

## Burden or Motivation

I met a man carrying what looked like a very heavy pack, who appeared to be struggling a good deal as he walked along. He told me that he had to travel to one of the shadowy valleys [scrip] near the Dead Sea to deliver it. I gave him my opinion that he was journeying into very rugged territory, and asked if I could help him with his great burden.

He told me that what he carried was not so much of a *burden* as a *motivation*. It was very necessary to the people to whom he was delivering it. He was motivated because of its critical value for those people: it would actually save them.

So, I could see no way to actually help him besides just journeying beside him. The contents of the pack could not be split up or transferred to me. I somehow sensed that I would not even be capable of carrying any part of it. And the man obviously felt that his responsibility could not be shared.

I could not keep from comparing how he described his task with the saving work of Christ. Though Christ prayed to have His burden (our sin) removed, He was under a great motivation to complete His mission.

I remember that time very well. When Christ was carrying His cross, someone else<sup>1</sup> was given the chance to help. All of His disciples felt badly about it later when they realized that in forsaking Him we had not been there to give Him the help that He needed.

Christ carried the burden of sin away from us to save us from it. And He was crushed by it, though He rose again with His mission accomplished.

As I thought about my own mission, I thought about the need (and motivation) to carry the burdens of others as well as our own<sup>2</sup>. Many of my fellow workers felt the burden of large groups of people<sup>3</sup>. But we all had a great motivation to serve. And we were all grateful that Christ was motivated to save us.

1. Simon, Matthew 27:32
2. carrying burdens, Galatians 6:2 and 6
3. Paul felt the burden of his concern for the churches, 2 Corinthians 11:28