

Psalms 112:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

Analysis

The psalm begins with a beatitude: 'Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD.' 'Blessed' (Hebrew 'ashrei') indicates deep happiness, security, and divine favor. This blessedness is predicated on 'feareth the LORD' - reverent awe and worship of God (echoing Psalm 111:10). The second clause expands this: 'that delighteth greatly in his commandments.' 'Delighteth' (chafetz) means to take pleasure in, desire, and treasure. 'Greatly' intensifies this - not grudging obedience but joyful embracing of God's law. This connects fear and delight - proper fear of God produces delight in His ways rather than dread. The blessed person doesn't merely keep commands externally but finds internal joy in them. This reflects the new covenant promise where God's law would be written on hearts (Jeremiah 31:33). The verse establishes that blessedness comes not from worldly success but from right relationship with God manifested in loving obedience.

Historical Context

Psalm 112 parallels Psalm 111 in structure - both are acrostic psalms with each line beginning with successive Hebrew letters, suggesting they were composed as a pair. While Psalm 111 praises God's works, Psalm 112 describes the blessed life of those who fear Him. The concept of blessedness through obedience permeates the Torah, particularly Deuteronomy 28 which details blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. However, this psalm adds the dimension of internal delight - obedience motivated by love rather than mere duty. In post-exilic Judaism, after experiencing the consequences of disobedience through exile, the

community's identity centered on Torah observance. Psalm 1 similarly describes the blessed man who delights in God's law. Jesus's Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) follow this pattern of pronouncing blessing on those whose character aligns with God's kingdom. The verse challenges the worldly notion that happiness comes from freedom to do as one pleases, asserting instead that true blessedness comes from delighting in God's revealed will.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does 'fearing the LORD' lead to 'delighting greatly in his commandments'?
2. What is the difference between external obedience and delighting in God's commands?
3. Why does the Bible consistently link blessedness with obedience rather than with circumstances or possessions?
4. How can believers cultivate delight in God's commandments rather than viewing them as burdensome?
5. In what ways does this verse challenge modern notions of happiness and fulfillment?

Interlinear Text

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------|-----------------|
| הַ לְלוֹ | יְהוָה | אַשְׁרֵי | אִישׁ | יִרְאֶה | אֶת | יְהוָה |
| Praise | ye the LORD | Blessed | is the man | that feareth | | the LORD |
| H1984 | H3050 | H835 | H376 | H3372 | H853 | H3068 |
| | | | | | | |
| בְּ מִצְוֹתָיו | חֲפִיץ | מְאֹד: | | | | |
| in his commandments | that delighteth | greatly | | | | |
| H4687 | H2654 | H3966 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 128:1 (Blessing): Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.

Isaiah 50:10 (Light): Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God.

Luke 1:50 (Parallel theme): And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

Psalms 119:35 (Word): Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

Psalms 111:10 (Word): The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

Psalms 145:19 (Parallel theme): He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Psalms 119:97 (Word): O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

Psalms 150:1 (Resurrection): Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power.

Romans 7:22 (Word): For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

Psalms 147:1 (Resurrection): Praise ye the LORD: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.