

Psalms 34:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

Analysis

O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

David commands fear (reverent awe) and promises provision. This connects worship (fearing God) with welfare (no want), establishing that godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6).

O fear the LORD issues imperative. Fear (yare) means reverent awe, worshipful respect, covenant faithfulness. Not terror but appropriate response to God's majesty, holiness, power. This fear includes loving trust—not contradicting but complementing reverence. Calvin said: True fear includes reverence, voluntary and glad service. Ye his saints addresses covenant people. Saints (qadosh) means holy ones, set apart ones, consecrated to God. Command comes to those already in relationship—sanctification's call follows justification's gift.

For there is no want provides motivating promise. Want (machsor) means lack, need, deficiency. No want means complete sufficiency—nothing lacking, every need met. To them that fear him specifies beneficiaries. Promise isn't universal (wicked often lack despite abundance) but particular to God-fearers. This echoes Psalm 23:1: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. Jesus taught: Seek first kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33).

This promise requires nuance. Doesn't guarantee wealth, ease, or absence of trials. Many godly people experience material poverty, persecution, suffering.

Rather, promises that those fearing God lack nothing necessary for godliness and life (2 Peter 1:3). Their needs are met according to God's wisdom, in God's timing, for God's glory. Paul experienced this paradox: poor yet making many rich, having nothing yet possessing all things (2 Corinthians 6:10). Contentment comes not from possessing everything desired but from trusting Provider who gives what's needed.

Reformed theology distinguishes common grace (God's general provision for all) from covenant blessing (His particular care for His own). This verse promises covenant blessing—God will never leave nor forsake His people (Hebrews 13:5); He will supply all their needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Historical Context

God's provision for those fearing Him runs throughout Israel's history. Wilderness generation lacked nothing for forty years—shoes didn't wear out, clothes didn't decay (Deuteronomy 8:4, 29:5). Elijah was fed by ravens and widow's inexhaustible oil (1 Kings 17). Returned exiles lacked nothing when rebuilding temple (Nehemiah 9:21). Jesus promised Father knows disciples' needs and will provide (Matthew 6:8,32).

Yet righteous also suffered material lack. Job lost everything while fearing God. Paul experienced hunger, cold, nakedness (2 Corinthians 11:27). Hebrews 11 catalogs faithful who died in poverty, persecution, destitution. Resolution: God defines what constitutes want. He promises sufficient grace, not surplus comfort. The contentment of godliness isn't circumstantial prosperity but spiritual sufficiency—having God Himself as portion and shield.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does fearing the LORD (reverent worship) relate to experiencing no want (material provision)?
2. What is difference between promise of no want and expectation of wealth or ease?
3. How have you experienced God's sufficiency even when lacking things you desired?
4. In what ways does contentment in God (no want) differ from contentment in circumstances?
5. Why must promise of provision (no want) be understood within covenant relationship (to them that fear him)?

Interlinear Text

לֵא פִּיִּיִּם	כֶּשׁ ו	וְרָע בּוֹ	וְדֹרְשֵׁי י	לֹא ! הִנֵּה	
The young lions	do lack	and suffer hunger	but they that seek	the LORD	H3808
H3715	H7326	H7456	H1875	H3068	
וְיִחָסֵר ו	כָּל	טוֹב:			
shall not want	H3605	any good			
H2637		H2896			

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 84:11 (Good): For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Matthew 6:32 (Parallel theme): (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Psalms 104:21 (Parallel theme): The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God.