



“MY YOKE IS EASY;”

IS MERE BELIEF IN YESHUA (JESUS) ALL THAT IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION?

By George Lujack

Yeshua (Jesus) spoke of an easy yoke of which He commanded all to come to Him and take. What is this yoke? This article will discuss His easy yoke and address the question as to whether or not mere belief in Yeshua (Jesus) is sufficient for salvation.

MATTHEW 11:30:

“For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

What is His yoke and what is the burden associated with it?
Yeshua’s (Jesus’) statement, in context and [INTERPRETED]:

MATTHEW 11:28-30:

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden [WITH SINS], and I will give you rest [FROM THEM]. Take My yoke [WAY] upon you and learn [WISDOM] from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your [TROUBLED] souls. For My yoke [WAY] is easy and My burden [CROSS] is light.”

Yeshua (Jesus) does give us a way to live by, a cross to bear in this age.

MATTHEW 10:38:

“And he who does not take his CROSS and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”

JOHN 14:6:

Yeshua (Jesus) said, “I am THE WAY, the truth, and the life.”

What is this cross (burden) we must bear and how shall we follow after Him to be worthy of Him?

What way is His way?

1 JOHN 2:3-6:

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 JOHN 5:3-4:

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments ARE NOT BURDENSOME. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world.

Yeshua’s (Jesus’) yoke, His burden, is obedience to His commandments.

Many end times false prophets are teaching that God’s commandments are burdensome and impossible to keep. Scripture directly refutes this falsehood.

God never issued commands to man that were impossible to follow. Although we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), going forward in our lives we are called upon to repent, or else perish.

EZEKIEL 33:11:

‘As I live,’ says YHWH (the Lord) GOD, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die?’

LUKE 13:3,5:

“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”

ACTS 26:19-20:

“Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, THAT THEY SHOULD REPENT, turn to God, AND DO WORKS BEFITTING REPENTANCE.

- The Apostle Paul

To repent is to feel regret and sorrow over sin, to turn from sin, and to live dedicated to amending one's life. Repentance is a lifestyle change from living in some manner of lawlessness and sin and turning to live in righteousness and in obedience to the commandments of God. Repentance itself is not 'works.' Good deeds and charity are works *befitting* repentance.

Yeshua's (Jesus') death on the cross to atone for our sins saves us. Repentance does not save, but refusing to repent – clinging to certain sins, considering it unnecessary 'work' to repent from them, can condemn someone professing to be a believer of Yeshua (Jesus). Therefore do not be deceived and repent!

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God)? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous (greedy of gain), nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God).

GALATIANS 5:19-21:

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, drug sorcery, hatred, quarrels, jealousies, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God).

REVELATION 21:7-8:

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. The cowardly, untrustworthy, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, drug sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

Yeshua's (Jesus') call to repent is consistent throughout Scripture. As these end times unfold, repent, for the kingdom of God will soon be at hand again.

MATTHEW 4:17:

Yeshua (Jesus) preached and to said, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”**

ACTS 17:30-31:

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.

REVELATION 3:19:

“Be zealous and repent.”

Many end times false prophets proclaim that it is impossible to repent, repentance is not necessary for salvation, and repentance is ‘works-based salvation.’ Scripture directly refutes this falsehood.

MERE BELIEF IN YESHUA (JESUS): SUFFICIENT FOR SALVATION?

ACTS 16:31:

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...”

Mere belief in Yeshua’s (Jesus’) existence, that He is the Son of God, is insufficient for salvation. Taking one solitary verse and applying one’s own standard – one’s own definition of ‘belief’ to it, while disregarding other verses that show what ‘belief’ actually entails, is deceitful. With belief comes obedience. Without obedience, belief is not acceptable. If one truly believes in Yeshua (Jesus), then one will obey His commandments. Anyone who merely says that he or she believes in Him, but does not keep His commandments is a liar and untruthful (1 John 2:3-6).

JAMES 2:19:

You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe - and tremble!

The demons believe in God, they tremble in His presence, and have lost their salvation.

A YOKE THAT MANY ARE UNABLE TO BEAR

The Apostle Peter spoke of a yoke that is very difficult to bear.

ACTS 15:10:

Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Was Peter speaking of the Torah (law) in general? NO! He was speaking specifically of the law of circumcision, in regards to the yoke of *adult* circumcision.

ACTS 15:5-11:

But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed [IN YESHUA (JESUS)] rose up, saying, “It is necessary TO CIRCUMCISE THEM, and to command them to keep the [CIRCUMCISION] law of Moses.”

Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us [CIRCUMCISED JEWS] and them [UNCIRCUMCISED GENTILES], purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke [ADULT CIRCUMCISION] on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ) we [CIRCUMCISED JEWS] shall be saved in the same manner as they [UNCIRCUMCISED GENTILES].”

Circumcision is an everlasting law of God that should be performed on male infants on their eighth day (Genesis 17:9-14). If a male believer has not been circumcised, he is no longer cut off from God. Yeshua (Jesus) paid the penalty for sin, but did not come to abolish the law itself. (Matthew 5:17-19). Circumcision is optional in adulthood, not required.

WAS IT NECESSARY FOR YESHUA (JESUS) TO REPEAT THE LAW?

Many end times false prophets teach that if Yeshua (Jesus) didn't repeat His commands in the New Testament, then they no longer apply. Yeshua (Jesus) did not come to repeat His commandments, and clearly stated that He did not come to destroy the law or any part of it (Matthew 5:17-19).

Imagine if people applied the 'law must be repeated in the New Testament standard' to driving an automobile. A man gets on a highway and sees a 70 miles per hour sign, then some time passes, he crosses a state border and sees no more speed limit signs. So the man believes that the speed limit must have been abolished and decides to travel at 120 miles per hour, before getting pulled over by a highway patrolman. The excuse that the speed limit sign was not constantly repeated will not get the man out of trouble with the highway patrol and he will be duly punished.

God gave the law to the Gentiles, as well as the Jews. The law was first given to the Jews at Mount Sinai and later given to the Gentiles after the resurrection of Yeshua (Jesus) through the Old Testament Scriptures.

Yeshua's (Jesus') yoke, obeying His commandments, is not impossible to do, or He never would have issued them. Obeying His commands, in this world – in this time period before He returns to establish His kingdom on Earth and rule with a rod of iron may be inconvenient and a small burden, but it is not impossible.

1 PETER 3:13-17:

And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. *“And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.”* But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct [COMMANDMENT KEEPING] in Messiah (Christ) may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.

Many end times false prophets teach that those who obey God's commandments are evildoers and they revile the good conduct of Torah-abiding (law-abiding) believers.

God's laws are good (1 Timothy 1:8). It can be somewhat inconvenient to not go to a restaurant or shopping at the mall on the Sabbath, when everyone else is going, but it is not impossible. It is a small burden to eat proper food, to refuse to eat non-food creatures, but it is not impossible. It may seem like a burden to remain sexually pure, when many are sexually promiscuous, but it is not impossible. It may seem like a heavy burden when people, even professing Christian believers, defame, mock, revile, ridicule, and threaten you for your good conduct, for being obedient to God's commandments, but it is better to suffer for doing good than it is to do evil.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12-13:

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

REVELATION 14:12:

Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Yeshua (Jesus).

Mere belief, without repentance, is insufficient for salvation. Yeshua's (Jesus') yoke is light, but it is not that light! We are to WORK out our own salvation with fear and trembling and God will work in us to bring us to righteousness and to do His will.

The light yoke that Yeshua (Jesus) asks His believers to bear is to obey His commandments while patiently putting up with the evils and resisting the temptations of the world.