

# His Yoke

In Matthew chapter 11, Jesus knows that John is isolated and wavering in his faith. He reminds John's disciples to remember the miracles and the preaching of the gospel as confirmation that He is the Messiah. Jesus then goes on to authenticate the ministry of John the Baptist. Confronting His listeners with not repenting when hearing John preach, Jesus reminds them of their lack of repentance in the cities where He performed most of His mighty works. He censured and reproached them. Compared them unfavorably to Tyre, Sidon and Sodom! Judgment is the certain consequence for lack of repentance. Abruptly Jesus changes focus. He prays audibly to His Father. Thanks Him for hiding truth from the wise, clever and learned (Amplified). Truth is revealed to the childish, untaught and unskilled (Amplified), (and to those who know just how needy they are). What happens then? Jesus goes on to do what only He can do. He deliberately chooses to reveal the heart and mind of God. "Come" is God's invitation. The overburdened are offered rest. Soul refreshment. Grace. Mercy. Peace. God's way. Not man's self-centered way of rules and regulations, physical bearing and pomp, but by grace. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast", Ephesians 2:8-9. KJV. Salvation is God-initiated. Further emphasis that salvation and peace with God is first and foremost God-centered comes from the Old Testament, where we read in Isaiah 43:25 "He blots out our transgressions for "His own sake". KJV.

Many Bible dictionaries and commentaries describe "yoke" as a bar of wood used to unite two animals to pull together in the field and suggest the term may refer to cooperation, working together or being united.

The rabbis of Jesus' day used the word "yoke" for school\*.

The context in Matthew 11 more favorably supports the rabbis use of the word, as Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you and **learn** from me...."

In this passage, Jesus was contrasting what was taught in the rabbi's school with what He was teaching in His school. He invites us to come to his school and **learn** from him. The school where God reveals Himself through Jesus is where we learn to know God and find soul rest. Further, this school is wholesome (useful, good) not harsh, hard, sharp or pressing, but comfortable, gracious and pleasant; (Amplified). The textbook in this school is the Word of God.

Jesus goes on to say that His burden is light and His yoke (His school) is easy, [due in no small part that we can "cast our cares on Him" (1 Peter 5:7, Psalms 55:22)] in contrast to that of the Pharisees with all of their burdensome impossible-to-keep rules and regulations with the emphasis on the external. His burden is light and His yoke (His school) is easy because He has paid in full the price for us to be reconciled to God. **GRACE.** Nothing more, nothing less. Further, we read in Romans 5:1-2 that justification is by faith and in Romans 8:1-2 that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. KJV.

This indeed is good news!

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