

CHAPTER TWENTYFIVE The Dispensations of the Earth

The preceding discussions show a correlation between the myth stories of four (or five) world ages and the ice ages discovered by modern geologists. In order to bring out the meaning of those correlations more fully I shall now consider the memories of a time when the earth knew a golden age and was administered by the gods. This era is described by Plato in his *Critias*:

In the days of old the gods had the whole earth distributed among them by allotment. There was no quarreling, for you cannot rightly suppose that the gods did not know what was proper for each of them to have, or, knowing this, that they would seek to procure for themselves by contention that which more properly belonged to others. They all of them by just apportionment obtained what they wanted, and peopled their own districts; and when they had peopled them they tended us, their nurselings and possessions, as shepherds tend their flocks, excepting only that they did not use blows or bodily force, as shepherds do, but governed us like pilots from the stern of a vessel, which is an easy way of guiding animals, holding our souls by the rudder of persuasion according to their own desires; thus did they guide all mortal creatures.

The place name and linguistic evidence we considered in previous chapters shows plainly that a divine dispensation once ruled this world. Plato goes on to tell how they apportioned the different regions and the things they taught:

. . . And there they implanted brave children of the soil and put into their minds the order of government; their names are preserved, but their actions have disappeared by reason of the destruction of those who received the traditions, and the lapse of ages.

. . . For mythology and the enquiry into antiquity are first introduced into cities when they begin to have leisure, and when they see that the necessities of life have been provided, but not before . . .

In those days

. . . the land was the best in the world, and was therefore able to support a vast army, raised from the surrounding people. Even the remnant of Attica which now exists may compare with any region in the world for the variety and excellence of its fruits and the suitability of its pas-

tures to every sort of animal, which proves what I am saying; but in those days the country was fair as now and yielded far more abundant produce. How shall I establish my words? And what part of it can be truly called a remnant of the land that then was?

Plato had trouble finding words to describe the bounty of those days. It was a virtual Garden of Eden. He also had difficulty describing exactly how the present lands follow those of the earlier days. Geological upheavals caused great changes. He goes on to describe the wonder of the land and the climate. He also describes the decline which led to the destruction of the land.

. . . For many generations, as long as the divine nature lasted in them, they were obedient to the laws, and well-affectioned towards the gods, whose seed they were; for they possessed true and in every way great spirits, uniting gentleness with wisdom in the various changes of life, and in their intercourse with one another. By such reflections and by the continuance in them of a divine nature, the qualities which we have described grew and increased among them; but when the divine portion began to fade away, and became diluted too often and too much with the mortal admixture, and the human nature got the upper hand, they then, being unable to bear their fortune, behaved unseemly, and to him who had an eye to see, grew visibly debased, for they were losing the fairest of their precious gifts; but to those who had no eye to see the true happiness, they appeared glorious and blessed at the very time when they were full of avarice and unrighteous power.

Here Plato confuses different episodes in our planetary history. The divine beings who came down here to bring mankind into a higher cultured state are mixed with the sons and daughters of Adam. As the Adamic blood lines became diluted the human (evolutionary) nature began to predominate, although the Adamic inheritance carried strong in the physique and bearing of those people. An objective observer, with ability to compare against the first generations, would easily recognize how the Adamic blood was deteriorating.

Note that this statement refers only to those regions to which the Adamic blood reached.

Plato goes on to relate how Zeus, the Greek King of the gods, perceived their condition. In order that they might be chastened and improved he devised plans to inflict punishment upon them. He called the gods together to discuss the course of action. See Psalm 82. Unfortunately, the fragment from Plato breaks off at that point and we do not know the decisions made by the heavenly council.

This story is ancient in origin; it repeats a theme from around the world: men lived in a beautiful and trouble-free world; they went bad; chastisement was inflicted upon them. The chastisement was a corrective action decided by the Ruler of Heaven, the King of the gods, the Creator, whose purpose was to cleanse

the earth and bring it back from its condition of wickedness and evil. Plato says it happened before; it is the fault of the inhabitants of the earth they cannot break the cycles of the ages.

