THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPISTLE AS A WHOLE.

(Alternation and Intversion.)

A | 1. 1—2. 17. CHRIST.
B | C | 2. 18—29. ANTICHRIST.
D | 3. 1—24. LOVE.
B | C | 4. 1—6. ANTICHRIST.
D | 4. 7—21. LOVE.
A | 5. 1—21. CHRIST.

NOTES.

1. Written by the apostle John, as is proved no less by its character than by external testimony. The similarity in tone and language to the Fourth Gospel shows both to be the work of that disciple whom Jesus loved (John 21. 7).

2. Written, as generally understood, to the "circle of Asiatic churches". But it is suggested that this First Epistle of John may be reckoned among the Diaspora and earlier epistles, for the following reasons:—

(a) The occurrence of the word parousia (2. 28). See Matt. 24. 3; 1 Thess. 2. 19, &c.
(b) The significance of the possessive pronoun hémeteros (1. 3; 2. 2: see Notes), and
(c) Paul's statement that John was one of the "pillars", i.e. teachers of the Law, and therefore a minister of the circumcision (see Gal. 2. 9).

The position that the epistle occupies canonically among the Diaspora writings strengthens the argument that it also is to be reckoned among them.

3. The contents are practical teaching in the light of the love of God. God is Life, is Light, is Truth, is Righteous, is Love, and we have fellowship with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. "We know that He abideth in us by the spirit which He hath given us" (3. 24). The apostle sets in vivid contrast the death, darkness, falsehood, hate, which are the characteristics of the devil who "sinneth from the beginning" (3. 8), and of those who are led by the spirit of error (4. 6), with the work of the Holy Spirit in believers. But the dominant conception running throughout the epistle is that of the love which constraineth, as it constrained Paul (2 Cor. 5. 14).

4. Written from Ephesus according to tradition, but no definite statement can be made as to either place or time of writing. The character of the contents indicates a much earlier date than is usually supposed (see Ap. 180).
1. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

2. If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.

3. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

4. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

5. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

6. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

7. And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

8. And hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

9. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

10. But whoso keepeth His word, verily the love of God is perfected in him.
6 He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk, even as he walked.

7 Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12 I write unto you, little children, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning.

13 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14 I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that anticosti shall come, even now are there many anticosti; whereby we know that it is the last time.

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

20 But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

21 I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

22 Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He that is of the truth is in the Father and of the Son.

23 Whosoever denieth the Son, denieth also the Father: and he that acknowledgeth not the Son hath not the Father also.

24 Abideth. See p. 1511.

25 Even as. Gr. kathôs. The expression "as ye," referring to the Son, occurs six times in this epistle. See 3, 2, 3, 7, 21; 4, 17, and cp. 1, 7.

26 No. not, as v. 2.

27 New. Gr. kainos. See Matt. 9, 17.

28 From the beginning. Gr. ap' (Ap. 104. iv) archê. See 1, 1.

29 Have. Omit.

30 From, &c. The texts omit.


32 Past = pass away. Gr. paragô, as v. 17.


35 Now = already. Gr. ëddê.

36 Shineth. Ap. 106. 1. i.

37 Even until. Gr. hêô.

38 Now. Gr. arti.


40 Occasion, &c. Gr. ekandôlon. See Rom. 9, 33.

41 Knoweth. Ap. 132. 1. i.


43 Hath. Omit.

44 Blinded. Gr. tuphloû. See 2 Cor. 4, 4.


46 For, &c. See account of (Ap. 104. v) His name.


48 Overcome. See John 16, 33.


50 Write. The texts read "wrote".

51 Little children. Here and in v. 18 the word pайдiô is used.

52 Have written = wrote.

53 Neither. Gr. méôê.

54 Pride. Gr. alazoneia. Only here and Jas. 4, 16 (boasting).


24 Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

25 And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.

26 These things I have written unto you that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that the name of him that sent me is truth.

27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

28 And now, little children, abide in him; and if he shall appear, we shall be like him, and shall see as he is.

29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.

30 Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

31 Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doeth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: and the transgression of the law is sin.

5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

The Companion Bible

E. W. Bullinger
I. JOHN.

neither. Gr. oude.
deceive. See 2. 26 (seduce).
doeth. See 2. 29.
from the beginning. See 1. 1 and John 8. 44.
For, &c. = For (Ap. 104. vii) this.
Son of God. Ap. 98. XV.
9 born = begotten.
remaineth. The same as “abideth”, n. 6.
cannot = is not (Ap. 105. I) able to.

3. 10-18 (D2, p. 1873). OUTWARD MANIFESTATION. (Introversion and Alternation.)

D2 G m

10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whence doeth not righteousness, and whosoever doeth not righteous, neither hateth his brother.

11 For this is the message which ye heard from the beginning, which we should love one another.

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother: And wherefore slew he his brother? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous.

13 Marvel not, my brethren, if one love the world, and the evil of the world: See Gal. 2. 11. (blamed).

14 We know that we passed out of death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because God laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.

20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us, then have we confidence toward God; 22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

23 And this is His commandment, That we

3. 16-24 (C, p. 1873). EFFECT UPON US. (Alternation.)

C 16-18. Love manifested to the brethren.

p | 19-22. Proof of our state before God.
| 23. Commandment of God.
| 24. Proof of His abiding in us.

17 whosoever. Gr. charis. See Gal. 2. 11. (blamed).

18 in, in. No prep. Dat. case.


23 And this is His commandment, That we
3. 23. I. JOHN.

should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

P 24 And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and he in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us.

BCJ 4 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

K 2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

J 4 ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He That is in you, than he that is in the world.

D Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, because God loveth us.

Q 7 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

s 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

T 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us.

u 13 Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.

v 15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.


4. 1-8 (C, p. 1870). ANTICHRIST. (Alternation.)


K | 6. Test of professors.


4. 7-21 (D, p. 1870). LOVE. (Introversion.)

D | 9. Call to love of the brethren.

s 10. Proof of God's love to us.

u 13. Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit.

v 15. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.


15 confess, &c. See Matt. 16. 16.
16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love, because he first loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

5 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also.

6 This is He That came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit That beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three that in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three agree in one.

8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son.

10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness of God; and he that believeth not the witness of God hath not the record of judgment.

11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

13 These things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.
5. 13.

I. JOHN.

God: if ye may 5 know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. 14 And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: 15 And if we 13 know that He heareth us whatsoever we ask, we 13 know that we have the petitions that we desire of Him.

16 If any man 1 see his brother 1 sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall 14 ask, and He shall give him 13 life for them that 10 not unto death. There is a sin which is unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin which is not unto death.

18 We 13 know that whatsoever we ask, we 13 know that we have the confidence that we have in Him that is true God, and eternal life.

19 And we 13 know that we are of Him, and the whole world lieth in 10 wickedness.

20 And we 13 know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him That is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.


5. 21.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EPISODE AS A WHOLE.

(Introduction.)

A | i-3. ELECT LADY AND CHILDREN: BENEDICTION.

B | 4-5. CHILDREN WALKING ACCORDING TO THE FATHER'S COMMANDMENT.

C | 7-8. WARNING AGAINST DECEIVERS.

B | 9-11. TRANSGRESSORS REJECTING CHRIST'S TEACHING.

A | 12, 13. JOY FULFILLED: CHILDREN OF ELECT SISTER. SALUTATION.

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