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DURING MY VACATION LAST MONTH, I WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT A PHRASE I HAD USED IN MY ARTICLE FOR APRIL, ENTITLED, "IT IS THE BEST I CAN DO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES." TO QUOTE FROM THAT ARTICLE: "IN 2 JNO. 3-11, WE ARE WARNED THAT WE CAN SO BEHAVE THAT WE CAN EVEN LOSE WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY GAINED: SIMPLY BY TAKING PART WITH PEOPLE WHO DO NOT ABIDE IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST. BY STANDING WITH THOSE TRANSGRESSORS WHO USE MEN'S METHODS AND TEACHINGS. IT TELLS US NOT EVEN TO WISH THEM GODSPEED (GOOD HEALTH). ELSE WE ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING OUR REWARD BY TAKING OUR STAND WITH THEM."

FIRST OF ALL, I WANT TO THANK FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART MY HONORED QUESTIONER, WHO CALLED MY ATTENTION TO THIS, SAYING THAT BY MY INSERTING (GOOD HEALTH), I HAD CAUSED PEOPLE TO GET A FALSE CONCEPTION OF THE WORD. SHE URGED ME TO "MAKE AMENDS." REMINDING ME OF THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN, WHERE JESUS TAUGHT, "GO, AND DO LIKEWISE." ALSO OF THE COMMAND TO, "DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY UNTO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH". SHE SAID THAT BY TEACHING NOT TO WISH THEM GOOD HEALTH, I WAS APPARENTLY TEACHING THAT WE SHOULD WISH THEM ILLNESS. IT WILL BE MY PURPOSE IN THIS ARTICLE TO MAKE AMENDS FOR BEING UNCLEAR HERE. ALSO, FARTHER: TO BRIEFLY SHOW OUR DUTY TOWARD THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD. I WILL GIVE SCRIPTURE REFFERENCES FOR WHAT I SAY. BUT I HOPE YOU WILL FORGIVE ME, FOR NOT WRITING THEM ALL OUT. THIS SUBJECT IS TOO BIG TO BE COVERED THAT WAY IN THIS ARTICLE. BUT I DO HOPE YOU WILL READ THEM ALL.

LOOKING UP THE WORD, "GODSPEED", IN ALL THE AUTHORITIES AVAILABLE TO ME, THE WORD MEANS: A GREETING, CARRYING WITH IT A WISH OR PRAYER FOR PEACE WITH GOD, PROSPERITY, AND GOOD HEALTH. I HAVE CONSULTED EIGHT TRANSLATIONS, AND THEY GIVE THE FOLLOWING RENDERINGS: "RECEIVE HIM NOT INTO YOUR YOUR HOUSE, NEITHER BID HIM GODSPEED." OTHERS SAY: "GIVE HIM NO GREETING." AND "GIVE HIM NO GREETING AT ALL." ONE SAYS, "DO NOT WELCOME HIM INTO YOUR HOUSE, NEITHER BID HIM TO EAT: FOR HE THAT BIDS HIM TO EAT IS PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL WORKS." ONE SAYS, "SAY HIM NOT HAIL". AND ONE SAYS, "NOT TO WISH HIM SUCCESS, OR GOOD HEALTH." OF COURSE THIS DOES NOT CONTRADICT THE SCRIPTURES THAT BID US DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN; TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES, AND SO ON. IT IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF RIGHTLY DIVIDING THESE SCRIPTURES.

THERE ARE ONLY 13 VERSES IN THE BOOK OF 2 JNO. BUT IF YOU WILL READ IT CAREFULLY, I AM SURE YOU WILL SEE THAT THESE INSTRUCTIONS WERE GIVEN CONCERNING TEACHERS OF FALSE DOCTRINES WHO COME TO THE CHURCH ASSEMBLY. THE BRETHREN DO NOT CALL ON THEM TO TAKE PART IN THE CHURCH SERVICES. THEY DO NOT ASK THEM TO WAIT ON THE TABLE, OR LEAD WORSHIP SERVICES IN ANY WAY; WE DO NOT SUPPORT THEM WITH MONEY: WE DO NOT WISH THEM GOOD HEALTH, PROSPERITY, SUCCESS, AND THE PEACE OF GOD IN THEIR WORK OF SPREADING FALSE DOCTRINES WHICH DIVIDE THE CHURCH. BUT THIS DOSEN'T MEAN THAT WE WISH THEM TO BE HUNGRY, OR SICK, OR ETERNALLY CONDEMNED. WE SIMPLY ARE NOT IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THEM, BY BEING HELPERS, OR ENCOURAGERS IN THEIR EVIL EVIL DEEDS OF SPREADING FALSE DOCTRINES AND NOT ABIDING IN THE DOCTRINE OF GOD.

