

Greetings to you! The theme for our morning's meditation is, "God cares for those who are heavily burdened". Many of us are seated here this morning with heavy burdens these may be with reference to our job, our finances, our families, our relationships and all the stress that comes with living in our world today. Maybe at times we have stopped and pondered whether anyone really cares about us and our burdens. Maybe some of us are going through tough temptations that we are not able to overcome and we may be thinking whether anybody understands what I am going through. Maybe there are some of you who don't know the way forward or what step to take next and are burdened with indecision. Some of us may just feel that I am weak and sinful and will God really forgive me and restore me. Our morning's theme reminds us that God cares for those who are heavily burdened.

In the Exodus event we see that God is deeply concerned about the burdens of the Israelites. They were being oppressed and their right to live was being snuffed out. Pharaoh had given orders for all the male children to be either killed at the birth stool or be thrown into the Nile and killed. They were slaves under the Egyptians and they were being sorely oppressed by the Egyptians especially as they grew in number. God had heard their outcry and remembered his covenant with Abraham. He was a God who was deeply concerned about the sufferings of his people. He raised up Moses and through him delivered the people of Israel through signs and wonders. God uses Moses to show numerous miraculous signs and plagues before Pharaoh eventually let them go. The final onslaught on Egypt was the death of the first-born son of every Egyptian from the prince to the pauper and the protection of every single first-born Israelite when the angel of death passed over them. With this Pharaoh let the people of Israel go out of Egypt. However, it did not stop there. Pharaoh sent his army after them because he had lost all his labour force. God then parted the way for the Israelites between the sea and took them safely to the other side while the Egyptian army was drowned. God cared for the people of Israel who were heavily burdened with slavery and set them free.

Similarly, Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Mat 11:28-30 NIV).

What are some of the bondages that we are burdened under this morning? Jesus invites us this morning to leave all our burdens at the foot of the cross and to follow him. Maybe we are under the bondage of sin and we have tried our best to lead a good life but we are unable to. Maybe we are under the bondage of substances and we are unable to get out. Maybe we are in bondage of legalism like the Pharisees and have always seen the Christian faith as keeping the laws and leading a good life and thereby achieving salvation. Maybe we are burdened and weary this morning as we have tried everything that we hoped would give peace in our lives but none of them have satisfied us. Or we may be burdened by other bondages: we may be in bondage to sin; or to drugs; or pornography; or evil thoughts; or anger; or lust; or the internet or anything else. We are in bondage to anything that controls our life. Jesus teaches us that following him is the way to salvation. Salvation is a free gift through faith in him. Our obedience to the law is an act of gratitude to him. Jesus also promises freedom from every yoke that keeps us down for he says, 'If the Son sets you free you will be free indeed'. May we leave our burdens and bondages at the feet of the cross and enjoy the freedom he calls us to. May we lead our lives as his treasured possession, a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.