

PREFACE

THE AIM of this commentary is to explain, with the help of an historico-philological method of interpretation, the simple meaning of the Biblical text, and to arrive, as nearly as possible, at the sense that the words of the Torah were intended to have for the reader at the time when they were written. Although the homiletical method is, without doubt, of great importance, in as much as it interprets the Bible in every generation according to the spirit and needs of the age, nevertheless every verse has its primary signification, and Scripture merits our effort to fathom its original intent.

The lines along which I have worked will become self-apparent to the reader as he studies the book; there is no need, therefore, for me to go into detail here. I shall draw attention only to a few basic principles by which I have been guided throughout.

The first chapters of the Book of Genesis, which form the subject of this commentary, deal with topics about which — and their like — there were numerous sagas in the ancient East, both among the Israelites and among the Gentiles. Hence, it is not possible to understand the purpose of the Torah in these chapters without constant reference to the lore and learning, the doctrines and traditions, of the neighbouring peoples, and of Israel itself, concerning these and related matters. For this reason, I paid greater attention than earlier commentators to the literature of the nations of the ancient East and to all the archaeological data that might possibly throw light on the subject — in all, a vast and variegated body of material, which, thanks to a number of fortunate discoveries, has, in recent years, grown considerably. Moreover, I gave consideration not only to the parallels between Israel and the other peoples, but also to the divergences between them; for the differences are likewise instructive, perhaps even more so than the similarities.

In order to determine the content of the traditions that were

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was prepared, from the start, to accept all the results of my investigations, be they what they might. I adopted a similar attitude when I began my work on the present commentary; I was willing to accept the conclusion, if necessary, that what I had myself previously written was erroneous. It was not my object to defend any particular viewpoint or any particular exegetical method, but only to arrive at a thorough understanding of the Torah's meaning, whatever that might be.

Possibly this attitude will not be acceptable to those who hold, from the outset, that certain views are not open to doubt. There are those, on the one hand, who are accustomed to read the Scriptures in the light of homiletical interpretation and think it wrong to deviate from the explanations that they received from their teachers and from the approach to which they have become used since childhood; and, on the other hand, there are those who see in the documentary hypothesis an assured and enduring achievement of science, an impregnable structure. I would ask both these schools of thought not to be hasty and pass judgment on my book before they have read it completely and have examined what it states in detail. I venture to hope that in the end even though they may not agree with me on all points — full agreement, of course, is not to be expected — they will both concede at least the correctness of my method and of most of my conclusions. The one group, which is well acquainted with the rabbinic dictum that every verse retains its simple meaning, must admit that the sincere endeavour to comprehend the words of the Torah according to their primary sense, and to fathom the ultimate purport of Scripture, cannot be regarded as something contrary to the spirit of the Bible itself. The other group, which is well aware that science has no dogmas, must grant that there is no scientific theory, however much it may be favoured, which is entitled to permanent acceptance and may not be criticised or replaced by another theory. On the contrary, the investigator is not only permitted, but is obliged, to submit the earlier theories to constant re-examination, and if it appears to him that the view that was formerly considered correct does not correspond to the established facts or to the new data discovered by science, it is his duty to abandon it and attempt to put forward, in its stead, another hypothesis that will better fit the existing facts and the new data.

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The commentary I present here on the first chapters of Genesis, which belong to the difficult and obscure portions of the Pentateuch, will serve, in a way, as a touchstone for my method. I trust that it will stand the test.

It is my pleasant duty to express my thanks to Dr. J. L. Magnes, the Director of the Hebrew University Press Association, and to his fellow-members of the Editorial Board, for kindly including this book in the Association's series of publications. I am also grateful to the various libraries in which I worked on the preparation of my commentary, to wit, the National and University Library, the library of the Government Department of Antiquities, the library of the American School of Oriental Research, the library of the Dominican School of Bible and Archaeology, the Schocken Library, and the library of the Museum of Jewish Antiquities; I am indebted to the directors and staff of these institutions for their courteous assistance. Finally, my thanks are due to the printers, Raphael Hayyim Ha-Cohen and Sons, who always endeavoured to fulfil my every request and to give me the utmost satisfaction with their work.

