

THORN IN THE FLESH
(Judges 2:12-15, 21-23; 3:1, 4; John 19:2
II Corinthians 12: 7-10)

Thorn in the flesh exists for reasons of **discipline and correction**, as it was the case of the Israelites when they forsook YAHWEH and went after the gods of the neighbor's countries and bowed down to them provoking YAHWEH to anger. He gave them into the power of plunderers who robbed them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies, so that they could no longer stand before their foes; YAHWEH said, Because this people have transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not listened to My voice, **I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides and their gods shall be a snare to you; from now on I will also not drive out from before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died**, that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of YAHWEH to walk in it, as their fathers kept it, or not. **So YAHWEH left those nations, without dispossessing quickly, and He did not deliver them into the hands of Joshua** (Judges 2); this is Israel's thorn in her flesh to this day.

The idolatrous acts of the Jewish nation blinded her so hard to the point of failing to recognize her Messiah many years later when He came for her. In her rejection of Him they shrieked and cried, Crucify Him! But even today YAHSHUA continues calling her to repentance for her salvation. Weeping for her He said, Would that you had known personally, even at least in this your day, the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, murdering the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you! How often would I have gathered your children together as a mother fowl gathers her brood under her wings, and you refused! Behold, your house is forsaken and desolate (Luke 19:41; Matt.23:37-78). And on the road to His crucifixion, YAHSHUA said to the women who were bewailing and lamenting Him, Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold, the days are coming during which they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that have not borne, and the breasts that have never nursed. Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us! And to the hills, Cover us! For if they do these things when the timber is green, what will happen when it is dry (Luke 23:28-31)?

The time will come when Israel will feel the thorn of correction deeply into her skin, causing her to call on the name of her Messiah with repentance, after a time of severe refining, as we read in Zachariah chapters twelve and thirteen, And in all the land, says YAHWEH, two-thirds shall be cut off and perish, but one-third shall be left alive; and I will bring the third part though the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined and will test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will hear and answer them. I will say, It is My people; and they will say, YAHWEH is my ELOHIM (Zachariah 12, 13).

To keep Paul from boasting and being proud about the things he had heard in heaven, a thorn in his flesh was given him, a messenger of Satan to **keep him from being excessively exalted** (II Corinthians 12:4-10). With the blessing of the anointing came a thorn in the flesh to position and keep Paul where he was to be after his heavenly experience. Paul had the understanding

and of what was happening and accepted the thorn as coming from YAHWEH after he had prayed for it to be removed. The anointing is a gift from YAHWEH for His servant to perform a task for Him, but it comes sometimes with thorn in the flesh to make one humble before YAHWEH and men. A thorn in the flesh can be permanent, as it was in the case of Paul but it can be for a time of correction. To know when sickness or any other trial is a thorn in the flesh one must seek YAHWEH to understand its cause. A thorn in the flesh is beneficial to a believer who tends to walk away from YAHWEH when things are going well in his life. YAHSHUA said that it would be better to enter heaven without a body member, than be left out with all of them. The Psalmist said, before I was afflicted I went astray, but now your Word do I keep; it is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes; I know, O YAHWEH, that Your judgments are right and righteous, and that in faithfulness You have afflicted me (Psalm 119:67,71,75).

Sometimes the stubbornness of the heart of man is so hard that YAHWEH lets the thorn go deeper into his soul. When YAHSHUA'S head was pierced with a crown of thorns to the point of His blood running through His face and body, it was for the piercing of the thorn in our flesh we had to experience because of our stubbornness against Him. If we had the faintest idea of how big the thorns were that composed His crown, we would understand the measure of His sufferings for us. When Satan inflicted a thorn of sin in Eve's mind causing her to sin, a curse of sin pierced all men. But thanks be to YAHWEH in the piercing of YAHSHUA'S head there was healing for those who would accept Him and walk according to His holiness. He was pierced for our transgression; He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement [needed to obtain] peace was upon Him, and with the stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). In the piercing of the thorn in our flesh we might hear, "My grace is sufficient for you", in our complete submission to His will. Our strength is only strong when it originates from the strength of His grace. We must stop blaming the devil for everything bad that happens in life and acknowledge YAHWEH'S sovereignty for us and through us. Forgiveness does not always mean the removal of the thorn, but it means freedom from guilt of sin and freedom to submit to His will.

THINK ABOUT IT!