**R821 - Rumination for October 25, 2020 by K.C. Ung**

The **T**heme: **THORNS**[berita-bethel-ung.com](http://www.berita-bethel-ung.com/)

The **T**ext: *-* ***Thorns also and thistles*** *shall it bring forth to thee…* Gen. 3:18

The **T**hots:

1. **The Thorns of Punishment on Sin.**
2. **G**od’s Original Creation was Very **G**ood. Gen. 1:31

*God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.*

1. Man was **M**arvellously **M**ade. Psa. 139:14

*I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are Thy works;*

1. Man was formed from dust and **I**nstilled with *the breath of* ***L****ife to become a* ***L****iving Soul.* Gen. 2:7
2. **M**an was **M**ade in the **I**mage of God. Gen. 1:26
3. *God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after our likeness…*
4. *God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him…* Gen. 1: 27

1. Man was **C**reated to take **C**harge of the Garden. Gen. 2:8

*God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed.*

1. His **C**harge to Man*:*

*…and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

1. His **C**ommand to Man: Gen. 2:16, 17
2. *The LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*
3. *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:*

*for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

1. Man’s **P**enalty and **P**unishment for **T**ransgression.
2. The **P**enalty for **T**ransgression - Man ate of the **F**orbidden **F**ruit and Sinned against God. Gen. 3:6

*When the woman saw that the tree was good for food…she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat,*

*and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

*The woman being deceived was in the transgression.* I Tim. 2:14

1. The **P**unishment of **T**horns and **T**histles. Gen. 3:17-19 *And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake…* ***Thorns also and thistles*** *shall it bring forth to thee…till thou return unto the ground;*

*for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

* ***T****horns and* ***T****histles* **T**oday **T**estify that all have sinned and come under its Penalty. Rom. 3:23
1. **The Thorns our Saviour Bore.** Matt, 27:29

*When they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon His head, and a reed in His right hand:*

*and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!*

1. The Soldiers **M**ocked His **M**ajesty – Mt. 27:29
2. They **P**latted a Crown of thorns and put it on His **H**ead. Mt. 27:29a
3. They **P**ut a Reed (to **S**ymbolise a **S**ceptre) in His **H**and. Mt. 27:29b
4. They **P**rostrated themselves mockingly before Him and **H**ailed Him as King. Mt. 27:29c
5. Jesus was **B**earing Man’s Punishment of **B**riers (*Thorns*) on his **B**ehalf.

**T**horns and **T**histles were God’s Punishment on Man’s Disobedience. See #A4b above.

1. Jesus **B**ore Man’s Sins on His own **B**ody on the Tree (**C**ross) – I Pet. 2:24 W*ho His own self* ***B****are our sins in His own* ***B****ody on the tree…*

*The Thorns* in His **C**rown testified to **C**hrist Being **C**rucified on our **B**ehalf.

1. **The Thorn in the Flesh for Paul. II Cor. 12:7**
2. Paul’s **P**rofound revelations – Paul had a series of special revelations. II Cor. 2:2-4

*Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations,*

1. Paul was even in the **P**resence of God – *caught up to the third heaven…into paradise,*

*and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

1. But Paul was **P**rescribed *a thorn in the flesh* to keep him in **P**lace – II Cor. 12:7
2. A **M**ystifying **H**arassment to **H**umble him - *there was given to me a thorn in the flesh,*
3. *The* ***M****essenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*

**Conclusion: *T****horns**and Thistles*came into existence to **P**oint to the **P**enalty and **P**unishment for Man’s sin. Jesus was made to wear *a crown of thorns* on His brow to bear Man’s **P**unishment for sinning, and **P**aul was given *a thorn in the flesh* to keep him humble and in his **P**roper **P**lace to depend on the Lord.

At this Lord’s Supper, let us each be able to **P**roclaim:

*King of my life, I crown Thee now, Thine shall the glory be;*

 *Lest I forget Thy thorn crowned brow, Lead me to Calvary.* Jennie E. Hussey

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK. R. 821**

1. In front of my house, I have planted a row of aloe vera plants. They are well-praised for their “amazing health benefits”. One has just to Google “Aloe Vera” to find lists of them. It is not for me to re-trumpet and boast of its already-proved benefits from these well-researched resources.

