

Brian Reynolds

His Bottle and His Book

"You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book?"

Psalm 56:8

God has both a "bottle" and a "book." We do not have to think of them in literal terms but they are no less real, indeed they are more real than anything in our physical world.

The effort of the enemy against God's people is prominent in this psalm: "My enemies would hound me all day" (v. 2). Of his enemies, David writes, "they mark [or *watch*] my steps" (v. 6); the enemy is watching me, and he is trying to trip me up. But Someone else was watching David too, watching and recording everything.

The "bottle" here is a leather water pouch similar to leather wineskins of the time period for travelers, in order to have access to water. There is a pun or play on the words in the Hebrew due to the similarity of the words "wandering" and "bottle." However, it is God who is collecting the "water" of our tears during our wanderings down here, and not one is lost. Some may ask, "I thought that there are no tears in heaven. Why would God even collect them?" In answer to this, John Bunyan, who suffered for Christ, once said about this verse, "God preserves our tears in a bottle, so that He can wipe them away in heaven" (see Rev. 21:4).

God also has a *book* in order to record the tears of our "wanderings," our pilgrimage down here. We could say that the bottle shows the quantity of tears, while the book records the details connected with our tears. Yes, the enemy is watching, but God is also watching. David was having a tough time when he wrote this; he had been taken captive by the Philistines in Gath. But God knew all about

it; indeed, He still knows about it. In fact, the following verse says, “This I know, because God is for me” (v. 9). If God is for us, who can be against us?

