

What is the importance of Patmos in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Patmos-in-the-Bible.html>

Patmos is a small Greek island in the Aegean Sea and is mentioned only once in Scripture. The apostle John relates that he was writing the book of Revelation from the isle of Patmos “because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus” (Revelation 1:9). That is, John was exiled there by the Roman government because of his proclamation of the gospel. It was on the island of Patmos that John received messages from Jesus to the churches and visions related to the end times.

In New Testament times, Patmos was a destination for criminals and political prisoners. Convicts were allowed relative freedom to roam the small island, but most had to provide their own food and shelter and were guarded by Roman soldiers against leaving. Many died of exposure, violent attacks by other convicts, or starvation. Tradition holds that John’s friends and followers in Ephesus sent food and other supplies to John on the island, and that is how he survived.

Patmos is significant because of its relative insignificance. Patmos is another example of the way God “chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him” (1 Corinthians 1:27-29). Patmos had nothing in itself that would draw the attention of the Lord, except that His servant John was there (Revelation 1:10). Though Patmos was but a dot in the ocean, God saw John there and entrusted him with important prophecies. John was exiled by the world, but he was not forsaken by God.

The psalmist asks, “Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?” and then he answers, “If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast” (Psalm 139:7-10). Nothing and no one is too insignificant for God to use. If Jesus was with John, a prisoner on the tiny island of Patmos, He is with us wherever we are and whatever circumstances we are in. Even on Patmos, there is hope. Wherever we are, there is hope, and we can worship and serve God in spite of our circumstances (Psalm 54:6; 50:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:18).