  

Here is how Wikipedia describes the aloe vera plant:

*Aloe vera is a stemless or very short-stemmed plant growing to 60–100 cm (24–39 in) tall, spreading by*[*offsets*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Offset_%28botany%29)*.*[*[3]*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloe_vera#cite_note-cabi-3)*The leaves are thick and fleshy, green to grey-green, with some varieties showing white flecks on their upper and lower stem surfaces.*[*[7]*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloe_vera#cite_note-Yates-7)*The margin of the leaf is*[*serrated*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leaf_margins)*and has small white teeth.*

###  [Aloe vera – Wikipedia en.wikipedia.org › wiki › Aloe\_vera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aloe_vera%22%20%5Cl%20%22%3A~%3Atext%3D10%20External%20links-%2CDescription%2Cand%20has%20small%20white%20teeth)

I would just like to take its physical features to link them with Paul’s mention of his “*thorn in the flesh*” and draw from it some spiritual lessons, justifiably or not I leave them to you my readers to decide. It is more of a play of words rather than a serious interpretation of biblical terms

The leaf of an Aloe Vera plant is “*thick and fleshy”. The margin of the leaf is*[*serrated*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leaf_margins)*and has small white teeth,* which I would like to associate with “thorns”. Then, can I refer to this leaf as a “thorn in the flesh” or “flesh of thorns” with its gel referred to as “flesh” and its serrated teeth referred to as “thorns”?

I would then recall my experience when doing work in my garden. I would be bitten by a species of ants I always refer to as “fiery” ants, because when they bite or sting any part of my body, I would feel a burning fiery sensation and, in a few moments later the bitten part would begin to swell and cause me much stinging pain. It would not subside no matter what I did then. I had to rush to a doctor to get an anti-allergic and anti-inflammatory injection.

However, later, I discovered that the gel of the aloe-vera leaf, when rubbed against the wound, it would heal immediately and there would be no swelling and no pain at all. It was indeed an amazing plant. I had no fear of these fiery ants after that.

At this stage, (1) can I refer to the leaf of the aloe vera plant as ***flesh with thorns*** to remind me of the lusts of the flesh and of the eyes (I Jn. 2:16) that can bring about *thorns* in my Christian life? It will then be choked even as the seed of the Word that falls among thorns would be suffocated (Matt. 13:7, 22). I therefore need to be careful so as not to allow the Flesh to take over my spiritual life and drive me away from God’s Word and God’s Will.

Or (2) can I refer to the leaf as ***thorns in the flesh*** as sent into Paul’s life to keep him humble and dependent on the Lord. For those of us who have been greatly used of the Lord, we need these thorns in the flesh to keep us humble and crucified with Christ to “die daily”. The Aloe Vera gel will heal whatever wounds we are inflicted with in our Christian walk with the Lord, though at the first, these wounds may seem painful.

The next time you see an Aloe Vera Plant will it remind you of your *flesh with thorns* not to Walk in the Flesh or *thorns in the flesh* to be humble and submit to the sovereign will of God whatever thorny hardship He may allow into your life? **REFLECT.**

1. The Love of the World which is the Lust of the Flesh and the Lust of the Eyes will take a Christian away from the Love of God just as *the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches,* [as thorns will] *choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.* (Matt. 13:7, 22)

Take care and not allow Thorns to grow in your Garden of Life! **REFLECT**

*Thanks for roses by the wayside, Thanks for thorns their stems contain!*

*Thanks for home and thanks for fireside, Thanks for hope, that sweet refrain!*

*Thanks for joy and thanks for sorrow, Thanks for heav’nly peace with Thee!*

*Thanks for hope in the tomorrow, Thanks through all eternity!* August L. Storm

**POINTS TO PONDER:** Can we give Thanks for the Thorns in our Flesh?