

28/01/2018

MATTHEW 11:28-30 = REST (Come to Me and I will give you rest...)

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: *Illustration of yoke, "skeie&strops":* The yoke rested on top of the cattles' neck. The "skeie" were used to divide/separate the cattle, to enable them to work productively. The "strops" tied them to this yoke and to the plough/wagon they had to pull. Bottomline: Once all the cattle moved together, the plough/wagon moved. But because of uneven surfaces and the weight of the object drawn, these cattle sometimes had chaffing marks on their backs.

#SCRIPTURE READING: Matt 11:28-30, 2 Peter 1:4, Galatians 3:1-3, Philippians 2:5-11

#SERMON=TRANSITION: Could be that we would like to ask: "Lord, with all respect, we're already 'heavy' enough - carrying all our burdens/responsibilities. This yoke story - really?..." B/S, how should we understand this?

+EXEGESIS&APPLICATION: Two of the Lord's "exceedingly great and precious promises" (2 PET 1:4) are found in our Scripture reading: "I will give you rest" and "...you will find rest for your soul". The *1st promise* pertains to *justification and Spiritual birth*. The *2nd* pertains to *sanctification and Spiritual growth*.

*The *1st promise* is addressed *to those who are struggling under the burden of guilt and condemnation related to sin*: "...all you who labour and are heavy laden..." This is where everyone begins their earthly trek. David testified of this common starting point for humanity when he wrote: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." (PS 51:5)... In order to enjoy the benefits of this initial promise of rest, *a person must bring their sin/guilt to Christ*: "Come to Me" He is able to remove it, 'cause He carried that burden of sin for us on the cross: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, everyone, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (ISAI 53:6) For every single person who comes to Jesus in humble repentance, forgiveness is granted. The promise is fulfilled: "I will give you rest."

*The *2nd promise* is addressed *to those who have found the initial rest of forgiveness, but their soul is restless*. They are struggling under the burden of trying to produce a Godly life by their own fleshly resources. *Re* this same issue, Paul asks the Galatians: "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?" (GAL 3:3) They yearn for rescue from the crushing load of walking according to the flesh. "Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (ROM 7:24)... In order to enjoy the benefits of this additional promise of rest, *a person must yoke up with Jesus = walk with Him in daily intimacy*. "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me." *But this yoke is not for the purpose of pulling half of the load* (like the yoke placed upon two oxen); *this is "yoke" of relationship and communion*. "...learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart." (MATT 11:29b) *Those who walk this path of growing communion with the Lord have this second promise fulfilled*: "...and you will find rest for your souls." (11:29c) *The paradox of the Gospel*: *That if you want to live - you have to die to yourself; that if you want to be first - you have to be prepared to be last; that if you want to retain/keep what you have - you have to let go/sacrifice it; that in God's Kingdom the servant is the leader* (LUKE 22:26). Jesus washing the feet of his disciples (JOHN 13:1-17); *knowing Who He was*, He took the water&towel and washed their feet. Men/Priests - *serve like a king, lead like servant*.

+CONCLUSION: Why is this "yoke" not heavy, on the contrary "en-lightning"? Cause Jesus rose from the grave/ascended to heaven. "Gravity point" changed. WOW! (...Preke\Rus\Matt11v28)