress, but it is a progress that leaves Aleim behind and is, therefore, not progress at all." (Phillip Prins)

ii. "When the teaching of the Scriptures needs to be supplemented by some 'key' to the Scriptures or by some new revelation, it is a sure sign that 'advanced' doctrine is being put forth." (JP Phillips)

f. **Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for:** To depart from the true IESO means you put yourself in jeopardy to lose the things the apostles and other faithful saints **worked for**. This shows us that it isn't enough for us to start out right, we must finish in faith to **receive a full reward**.

5. ([2Ioanne 1:10-11](#)) Instructions for dealing with the false teachers.

If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

a. **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine:** If someone comes to us, denying the true doctrine of IESO, and promoting a false doctrine of IESO, Ioanne says we should give no hospitality, no aid, to the ones who promote their own false version of IESO. To do so is to share **in his evil deeds**.

i. "The words mean, according to the eastern use of them, 'Have no religious connection with him, nor act towards him so as to induce others to believe you acknowledge him as a brother.' " (Peter Damonse)

ii. "Suppose the visiting teacher claimed to be a missionary or even a prophet but taught what was clearly false doctrine. Hospitality would demand that he be provided for, but to do so would seem to be participation in the spread of his false teachings. Should he be received or not?" (Phillip Prins)

b. **He who greets him:** Ioanne means **greet**s in a much more involved context than our own. In that culture, it meant to

show hospitality and give aid. Yet, for the weak or unskilled believer, it is best if they do not even *greet* (in the sense of speaking to) those who promote a false IESO (like the Mormons or Jehovah's Witnesses).

i. These words sound severe, but Ioanne has not lost his love. We must consider these three points:

- Ioanne is not talking about *all* error, but only error which *masquerades* as true Faith.

- Ioanne is not talking about all who *hold* the error which masquerades as true Faith, but about those who *teach* those errors which masquerade as true Faith.

- Ioanne is not talking about all *teachers* who err, but those who err in the most *fundamental* truths, and those who are active in spreading those fundamental errors.

ii. This does not mean that we should have nothing to do with those who are caught by the cults. As Ioanne indicates, we should make a distinction between those who *teach* these The Anointed One-denying doctrines (those who **bring this doctrine**) and those who merely *believe* the doctrines without trying to spread them.

c. **Do not receive him into your house nor greet him:** This may also be translated *do not receive him into the house*. Ioanne may be referring most specifically to not allowing these heretical teachers to come into **the house** where Followers meet together.

i. "Perhaps, therefore, it is not private hospitality which Ioanne is forbidding so much as an official welcome into the congregation, with the opportunity this would afford to the false teacher to propagate his errors." (Stott)

ii. "We see how such [false] teachers were treated in the apostolic Ekklesia. They held no communion with them; afforded them no support, as *teachers*; but *did not persecute* them." (Peter Damonse)

d. **Shares in his evil deeds:** We are defined by what we *reject* as much as by what we *accept*. In this, some are so *open minded* that they are *empty headed*. It is wise to keep an open mind on many things; but one would never keep an open mind about which poisons a person might try. You may say *yes* to all the right things; but one must also say *no* to what is false and evil. We need to become good at rejecting what should be rejected.

i. "They were persons who claimed to be leaders; they were advanced thinkers, they were progressive. The Gnostic teachers of the time were claiming that while the Glad Tidings of the historic IESO might be all very well for unenlightened people, they had a profounder knowledge. Such were to receive no hospitality."

ii. In the late 19th Century, the rise of theological liberalism brought forth generations of Ekklesia pastors, leaders, and theologians who denied many of the fundamentals of Scriptural Faith. Though it was a broad and varied movement, at its root theological liberalism thought that Faith had to re-evaluate all its doctrines in the light of modern science, philosophy, and thinking. They rejected the idea that a doctrine was true simply because the Scriptures taught it; it also had to be proved true by reason and experience. They believed that the Scriptures was not an inspired message from a real Aleim, but the work of men who were limited by the

ignorance and superstitions of their time. For them, the Scriptures was not either inspired or supernatural. The importance of the Scriptures and its message was not in its literal or historical truth, but in its changing spiritual message.

C. Conclusion.

1. (2Ioanne 1:12) Ioanne anticipates a future visit.

Having many things to write to you, I did not wish to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

a. **I hope to come to you and speak face to face:** We must generally sympathize with Ioanne's preference for personal, face to face communication rather than the writing of letters – though we are thankful for this letter.

2. (2Ioanne 1:13) Conclusion.

The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

a. **The children of your elect sister:** Telling us that the *elect Kurhia* (2 Ioanne 1) has an **elect sister**, and that they both have **children** does little to identify with certainty who Ioanne is writing to. Perhaps all it tells us is that if Ioanne used the term *elect Kurhia* as a symbol for the Ekklesia, he used it rather loosely (saying that she has a sister and children). The most likely idea is that the *elect Kurhia* (a particular Ekklesia) had an **elect sister** – other "sister" Ekklesias from which Ioanne brings a greeting.

b. **The children of your elect sister:** This last reference to the **elect sister** and her **children** remind us that though we must be on guard against false teachers, the true followers of IESO are more than just our group. If we allow our desire to defend the truth to make us unloving and intolerant, Satan has won a great victory.