

Acts 15:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Analysis

Peter's question - 'why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?' - powerfully argues against legalism. Adding law-keeping to faith 'tempts God' by testing whether grace really suffices. Peter's admission that Jews themselves couldn't bear the law's yoke demonstrates its purpose: revealing sin and driving us to Christ (Galatians 3:24).

Historical Context

The 'yoke' metaphor referred to the comprehensive system of Mosaic law and rabbinic tradition. Peter's honest admission that Jews themselves failed to keep it undermined arguments for requiring Gentile law-observance.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How might you be tempting God by adding requirements to the simple gospel of grace?
2. What does the law's unbearable yoke teach about human inability and need for grace?

Interlinear Text

νῦν οὖν τί πειράζετε τὸν θεόν ἐπιθεῖναι ζυγὸν ἐπὶ¹
Now therefore why tempt ye G3588 God to put a yoke upon
G3568 G3767 G5101 G3985 G2316 G2007 G2218 G1909

τὸν τράχηλον τῶν μαθητῶν δὸν οὔτε οἱ πατέρες
G3588 the neck G3588 of the disciples which neither G3588 fathers
G5137 G3101 G3739 G3777 G3962

ἡμῶν οὔτε ἡμεῖς ισχύσαμεν βαστάσαι
our neither we were able to bear
G2257 G3777 G2249 G2480 G941

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 23:4 (Parallel theme): For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

Galatians 5:1 (Parallel theme): Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Galatians 4:9 (References God): But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?

Hebrews 9:9 (Parallel theme): Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

Isaiah 7:12 (Parallel theme): But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the LORD.

Hebrews 3:9 (Parallel theme): When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

Exodus 17:2 (Parallel theme): Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

Matthew 4:7 (References God): Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

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