

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"In All of Our Lack, He is Our Supply"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Phil. 4:18-23; 2:25, 30; 4:10-13; Heb. 13:15-16; Eph. 5:1-2; Mal. 3:10-12

There are times when the word *lack* feels painfully familiar. Sometimes the lack is financial. Sometimes what we lack is strength, peace, wisdom, encouragement, or even the ability to see how something is going to work out. There are places in our lives that another person simply cannot fill. We can look at what is in front of us, look at what we have available to us, and quietly wonder, "Is this going to be enough?" That is where Paul brings us as he closes his letter to the Philippians. He is writing from prison, and yet the man who appears to have so little keeps talking about abundance. He has already said that he has learned the secret of contentment—to know, in Messiah, "this is enough." Now he takes us one step further: **in all of our lack, He is our supply.**

And that is really an appropriate place for Philippians to end. Paul has spoken about suffering, anxiety, unity, humility, generosity, contentment, and joy. But underneath all of it is this confidence that the Lord is present and the Lord is enough. The Philippians have given sacrificially to Paul, but Paul does not want their eyes fixed on what has left their hands. He wants them to see the God into whose hands they have placed it. Their gift has become worship, their lack has become an opportunity for trust, and even in the heart of Caesar's empire, God is quietly advancing His Kingdom. That is the encouragement of these final verses.

1. WHAT WE GIVE UNTO THE LORD BECOMES WORSHIP

Paul finally addresses the Philippians' gift directly: *"But I have received everything and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you sent—a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God."* (Phil. 4:18). That is remarkable language. Their gift was sent to Paul, but Paul says that, ultimately, it was received by the Lord. He pictures the aroma of the sacrificial fire rising heavenward. What they had done for Paul was beautiful, but from God's perspective it had become an act of worship—a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, something pleasing to Him.

But what pleased the Lord was not simply the act of giving. **It was the heart of it.** It has always been about the heart. An outward act is meant to express an inward reality. That is why Heb. 13 says, *"Through Yeshua then, let us continually offer up to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips giving thanks to His name. Do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."* (Heb. 13:15-16). Paul uses almost identical language of Yeshua: *"Walk in love, just as Messiah also loved us and gave Himself up for us as an offering and sacrifice to God for a fragrant aroma."* (Eph. 5:2). Giving of ourselves—our resources, our time, our strength, our lives—from a place of sacrificial love is worship. It reflects the generous heart of Yeshua. That is what makes the Lord smile.

2. MY GOD WILL FULFILL EVERY PLACE OF LACK

Then Paul says something we quote often, but its setting matters: *“My God will fulfill every need of yours according to the riches of His glory in Messiah Yeshua.”* (Phil. 4:19). Paul is in prison. He cannot repay them. He cannot reciprocate in kind. But that is all right, because their gift was never ultimately given to Paul—it was given unto the Lord. Paul can essentially say, “I may not be able to pay you back, but my God is going to take care of you.” And notice the measure of His supply: not according to Paul’s resources, not according to the Philippians’ resources, but *“according to the riches of His glory in Messiah Yeshua.”* He is supplying from **His storehouse**.

And we need to hear that as more than a promise about money. Yes, God can supply material needs, but we all lack in ways that have nothing to do with finances. The Philippians needed steadfastness in suffering. They needed encouragement. They needed grace and humility to walk in unity. They needed peace in place of anxiety and gratitude in place of grumbling. Paul is saying, “My God will fill to the full whatever you lack.” The One who commands them to stand firm supplies the strength to stand. The One who calls them to unity supplies the humility they need. The One who tells them not to be anxious comes near as the God of shalom. And when Paul considers the vastness of those riches, there is only one appropriate response: *“To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever! Amen.”* (Phil. 4:20).

3. EVEN WHERE YOU CANNOT SEE IT, GOD IS AT WORK

Paul then closes with what could easily sound like a few ordinary greetings: *“Greet all the kedoshim in Messiah Yeshua. The brethren who are with me greet you. All the kedoshim greet you, **especially those of Caesar’s household.**”* (Phil. 4:21–22). But those words must have landed with tremendous force in Philippi. The believers there were suffering in a Roman colony surrounded by people whose allegiance was to Caesar. Paul himself was Caesar’s prisoner. And yet, by imprisoning Paul at the very heart of the empire, Rome had unknowingly brought the Good News right into Caesar’s world. There were now followers of Yeshua even among Caesar’s household.

Think about that. What looked like confinement had become opportunity. What looked like opposition had become an open door. Rome thought it had Paul contained, but the Good News was spreading within the very household of Caesar. God was working in places the Philippians could not see. And Paul closes, *“The grace of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah be with your spirit.”* (Phil. 4:23). Be strengthened in spirit. Do not be discouraged. You can rejoice in suffering. You can refuse anxiety. You can live generously rather than from a place of fear and scarcity, because God is at work—and He will supply what you need. The circumstances around you never tell the whole story.

CONCLUSION

There is such freedom in this. We do not have to live with clenched fists, constantly afraid that there will not be enough. We do not have to hoard our resources, our time, our affection, or our strength because we are frightened by what we lack. We can give unto the Lord. We can serve unto the Lord. We can love sacrificially unto the Lord. And when those acts flow from hearts shaped by Yeshua, they rise before Him as worship. We do not give in order to

manipulate God into giving something back; we give because we trust the generous heart of the One who has already given Himself for us.

Maybe today you are very aware of an area where you lack. Perhaps there is something you simply cannot supply for yourself—peace, strength, provision, courage, wisdom, reconciliation, or hope. Bring that place to Him. Stop measuring the resources of heaven by what you can see in your own hands. Today, open your hands before the Lord and say, “ADONAI, this is what I lack, and I cannot fill it—but You can. Teach me to trust Your supply. Teach me to give rather than grasp. Teach me to recognize what You are doing even when I cannot yet see it.” **His storehouse is not empty. His grace has not run out. His work is not finished. In all of our lack, He is our supply.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Phil. 4:18, why does Paul describe the Philippians’ gift as “*a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God*” rather than simply thanking them for the money?
2. How does Eph. 5:1–2 help us understand the connection between sacrificial giving, Yeshua’s self-giving love, and worship?
3. What is one area of your life right now where you feel a genuine sense of lack—materially, emotionally, spiritually, relationally, or otherwise? How might Phil. 4:19 change the way you view that need?
4. Are there places where fear of not having enough has caused you to hold too tightly to your time, resources, energy, or possessions? What would trusting God’s supply look like practically?
5. Why is the reference to “*Caesar’s household*” in Phil. 4:22 such a powerful way for Paul to end this letter? What does it teach us about recognizing God’s work in circumstances that initially appear negative?

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank You that in every place where we lack, You are our supply. Forgive us for the times we have looked only at what is in our own hands and forgotten the riches of Your glory in Messiah Yeshua. Give us generous hearts that reflect the heart of Yeshua—hearts willing to give, serve, love, and sacrifice as worship unto You.

Teach us to trust You with every need we cannot fill ourselves. Supply strength where we are weak, shalom where we are anxious, humility where we struggle with one another, courage where we face opposition, and provision wherever there is genuine need. Open our eyes to see that You are at work even in places we do not understand. May the grace of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah be with our spirit, and to You, our God and Father, be the glory forever and ever.

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