JERUSALEM, ELUL, 5704 (1944)

U. C.

* No attempt has been made to bring the bibliographies up to date, since it is felt that this is a task that only the author, had he lived, could properly have performed (*Translator*).

SECTION ONE

THE STORY OF CREATION

CHAPTER I, VERSE 1 — CHAPTER II, VERSE 3

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. THE PURPOSE of the Torah in this section is to teach us that the whole world and all that it contains were created by the word of the One God, according to His will, which operates without restraint. It is thus opposed to the concepts current among the peoples of the ancient East who were Israel's neighbours; and in some respects it is also in conflict with certain ideas that had already found their way into the ranks of our people. The language, however, is tranquil, undisturbed by polemic or dispute; the controversial note is heard indirectly, as it were, through the deliberate, quiet utterances of Scripture, which sets the opposing views at nought by silence or by subtle hint.

§ 2. All kinds of wondrous stories about the creation of the world were wide-spread throughout the lands of the East, and many of them assumed a literary form in epic poems or other compositions. In the course of our exposition we shall have repeated occasion to refer to a number of matters found in these sources and to translate several verses from their texts. Here it will suffice to indicate briefly their general character. They began, as a rule, with a theogony, that is, with the origin of the gods, the genealogy of the deities who preceded the birth of the world and mankind; and they told of the antagonism between this god and that god, of frictions that arose from these clashes of will, and of mighty wars that were waged by the gods. They connected the genesis of the world with the genesis of the gods and with the hostilities and wars between them; and they identified the different parts of the universe with given deities or with certain parts of their bodies. Even the elect few among the nations, the thinkers who for a time attained to loftier concepts than those normally held in their environment, men

like Amenhotep IV — the Egyptian king who attributed the entire creation to one of the gods, the sun-god Aten — and his predecessors (the discoveries of recent years prove that he was not the first to hold this doctrine), even they pictured this god to themselves as but one of the gods, be he the very greatest, as a deity linked to nature and identifiable with one of its component parts. Then came the Torah and soared aloft, as on eagles' wings, above all these notions. Not many gods but One God; not theogony, for a god has no family tree; not wars nor strife nor the clash of wills, but only One Will, which rules over everything, without the slightest let or hindrance; not a deity associated with nature and identified with it wholly or in part, but a God who stands absolutely above nature, and outside of it, and nature and all its constituent elements, even the sun and all the other entities, be they never so exalted, are only His creatures, made according to His will.

§ 3. Among the Israelites, too, there existed, prior to the Biblical account, narrative poems about the creation and the beginning of the world's history. Although these poems have not come down to us, having perished in the course of time, evidence of their existence is to be found both in this section and in other parts of Scripture. Frequently the prophets and the Bible poets allude to matters appertaining directly or indirectly to the creation of the world that are not mentioned in our section at all, for example, the story of Rahab, the prince of the sea, who rose up in revolt against God, and in the end God subdued him and slew him (see below, on i 9); but the brevity of these references leaves the impression that the authors were touching on topics that were well-known to the people they addressed. At times the Scriptural allusions closely resemble what we are told in the legends of the non-Israelites; yet it is difficult to imagine that these particular myths influenced them directly. Generally speaking, it is inconceivable that the prophets and poets of Israel intended to seek support for their views in the pagan mythological works, which they undoubtedly detested and abominated; nor is it thinkable that they mentioned the heathen legends as something that the Israelites knew and accepted. Furthermore, whilst these allusions show certain resemblances—quite striking, at times—to the sagas of the Gentiles, they also exhibit distinct differences: the actions credited to the various deities in the

