

Psalms 56:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle:
are they not in thy book?

Analysis

The image of God numbering wanderings and collecting tears in a bottle reveals divine attention to suffering. The Hebrew 'nod' (wandering/exile) indicates David's fugitive status. Ancient Near Eastern peoples collected tears in small bottles to represent mourning; David asks if God similarly treasures his tears. 'Are they not in thy book?' affirms that God records all suffering for eschatological vindication.

Historical Context

David's years as a fugitive from Saul involved constant movement from place to place with no settled home. The imagery of collected tears reflects ancient mourning practices where tear bottles were sometimes placed in tombs.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does knowing that God records your sufferings affect your endurance of trials?

2. What does the metaphor of God's 'book' reveal about His purposes in allowing suffering?

Interlinear Text

נָדִי	סַפַּרְתָּ הָ	אָ תָּהָ	שֵׁ יָמָה	דִּמְעָתִי	בְּנֹאֵךְ
my wanderings	Thou tellest	H859	put	thou my tears	into thy bottle
H5112	H5608		H7760	H1832	H4997
אֵל	בְּסִפְרֹתֶיךָ:				
H3808	are they not in thy book				
	H5612				

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 20:5 (Parallel theme): Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

Psalms 39:12 (Parallel theme): Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a stranger with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers were.

Malachi 3:16 (Parallel theme): Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

Revelation 7:17 (Parallel theme): For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Matthew 10:30 (Parallel theme): But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Psalms 139:16 (Parallel theme): Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Psalms 121:8 (Parallel theme): The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Hebrews 11:13 (Parallel theme): These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Isaiah 63:9 (Parallel theme): In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

Revelation 20:12 (Parallel theme): And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.