

Albania

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Visual Newsletter Volume 2! The beginning of the end of the winter season, the temps start to rebound and Albania returns from hibernation. This issue covers the last couple of months of activities. Pictured; An old cemetary about 4 hours from Tirana by bike.

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Top; Goat fountain with a knife on top, Left; hooks to hang the animal carcass, Above; Blood stained snow, still fresh.

Bektashi Experience A sect of Islam, the Bektashi hold the fresh spring at the top of Kruja mountain as a sacred location. They light candles and practice animal sacrifices high up on the cliffs above the city of Kruja.

We biked to the top of the mountain with my friend, Genti (in the picture below, he's on the right), and as a Kruja local, he showed us the location of the spring and the place where they slaughter animals. I am reminded of Hebrews 10, where it talks about the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made so that the need for sacrificing animals was no longer required to enter the Most Holy Place. This passage truly comes to life when you step on blood stained snow and see the hooks for the carcasses dangling overhead. For "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Heb 10:4). Praise God that we might enter His presence by the blood of Jesus - a new and living way - and that through Him there is no longer any need of sacrifice for sin.





A Lesson in Hospitality

Half-a-day's journey to the middle of nowhere, we stumble upon this man and his basic convenience shop (the ragged building behind him) at the very top of a mountain range. He welcomed us into his meager shop and began to work furiously to prepare two turkish coffees from his tattered stock of supplies tucked into the back of the mud-floored building. We sat in some plastic chairs soaking in the view (where Brett is standing in the left inset) and sipping our thick coffees. We went to pay him for the coffees and he refused to accept the money and bid us a safe journey - what hospitality and generosity.



Mike Low tears through some fresh, knee-deep powder on the last day of a ski trip in Kolasin, Montenegro - a great way to rejuvenate and re-energize!



Some colorful clothes hang out to dry as they soak up the warm sun and reflect on a still lake outside Tirana in a small, rural village.

