

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"The Daily Decision to 'Take Every Thought Captive'"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Psalms, 13, 43, 73, 103; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 10:4–5

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where everything you're experiencing seems to contradict what you know about God? You've prayed, trusted, and tried to walk faithfully in His ways, yet things just aren't working out. Maybe you're discouraged, overwhelmed, or wondering, "Lord, where are You? Are You paying attention? Does any of this even matter?" Often, the real battle isn't simply what we're experiencing, but what we're *telling ourselves* about those experiences. Are we holding on to what God says, or allowing our circumstances to determine what we believe is true?

Paul tells us in Rom. 12:2 that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. In 2 Cor. 10:4–5, he describes a spiritual battle in which we tear down false arguments and take every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah. That's where the battle is—in our minds. Will we allow fearful, anxious, and discouraging thoughts to take us captive, or will we take them captive? Psalms 13, 43, 73, and 103 reveal faithful people wrestling with genuine struggles and doubts. Yet they teach us something essential: **Taking every thought captive is a daily decision to hold on to what God says is true, even when everything around us seems to say otherwise.**

1. CHOOSE TO TRUST GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IN THE MIDST OF YOUR STRUGGLES (Ps. 13; 43). Psalm 13 opens with David crying out, "*How long, ADONAI? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me?*" (Ps. 13:2). He's grieving, overwhelmed, and feeling forgotten. Yet rather than allowing those feelings to convince him that God has abandoned him, David brings them directly to the LORD. He asks God to answer him and bring light to his eyes. Then, in the midst of his sorrow, he declares, "*But I trust in Your lovingkindness (chesed, חֶסֶד), my heart rejoices in Your salvation.*" (Ps. 13:6). *Chesed* is God's faithful covenant love and loyalty. David's circumstances haven't necessarily changed, but his resolve has. He chooses to trust who God is, regardless of what he's experiencing.

We find a similar struggle in Psalm 43. The psalmist faces injustice, oppression, and discouragement. He calls God his stronghold, yet feels rejected and overwhelmed by darkness. So he prays, "*Send forth Your light and Your truth! Let THEM guide me.*" (Ps. 43:3). He recognizes that God's truth must overcome the confusion clouding his thinking. Then he addresses his own soul, calling himself to hope in God and endure because he will yet praise Him (Ps. 43:5). This is taking our thoughts captive. We don't deny our difficulties; we bring them honestly before the LORD. When our feelings declare defeat, we choose to remember His *chesed*. We may not understand our circumstances, but we can trust the One who does.

2. BRING YOUR QUESTIONS INTO GOD'S PRESENCE AND ALLOW HIM TO CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE (Ps. 73). Psalm 73 takes us through an incredible journey with Asaph. He begins confidently declaring, "*Surely God is good to Israel, to the pure in*

heart." (Ps. 73:1). Yet he admits that he almost lost his footing because he envied the prosperity of the wicked. From what he could see, those living in arrogance and rebellion enjoyed peace and prosperity, while he suffered despite walking faithfully before God. The math didn't add up! He began wondering whether his pursuit of purity had been in vain. His heart was interpreting what his eyes were seeing in a way that nearly pulled him away from the LORD. He was allowing his limited perspective to distort his understanding of God's goodness.

But everything changed when he entered God's sanctuary. Asaph writes, *"Until I entered the Sanctuary of God, and perceived their end."* (Ps. 73:17). In God's presence, he began seeing the whole picture. The prosperity of the wicked was temporary, but his future was secure in God's hands. He recognized how bitterness had clouded his thinking and declared, *"Yet I am continually with You. You hold my right hand."* (Ps. 73:23). The faithful aren't necessarily people who never question God; they're people who bring their sincere questions to Him because they desire understanding rather than an excuse to walk away. Asaph concludes, *"But for me, it is good to be near God."* (Ps. 73:28). When life doesn't add up, we must bring our doubts and calculations into His presence, allowing His truth to reveal what our limited perspective cannot see.

