

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

HOW CAN WE "GIVE TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH"?

QUESTION. – What is the meaning of our Lord's words in Luke 6:30, "Give to every man that asketh"?

Answer. – Our Lord's discourse, of which this is a part, is given more fully, more completely, in Matt. 5:40-44. From Matthew's account it would appear that our Lord meant that when we are brought under compulsion, legally, we are to submit gracefully, and not to harbor resentment or grudgings. For instance, he says, "If any man *sue thee at the law*, and take away thy coat [by legal process], do not refuse him the cloak also." It does not follow that we are to allow him to take coat and cloak, etc., without the process of law-suit and compulsion. But whether we think the legal decision a just or an unjust one, we, as the Lord's disciples, are to be so law-abiding that we will offer not the slightest resistance to the enforcement of the legal decision, tho it take from us everything.

We should interpret Matt. 5:42, and Luke 6:30 in harmony with the foregoing, and assume that the asking means a *demand*, a compulsion. As for instance, if a highway robber were to "ask" or demand your money (as was much more customary in olden times than now, under present police regulations), surrender it without a fight. That this is the proper view is proven by the preceding statement, "If any man *sue thee at the law*, and take away thy coat," etc. If the coat were to be given freely for the *asking*, the injunction respecting the law-suit to obtain it would be meaningless.

The succeeding statement is in harmony also, "From him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." Here the attitude of the borrower stands out in contrast with the attitude of the highway robber, who demands absolute possession. The Lord's followers are to be

generously inclined toward all men, anxious to "do good and lend," and to use hospitality without selfishly hoping for return favors. If so situated that an enemy could demand of us our goods, we are to submit; but if so situated that we can resist legally, we are to resist any unjust demands, and compel a suit at law. If the suit at law shall go against us, we are to submit gracefully and heartily. The teachings of this verse seem to be that the Lord's people are to seek to be generous, peaceable and law-abiding under all circumstances and conditions.

WAS THE GOSPEL PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD IN PAUL'S DAY?

Question. – Please harmonize Matt. 24:14 and Col. 1:23, with your teachings.

Answer. – The statement of Matt. 24:14 does not imply that the whole world will receive the gospel and be converted by it, before the end of the Gospel age. Quite to the contrary, it expressly states that the preaching is to be for "a *witness* to the nations." From the form of your question, it would appear that you consider Col. 1:6 to mean that the gospel had already been preached to all the world in the Apostle Paul's day. If this be your thought, it is evidently quite incorrect, because, if the gospel had already been preached to every nation at that time, the end of the Gospel age should have come at that time, as our Lord declared, and the Millennial Kingdom should have been set up and Satan been bound eighteen centuries ago. Besides, as we look over all the world to-day, **[R2518 : page 218]** we know that neither now nor at any time in the past has the gospel converted all the world: the most we can say to-day is that now, finally, the gospel has been *preached as a witness to every nation* – the Bible, which is the gospel message, has been translated into all the national tongues of the world, and thus every nation (through some representatives) has been made acquainted with the letter of God's message, at least; and this is in full agreement with our position that we are now in the "harvest" time or end of this gospel age, and in the dawning of the Millennium.

In respect to Col. 1:23, we will suppose that you refer to the clause which says, "The gospel which ye have heard, and which *was preached to every creature* which is under heaven." To assume, as you evidently do, that this implies that the gospel was already preached to every creature under heaven in the Apostle's day, and hence that there would be no need of a presentation of Christ to any in the future, because all have had a full and fair opportunity of knowing of the grace of God in the present life, is a most unreasonable interpretation of the Apostle's words. We submit to you that his meaning is as follows: –

God's grace for over two thousand years was restricted to Abraham and his seed, – the one nation of Israel; and was not sent to any other nation under heaven. (Amos 3:2.) And even when the gospel "began to be preached by our Lord," it was restricted to the same "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24): it was not until Israel had stumbled through unbelief, and been rejected of God (Matt. 23:37,38), and after our Lord Jesus had "tasted death for every man," "for the sins of the *whole world*," and had risen from the dead, "Lord of *all*," that he authorized the preaching of the gospel to others than the Jews – to the Gentiles. His message was, "Go ye and teach *all nations*," etc. In harmony with this the Apostle tells us in Col. 1:23 that the gospel which we have heard is *open to every human creature* under heaven – there is no longer any restriction of it to the Jews. The difficulty in the translation is in the word [**R2519 : page 218**] *to*: the proper thought would be better conveyed by the word *for*. The Greek word here is *en*, and altho its strict meaning is *in*, yet it is frequently used in the sense of *for*, being so translated six times in the New Testament. Instances: "If ye be reproached *for* the name of Christ." (1 Pet. 4:14.) "Well reported of *for* good works." (1 Tim. 5:10.) "Think they shall be heard *for* their much speaking" (Matt. 6:7), etc.