pagan literature are attributed in the Hebrew Scriptures to the God of Israel, and are portrayed in a form more in keeping with Israel's religious conscience. It follows that we have to assume the existence of intermediate links in the chain of development, which bridged the gap between the poems of the non-Israelites and the myths alluded to in the Bible. It seems that the intermediaries between the heathen peoples and Israel were the groups of Sages, the exponents of international 'Wisdom', who, it is known, were prone to obscure the religious elements peculiar to each individual nation. It may confidently be surmised that the said links included epic poems of Israel, Israelite cycles in which the ancient Eastern tradition took on a form that was generally in harmony with the national spirit of Israel and its religious convictions. I have dealt at length with this subject in my Hebrew essay on 'The Epic Poetry of Israel', which appeared in *Keneseth*, dedicated to H. N. Bialik, Vol. viii, 1943; I shall not, therefore, repeat what I have written there. Here I shall refer only to matters that concern our section as a whole, and in the course of my annotations on the individual verses, I shall mention the points that have a bearing on those verses in particular.

Allusions to the creation-story that are unrelated to our section are found, for instance, in Job xxxviii 4-7:

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell me, if you have understanding.

Who determined its measurements—surely you know!

Or who stretched the line upon it?

On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone,

*When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God
shouted for joy?*

There is a clear indication here of a tradition concerning the creation of the earth on a bright morning, whilst the stars and God's angels sang a paean. Undoubtedly, the author of the book of Job did not fabricate these details. Nor did he invent such concepts or terms as *lay the foundations, measurements, line, bases, cornerstone*.

Similarly, we read in Isaiah xl 12, 21-22:

*Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and
marked off the heavens with a span,
enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the
mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?*

.....

*Have you not known? Have you not heard?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
It is He who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in.*

The two passages probably derive from a common poetic source. It may be noted in regard to the root יָסַד *yāsadb* ['lay the foundations'], which occurs in both texts in relation to the earth, that it is used a number of times in the Bible in this sense, although it does not appear in our section at all. The same applies to the verb נָטָה *nāṭā* ['stretch out'] in connection with the heavens, which is found in Isaiah *ibid.*, and in another passage of Job (ix 8); this word, too, occurs frequently in Scripture but not in our section. At times, moreover, both expressions — *to lay the foundations of the earth* and *to stretch out the heavens* — are found in juxtaposition. It cannot, therefore, be doubted that we have here an ancient literary tradition, and apparently this tradition has its roots in Israel's epic poetry. There are also other literary characteristics that appear to belong to the vocabulary and phraseology of the ancient poetic tradition regarding the creation, and serve to prove the existence of such a poetic tradition among the Israelites: for instance, the expression *spread forth the earth*; the simile of a *tent-curtain*, or some synonym thereof, employed in connection with the stretching out of the heavens; the figure of *chambers* or *upper chambers*, signifying the heavens in relation to the earth beneath them; the verb הִקְקִירָה *hameqāre* ['who hast laid the beams'] in Psa. civ 3, which corresponds to an Akkadian expression (see below, on verse 6); the root כִּוֵּן *kūn* ['establish'] followed by the words בַּל יִמוּט *bal yimmoṭ* or בַּל תִּמּוּט *bal timmoṭ* ['shall not be moved']; the verb הִלֵּל *hōlēl* in the sense of *created*; the adverb טַרְם *ṭerem* ['not yet'] or the conjunction בְּטַרְם *beṭerem* ['before'], used with reference to the pre-creation period (a similar usage is also common in non-Israelite writings), and many more examples of this kind.

As far as our own section is concerned, a poetic construction like חַיְתֵי אֶרֶץ *haythō 'ereṣ* ['beasts of the earth'] (i 24) next to the

corresponding prose form חַיֵּי הָאָרֶץ *hayyath hā'āreṣ* (i 25, 30); or verses with poetic rhythm like i 27:

*So God created man in His own image,
in the image of God He created him;
male and female He created them.*

and a number of other poetic features, which we shall discuss in the course of our exposition, also point to a poetic tradition among the Israelites anterior to the Book of Genesis. The metre of the verse, *So God created man* . . . — tetrameter —, which is also found in other verses of our section, is the most usual in the epic poetry of the Eastern peoples of antiquity, and was probably employed to a large extent in the epic poetry of Israel, too. There is no necessity to assume that the Torah took these verses verbatim from an earlier epic poem. Admittedly this is possible; but it is simpler to suppose that wherever, in the course of the Biblical story, which is mainly in prose, the special importance of the subject led to an exaltation of style approaching the level of poetry, the thought took on of its own accord, as it were, an aspect conforming to the traditional pattern of narrative poetry — an aspect, at all events, that was in keeping with ancient poetic tradition.