3. SPEAK TRUTH TO YOUR SOUL AND REMEMBER WHO GOD IS (PS. 103). Ps 103 brings this journey into focus: *"Bless ADONAI, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless ADONAI, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."* (Ps. 103:1–2). Notice what he's doing. He's deliberately directing his thoughts and his entire inner being toward the LORD. He's reminding himself of everything God has accomplished. God forgives our iniquities, heals our diseases, redeems our lives from the pit, crowns us with lovingkindness and compassion, and satisfies us with good things. These aren't simply things God does; they reveal who He is! He is our Forgiver, Healer, and Redeemer, the One who surrounds us with His faithful love. When circumstances threaten to distort our understanding, we must remember and declare the truth about His character.

David reminds us that ADONAI is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in *chesed*. He knows our frailty and remembers that we are dust. Our lives are temporary, like grass that flourishes briefly before the wind passes over it, but His lovingkindness is everlasting (Ps. 103:15–17). Think about that! The problems and circumstances that overwhelm us today are temporary, but God's faithfulness endures forever. David begins and ends by calling his soul to bless ADONAI. This is the daily discipline of taking our thoughts captive. Instead of allowing fear, resentment, or discouragement to define reality, we remember who God is, what He has accomplished, and what He has promised. We deliberately choose to worship Him with everything within us.

CONCLUSION

Taking every thought captive doesn't mean we'll never experience fear, sorrow, anxiety, or doubt. David experienced those things, and Asaph nearly lost his footing because of them. But the difference was where they brought their struggles and what they ultimately chose to believe. David resolved to trust God's covenant love. The psalmist in Psalm 43 sought

God's light and truth. Asaph carried his confusion into God's sanctuary, and David called his soul to remember God's faithfulness. **Our circumstances may be real, but God's Word, His character, and His promises are the greater reality to which we must anchor our thoughts.** We may not understand everything, but we can remain continually with Him, knowing He holds our right hand.

So what thoughts have been taking you captive? Have you believed the enemy's whispers that God has forgotten you, that your faithfulness doesn't matter, or that your circumstances are greater than His promises? Today, bring those thoughts before Messiah Yeshua. Surrender your fear, bitterness, resentment, and the false arguments shaping your thinking. Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate your heart with God's truth. If you've allowed these thoughts to pull you away, turn back to Him today. Choose to trust His *chesed*, remain in His presence, and remember all He has accomplished. You don't have to understand everything to hold on to Him. Even when you feel yourself slipping, He's holding your hand. So bless ADONAI, O my soul! Don't forget who He is. Take every thought captive and choose, day after day, to believe what He says is true.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Ps. 13, David moves from anguish to trusting God's lovingkindness. What does this reveal about the relationship between our feelings and our faith?
2. Psalm 43 emphasizes God's light and truth. How can Scripture and prayer help us confront anxious or discouraging thoughts in our daily lives?
3. What changed when Asaph entered God's sanctuary in Ps. 73, and how did it transform his understanding of his circumstances?
4. How might news, social media, conversations, or other daily influences be shaping your thinking more than God's Word? What practical changes could you make?
5. In Ps. 103, David deliberately remembers God's character and accomplishments. Which truths about God do you most need to remember in your present circumstances?

CLOSING PRAYER

Avinu Malkhenu, Our Father, Our King, thank You that Your lovingkindness endures forever and that even when we struggle to understand our circumstances, You never stop holding our hands. Forgive us for allowing fear, discouragement, bitterness, or the enemy's lies to shape our thinking. Send Your light and truth into our hearts and renew our minds through Your Word. Teach us to take every thought captive to the obedience of Messiah Yeshua. When our feet begin to slip, remind us that You are our strength and our portion forever. Help us remember all You've accomplished, trust Your covenant faithfulness, and remain continually in Your presence. May we always hold on to the truth that You are good, Your promises are sure, and Your love is everlasting.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.