

The Upward Look

The Thanksgiving Season

Of all the holidays in the year, Thanksgiving Day is one of the most lovely. No matter how poor and humble we may be or how great and mighty, if we believe that an Infinite Living Father is leading and guiding us all the way here below and that our life on earth is but the training ground for a better life to come, then we must be happy. We will be happy all the time in trouble as well as in joy, in times of sorrow as well as in times of rejoicing, for we will have the conviction, deep down in our hearts, that as fire is required to remove the impurities and dross from the iron to leave nothing but the refined steel, so our set-backs and disappointments and even our abiding sorrows may be made the factors that will transform our lives into lives of true richness of character just as the griefs and sufferings of "The Man of Sorrows," Jesus, have revealed the true strength and beauty of His life to us in all their sweetness and compelling love. What would Jesus' life have meant to us had it been a life of ease and freedom from trouble?

But it is the rich, especially, who are in danger of forgetting to observe "Thanksgiving" in the right spirit. In the words of Christ: "How hardly shall they that have richness enter into the kingdom of God." (St. Luke

18, 24). This, as He explained elsewhere in His teachings, is because there are very great and which very few of us are strong enough to withstand. The rich who forget to thank God humbly and constantly for all His blessings are those in whom "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of richness" have choked the word and they have "become unfruitful." (St. Math. 13, 22). Our constant aim should be to reach that frame of mind where we can say as did Paul of old: "For I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content, I know both how to be abased, and I know both to abound; everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." (Philippians 4, 11-12).

In the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy God has given us a wonderful view of His purposes towards men and of what their attitude towards Him should be. He shows how He punishes and humbles us for our sins on us; the danger we are in, when good times come, of forgetting that "every good gift comes from above," and of becoming proud and vainglorious, and finally it shows us what we may expect to happen to us if we sin in this respect. Let us read it together in spirit in all its beauty.—I. H. N.

All the commendations which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply,

and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether or not thou wouldst keep his commandments.

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thine raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of oil olive, and honey. A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

When thou hast eaten and art full, thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not

the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein: And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied: Then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage: Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint: Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end: And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God.



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