

Deuteronomy 8:11-16

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-8/deuteronomy-811-16/>

Moses exhorts Israel not to forget that their wealth in Canaan is God's provision for them, just as the manna of the wilderness has been. He exhorts them to remain grateful, and not fall in to being proud.

Having described the prosperity of Canaan and urging Israel to enjoy their material prosperity while giving thanks to God, now Moses warns Israel against taking their prosperity for granted, and forgetting the LORD their Suzerain God. Moses warns Israel to *beware that they did not forget the LORD their God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes* which Moses was commanding them *today*. To forget the LORD is to ignore or disobey *His commandments, His ordinances, and His statutes*. It is easy to start thinking "I don't need God because I have all this prosperity" rather than being grateful for God's provision.

The word *commandments* refers to the laws and rules, that is, the whole legal corpus. The term translated as *ordinances* ("mišpāṭîm,") here refers to legal procedures, as decisions issued by a judge. It is translated in 6:1 as "judgments." The word *statutes* ("ḥuqqîm" in Hebrew) refers to something prescribed. Hence, the use of these three words (*commandments, ordinances, and statutes*) refers to all the covenant stipulations.

It was imperative for Moses to warn the Israelites not to *forget the LORD* because riches or prosperity often results in forgetfulness and pride. Since the Israelites could easily *forget* their Suzerain God when they prosper in Canaan, Moses gave them a warning. He warned them that they would be prone to *become proud and forget the LORD* because of material comfort. When Israel had full bellies, had *eaten* and were *satisfied*, and had *built good houses and lived in them, and when their herds and flocks multiply, and their silver and gold multiply, and all that they have multiplies, then their heart will become proud and they will forget the LORD their God.*

In scripture pride is the opposite of faith. Pride is trust in self. [Habakkuk 2:4](#) is quoted in part by Paul as a key verse in Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. It states in full:

Behold, as for the proud one,

His soul is not right within him;

But the righteous will live by his faith.

When we don't live by faith, we live out of pride. Moses warns Israel that material comfort will lead them to *become proud and forget God* if they were not diligent to avoid it. Material possessions and physical comfort can easily lead to self-congratulation, which in turn, leads to pride and forgetting the LORD. To forget the LORD is tantamount to forgetting His covenant relationship, as well as His mighty deeds. Such deeds include God's acts of redeeming His people from slavery in Egypt. That is why Moses told the people of God not to *forget the LORD their God who brought them out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*

Israel was enslaved and oppressed for approximately 400 years under Pharaoh and the Egyptians ([Genesis 15:13](#); [Exodus 12:40-41](#)). But God was their liberator. He delivered them from their bondage in Egypt and redeemed them "with an outstretched arm" ([Exodus 3:13-15](#); Ex: 6:6-7). Since the LORD alone redeemed the Israelites from bondage to Pharaoh, it is important that they remember His mighty acts by praising Him. This will help prevent them from becoming *proud*.

Even after redeeming the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the Suzerain God did not leave them on their own. He acted as their leader. He *led them through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water.* And even though there was no water in the *thirsty ground*, God provided. *He brought water for them out of the rock of flint.* God alone did all this. In addition to being Israel's liberator and leader, God was their provider. God fed Israel *in the wilderness* with a special food called *manna*, which their fathers did not know. This food was provided miraculously, and was something completely unknown to Israel's ancestors.

The word *manna* derives from a play on the Hebrew phrase *man hu'* which means "what is it?" ([Exodus 16:15](#)). This was the question the Israelites asked Moses when they first saw the food God provided for them. The *manna* was like coriander seed in size but was white in color ([Numbers 11:7](#)). It was "a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground" ([Exodus 16:14](#)). God gave them each day enough just for that day, or two days the day before the Sabbath. The Suzerain (Ruler) God allowed His people to experience dependency so *that He might humble them and that He might test them, to do*

good for them in the end. This lesson was meant to teach Israel to depend on God to meet all their needs.

There is an application in all this that would be well for any believer to take away. God's priority for us is not our material comfort, but our spiritual well-being. In order to have spiritual well-being, we need to learn to depend on God, who is dependable, rather than upon self, which is a poor foundation for wellness. We can expect God to take those whom He loves through a wilderness, where all we tend to trust in is removed. There we can learn dependence, which is the key to true prosperity.

The God who took the initiative to redeem the Israelites from Egypt was the one who led them through the *great and terrible wilderness*. He was also the one who provided for them daily during their time of need. God did all this for His covenant people in order *to do good for them in the end*. God's purpose in each of His actions was to bring blessing to His people. Just as a parent disciplines a child for their own good, so God does for His children.

Biblical Text:

¹¹ Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; ¹² otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived *in them*, ¹³ and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, ¹⁴ then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹⁵ He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, *with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water*; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. ¹⁶ In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.