

October 27, 2002
AM Service
Patchogue Church of the Nazarene

“The Apple of His Eye!”

Zech 2:8

For this is what the LORD Almighty says: ... whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye...”

Certainly you have heard the expression, “The apple of his eye.” Your child may be “the apple of your eye.” Your spouse may be “the apple of your eye.” It means someone you cherish. It is often used to express affection for the person you love the most. If someone hurts the apple of your eye – you hurt, get angry and will come to his or her aid.

Zech 2:8 NLT

... the LORD Almighty sent me against the nations who oppressed you. For he said, ‘Anyone who harms you harms my most precious possession. (i.e. the NLT translates “apple of his eye” as “my most precious possession.”)

Notice who Zechariah is talking about: ZION

In the OT Zion refers to Jerusalem, the city that David - a capital of the united kingdom of Israel (1 Chron 11:5; Ps 2:6; Isa 2:3).

In a prophetic sense, Zion has reference to Jerusalem as the future capital city of the nation Israel in the Kingdom age (Isa 1:27; 2:3; 4; Joel 3:16; Zech 1:16-17; 8:3-8; Rom 11:26).

The NT also refers to Zion as the New Jerusalem (Heb 12:22-24), the eternal city into which the church will be received (cf. Rev).

(From The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)

The most important use of the word Zion is in a religious or theological sense. Zion is used figuratively of Israel as the people of God (Isa 60:14).

The spiritual meaning of Zion is continued in the New Testament, where it is given the Christian meaning of God's spiritual kingdom, the church of God, (as well as) the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb 12:22; Rev 14:1).

(from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Zion refers to the inhabitants of Zion therefore, the people of God, in the NT that would mean the Church (those who put their faith in Jesus thus becoming children of God).

In this chapter God, the Lord Almighty, is warning all nations to not mess with Zion / Jerusalem. It is also a warning from God to all powers – not just flesh and blood but spiritual powers too – to not mess with His Nation, His Church, and His people for His people –us – are the apple of His eye, His most precious possession. God cherishes us who believe and belong to Him because of Jesus. You are His most precious possession. That is how God feels about you (you are lovable, treasured, esteemed, prized, held dear). Is it easier for you to understand what it feels like to cherish someone than it does to be cherished? [Allow yourself, right now, to feel precious to God].

I looked up the definition of “apple of one’s eye” in the dictionary and it means the pupil of one’s eye as well as any person or thing that one cherishes. So I looked up pupil and was surprised to see two definitions: 1. That sensitive circular opening in the center of the eye. But I also learned that 2. The word comes from one’s image seen reflected in another’s eye.

1. The pupil of the eye is sensitive, vulnerable, tender, irreplaceable therefore highly valued by its owner and carefully protected and cared for. When something comes at your eye you instinctively put up your hands to protect it. We carefully protect our eyes when injury threatens them. When they are injured we feel so much pain. Whose eyes are we referring to here? God’s eyes! But who are the pupils of God’s eyes? His people - His sensitive, vulnerable, valued people. Jerusalem / the church and therefore the people of God are highly valued and therefore whoever touches the people of God so highly valued by God touches God at a sensitive point. And when we, His people, are injured He feels so much pain. Followers of Jesus are God’s children and even we, who are not as perfect as our Heavenly Father, can not stand to see our children hurting. God allowed and used other nations to discipline His people (we discipline our children, we don’t always like to but we do it for their good). But when these nations became excessive in their oppression of God’s people God protected them. He does the same with us when our enemies, including our spiritual enemies, become excessive in their attack on us. Not only are we His children, we are part of His body. Everyone takes care of his or her body. We especially protect our eyes because it is our dearest possession. As the apple of God’s eye we are His dearest possession. We are dear to Him. We are part of Him. What is done against us is taken by God as done against Him - against the most tender-est part of Him - the apple of His eye. This encourages us to pray with David (Ps 17:8) Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings. God values you as much as you value your eyesight.

- > If GOD had a refrigerator, your picture would be on it.
- > If HE had a wallet, your picture would be in it.
- > HE sends you flowers every spring.
- > HE sends you a sunrise every morning.
- > HE reassures us with Rainbows after the storms have passed.
- > Whenever you want to talk, HE listens.
- > Your Birthday is on HIS calendar.
- > HE never rests when you stay away too long without calling.
- > HE's happy when you read the BOOK HE wrote.
- > HE is Joyous to see you, completely satisfied with what HE gives you.

> HE can live anywhere in the Universe, yet HE chooses your Heart!

> FACE IT, HE IS CRAZY ABOUT YOU!!

(Maybe you have seen this. It has been over the Internet many times. I do not know the author). God created you. He wanted you to exist ... forever. He sent His only Son to die for you. He wants you to spend (your forever) in eternity, in heaven with Him reaping the rewards of your relationship with Him. He must love you very much! You are of great value to Him. FACE IT, HE IS CRAZY ABOUT YOU!

An ancient story tells of two great warriors, Cyrus and Cagular. Cyrus, of course, was the noted emperor of Persia and Cagular was a little-known chieftain who consistently repelled Cyrus' attacks.

Cagular's troops tore the Persian army apart time and time again as they resisted Cyrus' attempts to expand his southern border. Finally, Cyrus amassed his whole army, surrounded Cagular, captured him, and brought him to the capitol for trial and execution.

On the day of the trial, Cagular and his family were brought to the judgment chamber. The chieftain, six feet tall with the appearance of a nobleman, faced the throne. Cyrus was duly impressed with Cagular.

"What would you do should I spare your life?" the emperor asked.

"Your majesty," replied the warrior, "If you spared my life, I would return home and remain your obedient servant as long as I live."

"What would you do if I spared the life of your wife?" Cyrus questioned.

"Your majesty, if you spared the life of my wife, I would die for you."

So moved was Cyrus by his answer that he freed Cagular and his wife and appointed the chieftain to govern the southern province.

On the trip home, Cagular enthused to his wife, "Did you notice the marble entrance to the palace? Did you see the corridor to the throne room? Did you see the chair on which he sat? It was made of one lump of solid gold!"

His wife appreciated her husband's excitement, but admitted, "I really didn't notice any of that."

"Well," Cagular asked in amazement, "What did you see?"

She looked seriously into his eyes. "I beheld only the face of the man who said he would die for me."

(as told by Steve Goodier)

God in Christ was willing to die for you because you are His most precious possession. One day you will see the face of the man who said he would die for you.

2. Now let's look at the fact that the word, pupil, comes from one's image seen reflected in another's eye.

Any person, by looking into the eye of another, will see his own image perfectly expressed, though in extreme miniature, in the pupil. (from Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1996 by Biblesoft)

One thing we can draw from this is that the eye of God is always upon His follower, and therefore His attention, providence, and mercy. That is, we are impressed on His eye. Secondly, we are made in the image of God. In Christ we see what we are to reflect – the image of Christ. But also, as we look at Him we see a reflection of what we are – we are Him in miniature. We are partakers of His character and nature. We are His ambassadors, His representatives on earth. We are the Christs of this generation, commissioned to tell of His love and show His love. People must see His image in His servants.

ILLUSTRATION: James Butler Bonham

You are the apple of God's eye: His most precious possession and a reflection of His character. Allow yourself to believe you are precious in God's sight. Then let His nature shine through you.