

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 2nd January 2022 Hymns Ps 17:1-9 T Ellacombe, 101, 727 Read: Psalm 17:8 Text Psalm 17:8

Title- Keep Me As The Apple Of Thine Eye

The title of this Psalm as I have in my Bible is **A prayer of David**. While the background is not given, yet it is clear time is experiencing a time of great trouble, danger and despair.

However, this Psalm and the prayer offered gives instruction to every believer in difficult times to get before God and pray, **Keep me as the apple of the eye.**"

This expression used by David in **verse 8** "**the apple of the eye**" is used five times in the Scripture, and all the references are found in the Old Testament, **but all centre upon the eye which is the pupil.**

For instance, in this **Psalm 17:8** "**Keep me as the apple of the eye.**" **Deuteronomy 32:10** Moses song, about God keeping Jacob in the desert land, "**He kept him as the apple of the eye.**" **Prov 7:2** in reference to the law of God, "**Keep...my law as the apple of thine eye.**"

Another, reference where the same language is employed is **Lam 2:18** "**Let not the apple of the thine eye cease.**"

The final reference is found in **Zech 2:8**, where the Lord says of His people, "**He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of the eye.**"

At first this language in these references, seem strange to us, yet when we think about it carefully, they are speaking of the natural eye with a spiritual illustration.

In this Psalm David, is taking the pupil which is the centre of the eye, the most tender and sensitive part of the body, that always needs constant care.

While he is thinking about the pupil or Apple of the eye, David knows the eye needs to be kept from any severe danger or harm that would cause continual irritation, or loss of sight.

In application the Psalmist Knowing that there are snares all around him, He prays for the Lord to keep him from severe danger, to make a way of escape and recovery.

The word **keep** in the Hebrew is in the **continuous** tense, meaning, David is praying continually "**keep me as the apple of the eye.**" constant care, divine guardianship continuously. The more David grew in age and grace the more he realised he needed the Lord.

Dear believer, during this year 2022, and time of coronavirus, as you leave your house for a short walk, work, to shop for necessities, or that in our going out and coming in to church we must pray daily, continually Lord, "***Keep me as the apple of the eye.***" Or ***Lord has the apple of the eye is kept so Lord keep me.***

Pray this for your pastor as he labours in the field.

With that in view there are various spiritual lessons we can draw from this bodily object lesson, a prayer "***Keep me as the apple of the eye.***"

I FIRST, DAVID'S PRAYER WAS BASED UPON POSITION.

When David considers the eye, he knows the eye is positioned safe and secure in the eye socket (orbit) in the head.

God in His providence and wonderful work of creation has so designed man's physical frame that the eyes are positioned securely in the head.

Have you ever thought that your eyes don't keep falling out and then having to be put back in place.

The reason being, It is union or joined with all the other members of the body, and connected by the head and secured in head.

David is aware that the eye does not stand alone, but it is in union with the other members of the body that make up the physical frame of man.

Without the head nothing can function, but all are joined together by the handy work of God.

David considers the apple of the eye, how it is divinely positioned.

And in a time of trouble, and danger, his mind is lifted to heaven, to think about his own position in Christ, the head of the church and saviour of His body.

His circumstances are unstable; however, David is a child of the Heavenly King.

Therefore, he seeks God upon the basis of his position in Christ. Not a position that he has placed himself, but one where God brought David into saving union with Christ which meant he had spiritual life in Christ. Paul described in **Eph 1:6** "**wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.**"

You see just as the eye and the apple of the eye is safe and secure by it's setting in the head so the believer is safe and secure through his union with Christ the Head of His people.

The Bible uses number of illustrations to teach this great truth of the believer's union or oneness with Christ. To be in union with *Christ Jesus* is to be united to Him, and receive from Him spiritual life.

The Lord Jesus Christ in speaking to His disciples said in **John 15:5** ***"I am the vine and ye are the branches, He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing."*** Paul taught in **Eph 4:15-16** about the Union of the head with the body. A headless body is lifeless.

Only when the body is united with the head can it function. Here is the connection between Christ and His people.

As His body, His people cannot exist without Christ who is the Head of His Church. Paul said in in **Col 2:10** ***"we are complete in Him."*** In **Gal 2:20** ***"Christ liveth in me."*** **Acts 17:28** ***"...in Him we live and move and have our being..."***

Now the truth of our union in Christ is illustrated by seeing the believer positioned as the apple of God's eye, kept.

Only those who have their transgressions forgiven and their sin covered by the cleansing power of Christ's blood are in union with Christ. Accepted and clothed in the righteousness of Christ who is the lamb without spot and without blemish.

Dear, believer just as the apple of the eye is positioned securely in the head, so you are eternally secure in Christ our living Head, adopted into the family of God, entitled to enjoy all the rights, and privileges of the children of God.

II SECOND, DAVID'S PRAYER WAS FOR PROTECTION.

David confirms at the start of **verse 9** his prayer is to be kept from the ***"wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies who compass me about."*** the words ***oppress me*** in the Hebrew read ***"waste me."***

They desired David's death. David is like a city besieged, under attack. he acknowledges the plan of his enemies to ruin him and leave him like a city brought down to nothing, wasted.

