worshippers formin*g* a natural unity, so that every man’s birth or political and social status determines at once what *g*od he is called upon to worship and may confidently loo*k* to for help. Reli*g*ions of this sort, therefore, are mainly tribal or national, and the deity is re*g*arded as a *k*ing, or, if there are several *g*ods worshipped by the same circle, they are lords and ladies and are naturally to be honoured in the same way as earthly *g*randees. Thus among the Hebrews, whose early institutions afford a typical example of a national reli*g*ion, the funda*m*ental rule is that no one is to appear before Jehovah empty-handed (Exod. xxiii. 15), just as it would be indecent (and in the East is still indecent) to approach a king or *g*reat man without some present, however trifling. In li*k*e *m*anner Homer teaches that *g*ods and *k*in*g*s ali*k*e are persuaded by gifts. A special request will naturally be accompanied by a special *g*ift proportioned to the occasion or by a vow to be fulfilled when the prayer is heard; but apart from this the *g*eneral *g*oodwill whether of god or kin*g* falls to be acknowled*g*ed and secured by offerings renewed from ti*m*e to time by way of tribute or homa*g*e. Thus in Hebrew the word *minha m*eans alike “*g*ift,” “tribute,” and “ sacrificial obla­tion,” especially an oblation of agricultural produce. For in a simple agricultural society payments in kind, whether to a divine or to a human lord, would naturally consist for the most part of the fruits of the soil; and with this it a*g*rees that not only in Canaan but amon*g* the Greeks there is evidence that cereal oblations had a *g*reat place in early ritual, though they afterwards became second in i*m*portance to animal sacrifices, which yielded a *m*ore luxurious sacrificial banquet, and also, as we shall see, derived a peculiar significance fro*m* the shedding of the victim’s blood. In almost all nations we find that the chief sacrificial feasts are associated with the harvest and the vintage, or, where pastoral life predominates, are re­*g*ulated by the time at which the flocks bear their young (comp. Passover) ; at these seasons tribute of firstfruits and firstlings is paid to the *g*ods of the *g*ood thin*g*s which they the*m*selves have *g*iven to the inhabitants of their land. This conception of sacrifice may go with very various views of the nature of the gods and of reli*g*ion. It may *g*o with the idea that the *g*od has need of the worshipper and his gifts just as the worshipper has need of the *g*od and his help, and thus with a matter-of-fact business-like people like the Romans reli*g*ion *m*ay become very much a sort of bargain struck with the *g*ods. But, on the other hand, it is quite possible that sacrifices may continue to be offered by men who have ceased to believe that the deity has any need of what *m*an can *g*ive, simply because such *g*ifts are in ordinary life the natural expression of respect and ho*m*a*g*e and no fitter and more expressive way of *g*ivin*g* utterance to the same feelin*g*s towards the *g*ods has been devised. Thus the Hebrews continued to offer sacrifices to Jehovah long after they knew that “if He were hungry He would not tell *m*an, for the world was His and the fulness thereof.” But when this standpoint is reached sacrifice becomes a merely conventional way of expressin*g* religious feeling; the ritual becomes a simple affair of tradition, which may, as in the Levitical legislation, be based on an express divine co*mm*and ; and those who are not content with the authority of tradition as a sufficient proof that the *g*ods love to be honoured in this way take refuge in so*m*e alle*g*orical explanation of the ceremonial. In *g*eneral, however, we find an extraordinary persistence of the notion that sacrifices do in some way afford a phy­sical satisfaction to the deity. If they do not feed him, he is at least *g*ratified by their odour. Neither the Greek philosophers nor the Jewish rabbins ever quite *g*ot rid of this idea.

But in fact the notion that the more ethereal elements

of the sacrifice rise to heaven, the seat of the *g*ods, in the savoury smoke that ascends from the sacrificial flame can in certain instances be shown to be connected with a later development of sacrifice. Amon*g* the Semites, for ex­ample, sacrifices were not originally burned. The god was not seated aloft, but was present at the place of sacri­fice, inhabitin*g* a sacred stone (a baetylium, beth-el, or “house of god”), which answered at once to the later idol and the later altar. That the *g*od was thou*g*ht by the heathen Semites to inhabit the sacred stone, or in other cases a sacred tree, is expressly recorded of several Arabian sanctuaries, and it cannot be doubted that this was the *g*eneral view wherever there was a *maṣṣēba* (sacred cippus) or an *ashera* (sacred pole or tree). And in these cases the *g*ift of the worshipper was not, in the *m*ore primitive cults, consumed by fire, but the sacred stone was daubed with oil or blood, libations of milk, of blood, or of wine were poured forth beside it, cereal *g*ifts were presented by bein*g* si*m*ply laid on the sacred *g*round, and slau*g*htered victims were left there to be devoured by wild beasts (Sprenger, *Leb. Moh.,* iii. 457), or even a human sacrifice was offered by burying the victim under the cippus. Sacrifices of this type are found not only throu*g*hout the Semitic field but in all parts of the world; they belong to the same category with the Hebrew showbread and the Ro*m*an *lectisternia.* In later times the food spread on the tables of the *g*od is eaten by his ministers, the priests, to whom he is supposed to make over the enjoyment of the banquet; but this is a refinement on the original usage. In older times the gods themselves were held to partake of these *g*ifts of food, just as the venerable dead were fed by the meat and drink placed or poured out upon their tombs. In the religions of sava*g*es both *g*ods and the dead have very *m*aterial needs, amon*g* which the need of nourishment has the first place; and just as we learn from the story of Periander and Melissa (Herod., v. 92) that among the Greeks of the 7th century b.c. it was a new idea that the dead could make no use of the *g*ifts buried with them unless they were etherealized by fire, so also the fact that amon*g* the Greeks, especially in old times, sacrifices to water-gods were simply flung into the river or the sea, and sacrifices to under*g*round *g*ods were buried, indicates that it is a secondary idea that the gods were too ethereal to enjoy a sacrifice through any other sense than that of smell. Even the highest antique religions show by unmistakable signs that in their origin sacrifices were literally “ the food of the *g*ods.” In Israel the conception against which the author of Psalm 1. protests so strongly was never eli*m*inated from the ancient technical langua*g*e of the priestly ritual, in which the sacri­fices are called לחם אלחים , “ food of the deity ” (Lev. xxi.

8, 17, 21); and amon*g* the Greeks we find not only such *g*eneral expressions as that the *g*ods “feast on hecatombs ” *(Il.,* ix. 531) but even that particular *g*ods bear special surnames, such as “the *g*oat-eater,” the “ra*m*-eater,” “ Dionysus the eater of raw (human) flesh ” (*αίγοϕάγος, κpιoφάyos, ώμηστης*).

A sacrifice, therefore, is primarily a meal offered to the deity. In some of the cases already noticed, and in the case of holocausts or whole burnt-offerin*g*s, the sacrificial *g*ift is entirely made over to the god; but ordinarily the sacrifice is a feast of which *g*ods and worshippers parta*k*e together. If all sacrifices are not convivial entertainments, at least the tendency is to *g*ive to all feasts, nay to all meals, a sacrificial character by inviting the *g*ods to partake of them (Athenseus, v. 19). Thus the Roman family never rose from supper till a portion of the food had been laid on the burnin*g* hearth as an offerin*g* to the Lares (Serv., *Ad* Æ*u*., i. 730; Ovid, *Fast.,* ii. 633); and a similar practice was probably followed in early Greece. @@1 At all events

@@@1 See the discussion in Buchholz, *Homer. Realien,* II. ii. 213 *sq.*