In *Critias* Plato goes on to describe how Poseidon, the god of the sea, became the father of Atlantis. In the distorted Greek memory Poseidon takes the place of Adam. He mated with Clieto, the earth mother, enclosed the hill on which she dwelt, and fashioned a garden home with alternating causeways and canals. In the biblical account the Garden was watered by four rivers. (Also refer to discussions in the *Urantia Papers*.)

The issue of the mating of Poseidon with Clieto was five sets of twin sons. Plato's story and the Navaho myths echo one another. The myths are relevant for they provide three key features to help us understand other planetary evidence:

- 1) The children are sired by a leading god figure,
- 2) They are ten in number, and
- 3) They are twinned - they come in pairs.

In the myths of the world one finds genealogies of the gods. M. L. West briefly reviewed some of those^{THEO}. They are included in Norse epic literature, and in Finnish, Keltic, Teutonic, Japanese, and Polynesian, among others. Although various numbers of gods are given, more often eight or ten are listed. The Hindu Manus were twelve in number. Six had already come; one now was; five more were yet to come. The greatest of the Manus was *Svayambhuva*; the earth belonged to his spirit sons; to those spirit sons were born ten sons like themselves^{CHM}.

In Egypt the great Ennead of Heliopolis listed ten names for the genealogy of the gods. Eight names were paired^{NEC}:

Ptah
Ra
Shu --- Tefnet
Geb --- Nut
Osiris --- Isis
Seth --- Nephthys

In the Turin papyrus^{NEC} the names are listed as:

Ptah
Ra
Shu
Geb
Osiris
Seth -- 200 years reign
Horus (I) 300 years reign
Thoth (Truth) 3,126 years reign
Maat (Justice)
Horus (II)

Ptah is the Father god, Ra the Sun god; Osiris is the god who came down to earth and lived as a man; Horus is the god who is destined to rule the earth. In the first list the four pairs of eight gods reflect the four pairs of world cycles, four cold and four corresponding warm periods. In the second list the long reigns assigned to Seth, Horus (I) and Thoth reflect degraded memory of the long time spans of the ages.

The artificial nature of the lists is noted by the mention of Thoth and Maat, two gods who were not rulers but representatives of righteous conduct among the gods.

Joseph Campbell listed ten kings whom the Chinese believed were their royal ancestors but who possessed extraordinary powers^{MOG}. They all lived prior to the Great Deluge. Refer also to K. C. Wu^{TCH}. Although they are highly mythologized, with corrupt memory, I list them in detail because they represent a tradition found all over the world.

1) Fu Hsi was the first on the list. As we noted earlier, he is a distorted memory of Adam.

2) Shen Nung devised the plow and instituted marriage. He lived seventeen human generations.

3) Yen Ti was a minor personage overshadowed by his glorious brother Huang Ti.

4) Huang Ti was the great Yellow Lord, or Yellow Emperor. He had twenty-five sons, some of whom became the fathers of twelve feudal families of the Chou period. Huang Ti invented the fire drill, (already invented by the Fire-Driller Lords), burned the forests on the hills, cleared the brush, drained the marshes, and drove out the wild beasts. His virtue brought the barbarians of the four corners of the earth to allegiance. He consulted with his sages while deliberating on the "Bright Terrace;" he harmonized the five sounds. He drove in an ivory chariot drawn by six dragons when he assembled the spirits on the holy mount T'ai-shan. Many traditions said he was immortal; like Enoch, (or Elijah), a dragon descended from heaven and carried him aloft^{TCH}. Although the Chinese believed Huang Ti was their mortal ancestor their folk memory betrays their belief. T'ai-shan is the holy mountain of heaven, the same mountain remembered by the Egyptians as Manu, the Greeks as Olympus, and the Hebrews as Zion. The "Bright Terrace" is a deliberation hall in those celestial realms.

5) Shao Hao followed Huang Ti but little is recorded of him.

6) Chuan Hsu, also known as Kao Yang, had eight talented sons, one of whom was the father of Yu. (See below.)

7) K'u had two wives, Chiang Yuan and Chien Ti, both of whom conceived miraculously. The first became pregnant when she trod on the big toe of God's footprint. Her child was Hou Chi who, again in distorted memory, became Minister of Agriculture. He was brought forth in a narrow lane, the oxen and sheep nurtured him, the birds covered and protected him.

