

**Antipas** was an early Christian leader in **Pergamum** (modern-day Turkey), whom Jesus uniquely honors in Revelation 2:13 as "My **faithful witness**". He is the only martyr mentioned by name in the entire Book of Revelation besides Jesus and John the Baptist.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLVCrNYFM3E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PhRnZnAyYek>

## **Historical Context and Identity**

- **Role:** According to church tradition, Antipas was the **Bishop of Pergamum**, having been ordained by the Apostle John.
- **Setting:** He lived in a city described as "where Satan has his throne". This likely refers to Pergamum's status as a major

center for **emperor worship** and its massive **Altar of Zeus**.

- **The Conflict:** His martyrdom occurred during a time of intense pressure for Christians to offer sacrifices to the Roman Emperor (likely **Domitian**, r. 81–96 AD) as a god.

### **The Historical Event of His Martyrdom**

Tradition from the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic churches describes a brutal execution:

- **The Accusation:** Local pagan priests claimed that **Antipas's prayers** were driving away their gods and demons. When he refused to renounce Christ, he was brought to the temple of Artemis.
- **The "Brazen Bull":** Antipas was reportedly placed inside a **brazen bull**—a hollow bronze statue used as a torture device. A

fire was lit beneath the bull, slowly roasting him alive.

- **His Experience:** Legend holds that as the metal grew red-hot, Antipas did not scream in agony; instead, he **sang psalms and prayed** for his congregation and the world until he died.
- **The Aftermath:** Christians later recovered his body, which tradition says was miraculously untouched by the fire.

### **Legacy and Veneration**

- **Feast Day:** He is commemorated on **April 11**.
- **Patron Saint:** Because of the tradition that he prayed for those with dental pain while inside the bull, he is the patron saint of toothaches and dental diseases.
- **Archeological Link:** The Great Altar of Pergamon, associated with the biblical

"throne of Satan," is now a major exhibit in the **Pergamon Museum in Berlin**.

*Would you like to explore the **theological meaning** behind the "throne of Satan" or see more about the **archaeological remains** of Pergamum?*

- The theological and archaeological significance of Pergamum (modern-day Bergama, Turkey) stems from its identity as a major center of pagan worship and intellectual power.
- **Theological Meaning: The "Throne of Satan"**
- In Revelation 2:13, the phrase "where Satan's throne is" is widely believed by scholars to refer to one of several dominant pagan structures in the city:
- **Shaped like a giant "U"** and visible from miles away, its resemblance to a massive throne makes it the most likely candidate.

- Emperor Worship
- Pergamum was the first city to receive a temple dedicated to the living Roman Emperor (Augustus), making it a hub for the cult of Caesar, which early Christians viewed as demonic.
- The city was famous for its healing center dedicated to Asclepius, the god of medicine, whose symbol was a **snake**—a figure Christians associated with Satan.

### **Key Archaeological Remains**

- The ruins of Pergamum are split into three main levels: the **Upper Acropolis**, the **Middle City**, and the **Lower City**. [1, 4]
- Only the foundations remain on-site in Turkey. The original monumental frieze, depicting the battle between gods and giants, was moved and reconstructed in the **Pergamon Museum in Berlin**.

- The Steepest Theater
- This Hellenistic theater is carved directly into the bedrock with an incredible **70-degree incline**, seating 10,000 people and offering panoramic views of the valley below.
- Once the second-largest in the ancient world (rivaling Alexandria), it housed 200,000 scrolls. It is historically significant for the development of **parchment** (pergamena) after Egypt banned papyrus exports to the city.
- A stunning Roman structure with soaring white marble columns that crown the highest point of the citadel.
- A massive red-brick temple originally built for the Egyptian god Serapis. It later became one of the **Seven Churches of Revelation**.

- Located about 3km from the Acropolis, this medical center included underground treatment tunnels and a theater, where the famous physician **Galen** once worked.
- Would you like to know more about the **daily lives** of the citizens who lived here

Daily life in Pergamum was a blend of sophisticated urban luxury and intense spiritual pressure. As a resident, your experience would depend heavily on whether you lived in the "Upper Acropolis" (the elite district) or the bustling "Lower City."

### **Social Class and Housing**

- **The Elite:** If you were a wealthy citizen, you likely lived in the Upper Acropolis in grand houses like the **House of Dionysus**. These homes featured central courtyards, private baths, and even primitive underfloor heating (hypocausts).

- **Commoners and Trades people:** Most citizens were farmers, craftsmen, or shopkeepers living in more modest apartments in the lower city.
- **A City of Immigrants:** Pergamum was a cultural melting pot where Greek settlers lived alongside indigenous Anatolian populations, though a clear social divide often kept the Greeks in power.

### **A Day in the Life**

- **Morning Routines:** The day started at dawn. While the wealthy met with "clients" (political dependents), tradespeople set up market stalls or worked in the city's famous **tanneries** and **perfume workshops**.
- **Health and Wellness:** You might visit the Asclepeion, a world-renowned medical "spa."

- **Treatments were holistic:** you would walk barefoot on soil, listen to the "healing" sounds of underground water, and sleep in "incubation" rooms where priests interpreted your dreams to diagnose illnesses.
- **Afternoon Leisure:** Work usually ended by midday. You might visit the **Great Library** to read scrolls or head to the public baths to socialize, exercise, and gossip.

## **Diet and Health**

Recent archaeological studies of skeletons in Pergamum reveal the harsh realities of daily life:

- **The Menu:** Most people ate a plant-based diet of **bread and porridge**. Only the wealthy regularly ate beef or pork.
- **Life Expectancy:** Life was short; most residents died between the ages of **20**

**and 40.** Women often died even younger due to complications from childbirth.

- **Common Ailments:** Even in this "medical capital," tooth loss and abscesses were extremely common among the young.

## The "Dark Side" of Culture

The city's beauty came with a heavy religious burden that directly impacted your social standing:

- **Trade Unions:** To get a job, you had to join a trade guild. These were almost always tied to a pagan god, requiring you to attend feasts that involved animal sacrifices and ritual immorality.
- **Compulsory Worship:** In Pergamum, unlike other cities, **Emperor worship** was a daily requirement. Simply walking past a shrine might require you to stop and

publicly declare "Caesar is Lord" to avoid arrest.

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