

## Chapter III

**T**HAT part of Isaiah assigned by Kenneth to the second century B.C. is full of references to the economic conditions. Here the cry of justice goes coupled with that of restoration. "But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses; they are for a prey, and none delivereth, and none sayeth, Restore." The condition of the people was so shocking, that neither prophet nor folk could believe that anyone but God was responsible for the havoc; it seemed to them beyond mortal power to create such woe. Yet they knew that in passing through the furnace of affliction they were enduring a refining process. It was not all for naught; they were not utterly forsaken. "Hearken unto me, ye that know justice, the people in whose heart is my law." Remember the covenant! Remember Egypt, the wilderness, Horeb, and the land of milk and honey, where there was no scarceness. "Awake, awake, put on strength, awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old! Keep justice and do right, forsake the way of the wicked, and he that puts his trust in me shall inherit the land. Return to God, for there is no peace to the wicked."

If the last eight chapters of the book of Isaiah are to be attributed, as some of the higher critics do attribute them, to writers of the second century, then it is essential for a proper understanding of them to know the economic and political conditions which prevailed in Palestine, particularly in Galilee at the time of the Maccabean revolts. But it is not easy for the student to find the scraps of data scattered about in num-

bers of old books not included in the Bible and Apocrypha. Dr. Eisler, in *The Messiah Jesus*, has collected stores of information on the economic and political conditions of the time of Judas of Gaulon, and, in *Jesus of Nazareth*, Dr. Klausner has earned the gratitude of all Bible students who desire a clear statement of the events which set Galilee for several years in a state of riot and revolt. It is possible now to get an idea of the environment of Nazareth after the death of Herod. And these chapters, the last eight of the book of Isaiah, the import and significance of which have been neglected by critic and preacher, may have been the manifestoes of hope which inspired the Zealots and their followers. There are verses in these chapters which seem to refer to Babylonian days, some are attributed to the first Isaiah, others are so like Jeremiah that one conscientious critic would tear a short verse from a chapter so that the alleged work of Jeremiah might retain the stamp of antiquity. Let higher criticism decide the matter as it may, there is this to be considered: are these chapters, whether by early or late prophets, typical of the hope and aspiration of the people? Do they mean anything in the way of practical propaganda, or are they without economic or political significance? The fifty-eighth chapter is a perfect specimen of Hebrew exhortation, a poem stating clearly the economic, political, and religious conditions known to everyone who hath eyes and ears. There is no crack in the fifty-eighth chapter, no alien bit pushed in, no interruption for expletives after its opening; it is all of a piece. It might have been the work of a committee of trained literary jewellers called to fit broken pieces of Hebrew poetry together. What of it? It is a jewel. So good, that it flows like a stream of words welling up from a full heart, when the unfettered mind, elated at its freedom, picks the right word and gives surety to each sen-

tence as it marches in place, and carries the idea straight to its home.

These poems, calling for justice, the restoration of God's justice, have never been understood; their place in old Hebrew hope and aspiration is unknown, because prophets, the authors and speakers of the poems, were not priests in authority, the most unlikely people to stamp with approval texts revealing their own imperfections. The distance lying at all times between the prophet's mind and vision and the priest's was too wide for a bridge. The prophet was the rebel, the priest was the Tory, or, to put it after the English manner, the prophet was the true conservative, desiring to restore the law and custom of the land, and the priest at best was the Tory, multiplying forms to the detriment of the substance of law and custom. "Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord?" In the next chapter, LIX, there is a description of the hopelessness of the people. "None call-eth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth." And there was no man to help, no intercessor to aid the fallen. Forsaken by justice, they groped for the wall; like the blind, they groped as if they had no eyes, and they stumbled at noonday as in the night. But even in the darkest hour they were not utterly rejected. The promise held good. Restoration and redemption as ever will be acceptable for a renewal of the covenant, but redemption is not enough; restoration must go with it; they are complementary. "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," is the call which

opens the poem called the sixtieth chapter. "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land. . . . Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself. . . . Thy people also shall be all just; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." No more groping for the wall, no more stumbling at noonday. For one is sent to teach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to make crooked ways straight. And in their land they shall possess the double; no more the crushing burdens of tribute and tithe; they shall build up the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations; no more robbery for burnt offering, for the Lord God will cause justice and praise to spring forth before all the nations. They shall no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall their land any more be termed Desolate. Remember the days of old, remember Moses who led them from bondage. Whatever their transgression, God's goodness and mercy are for the asking. But no mere piety, no burnt offering taken from the needy, no showy fasts will suffice. "All our righteousness are as filthy rags," and "justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street and equity cannot enter."