§ 4. Although the epic poetry of Israel gave the traditional material, as has been stated, a form that was generally in harmony with the spirit and conscience of the nation, it nevertheless retained certain elements in which echoes of their origin in a foreign environment could still be heard. The saga, for example, of the revolt of 'the lord of the sea' against God belonged to this category. The same applies to the reference in Job xxxviii 7, to the morning stars that sang and to the sons of God who shouted for joy when God laid the cornerstone of the earth. It is not surprising, therefore, that the attitude of the Torah to these elements was not sympathetic. The prophets and the Biblical poets, who were accustomed to clothe their ideas in poetic garb and to elucidate them with the help of similes, and generally to employ the familiar devices of poesy, were not, to be sure, deterred from using what they found to hand in Israel's epic poetry. But the Torah, which is not written in verse but in prose, and employs as a rule simple, not figurative, language, and weighs every word scrupulously, was careful not to introduce ingredients that were not completely in accord with its doctrines.

Nay more, whenever necessary it voiced, in its own subtle way, its objection in principle to concepts suggestive of an alien spirit as, for instance, the myth of the revolt of the sea against its Creator (see below on i 6, 9, 14–15, 21).

Nevertheless, the Torah did not refrain from taking over other components of Israel's poetic tradition, in so far as these did not militate against its spirit. We have already seen above that here and there the style of our section assumes an elevated poetic form, and that it is precisely the metre of epic poetry that is reflected in some of its sentences. This applies also to the content of the story, which has likewise absorbed certain elements of Israel's ancient poetry. The truth that the Torah wished to convey in this section, to wit, that the world in its entirety was created by the word of the One God, could not be stated in abstract terms, simply as a theoretical concept. Semitic thought avoids general statements. Particularly in the case of a book like ours, which was not intended for the thinkers and the elect few only, but for the people as a whole, including also its common folk, it was proper that its ideas should be embodied in the language of concrete description. Hence, the Torah made use of the concrete traditions that found expression in the 'Wisdom' literature and in the ancient heroic poetry of Israel, and drew from them material for its structure. Choosing only what it deemed worthy, it refined and purified the selected matter, and moulded the entire narrative to a pattern of its own — a pattern befitting its purpose and educational aim. In the light of this hypothesis, the parallels between our section and the traditions current in the ancient Orient become perfectly clear.

§ 5. The structure of our section is based on a system of numerical harmony. Not only is the number *seven* fundamental to its main theme, but it also serves to determine many of its details. Both to the Israelites and to the Gentiles, in the East and also in the West — but especially in the East — it was the number of *perfection* and the basis of ordered arrangement; and particular importance attached to it in the symbolism of numbers. The work of the Creator, which is marked by absolute perfection and flawless systematic orderliness, is distributed over seven days: six days of labour and a seventh day set aside for the enjoyment of the completed task. On the significance and use of the number *seven* see the works I have

listed in *Tarbiz*, xiii, p. 207, notes 31–32, and my remarks *ibid.*, pp. 206–207 [Hebrew], as well as the examples that I have cited there from Akkadian and Ugaritic literature, which prove that a series of *seven consecutive days* was considered a perfect *period* [unit of time] in which to develop an important work, the action lasting six days and reaching its conclusion and outcome on the seventh day. Possibly the Torah perceives in the importance attributed to the number seven by non-Israelites a kind of indistinct echo of the story of creation.

