

## Notes on Churches in Revelation

### 1. The nature of the exiled community on **PATMOS**.

Jeff Lucas, says, "It's believed the Romans used Patmos, apparently "volcanic and treeless" as a penal colony, forcing prisoners to work in its granite quarries and mines". Although, (according to Wikipedia) "[Forbes](#) magazine, in 2009, named Patmos "Europe's most idyllic place to live", it was not that way under Rome!

Lucas also paints a picture of John's situation as follows:

*Patmos. One writer describes it as 'the Alcatraz of the First Century', where the worst criminals were incarcerated. The remoteness of the island meant that the normal protocols about the treatment of prisoners (especially Roman citizens) that Roman law demanded could be ignored. On arrival, prisoners were usually scourged, a cruel welcome that made it absolutely clear that any poor behaviour would be punished mercilessly. Prisoners were divided into two categories - common criminals and political offenders.*

*John was no stranger to suffering. In 93AD, he was arrested and forced to stand before the power crazed emperor Domitian. According to the early Christian apologist Tertullian, Domitian insisted that John burn pagan incense, and when the old apostle refused, he was thrown into a vat of boiling oil - which he survived, a miracle. Now he found himself on Patmos, and as a political prisoner, he would not have been provided with clothes, food or water, but had to fend for himself. According to some early writings, he lived in a cave. Patmos was one of the worst places on earth - but it was while John was there that Jesus appeared to him with the message that we know as the book of Revelation.*

Added to this he may well have been completely isolated from fellow believers, anticipating possible execution, and thinking that "his years of ministry were over, and God was not going to use him again".

### Links to the end of Revelation

Ephesus – tree of life	2:7/22:2,14,19
Smyrna – second death	2:11/20:6,14 & 21:8
Pergamum – new Jerusalem	2:17/19:12
Thyatira – morning star	2:27-28/19 & 22:16
Sardis – book of life	3:5/20:12
Philadelphia – a new name	3:12/21:2,10 & 22:4
Laodicea – throne of God	3:21/22:3

## **EPHESUS**

### **Ephesus Prayer Point**

Possibly suggest prayer that as a church we will maintain our passion for Christ, and for any individuals we know who have lost/are losing that passion.

### **Cross reference**

Might it be useful to cross reference to Paul's time in Ephesus (Acts 19) to give something of the atmosphere of the city towards Christianity.

## **SMYRNA**

### **Prayer Point Smyrna**

Pray that we as a church will remain faithful whatever the circumstances and encourage each other to hold fast to our faith whatever life may throw at us.

## **PERGAMUM**

### **Prayer Point Pergamos**

Pray that as a church and as individuals we may be alert to and have the ability to resist any thing or situation that may tempt us to compromise our faith and witness.

## **THYATIRA**

### **Prayer Point Thyatira**

Jesus commended the church in Thyatira for several reasons. Give thanks for what you see as commendable before God in MPBC and in each other's lives.