The climax of promise reached in these economic poems exceeds in beauty anything in the realms of utopia-building. It is the most perfect specimen of economic peace and fullness to be found in the poetry of any people. How it has been missed by critics and preachers cannot be explained; why it has been neglected by the labour propagandists is a mystery. There it is in the sixty-fifth chapter, glowing with the promise of an individualism born of God's justice, but in some unaccountable way neglected, overlooked by modern prophets and reformers.

That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes.

For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come unto mind.

But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

And what is justice? Justice is the opportunity to build and inhabit, to plant and to eat, to enjoy the work of one's hands. It is equality of opportunity to use the earth provided by God for his creatures, whose sustenance is drawn from it, from it and no other source. Justice is the basis of man's right to life, and also the basis of ownership of the wealth he produces. Justice is the link which binds man to God. It is the system which the Father creates for the care of his children. Without it man is lost—as in every civilization of which there is record, lost as he is today, as he was in Babylon, in India,

in Greece, in Rome, all fearful examples of the curse which followed the removal of a neighbour's landmark.

Recorded history usually begins with the adventure and glory of conquest, not with the placid habits of free tillers of the soil. Precious little history would have been worth recording if war and invasion had not brought about the extremes of power and weakness, riches and poverty, monopoly and slavery. It is only when a background for a people is required, that the historian collaborates with the archæologist, who is better qualified for the job of seeking origins.

As each decade passes, practical archæologists contribute more and more data to the morphology of history. The recent discoveries of Petrie at Gaza and of Garstang at Jericho are examples which suggest enormous fields yet to be explored, which will yield contributions to the structural and destructive work of man in civilizations raised by him, by him to be overthrown. Never accepting the authority of experience proffered by a past civilization, he has, as it were, of set purpose, gone to work in each new venture, repeating the blunders of his forbears, making history what it was, a record, in the main, of war, spoliation, poverty, and slavery. The great achievements in art crumbling under neglect, where they are not buried, are the epitaphs of his powers of destruction.

There must have been a time when man realized that the land was there for the use of the individual producer and that the produce belonged to him who produced it. But the student must go back, a long way back, far beyond the beginnings of the primitive state, far beyond the raids of nomadic hordes, usually the starting-points for sociologists, if he would have a clear view of the conditions under which early man used the earth. So much history begins with turmoil and strife, that it

is not strange many students hold the notion that man began, not with economic struggle, but with political struggle. He is often presented as the victim of exploiters of his labour, as if he began under the direction of a slave-driver. Sometimes he seems to have been ushered into a world of priests and medicine men, all ready with ritual and magic to put him into the frame of mind for producing penitential pence.

There are such wide differences of opinion among anthropologists and sociologists as to the economic nature of the beginnings of peoples, that it is almost impossible for the student to arrive at anything like a clear understanding of when and how the land-tilling peasants became tribute-paying subjects or slaves of conquerors. It is not a question of dates wanting, periods in the development of peoples towards civilization; nor is it a question of methods—how a peasantry fell under the rule of herdsmen; for, though the former question must remain shrouded in the darkness of the long past, the latter is generally accepted as being one of conquest in all cases. The primitive state began with conquest, and slavery was the economic basis of civilization, if civilization began with the organization of the state. But too much stress can be laid on the point as to when subjugation was accomplished. The sudden leaps taken by Ratzel, Lippert, and many other sociologists leave wide gaps in the narrative of man's progress as a tool-making and tool-using creature. And it is in these gaps, in which man tilled the land in peace with his neighbour, that the student must look for evidence, even though this can be done by inference only, of the system of apportioning the land, the conditions under which it could be used, and to whom the produce belonged.

