

~BURDEN (480)

.. Figurative Use

.. Carrying Others Burdens

- **Something carried, a load, literal or figurative.** Various **Hebrew** and **Greek** words are used in the Scriptures to denote a burden or load, sometimes relating to material that is carried but often to such figurative things as responsibility, guilt, or a message from God.
- A burden is generally viewed as a heavy load. Of the various Hebrew roots relating to burdens and loads, one **Hebrew**, *ka-vedh'* basically means be heavy.
- Consequently Yehowah said; The cry of complaint about Sodom and Gomorrah, yes, it is loud, and their sin, yes, it is very **heavy**. (**Genesis 18:20**)
- And it came about that at the moment that he mentioned the ark of the true God, he began to fall from the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck got broken so that he died, because the man was old and **heavy**, and he himself had judged Israel forty years. (**1 Samuel 4:18**)
- And the locusts began to come up over all the land of Egypt and to settle down upon all the territory of Egypt. They were very **burdensome**. Before them there had never turned up in this way locusts like them, and there will never turn up any in this way after them. (**Exodus 10:14**)
- Another, the verb **Hebrew** *na-sa'* means **lift** or **carry**
- And you yourself are commanded; Do this. Take for yourselves wagons from the land of Egypt for your little ones and your wives, and you must **lift** your father on one and come here. (**Genesis 45:19**)
- And I must lie with my fathers, and you must **carry** me out of Egypt and bury me in their grave. Accordingly he said; I myself shall do in keeping with your word. (**Genesis 47:30**)
- And is the root of *mas-sa'*, rendered **burden** or **load**.

- And he went on to say to the Levites, the instructors of all Israel, those holy to Yehowah; Put the holy Ark in the house that Solomon the son of David the king of Israel built, it is not yours as a **burden** upon the shoulder. Now serve Yehowah your God and his people Israel. (**2 Chronicles 35:3**)
- And Aaron and his sons must finish covering the holy place and all the utensils of the holy place when the camp is departing, and after that the sons of Kohath will come in to carry them, but they must not touch the holy place so that they have to die. These things are the load of the sons of Kohath in the tent of meeting. (**Numbers 4:15**)
- The **Hebrew** verb *sa-Val'*, translated **bear burdens** in,
- And he will see that the resting-place is good and that the land is pleasant, and he will bend down his shoulder to **bear burdens** and he will become subject to slavish forced labor. (**Genesis 49:15**)
- Is related to *sib-bal'*, **burden bearer**
- And Judah began to say; The power of the **burden bearer** has stumbled, and there is a great deal of rubbish, and we ourselves are not able to build on the wall. (**Nehemiah 4:10**)
- *ze'vel*, **burden**
- As for the builders on the wall and those who were carrying the **burden of load bearers**, each one was active in the work with his one hand while the other hand was holding the missile. (**Nehemiah 4:17**)
- **Compulsory service**
- Now the man Jeroboam was a valiant, mighty man. When Solomon got to see that the young man was a hard worker, he proceeded to make him overseer over all the **compulsory service** of the house of Joseph. (**1 Kings 11:28**)
- Chiefs of forced labor were placed over the Israelites in Egypt for the purpose of oppressing them in their **burden-bearing** and compelling them to carry and use such building materials as clay mortar and bricks.

- So they set over them chiefs of forced labor for the purpose of oppressing them in their **burden-bearing**, and they went building cities as storage places for Pharaoh, namely, Pithom and Raamses. (**Exodus 1:11**)
- But the more they would oppress them, the more they would multiply and the more they kept spreading abroad, so that they felt a sickening dread as a result of the sons of Israel. (**Exodus 1:12**)
- Consequently the Egyptians made the sons of Israel slave under tyranny. (**Exodus 1:13**)
- And they kept making their life bitter with hard slavery at clay mortar and bricks and with every form of slavery in the field, yes, every form of slavery of theirs in which they used them as slaves under tyranny. (**Exodus 1:14**)
- Now it came about in those days, as Moses was becoming strong, that he went out to his brothers that he might look at the **burdens** they were **bearing**, and he caught sight of a certain Egyptian striking a certain Hebrew of his brothers. (**Exodus 2:11**)
- But, Yehowah brought them out from under the **burdens** of the Egyptians.
- Therefore say to the sons of Israel, I am Yehowah, and I shall certainly bring you out from under the **burdens** of the Egyptians and deliver you from their slavery, and I shall indeed reclaim you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. (**Exodus 6:6**)
- I turned aside his shoulder even from the **burden**, his own hands got to be free even from the basket. (**Psalms 81:6**)
- When the tabernacle and its articles were moved from place to place, the Kohathite, Gershonite, and Merarite Levites had their specific loads to carry. (**Numbers Chapter 4**) Later, Solomon came to have 70,000 **burden bearers** in his large work force.
- And Solomon came to have seventy thousand **burden bearers** and eighty thousand cutters in the mountain. (**1 Kings 5:15**)