This myth contains the elements of virgin birth, protection among domestic animals, and primitive covering which took place with the actual birth of Jesus. Does it reflect another prophetic memory from times past? Compare also against the myths of the Roman eponymous ancestors, Romulus and Remus.

The second pregnancy occurred when the two young wives were in their pleasure tower of nine stories. God sent them a swallow that sang. They caught the bird and covered it with a blanket. After a time they lifted the blanket, whereupon the bird flew off, leaving two eggs behind. The young women each swallowed an egg. Chien Ti then conceived and her child became the father of the dynasty of Shang.

8) Yao is also known as Ti Yao, or Divine Yao. He is the most celebrated monarch of the Chinese golden age. He was reverential, accomplished, thoughtful, sincerely courteous, and obliging. His influence was felt through the four corners of the world. He distinguished the able and virtuous, thus bringing loving consideration to all people. His regulation and clarification of the people caused them to be luminously intelligent, thus uniting and harmonizing all provinces.

9) Shun married a daughter of Yao and became emperor in turn, continuing the great administrative work of his father-in-law.

10) Yu was known as the Great Yu, the last of the kings before the Flood. He came down from on high^{MAW}. He dug the soil and led the waters to the sea; he drove out snakes and dragons, and otherwise restored order from the effects of the Flood. A servant woman brought him excellent wine she had made but he sent her away. He knew that "*in the future there will be many who lose their states because of drink*,"^{MOG}. Compare against Noah becoming drunk with wine after the flood. In the mythologized accounts Yu made a grand tour of the four corners where he met winged people, wizards, the land of immortals, mountains of gold, the mountain of nine brilliances, and the holy mountain of the north. These stories are based on a tour of the heavens but their degraded form hides their true nature. They remind us of the journeys of Enoch^{APOT}. Later, in his severe toil to correct the ravages of the Flood, Yu became lame and had to drag one leg past the other. To this day the Chinese describe a lame man as having the "walk of Yu."

The Egyptian genealogical lists show the names of the gods. The Chinese lists show ancestral emperors but many of their attributes are divine, or superhuman. Yao is explicitly called divine. These lists find parallel in the Hebrew biblical accounts. Chapter Four of Genesis shows eight generations sired through Cain, the sinful son who killed his brother Abel. Chapter Five list ten generations sired through Seth. That list ends with Noah, the hero of the Flood.

Other features of the Genesis lists parallel those of the Chinese ancestral kings. Lamech, the seventh name in the Cain list, married two wives, as did K'u, the seventh name in the Chinese list. The first wife bears two sons; the second wife bears a son and a daughter. The total number of males in the Cain list is ten although only eight generations are shown. Each of Lamech's sons is noted for his contribution to the civilization of man. Jabal was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle; Jubal was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. Tubal-cain was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron, Gen 4:19-22.

In another Hebrew myth not recorded in the Bible, Noah forgot to give a ration of food to the lion; the hungry beast struck a blow that made Noah lame forever after^{M0G}. Both Yu, the hero of the Chinese Flood, and Noah, the hero of the biblical Flood, were thus afflicted with lameness. The Chinese Yao was regarded as divine, a designation that sets him apart from the other kings. But in the second Genesis list Enoch does not die; God takes him because of his devout nature. The second Genesis list has ten names as does the Chinese list. The ages in that list are more than mortal; except for Enoch the individuals all live nearly 1000 years. Shen Nung lived seventeen human generations.

Are the Hebrew parallels with the Chinese myths accidental? Did the Chinese borrow from the Hebrews or did the Hebrews borrow from the Chinese? What is the mystery behind these ancient accounts? Other evidence from the Near East offers insight into these questions.

Berosus, a Babylonian priest who lived around the time of Alexander the Great, wrote a number of works in Greek that related the history of man. According to the later writings of Josephus, Syncellus, Eusebius and others, Berosus obtained his information from the ancient archives of the temple of Belus at Babylon. Included in his writings was a list of kings who had reigned before the Great Flood. According to his list *Xisuthros* was the hero of the Flood. One of the names on the list was that of *Daonos*, an evident Don form. But most disconcerting were the ages Berosus had assigned to his kings. *Aloros*, the first king lived 36,000 years! Other kings reigned from 10,800 to 64,800 years. The total span of time covered by the ten kings was a fantastic 432,000 years! (Compare against the 432 billion years of Brahma, a ratio of 1,000,000.)