The sociologist finds it very difficult today to keep up with the anthropologist, as difficult, indeed, as the historian finds

it to keep up with the archæologist. As soon as the hardened anthropologist says a final word upon the Peking man, Dr. Leakey, searching in Oldoway, finds something that might upset many ideas concerning the genealogy of man. No sooner is the announcement made of the discovery of the skeleton at Oldoway, than news from Nairobi reaches *The Times* in London that a fragment of a human jaw has been found at Lake Victoria which "places homo sapiens one step further back than even Oldoway does, while confirming the Oldoway discoveries." Dr. Leakey, in his letter to *The Times*, on the discovery of the skeleton at Oldoway, says:

"The latest information to reach me here in camp is that tools of Chellean type and traces of fire have been found in the Peking cave, and that these are now attributed to the Peking man. Another possible explanation, however, crosses my mind in view of the Oldoway discoveries. So far as I know, all the Peking finds of human remains have up till now been more or less fragmentary crania, in a condition not very different from that of the numerous animals found. Is it not perhaps just possible that further excavations at the Peking cave will show that homo sapiens was living there and that he was responsible both for the tools and for the fire, and that the Sinanthropus remains represent the relics of his meat feasts, as with the other fossil animals found?"

It is not only in connexion with anthropology that discoveries are coming fast and of a nature rather shocking to the professors who have uttered so many final words on man's "first parents." Many opinions formed before the war on primitive peoples must now be changed, reconsidered in the light of quite fresh information as to the mentality of the savage, his customs, rites, beliefs, and practices. Not only the opinions of sociologists are affected by the new information



published by travellers since the war, but anthropologists who have thought that the savage was in no way like his European saviours will have to revise many works that were of great importance a generation ago. It is said now that the savage is a rational creature; and, when he is not interfered with by well-intentioned, civilized sentimentalists, he is quite capable of working out a really practical and honest system of living in peace with his neighbour. He has the most precise ideas on what is, and what is not, property. Numbers of the African tribes know that only what a man produces can be his own, and that he has the right to leave it to his heirs, exchange it, or give it away. In numbers of the tribes there is no such thing as private ownership of land; all land is held in trusteeship by the chief of the tribe. It is something of a shock to learn that magic has nothing whatever to do with religion, that magic is something quite different, serving an entirely different purpose. Magic is a kind of science the savage invents to enable him in some strange way to control unknown forces. This sounds as if it were taken from the textbook of some great physicist—but it is not; it comes from men who have to be so practical, so much alive to the innumerable surprises of the tropical forest, that they realize that every day's journey is attended by a thousand and one risks which the savage has learned to anticipate and to modify. One thing recent travellers have discovered in connexion with the savage tribes they have met, and whose language they know, is that the beginnings of their religion are traced back to Nature herself, and that fundamentally the beginnings are the same as those of the Aryan, Semitic, and Caucasian races: all go back to Mother Earth.

In the record of several peoples there are numbers of references to periods when the land was free, and the produce

belonged to him who raised it, and bore no tax. Some of these cases will be presented later.

It is probable that nomads and agriculturists subsisted side by side, each community pursuing its own vocation for long periods without aggression. Perhaps nomads were not always the warlike fellows addicted to the blood of conquest that many writers represent. It may be suggested that drought or flood, the cause of great loss in herds and flocks, might have been the reason why nomads or herdsmen were driven to the desperate act of swooping down upon a community of tillers of the soil, and reducing them to bondage. Whatever the cause may be, it is reasonable to infer that campaigns of plunder would not have stopped with the setting up of a slave state, unless the community of tillers was worth plundering year after year, and the area tilled wide and large enough to serve the needs of both plunderer and plundered. The point is: it took time, a long time, to organize a primitive community of tillers of the soil before the primitive state began. Exploitation of labour began with conquest when tribute was exacted by conquerors for the use of land. It is not easy to reject the evidence found in the Chinese books, the Aryan Vedas, the Hebrew Pentateuch, and the Homeric literature, of free communities tilling the land, unmolested for long periods by plundering hordes. When memory of economic systems is discovered in the early literature of a people, it may be accepted as valid, as real as the language itself, of which it has become a part. And as this evidence is nearly always found in the ritual or worship forms of ancient peoples, it indicates how closely bound together are early man's conception of a Creator and his expression of gratitude—worship—for the source of his well-being.

