

JOHN ON THE ISLE OF PATMOS

Revelation 1:1-8

OVERVIEW OF THE STORY

When the disciple John was very old, he was banished to the Isle of Patmos because the Romans did not want him to encourage Christianity in Asia Minor where he had established seven Christian churches. The Lord opened John's spiritual eyes so that he could see wonderful visions. John sent this message of hope to the seven churches in letters which are now written in the Book of Revelation.

CONCEPTS FOR PARENTS

- ❖ The Book of Revelation is full of prophetic visions. The visions foretell the establishment of the New Church on earth and in heaven.
- ❖ John saw into the spiritual world and wrote down messages for all of us. These dramatic visions also tell us about things that affect our inner spiritual lives.
- ❖ The New Church is founded upon the revelation of the internal sense of the Word which is the Second Coming of the Lord.
- ❖ The Book of Revelation also tells about spiritual judgment. It is what happens to those who choose not to follow the Lord. They are separated from the good and go to hell where selfishness rules.

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IMPORTANT IDEAS FOR YOUR CHILD

The Lord opened John's spiritual eyes so he could see into the spiritual world.

John wrote down what he saw in a book called Revelation.

Much later the Lord opened Swedenborg's spiritual eyes also to see into the spiritual world and write down what he saw in the books of the Heavenly Doctrines.

LET'S REMEMBER:

Today we start reading from the last book in the New Testament. The name of it is "Revelation." It is sometimes called by its name in Greek, "the Apocalypse" because the New Testament was originally written in the Greek language.

- ♦ **What does it mean to reveal something?** (To show it.)

[You may demonstrate this concept to your child by covering your hand or some object with a scarf and then pulling it off to reveal what had been hidden underneath.]

In this book of the Word, the Lord has revealed or showed us many wonderful things. It is similar to opening a scroll and seeing more and more new ideas presented. The Lord first showed these things to His disciple John. Then John wrote them down in letters which he sent to his friends. These letters were saved and are now the Book of Revelation.



OUR STORY FOR TODAY:

You remember that John had known the Lord when He lived on earth. This is not John the Baptist but one of the Lord's twelve disciples. He was one of those who came to the tomb on Easter morning and found it empty. John loved the Lord, and so after the Lord went to heaven, John spent his life telling people what the Lord had taught. He wrote the Gospel of John in the New Testament which tells the story of the Lord's life on earth. He started Christian churches so that people could worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Romans who ruled that part of the world did not want John to teach about the Lord so they sent him to live alone on an island called Patmos. Patmos is a pretty place with high pointed hills, palm trees and surrounded by the deep blue water of the Mediterranean Sea.

At this time John was an old man. The Lord performed a miracle and opened John's spiritual eyes. It was on a Sunday, the Lord's day, when John's spiritual eyes were opened. John could see the Lord and things in the spiritual world, just as Emanuel Swedenborg's spiritual eyes were opened many years later when once again the Lord had important things to tell people on earth.

The Lord gave John messages to write down and send to seven churches near John's home in the part of the world called Asia Minor. The people in these churches looked to John as their leader even though he could not visit them in person any more. The people in the churches were having a hard



time. They were being persecuted or treated badly by the Roman rulers. Many Christians were killed because they would not worship the gods or images of the emperors of Rome. So the Lord gave them messages from John to encourage them. Let's read the beginning of the first chapter.



Read **Revelation 1:1-3**.

Blessed means happy. Happy are the people who read these words.

Who were these words or letters originally written for? (People in John's seven churches.) Yes, and now they are saved in the Word so that everyone who wants to can read them and be blessed or happy.

John tells us that this book of Revelation is a prophecy. That means it is telling about things that will happen in the future.

Now we will read to learn another name for the Lord and what it means.



Read **Revelation 1:8**.

Here the Lord calls Himself "the Alpha and the Omega." What does He say it means? (The Beginning and the End.)

That's right. Alpha and Omega are the beginning and ending letters of the Greek alphabet, like the English letters A and Z.



What follows is another wonderful description of the Lord. "Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty." What do you think that means?

Yes, the Lord is the only One who always has been and always will be. He has all strength and power. So He could open John's eyes and let him see these wonderful visions that are recorded in this book of the Word.

These messages gave hope to the people in those seven churches long ago and they continue to give hope to all who love the Lord today. The visions tell us that no matter how hard life may seem at times, the Lord is always with us. He continues to make a New Church on earth and in heaven with those who love and obey Him.

WHAT DID WE LEARN TODAY?

- ♦ **Who wrote the Book of Revelation?** (John.)
- ♦ **Which John was it?** (The Lord's disciple and the one who wrote the gospel—not John the Baptist.)
- ♦ **Where was he living?** (Isle of Patmos.)
- ♦ **Who was he writing to?** (Seven churches he led.)
- ♦ **Can you remember the name of another person whose spiritual eyes were opened by the Lord?** (Emanuel Swedenborg.)
- ♦ **Why do you think the Lord opened these men's spiritual eyes and let them see into heaven?** (Because He had important things to let people know about heaven and how to live a good or heavenly life.)

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LESSON 33 ACTIVITIES



Recitation: Learn the recitation by heart. Practice it for four lessons.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Revelation 21:1-2



Projects:

Make the "John on Patmos" project.
Color the line drawing of John.



Songs:

"Lo! the Clouds Have Burst Asunder"—Track 30
"Jerusalem, the Golden!"—Track 31

"Behold, the Great Red Dragon"—Track 32



Additional Activities:

- ❖ Geodes are readily available these days in various stores that sell objects from nature. If you have a geode you can demonstrate to your child how this rock looks like any other on the outside. However, when you look on the inside, it reveals a treasure full of beauty. This is a powerful example to a child of the Word. It looks like any other book on the outside, but the inside is precious and full of spiritual beauty.
- ❖ Your child may enjoy decorating a "treasure box" which could be made from a small wooden box or even a shoebox. This could be used to store special objects, such as a rock collection. The child could "reveal" the contents to others by opening the lid.
- ❖ Find a piece of brass or silver that is tarnished. Have your child polish the surface to "reveal" the beautiful shine beneath. Help him or her see how the spiritual world and heaven are indescribably more beautiful than this world.
- ❖ Discuss with your child how fortunate we are to be able to worship the Lord in our own way.

John on Patmos Lesson 33

This project illustrates John as an old man living on the island of Patmos where he received many visions of the spiritual world.

Supplies:

- 1 piece of blue construction paper
- 1 piece of green construction paper
- 1/4 piece of yellow construction paper
- oil pastels

Project instructions:

1. Cut a wavy oval out of the piece of green paper. This will represent the island of Patmos.
2. Glue the green island into the center of the piece of blue paper. The blue paper is like the ocean.
3. Cut a quarter sun shape out of the yellow paper (see drawing) and glue it in the upper left corner of the blue paper. The sun's rays indicate the Lord giving John heavenly visions.
4. With oil pastels, draw a picture of John standing on the island. Give him a long tunic as people wore at this time. Be sure to make the shapes and color them in with solid color.
5. You may wish to add one or more palm trees to your island.



