

Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption



"Thou Shalt Not Worry"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Phil. 4.4-5; 1:1-7; Matt. 6:25-34; Is. 7:9; Luke 22:41-46; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; Luke 6:11-12; John 11:41-42; Ps. 145:17-19

Have you ever had one of those moments when your mind simply will not stop? You lie down, but your mind keeps working. You pray, but five minutes later you have picked the problem back up again. What if this happens? What if that happens? What am I going to do? Maybe it is the mortgage or rent, a lost job, your health, your marriage, or a child making choices you cannot control anymore. Anxiety has a way of dividing our attention until the problem becomes all that we can see. But Paul writes, *"Do not be anxious about anything—but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the shalom of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yeshua"* (Phil. 4:6-7).

And remember where Paul is when he writes this. He is imprisoned, and the believers in Philippi are facing pressures from without and within. These are circumstances that would naturally be anxiety-inducing. Yet Paul says, *"Rejoice in the Lord always—again I will say, rejoice!"* (Phil. 4:4), and then, *"The Lord is near"* (Phil. 4:5). That is the foundation beneath everything he is about to say. The Lord is near. He has not lost sight of you. Because He is near, you do not have to let fear control your heart or divide your mind. You can trust Him.

1. "DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING" — RELEASE CONTROL

Paul begins with a statement stronger than we sometimes allow it to be: *"Do not be anxious about anything"* (Phil. 4:6). In other words, "Let nothing worry you." Here is a new "Thou shalt not": **Thou shalt not worry.** We often treat that more like a suggestion than a command because we hear the tenderness behind it. When Yeshua says, *"Do not worry about your life"* (Matt. 6:25), He is reassuring us: "I know what you need. I see you. Trust Me." But that does not make the command less real. Like every instruction of the Lord, it comes from a heart of love that says, "This is for your good."

The struggle is that worry is often connected to our desire for control. Beneath the anxiety is often the thought, "If I do not take care of this, who will?" Or, "Lord, I trust You, but I do not know if I trust You to handle this the way I think it should be handled." That becomes a trust-myself-first mentality. But the Lord says, "Trust ME." When Ahaz was afraid and making his own plans, the Lord told him through Isaiah, *"If you do not trust, you will not stand"* (Is. 7:9). Worry cannot add an hour to your life or force circumstances into the shape you want. So release control. Let Him be Lord of all.

2. “BUT IN EVERYTHING...” — BRING IT TO THE LORD

Paul does not merely tell us what **not** to do. He tells us what to do instead: *“But in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God”* (Phil. 4:6). Notice the contrast: anxious about **nothing**, but praying about **everything**. Whatever is large enough to trouble your heart is large enough to bring before the Lord. When anxiety comes—and it does—we bring it to Him. When we do not know what to do, we bring it to Him. When we feel overwhelmed, we bring it to Him.

Look at Yeshua. On the night before He faced the most painful day of His earthly life, He prayed, *“Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done”* (Luke 22:42). That was the pattern of His life. When ministry demands surrounded Him, *“Very early, while it was still night, Yeshua got up, left, and went away to a place in the wilderness; and there He was praying”* (Mark 1:35). When others were conspiring against Him, His strategy session was with the Father. That is the mind of Messiah. Anxious? Pray. Stressed? Pray. Overwhelmed? Pray. You cannot change anything by worrying about it, but you can bring everything to Him.

3. “WITH THANKSGIVING” — LET HIS SHALOM GUARD YOU

Paul adds something important to our praying: *“with thanksgiving”* (Phil. 4:6). We do not simply bring God a list of everything frightening us; we bring those requests while remembering who He is and what He has already done. At Lazarus’ tomb, Yeshua prayed, *“Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. I knew that You always hear Me”* (John 11:41–42). When I do not know what is coming or how something is going to turn out, I can still thank the Lord because I know He hears me. Thanksgiving reminds my heart of His faithfulness.

And then something happens. Paul does not promise that the circumstance always changes. Sometimes the job comes back; sometimes it does not. Sometimes healing comes the way we prayed; sometimes someone we love goes home to be with the Lord. Even Yeshua prayed, *“Yet not My will, but Yours be done”* (Luke 22:42). But something **does** change. Paul says, *“And the shalom of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yeshua”* (Phil. 4:7). The word “guard” carries the picture of a garrison standing watch. We pray. We ask. We thank. And God’s supernatural shalom becomes the fortress around our hearts and minds.

CONCLUSION

Paul could write these words from prison because his peace was not chained to his circumstances. He could face imprisonment and even death and say, *“For to me, to live is Messiah and to die is gain”* (Phil. 1:21). His confidence was not that everything would always be comfortable; it was that the Lord was near and faithful. The same shalom is available to us. The bills may still be on the counter. Your child may still be wandering. The diagnosis may still be there. But your heart does not have to belong to the

circumstance. *“ADONAI is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth”* (Ps. 145:18).

So what are you carrying today that the Lord never asked you to carry? What are you trying to control because you are afraid of what will happen if you let go? **Bring it to Him.** Release your grip on the outcome and put the person, the finances, the illness, the uncertainty, the future—whatever it is—into His hands. Ask Him boldly, and then thank Him for who He is and for every way He has already shown Himself faithful. The Lord is near. **Do not be anxious about anything. In everything, pray, ask, and thank—and let the shalom of God stand guard over your heart and mind in Messiah Yeshua.**

Discussion Questions

1. Paul writes, *“Do not be anxious about anything—but in everything...”* (Phil. 4:6). What do the words **anything** and **everything** teach us about what we should bring before the Lord?
2. Why is worry so often connected to our desire for control? How does trusting God challenge a “trust-me-first” mentality?
3. What do Yeshua’s responses to pressure in Luke 22:41–46 and Mark 1:35 teach us about how to respond to stress and uncertainty?
4. What is one situation in your life right now that you have been worrying about more than you have been praying about? What would it look like to place it into the Lord’s hands today?
5. Where have you already seen the Lord’s faithfulness in your life? How could intentionally thanking Him for those things change the way you face what is worrying you now?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You are near and that You have not lost sight of us. Forgive us for the times we have trusted ourselves first, tried to control what only You can control, and allowed fear and anxiety to divide our minds.

Today, we bring everything to You—our families, finances, health, relationships, unanswered questions, and the things about tomorrow we cannot see. Like Yeshua, we say, *“Yet not my will, but Yours be done.”* Thank You for Your faithfulness. Teach us to trust You, and may Your shalom—the peace that surpasses all understanding—stand guard over our hearts and minds in Messiah Yeshua.

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