It is worth noting in this connection that in the case of actions lasting the above-mentioned length of time, it was customary to divide the six days of labour into three pairs, and to relate the story somewhat as follows: on the first day and on the second such-and-such a work was done; so, too, on the third day and on the fourth that work was done; likewise on the fifth day and on the sixth the same work was done. Thereafter, when the work had been completed on the sixth day, came the seventh day, a day of conclusion and change of situation (see the Akkadian and Ugaritic examples that I quote *ibid.*). In our section the division of the days is, as we shall see later, rather different, to wit, two series of three days each. But the prevailing pattern is implicit in the rabbinic saying: 'It (the Sabbath day) has no partner: there is the first of the Sabbath [i.e. week], the second of the Sabbath; the third, the fourth, the fifth, the eve of the Sabbath; but the Sabbath itself remains unpaired' (Bereshith Rabba, xi 8; for the different readings and parallels see Theodor's edition).

In view of the importance ascribed to the number seven generally, and particularly in the story of Creation, this number occurs again and again in the structure of our section. The following details are deserving of note:

(a). After the introductory verse (i 1), the section is divided into *seven* paragraphs, each of which appertains to one of the seven days. An obvious indication of this division is to be seen in the recurring sentence, *And there was evening and there was morning, such-and-such a day*. Hence the Masoretes were right in placing an open paragraph [i.e. one that begins on a new line] after each of these verses. Other ways of dividing the section suggested by some modern scholars are unsatisfactory.

(b-d). Each of the three nouns that occur in the first verse and express the basic concepts of the section, viz *God* [אֱלֹהִים 'Elōhīm], *heavens* [שָׁמַיִם šamayim], *earth* [אֶרֶץ 'ereṣ], are repeated in the section a given number of times that is a multiple of *seven*: thus the name of *God* occurs thirty-five times, that is, five times *seven* (on the fact that the Divine Name, in one of its forms, occurs seventy times in the first four chapters, see below); *earth* is found twenty-one times, that is, three times *seven*; similarly *heavens* (or *firmament*, רָקִיעַ rāqīa') appears twenty-one times.

(e). The ten sayings with which, according to the Talmud, the world was created (Aboth v 1; in B. Rosh Hashana 32a and B. Megilla 21b only nine of them are enumerated, the one in i 29, apparently, being omitted) — that is, the ten utterances of God beginning with the words, *and... said* — are clearly divisible into two groups: the first group contains *seven* Divine fiats enjoining the creation of the creatures, to wit, 'Let there be light', 'Let there be a firmament', 'Let the waters be gathered together', 'Let the earth put forth vegetation', 'Let there be lights', 'Let the waters bring forth swarms', 'Let the earth bring forth'; the second group comprises three pronouncements that emphasize God's concern for man's welfare (*three* being the number of emphasis), namely, 'Let us make man' (not a command but an expression of the will to create man), 'Be fruitful and multiply', 'Behold I have given unto you every plant yielding seed'. Thus we have here, too, a series of *seven* corresponding dicta.

(f). The terms *light* and *day* are found, in all, *seven* times in the first paragraph, and there are *seven* references to *light* in the fourth paragraph.

(g). *Water* is mentioned *seven* times in the course of paragraphs two and three.

(h). In the fifth and sixth paragraphs forms of the word חַיָּה ḥayyā [rendered 'living' or 'beasts'] occur *seven* times.

(i). The expression *it was good* appears *seven* times (the seventh time — *very good*).

(j). The first verse has *seven* words.

(k). The second verse contains fourteen words — twice *seven*.

(1). In the *seventh* paragraph, which deals with the *seventh* day, there occur the following three consecutive sentences (three

for emphasis), each of which consists of *seven* words and contains in the middle the expression *the seventh day*:

And on THE SEVENTH DAY God finished His work which He had done, and He rested on THE SEVENTH DAY from all His work which He had done.

So God blessed THE SEVENTH DAY and hallowed it.

(m). The words in the seventh paragraph total thirty-five — five times *seven*.

To suppose that all this is a mere coincidence is not possible.

