

Psalm 119:136

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

Analysis

Rivers of waters run down mine eyes (פלגיהם ירדו עיני, palgei-mayim yardu einai)—Peleg means stream, canal, channel—not drops but torrents. Yarad (run down, descend) suggests continuous flow. The hyperbolic imagery communicates overwhelming grief. Jeremiah wept similarly over Jerusalem's rebellion (Lam 3:48-49).

Because they keep not thy law (על אשר לא-שameru toratekha)—The tears flow not from personal suffering but from others' violation of God's torah. This is holy sorrow for God's dishonor. Paul had 'great sorrow and continual grief' for Israel's unbelief (Rom 9:2). Righteous weeping over sin marks spiritual maturity.

Historical Context

This concludes the Pe (⁹) stanza. The progression moves from wonder at God's Word (v. 129) to panting desire (v. 131) to weeping over its violation (v. 136). Prophetic figures (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jesus) wept over covenant-breaking. Grief for sin's prevalence should mark God's people.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. When was the last time you wept over others' disregard for God's law—not from self-righteousness but from love for God's honor?
2. How does holy sorrow for widespread sin differ from judgmental disdain or apathetic tolerance?
3. What does it reveal about your heart if you never grieve over the violation of God's Word in your culture?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמַר אֵלֶיךָ פְּלִגִּים מִמְּמֹנְדָּת מִן עֵינֶיךָ לֹא עַל עֵינֶיךָ יְרַד אֵלֶיךָ מִן פְּלִגִּים
Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep
H6388 H4325 H3381 H5869 H5921 H3808 H8104

תֹּרְתָּךְ:

not thy law

H8451

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 9:1 (Parallel theme): Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!

Ezekiel 9:4 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

Psalms 119:53 (Word): Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

Jeremiah 9:18 (Parallel theme): And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.

Jeremiah 14:17 (Word): Therefore thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.

1 Samuel 15:11 (Word): It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

Psalms 119:158 (Word): I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

Jeremiah 13:17 (Parallel theme): But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive.

Luke 19:41 (Parallel theme): And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,