



The Gift of The Cross!

THE SKYLINE OF A CITY WAS CHANGED IN A MOMENT BY AN ELECTRICAL DEVICE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC. IN 1931, MARCONI ACTIVATED A SWITCH IN ITALY, AND A COLOSSAL CONCRETE STATUE IN RIO DE JANEIRO WAS INSTANTLY BATHED IN A FLOOD OF LIGHT. FROM A THOUSAND VIEWPOINTS IN THE STREETS BELOW, ON THE TOP OF MT. CORCOVADO, TWO-THIRDS OF A MILE ABOVE THE BAY, A TOWERING IMAGE OF CHRIST WAS REVEALED. EVER SINCE THAT DAY THIS IMPOSING GUARDIAN OF RIO DE JANEIRO STANDS WITH ITS ARMS EXTENDED WIDE TO PROTECT THE TROPICAL PARADISE BELOW.

When we focus the spotlight of the Holy Spirit on the book of Revelation, the towering image of the exalted Christ completely dominates the landscape. The book of Revelation has been considered by many to be foreboding, full of denunciations and threats. Grotesque beasts glare threateningly from its pages. Monstrous powers of evil appear. Hundreds of volumes have been written in attempts to identify the beast and his image. The good news is that the beast is not the hero of the book. On the backdrop of the bleak crags of this present Patmos, the book of Revelation emphasizes the lofty countenance of a Man. We call Him "The Man of Revelation." The last book of the Bible begins with these words: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." (**Revelation 1:1**). It is not "The Revelation of St. John the Divine," as some Bibles state. The book of

Revelation truly reveals Jesus Christ, His personality, His power, His ministry and His eternal purpose. His name or its equivalent is used 187 times in the first three chapters of the book. The emphasis of the book is not the beast. It is the Lamb! Jesus is referred to as "The Lamb" 28 times in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 5 God's prophet is seen weeping bitterly. The question echoes through the courts of Heaven. "Who is Worthy?" **Revelation 5:2**. The only answer that rings through the universe is total silence. No angel can answer. No fallen being on earth can answer. Neither angels nor men know the secret purposes of God. Finally the answer to the most important question of the universe is given. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is worthy. Revelation 5:5. The prophet turns to see a lion, but what does He see instead? A lamb! Christ is a lion

to his enemies. Here He is seen in the garb of a lamb. The King of kings became a lamb so that He could redeem His people. "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb." Why is He worthy? "For thou wast slain." Revelation 5:9. Not because He was born on earth. Not because He lived a holy life. His credential lies in the fact that He rendered recompense to incensed justice and injured holiness by dying on the bloody tree. His sacrifice purchased redemption by His blood for people "of every kindred, tongue and people, and every nation." The book of Revelation has been referred to as the crown jewel, the capstone of divine revelation and glory. Of the 39 books of the Old Testament, 26 are directly quoted from. Of the 404 verses, 278 are either quoted from or coloured by Old Testament passages. Revelation sends searchers for truth into every part of the Scriptures. It is an epitome of the whole Bible. The Man of Revelation is the source of our salvation, because it is only through His sacrifice that fallen humankind can find redemption. Peter, John's contemporary disciple, states that our only hope of salvation is "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." **1 Peter 1:19**. The writer of the book of Revelation summarizes the essence of the Gospel declaring that God's gift of His only begotten Son provides the means whereby all who believe in Him "should not perish but have eternal life." **John 3:16**. Jesus is the Man of Revelation. He is worthy because He paid the awful price of our sin with His sacrifice on Calvary. It is through this sacrifice that the human race can have access to the "everlasting Gospel." **Revelation 14:6**. What is the essence of the everlasting Gospel? Through sin, our first parents were alienated from God. Their transgression brought the death sentence upon them. Right after sin entered the world, even before any announcement of punishment, before the condemnation came a swift message of mercy. Satan had introduced sin into the world. He had managed to promote a rebellion against God. His victory was short lived. The promise of a