But records, whether of writing, pottery, palace, or temple,

no matter how old they are, only mark stages of development long after man passed on from the primary occupations of hunter and herdsman. The long beginnings of agriculture are concealed in an unrecorded past; hidden are the toilsome processes through which man passed before he became the tool-maker inspired with the notion of satisfying his desires and needs with the least exertion. How long did it take him to progress from the spud to the first plough? Millenniums, perhaps. For, though his intelligence and inventive power throve and quickened with each advance, so slow, so arduously slow, were the initial stages, when perhaps he envied the fierce brutes' skill and speed in finding food, that vast eras passed over him before he thought of sharpening a flint. Then having discovered his purpose and vocation, each succeeding stage in his development quickened his powers, but each step forward, even after he learned to protect himself against the brute, was a long, painful one; not as speedy as some anthropologists have imagined.

What is called religion, therefore, seems to be a very late development in the economic history of man. He had reached quite a high state of civilization when he worshipped the Creator, the earth, and the son of the union of the Father (Creator) and Mother (Earth). Other deities came much later. He did not create in verse or prose a multitudinous theogony to begin with. Fear, perhaps, had not become an obsession; for his imaginative faculties must have developed as slowly as his inventive powers; and fear, in the so-called religious sense, which prompted deity-making for protective purposes, must have been an attribute of a creature endowed with an imaginative faculty of fairly high degree. Fear, the bugbear of the hardened rationalist, is with us still, and expresses itself in thousands of forms which by no stretch of

imagination can be called religious. What fear of the ancients can be compared for sheer nonsense with the fear of superstition which haunts the rationalist? And now no one has poetry enough in him to add another deity to the classic theogony.

It was gratitude, not fear, that prompted man to worship the first deity—the Creator. There is not a literature which has come down to this day that does not reveal this fact. To accept fully made theogonies as worship systems sprung suddenly into vogue is not reasonable. It took a long time to make a theogony. And it took a very long time to reach a priest stage; and who was more interested in making deities? Man, the land animal, the tool-making producer, worshipped first the Creator who gave him the source from which he obtained his food, and then his fuel, and then his clothing. Gratitude surely came long before fear in the scheme of deity-making. The Stoics held that the idea of God set alight in the souls of men came from their contemplation of the sublime order and majesty in nature. Plutarch says: "For always sun and moon and the remaining constellations moving in their orbits under the earth rise alike as to tints, and even as to measures, both as to identity of spaces and time. Therefore, those who established the tradition of the worship concerned with the gods did bring it forward to us through three forms: first, through the form of nature; second, through the form of legends; and third, from that form which has derived its evidence from (communal usages) laws. And the nature-form (of worship) is taught by the philosopher, and the legendary (or mythical) by the poets, and the statutory is enacted by each commonwealth." The established tradition in popular worship was firmament (Father) and earth (Mother), because the former poured down water, and so had the disposition of seeds and brought them to birth. Such was the

