

JUNE 18, 2021

Psalm 17:8

“Keep me, O Lord, as the *apple of your eye*,
Hide me under the shadow of your wings”

Deuteronomy 32:10

“The Lord sustained Israel in a desert land,
In a howling wilderness waste; God shielded the people,
Guarded them as the *apple of his eye*”

Proverbs 7: 2-3

Keep my commandments and live,
Keep my teachings as the *apple of your eye*;
Bind them on your fingers,
write them on the tablet of your heart.”

Zechariah 2:8

For this says the Lord... regarding the nations that plundered you:
Truly, one who touches you touches the *apple of my eye*.”

“You are the apple of my eye” means that I cherish you above all things and all others. It is a beautiful statement. To be the apple of someone’s eye is to be loved to the core of one’s being. But what is the “apple” of the eye? In ancient times, the “pupil” was called “the apple”. It’s as if seeing someone with the heart is seeing someone most clearly. It means to see someone truly the way God sees them. To be the apple of God’s eye is to know in your heart that you are so beloved by God who is the ground of your being and the Ground of all Being that you are precious above all human opinion, evaluation and measure. You are beloved beyond any human calculation of your value and worth. What a gift to believe such a thing about yourself or any person...

Even as “the apple of the eye” became a metaphorical phrase used in the bible, it also became a popular phrase in old English first used, it is believed, by King Aelfred of Wessex in 885AD. It was especially popularized after Shakespeare’s use of it in his play: *A Midsummer’s Night’s Dream* in 1600. The King James Bible translation (1611) used the phrase in many passages, and it has remained in most English translations to this day.

To refer to someone as the apple of your eye is to bestow on them the most beautiful expression of their belovedness, preciousness and worth. It is to recognize in them something so sacred and beautiful, ordinary words feel inadequate and metaphor alone captures something of the heart's devotion.

May you know yourself this day as the apple of God's eye. Every part of you, the parts you like and the parts you less like, cherished in all their imperfect perfection, as the apple of God's eye, a one-of-a-kind creation, God's best work. And may you and I express something of such belovedness and treat as so beloved the life around us human and non-human, all infinitely cherished by their creator God.

PRAYER: Wondrous God, you are the ground of my being and the ground of all being in this world. Is it true that I am so precious to you that I am the apple of your eye? Am I that beautiful, unique and one-of-a-kind, a creative work in which you delight?... May I see myself and treasure myself as you see me and treasure me. And may such trust and feeling for your love expand my heart ever more so that I see others and treat them as the apple of your eye. May righteousness and justice become the apple of our eye as we renew our call to be the hands, feet and heart of your beloved Jesus in the world... Amen.