Champion was given, One who will be bruised and suffer, but he will smite the enemy in a vital part and deliver a deadly wound. **Genesis 3:15**. This was the first Gospel promise, a lone star in the sky, a torch that shone from the gates of Eden and lit up the world to all believers. The patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament rejoiced in the mysterious language of this promise, and rested their hope upon it. Woven through the messages of the Scriptures like a thread we find the promises of the coming Man of Revelation. Isaiah has been referred to as the Gospel prophet. He states that all human beings, like sheep, have gone astray. **Isaiah 53:6**. It appears to be a hopeless situation. But there is a solution: "The LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Only Jesus could provide salvation. Worthy is the Lamb! The Apostle Paul presents the hopeless state of human beings. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." **Romans 3:23**. The news gets worse: "The wages of sin is death." **Romans 6:23**. There is a death sentence hanging over every member of the human race. The best person in the world is a sinner, worthy of death. There is no human solution to the problem of sin. All human righteousness is compared to filthy rags. **Isaiah 64:6** The situation seems hopeless. But there is a solution. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." **Romans 6:23**. How can we find salvation? "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." **Luke 19:10**. The first step in salvation is to recognize our lost condition. It is only then that we can turn to the Man of Revelation, who alone is worthy. We can not earn our salvation; it is the gift of God. **Romans 6:23**. One night while the people of Jerusalem were sleeping, a prominent man was walking through the streets. He went out of the city limits, down through a valley, and up a mountain known as the Mount of Olives. There He met the Man of Revelation. Under the dim light of the twinkling stars, accompanied by the sound of the soft breeze blowing on those olive trees, Jesus laid bare the most important truth of all

times. There was no human hope for Nicodemus. The only way to eternal life was to be born again. **John 3:3**. Every time a child is born it is a wonderful miracle of God. There is a much greater miracle. Nicodemus had no trouble believing in the birth of a child. He asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?" **John 3:4**. Christ explained the miracle of the new birth. It is the work of a moment. Theologians call it justification. When we confess our sins and accept Christ He cleanses us from all unrighteousness. **1 John 1:9**. Yet to be a Christian means more than simply to change your ways. Christ didn't tell Nicodemus to turn over a new leaf. The change must come from within. It is a total change. The born again Christian is a new person. Although he still has the same physical appearance, things are different. He speaks about new subjects, his actions are different, his likes and dislikes have changed. Things that had formerly been important to him now lose their charm. They are replaced by an interest in spiritual matters. He continues to grow through the process of sanctification. Not everyone who claims to be born again is truly a new person. Many use the name of Jesus, but are still in a lost condition. **Matthew 7:21-23**. Jesus asks them, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" **Luke 6:46**. There are many who talk the talk but fail to walk the walk. The book of Revelation projects a scene of the followers of the Lamb who "keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus." (**Revelation 14:12**). "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." **Revelation 14:5** They are not saved in their sin, but they are saved from their sin. To those who receive Him He gives them power to become the sons of God. **John 1:12**. The book of Revelation closes with a picture of the glorious finale to the conflict of the ages. Soon the last conflict will have ended and this blood-stained planet will be transformed into a place of joy and peace. The Man of Revelation will make all things new. **Revelation 21:5** His people will see His face,

and live with Him forever. **Revelation 22:4**. He calls you to accept His salvation today and be a part of His eternal kingdom.



Quick Quiz

Our heavenly Father has so much He longs to teach us! Think of each seminar session as one in a series of steps leading upward a series of “lessons from heaven.” May we learn our lessons well, so we in turn can teach others. God’s Word, the Bible - our Textbook for this seminar - offers **Lessons For Living!**

Lesson 5 - The Gift of the Cross!

1. Some hang onto denial, putting on a bold front, saying, “I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” not knowing they are “ _____ , and _____ , and _____ , and _____ .” **To check your answer, see Revelation 3:17**

2. **True or False** God vividly impressed on people in Old Testament times the cause-and-effect relationship between SIN and DEATH, when any sinner - from king to commoner - would have to confess his sin on the head of a sacrificial animal, then take the knife and slay the animal himself. **To check your answer, see Leviticus 4:22-30, etc.**

3. Perfect balance is seen in the Scripture that says, “The wages of _____ is _____ ; but the _____ of God is eternal _____ through Jesus Christ our Lord.” **To check your answer, see Romans 6:23**

4. Those who fear coming to Christ will “cramp their lifestyle” overlook Christ’s promise: “I am come that they might have _____ , and that they might have it more _____ .” **To check your answer, see John 10:10**

5. Men sometimes make salvation unnecessarily complicated, but the Bible makes it simplicity itself, reducing it to its lowest common denominator as an either-or proposition in saying: “He who has the _____ has life; he who does not have the Son of God does _____ have life.” **To check your answer, see 1 John 5:12**