Stoic notion of the tradition of worship. Fear came with legends, and legends brought priests, and then simple, pristine worship was merged after many generations with a multitudinous theogony. Chrysippus, the Stoic, says: "You cannot find any other beginning of justice than that from Zeus and from common nature; for from this source all such must have its beginning, if we are to take any ground on boons and evils." Pain brought the medicine man, and this superstition of magic and spells thrives apace in these days of enlightenment. Ancient man does not deserve the opprobrium poured upon him by many rationalists and socialists; anyway, it cannot be shown that he was ever so superstitious as to imagine the only rights he can enjoy are those conferred on him by the state. His rights antedate the state, for his rights are economic. Natural man had not to wait for the landlord, the capitalist, or the magistrate before he could freely use the earth to produce his sustenance. State rights, which are really not rights at all and ought to be called state privileges, must have come comparatively late in the development of man. Forms of worship must have been a late development, so late, indeed, that man by that time had become an artist. The altar surely marks the stage when man emerged from the darkness of sheer production to the dawn of creative expression. Poetry sprang from worship, and all art found its beginnings in the worship of the Creator—the bright, the shining. Fear, then, was the fear of love, the fear planted in every gentle heart, indicating refinement, fear to offend, fear to hurt, fear to disobey. But it was gratitude primarily which prompted religious worship, gratitude for favours received, if the hardened rationalist will have it so.

Fear in the sense of cowardliness came to distress man long after the first altar was raised in gratitude to the Creator.

Knowledge raised that fear born of doubt, and, as knowledge increased, the fears of man multiplied, until this time, when man is haunted day in day out by the dread spectre of poverty, and the awful fear that he has no power to lay it. Before man became so civilized as to be a meek tribute-payer, the only poverty he was likely to know was that occasioned by drought or flood. Yet even in such extreme cases of scarcity brought about by natural causes, he might have had a surplus of his own which would help him to survive periods of little or no harvest. Surplus taught him thrift, not only for seed, for time of ill-fortune also. But knowledge has not yet enabled man to banish the fear of war, let alone the fear of poverty. Better far the crude beginnings of religious faith in an unseen power that provides the source of sustenance, than the modern faith in the state, which perpetuates the system that breeds poverty, the slum, and despair.

The cry for justice, which recurs in all the religious books of early people, indicates clearly the memory of a time when man knew not involuntary poverty, when economic conditions were such that he could enjoy the work of his hands. From the Chinese classic, the *Li Ki*, the student can get a glimpse of an ancient system which did not penalize effort. *The Royal Regulations* says:

Anciently the public fields were cultivated by the united labour of the farmers around them, from the produce of whose fields nothing was levied. A rent was charged for the stances in the marketplaces, but wares were not taxed. Travellers were examined at the different passes, but no duties were levied from them. . . . Only three day's labour was required (by the state) from the people in the course of a year. Fields and residences in the hamlets (when once assigned) could not be sold.

The settlement of the people in the towns and in the

country was so like that revealed in Deuteronomy and Joshua, it might have been done according to a wise plan common to all peoples. The land was measured, and none of the people left to idle.

Then the people had rest in their dwellings, did joyfully what they had to do, exhorted one another to labour, honoured their rulers, and loved their superiors. This having been secured, there ensued the institution of schools.

Strange reading now. But stranger still, incompetent statesmen were not "kicked up stairs." "When a great officer was dismissed as incompetent from his duties, he was not (again) employed in any office to the end of his life. At his death he was buried as an (ordinary) officer."

They found work for cripples, the deaf, the dumb; "all fed according to what work they were able to do." All people contributed to the sacrifices: "to God dwelling in the great heaven; at the altars of the spirits of the land and grain."

No wonder Confucius bitterly lamented the passing of the good old days. Many of his censures cannot be understood without a knowledge of the conditions described in the *Li Ki*. He said to his pupils: "Remember this, my children, oppressive government is fiercer and more feared than any tiger." He knew what was possible under a just system. In the *Li Ki*, there is a description of the methods by which states become infirm:

When government is not correct, the ruler's seat is insecure. When the ruler's seat is insecure, the great ministers revolt, and smaller ones begin pilfering. Punishments (then) are made severe, and manners deteriorate. Thus the laws become irregular and the rules of ceremony uncertain. When these are uncertain, officers do not perform their duties; and when punishments become severe,

and manners deteriorate, the people do not turn (to what is right). We have that condition which may be described as an infirm state. . . . Hence the sage forms a ternion with Heaven and Earth, and stands side by side with spiritual beings, in order to do the right ordering of government. Taking his place on the ground of the principles inherent in them, he devises ceremonies in their order; calling them to the happy exercise of that in which they find pleasure, he secures the success of the government of the people. Heaven provides the seasons. Earth provides all the sources of wealth. Man is begotten by his father and instructed by his teacher. The ruler correctly uses these four agencies, and therefore he stands in the place where there is no error.