§ 6. This numerical symmetry is, as it were, the golden thread that binds together all the parts of the section and serves as a convincing proof of its unity against the view of those — and they comprise the majority of modern commentators — who consider that our section is not a unity but was formed by the fusion of two different accounts, or as the result of the adaptation and elaboration of a shorter earlier version. According to the prevailing view, the division of the work of creation in the original text differed from that found in the present recension, eight — or ten — creative acts, or seven days of work (man being formed on the seventh), or some other scheme being envisaged; only in the last redaction, it is assumed, was the division into six days of work introduced and the idea of the Sabbath added. The final edition is attributed by most scholars to the source P; the different theories concerning the source of the first version need not detain us here. I have already dealt with this matter fully in the second part of my essay, 'La creazione del mondo nella Genesi' (the creation of the world according to the Book of Genesis), published in *Annuario di studi ebraici*, Vol. i (1934) pp. 47-49. The reader who wishes to delve more deeply into the subject will find there the requisite details as well as a bibliography; here a summary account of the position must suffice. Following are the main arguments advanced by the scholars referred to:

(1). Internal contradictions: the existence of day and night before the creation of the luminaries; the presence of plants before the sun came into being.

(2). Signs of inconsistency and the absence of a unified system in the phrasing and formulation of the account: sometimes the expression *and it was so* is used, sometimes a different wording; on most of the days we are told *it was good*, but not on the second

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day; the acts of creation are described in different ways (at times God issues an order and His order is carried out; at other times it is He who creates or makes; on other occasions still He commands the elements to form the creatures).

(3). The distribution of the acts of creation over six days is not balanced, for the works of the first three days do not properly correspond to those of the last three days. Thus we have:

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|---|
| 1. Light | 2. Heavens | 3. Earth (including vegetation) and sea |
| 4. Luminaries | 5. Fish and birds | 6. Living creatures on land, and man |

(4). The use of antiquated words and concepts.

Not one of these contentions, however, is tenable in the face of critical examination. On the problem of the existence of day and night and plant-life before the formation of the luminaries, see below on i 14. With reference to the variations in phrasing and formulation, I have shown (in *Tarbiz*, xiii, pp. 205–206, sec. 2, [Hebrew], and subsequently in *Keneseth*, dedicated to the memory of H. N. Bialik, viii, pp. 126–127, sec. 15 [Hebrew]) that, in contrast to the style of epic poetry, which is prone to word-for-word repetition, it is a basic principle of Biblical narrative prose not to repeat a statement in identical terms; with fine artistic sense, the narrator likes to alter the wording or to shorten it or to change the order of the words when reverting to any subject (except when dealing with technical matters like the work of the Tabernacle, the sacrifices of the princes, or the genealogies). Concerning the expressions *and it was so* and *that it was good*, see below the detailed annotations on the verses where they occur or are omitted.

As for the three different ways of describing the acts of creation, it should be noted, firstly, that, quite apart from the point made previously regarding the characteristics of narrative prose style, these linguistic variations could serve to prove the existence of different versions only if it had been possible to employ each type of wording in all instances; in such circumstances the choice of one mode of expression in preference to the other two could be construed as typical of a given recension. Actually, this is not the case.

In regard to the light, which was but an immaterial phenomenon so long as it was independent of the luminaries, neither the second nor the third form of wording was applicable, and so the Bible had

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necessarily to use the first form. Similarly, in respect of the gathering of the water into one place, which represents only movement and not the creation of a new element, the first mode of expression had, perforce, to be chosen. Furthermore, the three ways of portraying the creative process cannot be considered of equal value. On the contrary, that which God creates or makes is of a higher order than what is formed by the elemental forces of nature. Bearing all this in mind, we cannot but conclude that throughout the section the three different modes of expression are used according to a systematic plan. When referring to non-material things, such as the creation of light or the gathering of the waters, the first mode, as stated, is inevitably chosen. In depicting the fashioning of new material entities, the second or third type of phrasing, according to the category of creation, is employed. Thus the second type — to wit, the creation or making by God — serves for the highest forms of being, namely, the firmament, the luminaries and man (there is a difference of degree even between making and creating, as we shall see later on verses 2–3); the combined second and third forms of expression are used for living creatures (fifth and sixth days); the third by itself is applied to plant-life.

