

The Apple of God's Eye Deuteronomy 32:1-

We want to look at the Eye of God one more time. We have taken notice of the eyes of the Lord and what He looks upon. We observed the phrase **“the sight of God”**. Now we, being led of the Lord, look at the phrase **“the apple of His eye”** or variations thereof.

Four Times In The Scriptures

There are five times in the Scriptures that the apple of the eye is mentioned. Four of the five times it is recorded it is in reference to someone or something that is cherished above all others; one time it is meaning the pupil of the eye. Three of the references are in reference to the apple of God's eye. **Proverbs 7:2** is in reference to God's people keeping the law of God as the apple of our eye. **Lamentations 2:18** refers to God's people, Judah, observing the destruction of the Jerusalem, and that they were instructed to weep and lament over the destruction because it was a result of their sins. Judah was commanded that the apple of their eye ought not to cease, that is crying, lamenting over their sins and the destruction God imposed for them.

The first occurrence is in the song of Moses, **Deuteronomy 32**. In this hymn, Moses, exalts the Lord stating, **“...I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God” (Deuteronomy 32:3)**. Part of the greatness of which Moses ascribes unto the Lord is His keeping of His people. Moses describes it in **Deuteronomy 32:10**—**“He [the Lord] found him [Jacob] in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he [the LORD] led him [Jacob] about, he [the LORD] instructed him [Jacob], he [the LORD] kept him [Jacob] as the apple of his eye.”**

The next occurrence of this phrase is in the Psalms. The sweet psalmist of old, David, rendered up a prayer to God in the form of a psalm. David begins his petition to the Lord: **“Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips” (Psalm 17:1)**. David desires for his prayer, his cry, his **“...effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man...” (James 5:16)**, to enter into the ear of the Lord. Evidently, when David prayed this psalm, he was dealing with an enemy (**Psalm 17:7, 9-14**). We are not told who that enemy was. Perhaps the Philistines, Saul, Absalom? Perhaps, it was his own self? We are not told. Yet, David prayed that the Lord would **“Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings, from the wicked that oppress me, from my deadly enemies, who compass me about” (Psalm 17:8,9)**.

The third occurrence of the phrase is in **Zechariah 2:8**—**“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.”** Here, Zechariah is informed that the Lord would render unto Babylon for her malicious and wicked treatment of Israel. The Lord states that Israel is the **“apple of his eye”** and whosoever touches Israel or His people today, His church, touches the **“apple of his eye”**. There will be a day when God will require it at their hands.

The Meaning of the Expression

The expression **“apple of the eye”** has two meanings: the pupil of one's eye; and, something (more properly someone) that is cherished above others. In this expression we see:

The Delight we are to Him: **Deuteronomy 10:15**—**“Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day.”** We are that which God cherishes. Now, there is nothing in us that would cause this care, love, or treasuring of us. The fact that God delights in us is all of grace!

Beloved, the Lord God cherishes someone more on this earth than anything else, His church. **Ephesians 5:29**—**“For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church”**. The Lord cherishes His church above all other “things” upon this church. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ is that which Christ purchased with His own blood (**Acts 20:28**), that which He assembles with (**Matthew 18:20; 28:20**), that which He uses for the furtherance of the gospel (**Matthew 28:18,19**), that which Christ has given the two ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper to, that which Christ uses for the instruction and cleansing of His blood bought people

through the preaching and teaching of God's Word (**Ephesians 5:25-27, Matthew 28:20**). Oh, we are a delight to the Lord. It is an immeasurable delight, of which we are not worthy of.

The Loving Care He exercises over His eye: Psalm 17:8—“Keep me as the apple of the eye...” The psalmist does not simply ask to be kept, but to be kept as the **“apple of the eye”**. Moses calls the people of God to take note that God did keep them as the **“apple of his eye”** in the most difficult and severest of circumstances (**Deuteronomy 32:10**). Moses describes the land as a **“...desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness...”** (**Deuteronomy 32:10**). What dangers there are in such a place to the sensitivities of the eye. These two phrases depict a land of debris capable of getting into the eye and causing disease, blindness, irritation. Thus, great care must be taken over it. (NOTE: I once had a piece dirt in my eye. We could not get it out. The next morning it was swollen shut and had to go to the hospital to get it taken care of). Thus, these are the circumstances. We are in a desert place, a waste howling wilderness or danger, evil, wickedness both spiritually and physically. But the Lord will keep us as the apple of His eye and we ought to be kept as such.

The **“apple of his eye”** (**Deuteronomy 32:10**) distinguishes the love and care He exercises over His people. Observe the love and care of which God has placed upon the eye. It stands surrounded by projecting bones. I encourage you to look at the picture of the skeleton and see the names of the bones surrounding the eye. They are there for protections. Spurgeon stated in his *Treasury of David*:

“Moreover, its (the apple of the eye) great Author has surrounded it with many tunics of inward covering, besides the hedge of the eyebrows, the curtain of the eyelids, and the fence of the eyelashes; and, in addition to this, he has given to every man so high a value for his eyes, and so quick an apprehension of danger, that no member of the body is more faithfully cared for than the organ of sight.”¹

According to the *Harvard Database of Useful Biological Numbers* (April 24, 2017), **“The average duration for a single blink of a human eye is 0.1 to 0.4 seconds, or 100 to 400 milliseconds”**. See how the eye is very quick to protect itself. It is a natural inclination. How many of you have blinked and/or ducked when a bird or debris hits your windshield? See how God has given His creation a natural instinct to protect the eye. These are all just teachings of creation on the care of which God has for you and I, the apple of His eye, and this church, which He nourishes and cherishes.

Concluding Thoughts

What marvelous work the Lord has done. No wonder David sought to be kept as **“the apple of the eye”** by the Lord. There is coming a day when the Lord will render unto those who mistreated His people, the **“apple of his eye”** (**Zechariah 2:8**). No wonder David was fearful of killing Saul, for he was the anointed of the Lord and he knew it would be required of the Lord in a great way (**1 Samuel 26:9; 1 Samuel 24:6; 2 Samuel 1:16**).

Is it not even more sad that children of God, or church members “touch” one another? They are both the **“apple of his eye”**. Are we not going to be held accountable before Him for doing such? The Scriptures indicate it to be so. Oh, may the Lord help us to cast ourselves in the safety and security that is the **“apple of his eye”** and as well be careful of our touching the **“apple of his eye”**.

¹ Spurgeon, Charles Haddon; *Treasury of David*, Psalm 17:8