The First Economy

Before there were coins…there were relationships. Families in villages had to have trust and reciprocity and reputation. You didn't survive because you had money. You survived because you belonged. Money compressed trust into a portable token. Instead of knowing you…I could trust the coin. Money solved an enormous problem. But over time, the symbol became more important than the relationship it represented. Maybe the next currency will become trust again. Everything important depends on trust. Families, markets, governments, science, friendship, marriage, medicine. Without trust, money doesn't work. The common isn't wealth, it is trust. Healthy soil creates food. Healthy relationships create trust. Healthy trust creates civilization. The Golden Rule isn't just moral, it is economic. If we treated others as ourselves at scale, the cost of transaction would collapse. The fraud would collapse. Contracts become shorter. Fewer lawyers and less insurance, as trust becomes wealth. The entire economy becomes more efficient. Because character improved. Money was never wealth. Money was a memory, a promise, a token in remembrance of value given. Somewhere along the way the symbol replaced the thing. Perhaps we will remember what money was supposed to represent. Life, trust, contribution, relationship, and the common. The purpose of an economy is not to maximize money, it is to cultivate life. There is no source of power or wealth on this planet that can defeat our unity.