

# Isaiah 32:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers;  
yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city:

## Analysis

**Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers** (עַל אֲדָמַת עַמִּי קוֹץ וְשָׁמִיר תֵּצֹא, al admat ami qots shamir ta'aleh)—on the אֲדָמָה (adamah, ground, land) of my people, קוֹץ (qots, thorns) and שָׁמִיר (shamir, briers) will עֲלֶה (alah, come up, spring up). **Yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city** (כִּי עַל-כָּל-בֵּיתִי מְשׁוֹשׁ, ki al-kol-batey masos qiryah alizah)—on all houses of מְשׁוֹשׁ (masos, joy, gladness) in the עֲלִיזָה (alizah, joyous, exultant) city.

Thorns and briers evoke Genesis 3:18—curse-consequences of sin. Productive land reverting to wilderness signals divine judgment. Cultivated ground becoming thorn-infested wasteland shows covenant curses enacted (Deuteronomy 29:23, Hosea 10:8). The contrast heightens: 'houses of joy' become desolate. The 'joyous city' (Jerusalem) will be silenced. Lamentations 5:15 mourns: 'The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning.' Jeremiah 7:34 warned: 'Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah... the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness.'

## Historical Context

After Babylonian destruction (586 BC), Jerusalem lay in ruins for decades. Nehemiah (445 BC) found walls broken, gates burned (Nehemiah 1:3). Agricultural land abandoned during exile reverted to wilderness. Houses stood empty or rubble-filled. What was a joyous city of pilgrimage festivals became desolate. The

thorns and briars weren't metaphorical—literal vegetation reclaimed abandoned sites.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. What 'thorns and briars'—consequences of sin—have you seen spring up in areas of disobedience?
2. How does the image of cultivated land reverting to wilderness picture spiritual backsliding?
3. What 'houses of joy' in your life need protection through faithfulness lest they become desolate?

## Interlinear Text

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עַל כִּי תִעָלֶה שָׁמַיְרָ קִוּי עַמִּי אֲדָמָת עַל  
H5921 Upon the land of my people thorns and briars shall come up H3588 H5921  
H127 H5971 H6975 H8068 H5927

עַל־יָזָה: קִרְיָה נֶחֱשׁ וְשֵׁ בֵּית יָ יֵא  
H3605 yea upon all the houses of joy city in the joyous  
H1004 H4885 H7151 H5947

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 22:2** (Parallel theme): Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.

**Isaiah 34:13** (Parallel theme): 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.

**Isaiah 7:23** (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass in that day, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns.

**Hosea 9:6** (Parallel theme): For, lo, they are gone because of destruction: Egypt shall gather them up, Memphis shall bury them: the pleasant places for their silver, nettles shall possess them: thorns shall be in their tabernacles.

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