

I. What does it mean “I shall not want?”

- A. “I shall not want” does not mean I will have everything I want, but I will not want for anything I need.¹
- B. “I shall not want” means I am not deficient in the proper expert care and management of God.²
- C. “I shall not want” means I have and will have all I need so that God’s agenda for me will be accomplished.
- D. “I shall not want” means that– whether it be spiritual, physical, or eternal– if it is necessary to accomplish God’s agenda for my life, I will not be without it.
- E. “I shall not want” means that I have and will have all that is necessary for me to have an abundant life with God.
- F. “I shall not want” means there will be no lack or deficiency in the Lord’s provision for me. Therefore, I lack nothing I need.³
- G. “I shall not want” means I will be content with a little or a lot because God is sufficiently providing what is necessary to accomplish His agenda in my life.

II. How does this explain times of suffering– am I not in want when I suffer?

- A. If adversity is because of your choices, then what you need is the discipline of God to lead you away from those choices and to guide you to walk in what is right in the sight of the Lord. The Shepherd will provide what you need accordingly.
(Psalm 119:65-71)

¹ Robert J. Morgan, *The Lord Is My Shepherd: Resting in the Peace and Power of Psalm 23* (New York: Howard Books, 2013), 33-34.

² W. Phillip Keller, *The Shepherd Trilogy: A Shepherd Looks at the 23rd Psalm / A Shepherd Looks at the Good Shepherd / A Shepherd Looks at the Lamb of God* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1996), 20,22)

³ Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: 1-41* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 2011), 560.

- B. If adversity is because of choices outside of your control, then you need the providential care of God to turn that adversity into good— which is ultimately the transformation of your character into the image of Jesus Christ. The shepherd will provide what you need accordingly. God may take you through a season of suffering to lead you to develop into maturity. (Romans 8:28-30, James 1:1-4, 1 Peter 1:1-9)

III. How does this explain times of need or lack?

- A. You may be struggling with a discontented heart that is constantly lusting after things you cannot have or truly do not need. These things are not necessary for the abundant life God's has called you to, nor are they helping you to be transformed into the image of Christ. Therefore, it may feel like a lack, but it is really a lust that is not needed to accomplish God's agenda for your life.
- B. God's goal dictates God's provision or lack thereof. Therefore, we may or may not have certain things for a temporary time in our lives to bring a greater good to our lives and the lives of others. For instance, if God is working on a character deficiency in our lives, or preparing us for a greater work, He may cause us to lack something in a temporal situation in order to address the need of character development and provide future blessings to ourselves and others. If God needs to develop character and prepare us for ministry by causing us to lack in some provision to help Him to accomplish this, then God will do it while sustaining us through the process (King David, Job, Joseph, Paul).

Key Point: "I shall not want" means that I shall not want in relation to whatever is necessary to accomplish God's agenda for my life. Therefore, God's agenda for my life dictates what I will and will not have and when I will and will not have it accordingly. God's agenda is that I may know Him, become like Him, be useful to Him, and wait on Him as He will return to make me completely like Him and to take me home with Him. God will accomplish his agenda through people, circumstances, angels, and demons. God will do what is necessary and allow what is necessary as a Shepherd to guide me into the fullness of this eternal life, to protect me in the fullness of this eternal life, and to cultivate me in the fullness this eternal life (this realm of existence that puts me in and keeps me in genuine fellowship with God forever). This means that my suffering, my sin, my sanctification, and my satisfaction are all addressed in God's providential care and concern for me. Therefore, I shall not want in relation to whatever is necessary to accomplish God's agenda for my life.