

Acts to Revelation
The World of the First Christians

Session 16 – John and the Island of Patmos

Session Summary – The most famous exile to be banished to the Island of Patmos was the Apostle John, a person disciple of Jesus and the writer of one of the four Gospels. We will travel to the incredible Greek island to investigate the story of John and his impact on the New Testament. We will visit the Cave of the Apocalypse, the traditional site for John’s writing of Revelation. We will also drive to the highest point of the island to explore the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian, where a variety of manuscripts and artifacts are housed.

“John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord’s Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet...”
– Revelation 1:9-10

High atop the island of Patmos is the incredible Monastery of Saint John the Theologian. A church dedicated to John was originally built here during the early Byzantine period of the 4th century, but was destroyed during Islamic attacks in the 7th to 9th centuries. In 1088, the current fortress-like structure was built over the remains of the church to help defend against pirates. The Monastery has an incredible library, including ancient manuscripts and parchment rolls. The centerpiece of the collection is the 6th century *Codex Petropolitanus Purpureus*, which contains the Gospels of Mathew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Scripture Reading: The Epistles of John and Revelation 1

Discussion Questions:

1. Patmos is part of what country?
2. Where did the Apostle John probably write his Gospel and Epistles (letters)?
3. Why did John end up on Patmos?
4. What does tradition say happened in the Cave of the Apocalypse?
5. Other than being a cool looking fortress at the top of Mount Elias on Patmos, why is the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian important today?

Scripture for Next Week: The Book of Revelation