

**We are looking at the question of human suffering which with a large majority of people shapes their perception of God and how He relates to humanity.**

**James 5:10-11 NKJV** My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. (11) Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

- ✓ These verses tell us to be inspired by Job's patience, perseverance, and endurance, and the mercy and grace of the Lord that brought great deliverance.

**Job 1:6-12 NKJV** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. (7) And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." (8) Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (9) So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? (10) Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. (11) But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" (12) And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

**There were two main factors that gave the devil access to bring destruction into Job's life:**

1. Job did not have a **covenant** with God and therefore did not have a covenant hedge of protection.

Supernatural protection is only afforded to those that are in covenant relationship with God.

**Job 1:4-5 NKJV** And his sons would go and feast in their houses, each on his appointed day, and would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them. (5) So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, "It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts." Thus Job did regularly.

This seemed honorable and Job may have believed he was doing the right thing, but you cannot do the right thing with the wrong motivation.

This would be equivalent to your mother going to church every Sunday because she is concerned her adult children were out partying the night before.

**Job 3:25-26 NKJV** For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, And what I dreaded has happened to me. (26) I am not at ease, nor am I quiet; I have no rest, for trouble comes."

2. Job was in **fear** of those things happening to him and his household.

Fear connects you to the things that you are afraid of, just like faith attaches you to the things that you believe God for. Fear is faith in something's ability to harm you.

We must have the revelation that God is not behind the destruction, and he does not use the devil to cause destruction in your life!

### ***Paul's Thorn in the Flesh***

**2 Corinthians 12:7 NKJV** And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

Commentary from Rick Renner's [Sparkling Gems from the Greek](#):

Paul had received great revelations directly from the Lord Himself and because of those revelations was enabled to influence a great portion of the early Church and also brought many sinners to Christ. Because of this, he became a target of Satan to greatly diminish or end his ministry.

This “messenger (Angelos) of Satan” was dispatched to keep Paul from gaining additional status and influence and to keep him from taking the Gospel further and higher in the world scene. It was sent to “buffet” Paul. This word means unending, continuous, repetitious beatings with a fist.

### ***Things we need to understand about Paul’s Thorn:***

1. The devil will never send a thorn to keep someone from being lifted up in **pride**.

If Satan wants to bring destruction in someone’s life, he will let them get lifted up in pride because pride comes before destruction. (*Proverbs 16:18 – pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall.*)

2. Jesus was being **exalted** and glorified through Paul because of the abundance of revelations.

Look at the facts: Paul was preaching to kings, governors, and world leaders. He was establishing churches, writing New Testament Scriptures, and pushing back the forces of hell. His personal influence was growing, and his impact was increasing day by day.

3. The “thorn in the flesh” mentioned here is not a reference to something internal such as **sickness** or disease.

According to the law of first mentions, the thorn is a reference from the Old Testament referring to an external source (persons or group of people) sent to harass God’s people.

**Numbers 33:55 NKJV** But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.

**Joshua 23:13 NKJV** ...know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

4. Paul's thorn in the flesh was the **people** who opposed and irritated him and continually caused him problems.

### ***Correct translation of 2 Corinthians 12:7:***

“Because of the phenomenal revelations I have received and on account of the vast number of these revelations that God has entrusted to me – and to hinder the highly visible progress I am making in the Lord's cause – a special messenger has been sent from Satan to harass me with constant distractions and headaches. There's no doubt about it! Those whom Satan has stirred up against me want my head on a stake! Satan is using these people to constantly buffet and distract me in an attempt to keep me from reaching a higher level of visibility and recognition and to sidetrack me from preaching my revelations...”

**2 Corinthians 12:8-10 NKJV** Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. (9) And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (10) Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

5. The word “**infirmities**” in this Scripture does not refer to sickness and disease.

It is more accurately translated *“distressing, unsettling emotions from dealing with problem people.”*

6. God could not **answer** this prayer for Paul.

Paul was praying to be delivered from these problem people. The reason God could not answer this prayer is because if He removed this particular group of people, it would not be long before another group would show up!

As long as we live in this world, we will have to deal with people whom we don't enjoy or whom the devil tries to use to steal our joy and peace. If we constantly focus on getting rid of these people, we'll be praying to be delivered from people for the rest of our lives. The only way this can happen is for you to go home to be with the Lord.

7. God's grace was **sufficient!**

### **Correct translation of verse 9:**

“My grace is more than enough to protect you, empower you, and help you deal with the problem people you encounter in life. You will find that My grace is completely satisfactory in meeting your need and that it will make you sufficiently strong to deal with these situations. If you'll receive it, you will find that it will sufficiently endow you with more than you need to deal with any situation. My power is always on hand, available to help you in moments when you are weak and needy...”

Start asking God to release His power to change *you* so you can walk in peace and victory even when people fail or disappoint you. If you can learn to appropriate the power of God to deal with people, the devil won't be able to use people to steal your joy and victory anymore!