

WHAT IS THE THORN?

Introduction

According to 2 Corinthians 12:7, Paul received "a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me."

There are several crucial points to note.

A. Paul describes it as a [thorn](#).

Paul employs the Greek word *skólops*, which can refer to a sharp spike, a splinter, or anything that produces agony.

That paints a clear picture: a thorn does not always destroy you instantaneously. It is anything that constantly annoys, injures, or bothers you.

The thorn says: "This thing keeps hurting me."

- ★ It may be a recurring challenge, a limitation, an obstacle, a weakness, or a situation that Paul kept asking God to change.



B. The term "in the flesh" is important.

Paul doesn't only state, "I have a problem." According to him, it is "in my flesh."

That suggests that he was continuously and personally impacted by something. It was close to him. He couldn't just leave it.

This is crucial because our problems are typically not caused by outside adversaries. We might carry the thorn from our personal experiences.

C. The Bible doesn't specify exactly what Paul's thorn was.

This is one of the most critical things to establish before speaking on this subject.

Paul never expressly mentions the thorn.

As a result, we should be cautious not to firmly state:

- "Paul's thorn was definitely a sickness."
- "Paul's thorn was definitely his eyesight."
- "Paul's thorn was definitely a particular person."
- "Paul's thorn was definitely a particular sin."

These interpretations have been proposed, but the text itself does not resolve the issue.

It is possible that the mystery is purposeful. Because Paul did not specify what his thorn was, believers throughout eras can identify with his suffering. Your thorn may not be like Paul's.

D. Even someone who is heavily utilised by God might have a thorn in their life.

The passage gains strength at this point.

- Paul served as an apostle.
- Paul experienced an epiphany.
- Paul has had remarkable experiences.
- God had made great use of Paul.

Paul was still carrying a thorn. Thus, we have to dispel the notion that:"I won't experience any agonising hardships if everything is in harmony with God."Not always.

1. You may have a thorn and still adore God.
2. You may have a thorn and pray at the same time.It is possible to have a thorn even after being anointed.
3. You may have a thorn and still be obedient.

God may make extensive use of you while yet having a shortcoming.

E. The thorn does not always indicate that you have been rejected by God.

This has a lovely connection to verse 7.The thorn was provided "lest I should be exalted above measure," according to Paul.

Paul saw that God might utilise even this agonising experience for a spiritual purpose, regardless of its exact form.

- ☐ Thus, the query isn't just:"Why haven't you taken this out, Lord?"

It may also develop into:

- ☐ "Lord, what are you creating in me with this?" That is a significant change in viewpoint.

F. However, we need to use caution while making one claim.

I would improve the line a little:

- "A persistent source of pain, weakness, limitation, or struggle is symbolised by a thorn."

Although the biblical definition should come first, that is helpful as an application.

Paul's inexplicable ailment is the thorn, and we shouldn't simply label every issue as a "thorn."

I would state the main point of preaching as follows:

- ❖ A thorn is an ongoing ailment or weakness that persists in spite of our wishes and prayers for it to go away.
- ❖ Next: The existence of a thorn does not always indicate the absence of God; Sometimes God teaches us to rely on His kindness by taking away the very thing we want, therefore the presence of a thorn does not necessarily mean that God is absent.

This gives us a far stronger foundation for the next question: If the thorn was painful, why did God allow Paul to have it in the first place? At that time, "not to be exalted above measure" becomes vital.

Conclusion

The thorn could still exist, but God's love is enough; His power keeps us going and our purpose endures.