"I, IF I BE LIFTED UP, WILL DRAW ALL MEN."

Question. – What is meant by "lifted up" in our Lord's expression, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me"?

Answer. – The primary thought undoubtedly is our Lord's crucifixion – his lifting up on the cross, as the great sin-offering on behalf of "the sins of the whole world." It is as a result or consequence of this sacrifice that all the blessings which God has purposed and promised shall eventually come to our race. Until the atonement for our sin had been made, nothing permanent could be done for man's release; for the sentence upon him was a death sentence. Our Lord's lifting up was as the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, looking to which the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpents, were healed, – in type of how the world of mankind, bitten by sin, poisoned and dying, may have life through the exercise of faith in the Redeemer, based upon his great sacrifice – his lifting up as our redemption price.

A secondary thought connected with this passage would be that our Lord's obedience in laying down his life as our sin-offering led directly to his own exaltation to power and great glory, as the Apostle has stated it, "*Wherefore* God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,...and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." – Phil. 2:10,11.

It is by reason of our Lord's *lifting up*, in both of these senses, that the blessing is to come to the world. His lifting up as the sin-offering was our purchase-price; his lifting up in exaltation as our great Prophet, Priest and King, is equally necessary to the drawing of the world of mankind, and the resultant blessing upon all who yield to the drawing influence.

While considering this passage, it is well to have a proper thought in mind respecting the *drawing*. That our Lord is not drawing all men to himself at the present time is evident to every one: moreover, the Scriptures assure us that he is *not* drawing men at the present time: on the contrary, his own words are that during the present age the Father does all the drawing: "No man cometh unto me, except

the *Father* which sent me *draw* him." The drawing by the Son will not begin until the drawing by the Father has accomplished its intended purpose. That purpose, as Scripturally expressed, is "to take out of them a people for his name" – to gather out of the world an elect Church as a bride for his Son, to bear the name of Christ, to be his Bride and joint-heir, "members in particular of his body."

When the election of this Gospel age shall have accomplished this purpose, and the Church shall have been glorified, Bride and Bridegroom made one, then will begin the time in which the Son will "*draw all men*," the world of mankind, as the Father has been drawing the Church during this age. In this work of [R2519 : page 219] *drawing* all men, the Church will be associated with the Lord as "members of his body," of which he is "the head over all, God blessed forever."

It has required this entire Gospel age to *lift up*, first the Head, and afterward the members of his body, joint-sacrificers with him. When all the sufferings of Christ are ended, and the last member of the body has finished his course in death, then, through the power of the first resurrection (which began with our Lord, and will finish with the change of the last member of his body) the entire Church will be *lifted up* in the secondary sense, of exaltation, and then will begin the work of drawing the world – pointing all to the great sin-offering finished at Calvary.

That our Lord meant by this expression, "lifted up," more than his own crucifixion is evident from his words, "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, *then* shall ye know that I am he." The Jews do not yet know Christ as the Messiah: and this is an additional proof that his words include the lifting up, the crucifying, of all the members of his body – the Church.

The drawing does not mean, as some have erroneously supposed, a compulsory forcing of mankind. Some Universalists have used this passage as tho it supported their contention; but rightly understood it

is quite to the contrary. It intimates that the Lord will exert a drawing and helpful influence upon all men, but nevertheless leave their own wills free to act; for he seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth. In proof that the word, "drawing," as used in the Scriptural sense, does not signify compulsion, note well the fact that the Father's drawing during this Gospel age has not been compulsory: it has consisted of enlightenment and help and opportunities which may be either accepted or resisted by all who experience the drawing. Thus we are distinctly told concerning this calling and drawing that "Many are called, but few chosen;" because few make their calling and election sure by obedience to the terms of the call. So, too, it will be during the Millennial age; the light, the opportunities, the general influence of that time, will be so favorable, that "***all shall come to a knowledge of the truth***" (1 Tim. 2:4; Isa. 11:9) and to opportunities of harmony with God. And it shall come to pass that the soul who will not hear (obey) that Prophet, Priest and King, then in power, shall be cut off from amongst his people – in the Second Death. – Acts 3:23.