Anciently, the wise kings cultivated and fashioned the lever of justice. "Humanity is the root of justice and the embodying of deferential consideration. The possessor of it is honoured."

In *The Books of Kan* (the Kan dynasty reigned from 1122 to 256 B.C.) there is a speech delivered by the king, reciting the deeds of Shan, the King of Shang. The first offence is, "Shan does not reverence Heaven above and inflicts calamities on the people below," whom he cruelly oppresses. "He has extended the punishments of offenders to all their relatives, and he has put men into office on the hereditary principle." It is interesting to note in passing how often the stupidities of governing in one civilization will appear in another at intervals of more than one thousand years. The *Shu King*, in which *The Books of Kan* are to be found, contains the most ancient of Chinese classical books and historical documents, relating to a period from 2357 to 627 B.C. There is no blunder common to politicians of our day that cannot be matched in old China, where deep wisdom seemed to accompany quite modern notions of doing the wrong thing with the best intention.



The *Li Ki* and the *Shu King* are so rich in wisdom, that the student who dips into them is filled with amazement that their treasures are used so seldom. Reference to them in the literature of our sociologists is rare; economists neglect them; and our theologians seem to find no worthy parallels in them which would enrich their discourses. Again it must be inferred that ancient economic conditions are considered not practical in this workaday world, that the machine age long ago abandoned fundamental principles in favour of statistical charts. Perhaps modern investigators of ancient systems wonder what good can be done by unearthing utopias that did not endure. "There is no going back now," they seem to conclude. Governments must be organized scientifically. Certainly the notion that the great engineers of modern governments would invent some new way out of "the mess" burned brightly a few years ago in many, a busy mind. But in a short space doubt came like a darkening cloud, and it not only dimmed the lustre of their ideas, it left a chill which touched the spirit; now something like despair covers all effort to find a way out of "the mess."

Whether the Hebrew or the Chinese tradition, as expressed in Deuteronomy or the *Li Ki*, be as early as one thousand years or as late as five hundred years before this era, does not matter. What does matter particularly is the method of economic settlement of a people, the system inaugurated on a basis of justice and no other. That is the point of great importance; for in the quest of divine justice it is necessary to find examples of its practice and utility. Such are found in the *Li Ki*, and in Deuteronomy. Whether students accept the names of the authors of this system, as given by the Chinese and the Hebrew scholars, or not, in no way invalidates its historical value. Whether the initiators were the Duke of Kan and

Moses, respectively, or not, is of no great interest in the inquiry. What is of superlative value is the ancient record of systems of land settlement begun under conditions which approximate economic justice. To find an economic system that is religious, uniting man with an invisible Creator, is a mighty advance on the superficial notion of those investigators who imagine worship was merely an exercise for propitiating evil spirits. Even in the *Avesta*, Ahura Mazda, the good principle, must have preceded Angra Mainyu, the evil principle, for primitive man would surely notice first the phenomena which would govern his habits and life, those which were with him night and day. Darmsteter, in his introduction to the *Zend Avesta*, referring to the law in nature, says: "Days after days, seasons after seasons, years after years, come and come again; there is marvellous friendship between the sun and moon; the dawn has never missed its appointed time and place, and the stars that shine in the night know where to go when the day is breaking. There is a God who fixed that never-failing law and on whom it rests for ever." If the sequence of noticeable events meant anything to early man, surely the God of never-failing law would inspire him long before an occasional storm or drought, or before any nightmare would force him to invent evil spirits that were worth propitiating. At any rate, it is clear in the *Avesta* that Angra Mainyu invaded the world of Ahura Mazda and marred it. The *Vendidad* begins with descriptions of the sixteen lands created by Ahura Mazda, in which the faithful enjoy abundant produce, wide pastures yield corn, grain, fruits, and increasing flocks and herds give joy to the husbandman.

