

Dangerous Prosperity

July 19, 2008

Since the end of World War II in 1945, material prosperity and comfort have not ceased to advance in many parts of the world. Alas, this prosperity is not without its dangers, as Moses warned the Israelites some 3,500 years ago. Here is one such passage which deserves today to be quoted in full (Deuteronomy VIII, 11–20). It is easily applied to our own times:

11 Take heed, and beware lest at any time thou forget the Lord thy God, and neglect his commandments and judgments and ceremonies, which I command thee this day:

12 Lest after thou hast eaten and art filled, hast built goodly houses and dwelt in them,

13 And shalt have herds of oxen and flocks of sheep, and plenty of gold and silver, and of all things,

14 Thy heart be lifted up, and thou remember not the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage:

15 And was thy leader in the great and terrible wilderness, wherein there was the serpent burning with his breath, and the scorpion and the dipsas, and no waters at all: who brought forth streams out of the hardest rock,

16 And fed thee in the wilderness with manna which thy fathers knew not. And after he had afflicted and proved thee, at the last he had mercy on thee,

17 Lest thou should say in thy heart: my own might and the strength of my own hand have achieved all these things for me.

18 But remember the Lord thy God, that he hath given thee strength, that he might fulfil his covenant, concerning which he swore to thy fathers, as this present day sheweth.

19 But if thou forget the Lord thy God, and follow strange gods, and serve and adore them, behold now I foretell thee that thou shalt utterly perish.

20 As the nations, which the Lord destroyed at thy entrance (into the Holy Land), so shall you also perish, if you be disobedient to the voice of the Lord your God.

To keep one's head on straight amidst confusion which only grows worse, it can certainly help to visit (prayerfully) the Old Testament. Being the Word of God, it always gives us God's own perspective on things.

Kyrie eleison.