What did the list from Berosus mean? Where did it come from? How could such extreme lengths of time be sensible? According to Berosus, the kings were rulers who lived upon earth. How could they possess such great power of life? For two thousand years scholars puzzled over the list from Berosus. It was regarded as mostly mythological and purely imaginary, until excavations in Mesopotamia at the beginning of this past century turned up other lists of kings with similar fantastic ages^{SKL}. Those tablets date from around 1,800 BC, or earlier, and if Jacobsen's estimate of the Sumerian cuneiform script is correct, the originals predate 3,000 BC.

Here, then, appeared to be the original source of the kings list, for they contained elements from the Egyptians, the Chinese, and the Hebrews:

- 1) Lists of eight and ten kings were found, as in Genesis.
- 2) A divine king, Dumuzi, was on the lists. This paralleled the divine Yao of the Chinese lists.
- 3) The kings all reigned prior to the Flood.
- 4) The fantastic ages found parallel in the Chinese seventeen human generations, the long life ages of the Genesis second list, and the Egyptian long reigns of the gods.

The tradition of the long-lived gods, kings, or ancestors, must derive from a tradition that goes around the world. The Egyptians knew them as gods; the Chinese as human emperors but with superhuman and divine elements, the He-

brews as mortal ancestors with long lives, and the Babylonians and Sumerians as kings who are not classified as either human or divine but who reigned for fantastic periods of time.

Were the Hebrew accounts borrowed from the Babylonian and Sumerian but adapted to their particular view of earth history? The scribes who put the Genesis story together must have felt impelled to include this information in their accounts; they could not simply ignore it. But they were sufficiently uncertain they included both an eight and a ten list. The "odd" eight list is sired through Cain, the sinful one, while the "good" ten list is sired through Seth. The "good" list shows the life ages while the "odd" list does not. It would appear the Hebrew scribes were unwilling to accept the long ages of the earlier lists, in contrast to the pagan priest Berosus, who, at least, was faithful to the traditions. The Hebrew scribes felt impelled to include the information of the generations before the Flood, but modified the ages to less objectionable times. Plato, who died c 347 BC, lived after the Genesis writing date but before the Berosus publication date, c 280 BC. According to Plato's dialogs the story of Atlantis came from the Egyptians, not the Babylonians. He probably was unaware of the Sumerian-Babylonian tradition, otherwise he might have included those kings in his stories. Whatever his source, the tradition obviously was maintained in Greece as late as 300 BC.

. . . their names are preserved, but their actions have disappeared by reason of the destructions . . .

He recognized that five sets of twin sons were sired through Poseidon, a leading god figure, and Clieto, the Earth Mother. From that slim evidence we see a trace of the tradition of Adam and Eve in the Greek tale. The world wide tradition brings us face-to-face once again with the question of the origins and the forms of the tradition. Since the Sumerians preserved explicit ages for the reigns we might believe they were the source of the other myths. But from the clay tablets available to us there is no strict justification for such belief. The Chinese obviously have degraded accounts, euphemized to make them more tolerable to the Chinese mind.

The proclivity of the Chinese mind is related in a story attributed to Confucius, their famous philosopher, who lived c 500 BC. One of his disciples asked about the age of Huang Ti, the Yellow Lord. How had he reached an age of 300 years? To this Confucius replied that there was a misunderstanding about the ages of the Great Ones. Huang Ti had actually lived only one hundred years. For another hundred years after his death they revered his spirit; for the next hundred years they followed his teachings. Thus he was remembered as living 300 years^{MAW}.

On the basis of the slim evidence it would not be possible for us to say that the Chinese myths came from the Sumerians, or that the Sumerians obtained theirs from the Chinese, or the Egyptians from other people. Rather the evidence indicates that a tradition was remembered throughout the world and that it probably predates all human memory, adapted by people according to their particular cultures, and remembered more precisely in some corners of the world than in others. From the evidence we can deduce that all old people believed the world

experienced ten (or eight) ages and that those periods were associated with rulership that came down from on high. The kings are the folk memory of divine dispensations of the earth.