CORNERSTONECONNECTIONS

JUNE132026

Scripture Story: Revelation 1:1-11.
Commentary: *The Acts of the Apostles* (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapter 56.

the revelation



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keytext

"I, 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."

(Revelation 1:9, NIV)

flashlight

"The rulers of the Jews were filled with bitter hatred against John for his unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. They declared that their efforts against the Christians would avail nothing so long as John's testimony kept ringing in the ears of the people. In order that the miracles and teachings of Jesus might be forgotten, the voice of the bold witness must be silenced. John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. Here before the authorities the apostle's doctrines were misstated. False witnesses accused him of teaching seditious heresies. By these accusations his enemies hoped to bring about the disciple's death" (*The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 569).

what do you think?

Rank the following items on a scale of 1 (highly upsetting) to 10 (no sweat) based on how much they annoy you.

____ Losing keys
____ Your sibling eats all the food and leaves you none
____ Cell phone dies
____ A "D" on a final exam
____ A paper cut
____ iPod gets stolen
____ A friend tells lies about you
____ Fender-bender accident
____ Internet access goes down for three days

did you know?

Did you know that the island of Patmos, the place where the apostle John received the vision found in the book of Revelation, still exists today? The island of Patmos is located in the Aegean Sea and has about 3,000 inhabitants. Today it is a tourist destination for people seeking a getaway far off the beaten path. However, during the time of John, Patmos was a penal colony where prisoners worked harvesting rocks out of ancient quarries on the island. It was backbreaking work meant to humble the toughest criminals.

INTO THE STORY

"The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

"John, to the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

"To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

"'Look, he is coming with the clouds,' and 'every eye will see him, even those who pierced him'; and all peoples on earth 'will mourn because of him.' So shall it be! Amen.

"'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.'

"I, 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, which said: 'Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.'"

(Revelation 1:1-11, NIV)



OUT OF THE STORY

Have you ever read any portions of the book of Revelation? What strikes you about the beginning of John's writing?

To whom is John writing? Who is the audience for this message?

What is the tone of John's message? Does he sound sad? Is he happy? Write a sentence describing the tone of John's opening message.

Where was John when He received this vision from God? What was he doing?

Read verse 9 again. Why was John sent to the island of Patmos? What were the charges against him?

What new thing have you learned about the author of the book of Revelation from the introduction to the book of Revelation?

What does John's message teach us about persevering through trials?

punch lines

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" **(2 Corinthians 12:9, 10, NIV).**

"All this I have told you so that you will not fall away. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, the time is coming when anyone who kills you will think they are offering a service to God" **(John 16:1, 2, NIV).**

"The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region" **(Acts 13:49, 50, NIV).**

"The righteous person may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all" **(Psalm 34:19, NIV).**

"The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous" **(Psalm 146:8, NIV).**

further insight

"Through trial and persecution the glory—the character—of God is revealed in His chosen ones."— Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles,* p. 576

Sabbath

Read 2 Corinthians 4:17 and 2 Corinthians 11:25.

Did you complete the *What Do You Think?* activity? Do any of the scenarios listed get you really upset? How do you handle the irritations you face from day to day?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:17. How does the apostle Paul refer to the challenges that he and his fellow witnesses faced?

Now read 2 Corinthians 11:25-28 to get a picture of the "light" afflictions of which Paul spoke. People tend not to undergo such punishment willingly. Why did Paul do it?

How do you think Paul's faithful witness affected John during his time of persecution? Is there someone from whom you draw strength in times of crisis?

Sunday

Read Psalm 34:19.

Read the *Into the Story* section of this week's lesson, and answer the *Out of the Story* questions. You were asked to consider the tone of John's writing, given that he is enduring hard labor in a colony of prisoners on the island of Patmos.

Scan the Scripture story and make a list of all the different things that John writes about Jesus Christ and God. Share some of them.

Did you notice that John's troubles have been forgotten as he looks upon God and the vision? What does this teach you about how to respond to trials and adversity?

Monday

Read Revelation 1:9.

This week's *Key Text* makes it clear that John knew exactly why he had been imprisoned. He preached God's Word and he shared his testimony that Jesus Christ was indeed the Messiah.

What phrase in Revelation 1:9 tells us how John is undergoing this test of his faith?

Now read Revelation 14:9-12. This verse refers to Christ's followers who will be living right before Jesus' second coming. How will they handle the adversity of the times?

What's your biggest trial right now? Do you trust God to handle it? Will you wait on Him?

Tuesday

Read Luke 6:22.

Read this week's *Flashlight* quotation from Ellen G. White. John was brought before the emperor Domitian on false charges. He had done nothing wrong, yet the false testimony of evil men was going to doom him.

What counsel did Jesus give when dealing with people who wrongly accuse us (Luke 6:22)?

How should we respond to people who seek to do us harm (Luke 6:27-36)?

Is this realistic advice? In your own words, explain how you can be a person of peace, yet not be a doormat for bullies at your school.

Wednesday

Read John 16:1, 2.

Check out this week's *Punch Lines*, all of which relate to the challenges of enduring trials and adversity. Consider John 16:1, 2. Jesus told the disciples that some people will harm you and claim that they are serving God in the process.

People do all kinds of things in the name of God. What would you say to a Christian who believes that abortion is murder, and therefore the killing of doctors who perform abortions is justified?

Thursday

Read 2 Timothy 3:12.

Most of us will never be called to make the sacrifices that the apostle John made for his faith. But, at some point, "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12).

Based on your current walk with God, complete the following statement:

If I ever had to explain why I believe in Jesus Christ before my friends at school or in my neighborhood, I would say:

Friday

Read Romans 8:28-39.

Choose one verse to paraphrase in your own words and write it here:

Ask God to make the assurance found in your verse real to you today.

this week's reading*

The Acts of the Apostles (or *Unlikely Leaders*), chapter 56.

**Unlikely Leaders* is a special adaptation of *The Acts of the Apostles*, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at www.cornerstoneconnections.net/article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.URlhF1rBO9s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages Series each year.