He who would till the earth, O Spitama Zarathustra; with the left arm and the right, with the right arm and the left, unto him will she bring forth plenty, like a loving bride on her bed, unto her

beloved; the bride will bring forth children, the earth will bring forth plenty of fruit. . . . He who sows corn sows holiness; he makes the law of Mazda grow higher and higher; he makes the law of Mazda as fat as he can with a hundred acts of adoration, a thousand oblations, ten thousand sacrifices. . . . No one who does not eat has strength to do works of holiness, strength to do works of husbandry, strength to beget children. By eating every material creature lives, by not eating it dies away.

In the introduction to the Upanishads, Max Müller says: "To watch in the Sacred Books of the East the dawn of the religious consciousness of man, must always remain one of the most inspiring and hallowing sights in the whole history of the world. . . . Some of the ancient sayings were preserved because they were so true and so striking that they could not be forgotten. They contain eternal truths, expressed for the first time in human language." The first *prapathaka* in the *Khandogya-Upanishad* begins with the statement: "The essence of all beings is the earth." In all worships the Creator provided the source of food before creating man. No creator, not one, in any of the ancient worships made man before the earth was made. All was done for man. The primitive creature had a sounder economic understanding of the wisdom of creation than have most of our modern philosophers.

The hymn is truly (to be considered as) the earth, for from it all whatsoever exists arises.

The object of its praise is Agni (fire) and the eighty verses (of the hymn) are food, for by means of food one obtains everything. . . .

All this that is food, and all this that consumes food, is only the earth, for from the earth arises all whatever there is.

And all goes hence (dies on earth), heaven consumes it all; and all that goes thence (returns from heaven to a new life) the earth consumes it all.

The earth is thus both food and consumer.

It is not strange that land animals of the human category should worship the creator of the earth. Nor is it strange that man should imagine an Angra Mainyu (the evil one) at work when adversity and hunger beset him, injustice was done, and the order in nature turned awry; then man thought some evil spirit was abroad thwarting the beneficence of the Creator. There arose then from baffled man the cry for justice. The first appeal in the *Gathas*, in the *Zend Avesta*, is for justice: "On me comes the assault of wrath and of violent power, the blow of desolation, audacious insolence, and (thievish) might. None other pasture-giver have I than you, therefore do ye teach me good (tillage) for the fields (my only hope of welfare)!" Whether the sacred herds and the folk were molested by alien foes, or a general foreclosure followed a period of bad harvests, or drought gave no pasture for the sacred kine, the wording of the appeal unmistakably manifests a severe economic crisis: someone had removed a neighbour's landmark. The five *Gathas* of Zarathustra are perhaps as old as any religious literature in existence. They have been compared by great scholars for intelligent religious earnestness to the Semitic scriptures. They contain many likenesses. But the great resemblance between the *Gathas* and the Pentateuch is: both folk cry for a champion of justice to appear and to relieve their misery. The tasks of Zarathustra and Moses were similar. The beginning of all worships must be similar, because the three factors are always the same. To put them in the order of their coming into man's waking consciousness, they are: man, earth, Creator. Worship is the economic manifestation of gratitude. What it became when fear-propitiation harassed the imagination alters not the fact that worship began as thankfulness, gratitude for the bounties provided by the Creator. Giving thanks, grace, is the oldest ceremony, and all the

ritual of the ancients—the Chinese, the Aryans, the Hebrews—concerned with selecting, gathering, preparing, cooking, and serving food, bears witness to the sacred fact that worship began when the active factor in production, man, used the passive factor, land, for the satisfaction of his desires and needs. There must have been a long period between that of worshipping the Creator and the earth, and that of influencing and placating evil spirits. These belong to the magic stage, when the fears of the credulous were exploited by priests and medicine men, when sacrifice and tithe were invented. Long, long ages lie at the back of the literature of the ancients. The traditions of worship they reveal are so old that no one attempts to set a date for their birth; but older still, much, much older, is the time when man first was stirred by the waking spirit, and forethought transformed him, made him realize he was higher than the brute, that he could produce his own food.