
Thorns

Thorns are associated with the curse of mankind and nature at the time of the Fall. Man has to contend with thorns in his work and in his spiritual life.

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and you shall eat the herb of the field (Gen. 3:18)

Thorns are used in connection with man's failure. The thorn is a symbol of man's negative will toward God. So thorns are used to designate divine chastisement

But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell. (Num. 33:55)

Wherefore I also said, 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 unto you. (Judges 2:3)

1. In 2 Cor 12:7, Paul's thorn in the flesh was something aggravating enough to bother him. God permitted a fallen angel of great ability to penetrate the wall of fire around Paul and to bother him.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Cor. 12:7-9)

Paul prayed for it to be removed, but his prayer was answered in the negative. God said, "No! My grace is sufficient for you!"

However, Paul was persistent, praying this erroneous prayer three times. Paul was in fellowship, but the suffering was still there; however, it was suffering designed for blessing.

The thorn is a sign of Satan's power; but even Satan's evil designs result in good when God's power is employed.

Thorns are used to designate the administration of the final cycle of discipline to a nation.

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing.

And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. (Isa. 34:12-13)

Topic: Chastisement (Divine Discipline)

Thorns are related to economic depression and recession under an agricultural economy. Depression is brought on by man's bad decisions or sins in the field of economy.

They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit: and they shall be ashamed of your revenues because of the fierce anger of the LORD. (Jer. 12:13)

The unconquered Canaanites in the promised Land were thorns to the nation of Israel.

Num. 33:55 (above)

Know for a certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you. (Josh 23:13)

And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

Wherefore I also said, 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 unto you. (Judges 2:2,3)

God had ordered Israel to destroy all the Canaanites. But the Jews did not obey that mandate, so God permitted certain Canaanite groups to live as thorns to the nation Israel.

Thorns are used to describe the results of not accepting Bible truth.

The reward of humility and reverence for the Lord are riches and honor and life; thorns and snares are in the way for evil ones, but he who guards his soul stays far from them. (Prov. 22:5)

Like a thorn bush in a drunkard's hand is a proverb [a piece of doctrine] in the mouth of a fool. (Prov. 26:9)

Thorns are used to describe the distractions to positive volition toward Bible truth.

In Matthew, "thorns" refer to the man who hears the Word, but the worries of this life (e.g. peer pressure) and the deceitfulness of riches choke out the Word.

And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them . . .

He also that received seed among the thorns is he that hears the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he become unfruitful. (Matt. 13:7,22)

Thorns are used to describe the results of being involved in Satan's domain cosmic and negative volition toward the plan of God.

But that which bears thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. (Heb. 6:8)

Jesus Christ wore a crown of thorns on the cross, which signified the fact that He was made a curse for us.

Matt. 27:29; Mark 15:17; John 19:2; Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 2:24

In the millennial reign of Christ, nature will be delivered from the curse of the Fall.

This is expressed by the removal of thorns in Isa 55:13 and Ezek 28:24.

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