**Healing Hidden Spiritual Problems (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)** **2/2/2025**

Paul, who enjoyed a deep relationship with God and was used as an evangelist, had an unknown, critical illness. While praying deeply about this painful issue, Paul realized that this suffering was "a thorn placed by Satan." We call this "a thorn placed by Satan" a spiritual problem. This does not simply mean demon possession. Behind all human problems, failures, diseases, and sufferings, there is hidden Satanic activity and spiritual problems.

**Jesus Himself said that Satan is like "a thief who comes to steal, kill, and destroy" (John 10:10).**
He also said that Satan is "ruling over this fallen world" (John 14:30) and that he is controlling political powers, leading the world into suffering and darkness (Ephesians 6:12).

**It is natural for unbelievers, who live without God and worship idols, to suffer from such spiritual problems (John 8:44, 1 Corinthians 10:20, Exodus 20:4-5).**However, when believers, church leaders, and even pastors suffer from these spiritual problems, they cannot see the blessings and answers that God has prepared for them. Relationships become strained and broken. It can lead to devastating failures and suffering (just like a thorn stuck in the throat causes great pain).

**1. There are various Biblical examples**

**1) King Saul. He was chosen as the first king of Israel.** However, he became arrogant and left his proper position (1 Samuel 13:13). He disobeyed God (1 Samuel 15:22) and eventually suffered from an evil spirit (1 Samuel 16:14).His relationships were destroyed, and even his descendants perished in war.

**2) Job**. **He was a righteous man who feared God and shunned evil (Job 1:1).** However, he did not realize one thing. He did not know that Satan was acting as a hidden thorn in his life. Thieves stole all his possessions, economic problems arose, a sudden storm killed his children, and he was struck with a painful disease. He cursed his life and wished for death. What was the conclusion? As he went through these trials, his spiritual eyes were opened, and everything was restored twice as much (Job 42:5,10).

**3) Peter**. **Despite being deeply loved by Jesus, he failed at a critical moment by denying, cursing, and swearing at Jesus.** Jesus warned him about Satan’s work (Luke 22:31-34). Though he denied Jesus with curses and swearing, the Lord restored him.

**4) Ananias and Sapphira**. **They were among the 70 disciples of the early church and sold their property to support the church.** However, they were consumed by jealousy and comparison, leading them to lie about their donation. As a result, they suffered a fatal spiritual downfall (Acts 5:1-11).

**2. When did these spiritual problems begin, and how do they develop?**

**1) Before the creation of the world, there was spiritual rebellion** **(Genesis 1:2, Revelation 12:7-8).** Satan entered the world and deceived Adam and Eve, leading them into unbelief and disobedience. Since then, all humanity has been under the power of sin, curse, and death (Romans 5:12). This is the curse of original sin.

**2) This curse of original sin has been passed down through nations, families, and generations and has reached us.** This is why God called Abraham to leave his homeland and family to enter the promised land of Canaan (Genesis 12:1). Different spiritual problems exist based on one's family background and national background (identity).

**3) Past wounds, especially those from childhood, can become a gateway for Satan (Isaiah 61:1).** Wounds suffered as adults are less impactful, but childhood wounds (loss, loneliness, favoritism, inferiority complex) remain in the unconscious and subconscious mind. These wounds manifest later in life as depression, personality disorders, violence, addictions, and mental illnesses. They unveil as compensational, defense mechanisms. The worst part is that they often explode in unrelated situations, places, and people. Human effort alone cannot resolve them, and they only worsen.

**3. Because humans cannot solve these spiritual problems, God sent His Son (1 John 3:8).**

**1) Christ has ended all sin and curses (John 19:30, Hebrews 9:12) and as He resurrected, he crushed the head of Satan (Genesis 3:15).** Now, through the Holy Spirit, He dwells in us, intercedes for us (Romans 8:26), guides us (John 14:16-18), and empowers us to overcome darkness. This state of being ruled by Christ is called "the kingship of Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:25) and "the kingdom of God" (Matthew 12:28).

**2) The Holy Spirit within us gradually heals our hidden spiritual problems ("hidden thorns"). How does He heal us?** This healing does not happen instantly (Ephesians 4:22-24). Therefore, to help others heal, we must learn to wait patiently.

**① Healing comes when we meditate on the covenant of God’s Word.** As we hear the Word, it imprints in us and strengthens our faith (Romans 10:13). Meditation helps the Word take root in our conscious, unconscious, and subconscious minds (Psalm 1:3). As the Word takes root, the broken neurological functions in our brains begin to heal. When meditating on the Word, always look for three things: God's comfort, things to discard and renew, and things to challenge.

**② Healing comes through all problems and events.** God allowed continuous trials for the Israelites in the wilderness to reveal their issues and heal them (Exodus 15:26). God does not expose our weaknesses to shame us but to heal us through revelation and prayer. We pray for healing.

**③ Healing comes through crises, suffering, and sickness.** Paul realized spiritual truths through his affliction and received messages from God through his suffering (7, 9). Through this pain, Paul was being prepared to be used for great works of saving not only Corinth but all the way to Rome.

**3) As we receive spiritual healing, there is a blessing of the conclusion we arrive at.**
① **A deep relationship with God is restored.** We develop a faith that transcends our limitations, experience power, and embrace a vision to save the world (237 nations, 5,000 people groups).This is Paul’s final confession in the passage (10).

② **Broken and strained relationships are restored.** Job’s friends, who had criticized and cursed him, returned, and as Job blessed them, his suffering ended (Job 42:10). Peter, who had failed, became a leader who saved others (John 21:16-17).

③ **We become true disciples who save others, and our lives become an eternal inheritance.** There are unique blessings for disciples who dedicate their lives to saving people (Matthew 16:24, Mark 10:29-30). Our health, finances, children, and future become eternal evidence and masterpieces of God’s work.

**Conclusion -** May the hidden thorns of Satan in our lives be exposed, removed, and healed, leading us into new blessings and answers.