

11:28-30

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Here's the idea: "I will give you rest." That is three words in the Greek and it is, "I will cause you to rest." Sometimes Jesus says, "I am going to make you rest. You are weary because of you. You are heavy laden because of others. I've got the cure. I'm not asking for your permission. I'm going to make you rest." I don't know if you've ever been in that position in your life, but God just sometimes kicks the door open and says, "I'm here and you're going to rest." He loves us that much. What seems like an inconvenience is the Lord's way of saying, "Enough! I'm sorry you don't have the money for that. You are going to rest. I'm sorry you don't have the time to do that. You're going to rest. I'm going to cause you to rest." It sounds a lot like Psalm 23:2. He makes us to lie down in green pastures. He makes us. He doesn't ask for permission. So here's the lesson I want you to get: If you're feeling inconvenienced and doing without, it could very well be just that you're not resting very well on your own.

Jeremiah 6:9 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, They shall thoroughly glean the remnant of Israel as a vine: turn back thine hand as a grapegatherer into the baskets. To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? Behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Let that sink in. They have no delight in the word of the Lord. They have no delight in being corrected by the word of the Lord.

6:11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD; I am weary with holding in: I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the assembly of young men together: for even the husband with the wife shall be taken, the aged with him that is full of days. And their houses shall be turned unto others, with their fields and wives together: for I will stretch out My hand upon the inhabitants of the land, saith the LORD.

And you know this happened. It happened to Israel: the northern ten tribes with the Assyrian empire in 722 BC, and it happened with the Babylonians in 605 BC. God did have a rapture of sorts of His people. They were snatched away. It says the husband and wife will be taken together. Doesn't that sound a little like Matthew, "where two will be in the bed; one will be taken and the other left?" But here, both will be taken in judgment; a snatching away. There's coming some people, that will be working for the Lord, that will take everything of yours.

6:13 For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. 15 We're getting to the point. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush. Therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD.

It's one of those "fix it before I come down there" sort of things.

*6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, **and ye shall find rest for your souls.** But they said, We will not walk therein.*

God says, "I want you to have rest in your souls." Now I am truly awestruck by this. Because He is offering them rest for their souls and there's no indication in this passage, the one before it, the one after, that anyone in that land was looking for peace in their heart or rest for their soul. That speaks to the character of God. He

offers rest to people who are not sure they need it, and certainly are sure that if they do need it they're not going to get it walking in the old paths. How sad it is to find restless souls.

So, I want to know what these old paths are.

18:13 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Ask ye now among the heathen, who hath heard such things: the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? Or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? Because My people hath forgotten Me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up.

"They've caused My people to walk in ways that are not ancient. They're not old ways." We can describe it as purity, innocence, simplicity (verses 13-14). How about from verse 15? Cold and refreshing. Verse 14. Cold flowing waters that come from another place. Snow that comes from a rock. Somehow old paths are to be seen as those things that are clean, refreshing, innocent, pure, simple.

29 Take My yoke and learn of Me. The word behind "learn" there is the same word we get our word "disciple" from. It has the idea of God saying, "I am not only going to take and put My yoke on you but you are now going to be My disciple." Whatever the old paths is, it is not a lazy man's position. "You are now going to learn from Me." "You are going to learn from Me." *Apo* is the word in the original. "You're going to learn, you're going to take things from Me as you're sharing My load."

30 For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. *find* is *eureka* in the Greek. It has the idea of, "You have been searching and here it is! You have found it! And it is rest!" The idea is in your souls, deep in the core of you, "rest" is going to become part of your fiber. "I'm going to make you rest to the point where they're going to have to do dynamite operations to get My rest out of you." Now that will be a day.

Now, how do we make the connection between the God of the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament? How is it that they're saying the same thing? It's the same one speaking in both places: Jeremiah 6 and Matthew 11. And God is still interested. I am amazed! Hundreds of years have passed, and God is still interested in His people having souls that are at rest.

Come. I wish I could say He was kind of suggesting it, but it is in the imperative. **Come to Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden.** It is, "You who are laboring yourselves, and are laden from others. You who are exhausted because of what you put on yourself and you who are exhausted because of what other people put on you." He says, "I don't care if you have caused the problems in your life. **Come. Come.** I don't care if other people have caused the problems in your life. Someone has laden you down. **Come.**" And immediately I wonder, "Bill Sturm, is there anyone that you're putting a burden on?" Because I don't want Jesus calling someone for relief from me.

I know what the old paths is not: the way of the Pharisees.

Matthew 23:3 You go land and sea to make a convert and you won't even help them with the slightest burden. You lay things on them, more things to obey, more things to observe, more things to do, and you won't even drive by the house and pick them up to do it.

If your idea of old paths, if your idea of purity, if your idea of innocence, if your idea of simplicity from Jeremiah 18, if your idea of old paths, Jeremiah 6, Jeremiah 18...if it's anything like the Pharisees, please know this: #1. You're wrong. #2. You do not have rest in your souls.

So here Jesus speaks as a rabbi. That whole **yoke** language is what a rabbi would say. Even today if you find a Jew, orthodox, liberal, or otherwise, they love their favorite rabbis. They quote their favorite rabbis, some from as recently as the thirteenth century, some more recent than that, especially the *kabbalah*. You've

got all kinds of recent sects of Judaism, you have ancient sects of Judaism and they all have their favorite rabbis, and when you were going to follow a rabbi you would take on his **yoke**, his burden of teaching. You say, "I'm a follower of rabbi ben-so-and-so," that meant you took on his **yoke** and that even the additional traditions that he added to the law, to the Torah, that meant that you took those on as well. And Jesus says, "I'll be your rabbi. Things are not working for you so well. Come with Me. **My burden is light.**"