

The Christian Yoke Is Not Easy

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The Christian Yoke Is Easy (Mt. 11:28-30).

The Christian Yoke Is Not Easy (Jn. 16:33; 2Tim. 3:12; Heb. 12:6, 8).

Jesus Christ expects all those who follow him to accept the same yoke that he accepted from his heavenly Father. According to a correct translation of Matthew 11:30, that yoke is kind,

For my (Christ's) yoke is *kind* (SGD 5543; same Greek word translated as "kind" in Luke 6:35) and my burden is light (Mt. 11:30; Ed. notes in parentheses; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

In order to correctly understand the meaning of the scriptures that supposedly contradict each other, it is imperative to know the answer to the following question:

"If the yoke that Christ accepted from his heavenly Father is kind and light, what does the other yoke represent?"

Logically, the other yoke that Christ did not refer to in Matthew 11:28-30 is the opposite. In other words, it is neither kind nor light. Therefore it would be unkind and heavy, or restrictive. Some Biblical scholars have assumed that the yoke Christ referred to was the Mosaic law. However, this is an error because the only aspect of the Mosaic law that Paul stated was changed pertained to the animal sacrificial system, including circumcision (cf. Rom. 2:25-29; 4:9-12; Heb. 10:1-4; see study: What was the change in the law that Paul referred to in Hebrews 7:12?). The animal sacrificial system was added as a temporary means of dealing with the penalty for sin (eternal death; cf. Rom. 6:23) until Christ came to fulfill it, and deal with the issue of sin once and for all (Gal. 3:19; cf. Mt. 5:17). Now that Christ fulfilled this aspect of God's law, every other word of God continues to be in effect (Mt. 4:4 cf. 5:18-19;). Therefore, the yoke that Christ referred to has nothing whatsoever to do with God's law, and those who claim it does need to repent of this error if they want to be in the first resurrection, and deal with this issue once and for all.

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome (1Jn. 5:3; cf. 1Jn. 2:3-6).

The yoke that is unkind and restrictive is Satan's. He keeps everyone, who is under his control, in bondage to sin. His primary means of maintaining this situation is through deception,

So the great dragon was cast out (of Almighty God's presence), that serpent of old (cf. Gen. 3:1),

called the Devil and **Satan, who deceives the whole world**; he was cast to the earth, and his angels (now demons) with him (Rev. 12:9; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

With the exception of those God has called out of this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), everyone is living under Satan's system, which is riddled with lies. In reality, very few people can call Almighty God their Father. Instead, the majority of mankind has Satan as their father. They are identified as belonging to him because they believe so many of the lies that he teaches, and they follow his way of living which is summarized in Galatians 5:19-21,

You do the deeds of your father (Satan) ... (Jn. 8:41a; Ed. note in parenthesis).

You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it (Jn. 8:44).

Almighty God describes what Satan has done to everyone under his influence in the next section of scripture,

Those who see you (Satan after he is transformed into a flesh and blood being for final judgment) will gaze at you, and consider you, saying 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷Who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities (through continual warfare), Who did not open (would not release) the house of his prisoners?' (Isa. 14:16-17; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Mankind as a whole is in Satan's prison and he is not going to let them out. However, upon Christ's return to rule this earth, Satan will be bound and his captives will finally be released (Rev. 20:1-3). Until this occurs, mankind is under Satan's yoke, which is both unkind and heavy. Therefore, the so-called Christian yoke that is supposed to be described in John 16:33, 2Timothy 3:12, Hebrews 12:6-8, has nothing whatsoever to do with the yoke that Christ mentioned in Matthew 11:28-30. Christ's yoke is light and kind and it involves obedience to God's word (Mt. 4:4). The fruit of living in accordance with Christ's yoke is described in Galatians 5:22-23. In contrast, the fruit of having to live under Satan's yoke results in various forms of oppression related to his lies and deception. For those who are living in accordance with God's law and commandments, Satan's yoke results in persecution as he is able to deceive his human minions into harming God's people,

So the serpent (symbol of Satan) spewed water out of his mouth like a flood (symbol of warfare; cf. Isa. 59:19; Jer. 46:8) after the woman (symbol of God's true church), that he might cause her to be carried away (destroyed) by the flood. ¹⁶But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

¹⁷And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and **he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony** (cf. Ex. 25:16) of **Jesus Christ** (Rev. 12:15-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Two of the scriptures that some try to compare to Christ's yoke, in order to claim a contradiction, will now be listed and they should make it clear that Satan's yoke (lies and deception) has a direct impact upon God's people, and the results are not easy to bear,

... In the world (of Satan's influence) you (God's servants) will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I (Christ) have overcome the world (Jn. 16:33b; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2Tim. 3:12).

The last scripture that is supposed to represent a contradiction between the Christian yoke being easy, while on the other hand not easy, is actually dealing with an unrelated subject. It is commenting on the fact that God disciplines people for their benefit as it helps them build righteous character,

For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives (Heb. 12:6).

But if you are without chastening (correction), of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons (Heb. 12:8).

In conclusion, Christ's yoke is kind and light and it involves doing the same things that Christ did during his earthly ministry. He obeyed his heavenly Father, just as all Christians are supposed to do. Christ did not come to do away with his Father's law and commandments, and he will enforce them upon his return to rule the earth. The three scriptures that some present as proof that the Christian yoke is not easy have nothing to do with the Christian yoke. Instead, two of them are proof that Satan's yoke brings pain and oppression to mankind, including those who are obeying God's law and commands. The texts in Hebrews 12:6-8 are unrelated to the topic of the Christian yoke as they are dealing with God's correction for wrongdoing.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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