IF THIS IS NOT THE RIGHT VIEW OF THIS SCRIPTURE: THEN HOW CAN WE INVITE SINNERS INTO OUR PRIVATE HOMES? HOW CAN WE FEED THEM? WITHOUT BEING PARTAKERS IN THEIR SINS. ALL THE SCRIPTURES AGREE. WHILE YOU DON'T INVITE A SINNER TO PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. YOU DO FEED HIM IF HE IS HUNGRY.

ACCORDING TO SMITH'S BIBLE DICTIONARY, IT WAS CUSTOMARY IN BIBLE TIMES TO GREET, SALUTE, OR HAIL ONE ANOTHER WITH SUCH EXPRESSIONS AS: "GOD BE GRACIOUS UNTO THEE," GEN. 43:29; "THE LORD BLESS THEE", "THE LORD BE WITH THEE," RUTH 2:4. THE PARTING SALUTATIONS ORIGINALLY CONSISTED OF A SIMPLE BLESSING, GEN. 24:60; BUT IN LATER TIMES THE FORM, "GO IN PEACE," 1 SAM. 1:17, WAS COMMON. IN MODERN TIMES THE ORDINARY MODE OF ADDRESS CURRENT IN THE EAST IS LIKE THE HEBREW, "PEACE BE ON YOU." I THINK THIS BACKGROUND INFORMATION HELPS US TO UNDERSTAND WHY WE COULD NOT WISH FOR A FALSE TEACHER GODSPEED, GOOD HEALTH, GOOD SUCCESS, PROSPERITY AND PEACE WITH GOD IN SPREADING DISCORD, DIVISION; AND REBELLION. THE WORD, THEN APPARENTLY CARRIED THE MEANING OF A PRAYER FOR SUCCESS, PROSPERITY, PEACE AND SO ON IN ACCOMPLISHING HIS MISSION..

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, WE HAVE REFFERENCES TO 4 CLASSES OF PEOPLE, ABOUT WHICH THE JEWISH PEOPLE ARE INSTRUCTED. OF COURSE THE BORN AND CIRCUMCISED JEW WAS OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. AND USUALLY, WHEN SPEAKING OF "NEIGHBOR", WE FIND THESE ARE THE PEOPLE REFERRED TO. THEN THERE WAS THE "STRANGER," AMONG THEM REFERRED TO. THE "STRANGER" WAS A PERSON, NOT OF JEWISH EXTRACTION, BUT LIVING AMONG THEM. AS THE GOOD SAMARITAN AND THE LEPER THAT, WHEN HEALED, RETURNED TO GIVE THANKS, LUKE 17:18. THE "STRANGER" LIVING AMONG THE JEWS COULD EVEN EAT THE PASSOVER, IF THE MALES WERE CIRCUMCISED, EX. 12:43-49. THE JEWS WERE NOT TO OPPRESS THE STRANGERS, BUT TO LOVE THEM, REMEMBERING THAT THEY HAD BEEN STRANGERS IN EGYPT. EX. 22:21, AND EX. 23:9, THE CARE FOR THESE STRANGERS IS GROUPED IN THE CARE FOR

THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS,DEUT.10:17-19.THEN THERE WAS THE CLASS CALLED FOREIGHNERS,HEATHEN,THE GENTILES,THE NATIONS AROUND THEM.BUT THEY WERE INSTRUCTED NOT TO DO THEM EVIL(EXCEPT THAT AS A POLITICAL NATION,THEY HAD WARS WITH THEM);BUT NEITHER WERE THEY TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH THEM; EX.30:33;NUM.16:40;DEUT.25:5;ACTS 10:25-28.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,TOO,THE WORD "NEIGHBOR" CARRIES WITH IT FIRST THE MEANING OF CHRISTIAN,THEN,EVERYONE IN NEED THAT WE CAN HELP, INCLUDING OUR ENEMIES.EPH.4:25;ROM.13:10,GAL.6:10,AND LUKE 10:29-37.

WE ARE TO DO GOOD FIRST OF ALL TO THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH,GAL. 6:10.IT IS ONLY THE GOOD WE DO FOR CHRISTIANS THAT CHRIST WILL CONSIDER AS GOOD DONE TO HIM,MATTH.25:31-39.IT IS ONLY THE FAITHFUL THAT WE MAY FELLOWSHIP IN THE ASSEMBLY WORSHIP,AND THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL;2 JNO.9-11;EPH.5:11.WE ARE TO AVOID THE DISORDERLY BRETHREN,WITHDRAWING FROM THEM,ROM.16:17;2 THESS.3:6.WE ARE NOT TO BID THEM GODSPEED,2 JNO. 9-11.BUT WE ARE NOT TO COUNT THEM AS ENEMIES,BUT ADMONISH THEM AS BRETHREN,2 THESS.3:15.THEY ARE DISORDERLY,ERRING BRETHREN,FALSE TEACHERS.WE MUST NOT BID THEM GODSPEED,LEST WE BE PARTAKERS WITH THEIR EVIL DEEDS. WE MUST KEEP OURSELVES PURE FROM THE SINS OF OTHERS,WHETHER THEY BE PUBLICK OR PRIVATE,1 TIM.5:22..