- So he made seventy thousand of them **burden bearers** and eighty thousand cutters in the mountain and three thousand six hundred overseers for keeping the people in service. (2 Chronicles 2:18)
- **Burden bearers** were also needed and used when King Josiah repaired the temple.
- And the men were acting in faithfulness in the work, and over them there were appointed Jahath and Obadiah the Levites, from the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, from the sons of the Kohathites, to act as overseers. And the Levites, each of whom was expert with the instruments of song. (2 Chronicles 34:12)
- Were over the **burden bearers**, and the overseers of all the doers of the work for the different services, and from the Levites there were secretaries and officers and gatekeepers. (2 Chronicles 34:13)
- And, years later, when Nehemiah supervised the rebuilding of Jerusalem's wall.
- As for the builders on the wall and those who were carrying the **burden of load bearers**, each one was active in the work with his one hand while the other hand was holding the missile. (Nehemiah 4:17)

See Also COMPULSORY SERVICE

- Animals were often used to **carry loads** in ancient times, and the Israelites were told that upon seeing the ass of someone hating them lying down under its load, instead of leaving it, one was without fail to get it loose.
- Should you see the ass of someone who hates you lying down under its load, then you must refrain from leaving him. With him you are without fail to get it loose. (Exodus 23:5)
- The amount of material an animal can carry is called a **load**, such as **the load of a pair of mules**.
- Finally Naaman said; If not, please, let there be given to your servant some ground, **the load of a pair of mules**, because your

servant will no more render up a burnt offering or a sacrifice to any other gods but to Yehowah. (2 Kings 5:17)

·· Figurative Use

- The Hebrew word *mas-sa* ' , often used for a **literal load** or a **burden**, can denote a **weighty message**, such as the one King Lemuel's mother gave him in correction.
- The words of Lemuel the king, the **weighty message** that his mother gave to him in correction. (Proverbs 31:1)
- It can also pertain to a pronouncement.
- The **pronouncement** against Babylon that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw in vision. (Isaiah 13:1)
- In the year that King Ahaz died this **pronouncement** occurred. (Isaiah 14:28)
- Say to them; This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said, As regards the chieftain, there is this **pronouncement** against Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are in the midst of them. (Ezekiel 12:10)
- The **pronouncement** against Nineveh! The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. (Nahum 1:1)
- Usually the **pronouncement** is one of denunciation for wickedness and thus is like a **heavy burden** of **judgment**.
- The person faithful to God can throw his **figurative burden**, or the lot that has been given to him in such things as trials and cares, upon Yehowah. Thus, David declared;
- **Throw your burden upon Yehowah himself**, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter. (Psalms 55:22)
- Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. (1 Peter 5:6)
- While you **throw all your anxiety upon him**, because he cares for you. (1 Peter 5:7)

- David was also moved to exclaim; Blessed be Yehowah, who daily **carries the load for us**, the true God of our salvation.
- Blessed be Yehowah, who **daily carries the load for us**, the true God of our salvation. (**Psalms 68:19**)
- A **burden** can be a **burden of responsibility** imposed by Christ.
- However, I say to the rest of you who are in Thyatira, all those who do not have this teaching, the very ones who did not get to know the deep things of Satan, as they say; I am not putting upon you **any other burden**. (**Revelation 2:24**)
- The Holy Spirit and the Christian older men favored adding no further **burden** to Christians except **necessary things**, that is, **to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication**.
- For the Holy Spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further **burden** to you, **except these necessary things**. (**Acts of Apostles 15:28**)
- To keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you! (**Acts of Apostles 15:29**)
- In another sense, Paul assured the Corinthians that he would not become a **burden** to them and was not seeking their possessions but would most gladly spend and be completely spent for their souls.
- Look! This is the third time I am ready to come to you, and **yet I will not become a burden**. For I am seeking, not your possessions, but you, for the children ought not to lay up for their parents, but the parents for their children. (**2 Corinthians 12:14**)
- For my part I will most gladly spend and be completely spent for your souls. If I love you the more abundantly, am I to be loved the less? (**2 Corinthians 12:15**)
- But be that as it may, I did not **burden** you down. Nevertheless, you say; I was crafty and I caught you by trickery. (**2 Corinthians 12:16**)

- As for any one of those I have dispatched to you, I did not take advantage of you through him, did I? (2 Corinthians 12:17)
- I urged Titus and I dispatched the brother with him. Titus **did not take advantage of you at all, did he?** We walked in the same spirit, did we not? In the same footsteps, did we not? (2 Corinthians 12:18)
- As an apostle of Christ, Paul justifiably could have been an expensive **burden** on Christians in Thessalonica. However, he did not even eat food from anyone free and could remind them that by labor and toil night and day we were working so as not to impose an **expensive burden** upon any one of you, not because of lacking authority to do so, but to serve as an example they could imitate.
- For you yourselves know the way you ought to imitate us, because we did not behave disorderly among you (2 Thessalonians 3:7)
- Nor did we eat food from anyone free. To the contrary, by labor and toil night and day we were working so as not to impose an expensive **burden** upon any one of you. (2 Thessalonians 3:8)
- Not that we do not have authority, but in order, that we might offer ourselves as an example to you to imitate us. (2 Thessalonians 3:9)
- In fact, also, when we were with you, we used to give you this order. If anyone does not want to work, neither let him eat. (2 Thessalonians 3:10)
- Jesus denounced the scribes and Pharisees, saying; They **bind up heavy loads** and put them upon the shoulders of men, **but they themselves are not willing to budge them with their finger.**
- The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the seat of Moses. (Matthew 23:2)
- They **bind up heavy loads** and put them upon the shoulders of men, **but they themselves are not willing to budge them with their finger.** (Matthew 23:4)

