

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our mediation today is the Old Testament Lesson of Deuteronomy chapter eight verses one through ten.

Beware, take care! These words of warning sound very strange for what should be a happy and joyous occasion of thanksgiving to God for all of His great blessings to us. Yet, as strange of these words of warning may sound, they are aptly needed.

Moses writes these words of warning for Israel and for us, just before the Israelites are to enter into the Promised land. They require this warning because of all of the wonderful blessings that the land contains. The people can very easy become complacent and forget the One from whom all of these blessings come from. In this complacency and forgetfulness, they can forget God and all of the wonderful things that He had done for them. The God, “who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, ¹⁵ who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, ¹⁶ who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end.” They would rather give thanks and praise and glory to themselves, that there own hands have done this rather than the almighty hand of God.

Has much changed? We too have been richly blessed by God in our daily lives. We have the wonders of food and drink in abundance, that we can have as much food or drink whenever we desire it, while elsewhere in the world, some people are doing without for lack of food and drink. We have the blessings of good governments, including the safety and protection that they give to us. We have the blessings of health given to us by doctors and nurses, just to name a few. We too fall into the same sinful trap as the people of Israel, we forget the One who gives us every good thing. We think it’s from our own hands, our own intelligence, that we have done it all by ourselves.

Our God should rightly take away every single one of our blessings and cast us into utter destruction because of our forgetfulness. Yet, He does not do so. Rather, He continues to shower more blessings upon us. He gives us the ultimate blessing by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior, Jesus bears every single one of our sins, our forgetfulness, our misappropriation, our misuse of our blessings. He takes them to the cross. There, they are nailed with Him. Jesus suffers and bleeds, covering them with His precious blood.

Through His Holy Spirit, we rightly give thanks to God for all of the blessings that He so freely gives to us. Dear Christian, hear and heed these words of warning, that we dare not forget the One who has given us so much already and so richly continues to bless us in our daily lives.

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.