WE MUST KEEP OURSELVES FROM BEING SPOTTED BY THE WORLD,JAS.1: 27,BUT VISIT FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR AFFLICTIONS.PROVIDE THE THIN THINGS THEY NEED;AND CARE FOR THEM IN NEED.WE ARE,AS MUCH AS LIETH IN US TO LIVE PEACEABLE WITH ALL MEN;ROM.12:18.WE ARE TO BE COURTEOUS TO ALL MEN(NOT JUST TO OUR BRETHREN),MATTH.5:43-48.WE ARE NOT TO FORGET TO FEED AND LODGE STRANGERS(BRETHREN AND SINNERS),HEB.13:2-2;1 TIM.5:10. WE ARE TO FEED OUR ENEMIES,EVEN LOVING THEM.ROM.12:20;MATTH.5:44.

THE RULE OF CHRIST ON EARTH IS AMONG HIS ENEMIES.THEREFORE WE WILL ALWAYS BE SURROUNDED BY THESE PEOPLE.WE ARE THE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS IN THE ENEMIES' WORLD;WHILE ALL THINGS ARE BEING PUT UNDER THE FEET OF CHRIST,OUR KING;1 PET.2:11;HEB.11:13,AND HEB.10:13.CHRISTIANS ARE ONLY AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER DISCIPLINE TO THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, OUR KINGDOM UNDER CHRIST:WITHDRAWING FROM,AND AVOIDING THE DISORDERLY, REBUKING AND ADMONISHING THEM.

BUT WE ARE TO ABHOR EVIL,ROM.12:9;WE ARE IN DANGER OF FALLING WHEN WE REACH THE POINT WHEN OUR SOULS ARE NOT VEXED BY EVIL.1 TIM.6: 11-12;2 TIM.2:21-26;JAS.4:7.WE ARE TO AVOID EVIL,PASS BY IT;NOT HESITATE WITH THOSE COMMITTING IT,PROV.4:14-15.NEVER FORGETTING THAT EVIL COMMUNICATIONS(EVIL COMPANY)CORRUPTS GOOD MANNERS,1 COR.15:33.WE ARE TO COME OUT OF BABYLON(ALL EVIL)LEST WE BE CONDEMNED WITH HER.2 COR.6:14-18;REV.18:4.

REMEMBER CHRIST DID GOOD TO ALL MEN,INCLUDING PUBLICANS AND SINNERS.BUT HIS OBJECT IN ASSOCIATING WITH THEM WAS PRIMARILY TO TEACH THEM THE TRUTH,MATTH.9:12-13;THE WELL NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN,BUT THE SICK. JAS.4:4,TELLS US THAT THE FRIEND OF THE WORLD IS THE ENEMY OF GOD.DEUT. 10:18,AND ACTS 14:15-17,TELLS US THAT GOD IS JUST AND PERFECT,AND SENDS SUN AND RAIN ON GOOD AND EVIL.MATTH.5:42-48,INSTRUCTS US TO FOLLOW HIS EXAMPLE.

BUT WHEN CHRIST WAS SPEAKING OF THOSE FOR WHOM HE HAD A SPECIAL LOVE,IT IS SAID:HAVING LOVED HIS OWN,HE LOVED THEM TO THE END,JNO. 13:1.IT WAS HIS OWN THAT HE PRAYED FOR ESPECIALLY,JNO.17.

WE PRAY THAT THE SINNER'S LIFE MAY BE SPARED,AND HIM GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO OBEY THE GOSPEL;THAT OUR RULERS MAY RULE WELL;THAT OUR LAND MAY HAVE PEACE,THAT ALL MAY HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO OBEY THE GOSPEL AND BE SAVED.1 TIM.2:1-4;JERE.29:7;EZEK.18:23.BUT IT IS THE FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS THAT WE LOVE AS BRETHREN;HEB.13:1-3;1 PET.1:22;1 JNO.3:14; 1 JNO.4:7;1 JNO.5:2;TIT.2:4;1 PET.2:17; 1 PET.3:8.WE BID THEM GODSPEED.

DEAR SISTERS:

BY WAY OF EXPLAINING THE EARLY DATES ON THESE LATE ARTICLES:I WANTED TO INCLUDE THIS ONE WITH THE ONE I HAD ALL READY WHEN WE RETURNED FROM VACATION.BUT MANY THINGS HAVE HINDERED,AMONG THEM ILLNESS.THERE ARE TIMES IN LIFE FOR ALL OF US WHEN WE MUST PASS THROUGH SHARP,RANK, THORNS AND BRIARS OF THIS LIFE.SATAN SEES TO THAT.BUT THE LORD WILL NEVER LEAVE US;AND WILL ABUNDANTLY REWARD US IF WE "KEEP THE FAITH."

WRITTEN IN CHRISTIAN LOVE,

LURANA MCCLUSKEY,1829 LAUREL LANE,
WEST SACRAMENTO,CALIF.95691