- Jesus was evidently referring to minute rules and **burdensome** traditions that these men laid upon the common people, being unwilling to lift even one small regulation to make things easier for them.
- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut up the kingdom of the heavens before men, for you yourselves do not go in, **neither do you permit those on their way in to go in.** (Matthew 23:13)
- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you give the tenth of the mint and the dill and the cumin, but you have disregarded the weightier matters of the **Law, namely, justice and mercy and faithfulness.** These things **it was binding to do, yet not to disregard the other things.** (Matthew 23:23)
- Blind guides, who strain out the gnat but gulp down the camel! (Matthew 23:24)
- On the other hand, Jesus freed persons spiritually from such oppressive traditions.
- And so Jesus went on to say to the Jews that had believed him. If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. (John 8:31)
- And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (John 8:32)
- He invited those who were **toiling and loaded down** to come to him, to take his **yoke** upon them, and to become his disciples, for he was mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and they would **thus find refreshment for their souls.** He said; **My yoke is kindly and my load is light.**
- Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. (Matthew 11:28)
- Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. (Matthew 11:29)
- For my yoke is kindly and my load is light. (Matthew 11:30)

- Christ was **not harsh or oppressive but kind**, and those coming to him would receive proper treatment. Christ's **yoke**, by comparison with that placed upon the people by religious traditionists, would be a **comparatively light one**.
- Jesus may also have meant that those **weary of the burden of sin** and error should come to him for spiritual refreshment. Carrying Jesus light **load** evidently involved acquaintance with and the fulfilling of divine requirements, something Jesus did with delight during his earthly life and ministry.
- This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ. (**John 17:3**)
- Jesus said to them; My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work. (**John 4:34**)
- Paul later likened the Christian career to being on a racecourse and urged fellow believers to **unburden** themselves, telling them to put off **every weight and the sin that easily entangles us**, and to run with endurance the race that is set before us, while looking intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus.
- So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. (**Hebrews 12:1**)
- As we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (**Hebrews 12:2**)

•• Carrying Others Burdens

- Paul wrote to the Galatians; Go on carrying the **burdens** or, **troublesome things**, literally, **heavy things** of one another, and thus fulfill the Law of the Christ.
- Go on carrying the **burdens** of one another, and thus fulfill the Law of the Christ. (**Galatians 6:2**) Footnote

- Here for **burdens** the apostle used *ba're*, the plural form of *ba'ros*, a **Greek** word always used to denote something **burdensome** or heavy.
- Certainly the sin and hence the **burden** of a man taking some **false step**, referred to in the preceding verse, would not be light but **heavy**. However, in verse 5 the apostle states:
 - **For each one will carry his own load**, that is, his load of responsibility. For load Paul here used the **Greek** word *phor-ti'on*, signifying **something that is to be borne or carried**, without any reference to the weight of the thing.
 - So he drew a distinction between **burdens** and **load** in these verses. This would indicate that if a Christian got into spiritual difficulty that was very hard for him to **bear**, **fellow believers would aid him, thus helping to bear another's burden**. Such persons would be displaying love and would thus fulfill the Law of Christ.
 - I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (**John 13:34**)
 - By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves. (**John 13:35**)
 - This harmonizes with what Paul had just said, as recorded in,
 - Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you **who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness**, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted. (**Galatians 6:1**)
 - About **endeavoring to restore a man spiritually**, **something that may be possible through love, kindness, and prayer**.
 - Is there anyone suffering evil among you? Let him carry on prayer. Is there anyone in good spirits? Let him sing psalms. (**James 5:13**)
 - Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, greasing him with oil in the name of Yehowah. (**James 5:14**)
 - And the prayer of faith will make the indisposed one well, and

Yehowah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. (**James 5:15**)

- Therefore openly confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may get healed. A righteous man's supplication, when it is at work, has much force. (**James 5:16**)
- Yet, as the apostle proceeded to show, bearing the **burdens** of one another **does not mean carrying another person's load of spiritual responsibility to God**.
- In the same context, Paul makes clear that a person is deceiving his own mind if he thinks that he is something when he is nothing, and the apostle urged the Christian to **prove what his own work is**, for then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person.
- For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deceiving his own mind. (**Galatians 6:3**)
- But let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person. (**Galatians 6:4**)
- For we do not dare to class ourselves among some or compare ourselves with some who recommend themselves. Certainly they in measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves have no understanding. (**2 Corinthians 10:12**)
- It was then that the apostle observed that **each one will carry his own load** of responsibility before the Supreme Judge, Yehowah God.