Therefore, David prays for protection, just as eye is protected naturally, so, by covenant promise as a child of thine "**Keep me as the apple of the eye.**"

David in seeking the Most High in prayer does so, for he is fully aware that no other can respond to his call, or come to his aid;

He prays to the Omniscience or all knowing one, who knows all David's dangers, and foresees all the attacks of his enemies.

God alone is acquainted with all David's ways.

He also seeks God who is Omnipotent, that is all powerful, none stronger than God, therefore, David's leans upon the everlasting arms of His Saviour, He prays for protection. "**Keep me as the apple of the eye.**"

by Divine arrangement the eye and the apple of the eye is always protected with peculiar care. They are defended with skill all fashioned by the master's creative hand.

Im not an optician, but I searched sources to see how the eye and in particular the pupil is protected.

Notice, the white part of the eye is the is visible part, called the (sclera), it is the protected layer.

The eye colour is the **iris**.

The **iris** It is like a disc with a small black circle in the middle, which is known as the **pupil**. The **iris** controls the amount of light entering the eye through the pupil, which is opening or widening of the black circle.

The iris and pupil are covered by a transparent layer called the **cornea**.

The main function of the cornea is to protect the eye from objects and injury.

The eyebrows, the eyelashes, eyelids, and eye tears, are formed as armour, fences, and barricades to protect the pupil of the eye from dust, dirt and infection.

They act a fortress surrounding the eye. There is continual alertness, and protective movement.

Remember it only takes a little dust in the eye to make a big impact, to hurt the eye. And so it only takes a little sin, to mar our life, hurt our service, hinder our prayer life.

David takes this illustration, and petitions "***Keep me as the apple of the eye.***" The word **keep** means **to watch guard**. The idea is **to hedge in**, to be to sheltered from surrounding trouble and dangers approaching.

The word is used in **Ps 141:9** "***keep me from the snares which they have laid for me...***" the word **laid** signifies the enemies traps are planned, and set carefully to catch me.

Just as the eye has been divinely protected and guarded, so Lord continually protect and guard thy servant, and his spiritual eye sight to see the Lord in all things, and perform the work given me to do.

David describes his oppressors in **verse 12** "***like as a lion that is greedy of its prey and as it were a young lion lurking in secret places.***"

Since the Lord had originally provided for the defence and protection of the eye, Then the Lord is the defence of His people, He has provided all for His redeemed people in a time of spiritual danger, who are the apple of His eye.

Paul in writing to the believers at Ephesus said in **Ephesians 6:10-11** “*finally, my brethren be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,*” **v11** “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*”

There is an armour provided for God’s people, and we are to seek for it is daily application and use of it in our lives against every enemy attack.

We need to be guarded from the dust of the world’s corruption, and fleshly attacks.

This armour provided all centres upon the person and substitutionary work of Jesus Christ the guardian and protector of His people. He is our shield and our defender.

Therefore, believer in the day of trouble and despair, think upon your blessed redeemer, and pray to be kept, protected as the apple of His eye.

Christ is our protector. Isaiah instructed the children of Judah, in **Isaiah 26:3** “*thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee.*” the word **keep** is **guard, protect**, the mind.

Here lies our protection, our guardianship, as the apple of His eye. David’s God was able to deliver him, and do exceeding above all that he could ask or think.

III THIRD, DAVID’S PRAYER WAS FOR PRESERVATION.

It is interesting to note that the word **keep** also translates as **preserved**. In speaking about the Lord never forsaking His

people, **Ps 37:28** states "...**they are preserved forever...**" **Ps 16:1** "**Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust.**"

As David's enemies have risen up against him, they seek to overthrow him. David considers the eye, and how it is preserved from dust, and other dangers that would hinder the sight and its focus, **yet the eye is wonderfully preserved, and keeps its focus.**

Its amazing to think, that, the **lens of the eye** is placed behind the **iris**, **the eye colour**. The lens acts like a camera helping to keep sight focus, to make the clear shapes and objects.

God has made the apple of the eye, sensitive for its own preservation. He has so designed the eye that it depends upon surrounding features for preservation.

Therefore, as David's enemies are surrounding and oppressing him, its easy to lose focus, and not see the Lord in the midst. When surrounded by Cov19 its easy to lose focus.

God has so saved a people to depend upon Him for their eternal preserving. You see I am not keeping or preserving God in my life, rather God is keeping and preserving me by His eternal will.

David recalls the faithfulness of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, to uphold His lovingkindness, goodness and mercy to him. David prays continually preserve me.

Ever keep me as the apple of the eye. Lord keep me as your focus in the mist of my trials. Don't take your eyes of me.

Just as **Mark 6** when the Disciples were in the midst of a storm, **v47** "**He alone the land,** **v48** "**and He saw them toiling and rowing... and about the forth watch of the night He cometh unto them walking upon the sea...**" He never took His eye of them as His people are always His focus.

During the storm of cov19, when the winds of new variants blow our way, keep me Lord as your focus. The Lord thinketh upon me.

Upon the basis of the covenant of grace signed by His own blood, an eternal charge is laid on Christ to preserve His people. He will never lose one committed to His charge because He has the power to keep them as He prays for them.

You can pray daily, Lord as the pupil is the centre of the eye, keep me the centre of your focus, in this time of trouble, **Keep me as the apple of the eye.**"