As to the distribution of the acts of creation over six days and the culmination of the process on the seventh day, reference to the ancient examples of similar schemes in the literatures of the East, to which I alluded above (at the beginning of § 3), will suffice to convince us at once that there are no grounds whatsoever for attributing the division adopted in our text to a later redaction. Regarding the parallelism between the first three days and the last three days, it will be clear from my commentary that only the version before us provides a completely harmonious balance, *viz*:

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Light | 2. Sea and Heaven | 3. Earth (with its plants) |
| 4. Luminaries | 5. Fish and Fowl | 6. Land creatures and Man |

In so far as the archaic expressions and concepts are concerned, they are fully explained by our hypothesis regarding the Israelite tradition of epic poetry that antedated the Torah account.

§ 7. On the relationship of our section to the next — the story of the Garden of Eden — see the introduction to the latter, where the use of the Divine name *אלהים* 'Elōhīm ['God'] in this section, and

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of יהוה אלהים *YHWH 'Elōhīm* ['Lord God'] in the following section, is also discussed.

§ 8. *Special bibliography for this section.* Detailed lists of relevant literature up to 1934 (including part of that year) the reader will find in those portions of my book, *La Questione della Genesi* (Florence, 1934), that deal with our section (see pp. 36, 151–152, 257–276), and in my aforementioned essay in *Annuario di studi ebraici*, I (1934), pp. 9–47. Of subsequent publications the following may be noted:

Torczyner, *Lešonēnu*, vi (1934–5), pp. 6–10 [Hebrew]; Bertholet, 'Zum Schöpfungsbericht in Genesis I', *JBL*, liii (1934), pp. 237–240; Rost, 'Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift', *Christentum und Wissenschaft*, x (1934), pp. 172–178; Sutcliffe, 'Primeval Chaos not Scriptural', *Miscellanea Biblica*, ii, Romae, 1934, pp. 203–215; Deimel, 'Enuma eliš' und Hexaëmeron, Rom, 1934; Humbert, 'La relation de Génèse 1 et du Psaume 104 avec la liturgie du Nouvel-An israélite', *RHPbR*, xv (1935), pp. 1–27; Krappe, 'The Birth of Eve', *Occident and Orient* (Gaster Anniversary Volume), London, 1936, pp. 312–322; Dumaine, 'L'Heptaméron biblique', *RB*, xlvi (1937), pp. 161–181; Feigin, 'Yeširath hā'iššā bammiqrā', *SEPHERTUROV*, Boston, 1938, pp. 213–222 [Hebrew]; May, 'The Creation of Light in Gen. 1, 3–5', *JBL*, lviii (1939), pp. 203–211; Schulz, 'Bemerkungen zu Gen. 2, 3', *BZ*, xxiv (1939), pp. 233–235; Eissfeldt, 'Das Chaos in der bibl. und in der phönizischen Kosmogonie', *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, xvi (1940), pp. 1–3; Jean, 'Les traditions suméro-babyloniennes sur la création d'après les découvertes et les études récentes', *NRTb*, lxxvii (1940), pp. 169–186; Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, New York–London, 1941, pp. 191–197; Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis: the Story of the Creation*, Chicago, 1942.

On the various views advanced recently concerning the question of the *Sabbath*, see the survey of Kraeling, 'The Present Status of the Sabbath Question', *AJS*, xlix (1932–3), pp. 218–228. For a detailed discussion of the sources relating to the Mesopotamian *Šabattu* or *Šapattu*, consult Landsberger, *Der kultische Kalender der Babylonier und Assyrer*, Erste Hälfte [Leipziger Semitistische Studien, vi. Band, Heft 1–2], Leipzig, 1917, pp. 92–100, 119–126, 131–136, and Langdon's work (which appeared after the

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above-mentioned article by Kraeling) entitled, *Babylonian Menologies and the Semitic Calendars*, London, 1935, pp. 73–96. Compare, further, the essay by Wolfe, which was likewise published after Kraeling's study, called 'New Moon and Sabbath', *JBL*, lix (1940), p. xiv. I do not know whether Wolfe's article was completed in subsequent numbers, as, on account of the war, the *JBL* was not received in Jerusalem during the last few years. See also Albright, *From Stone Age to Christianity*, Baltimore 1940, pp. 205, 329; Oppenheim, 'Assyriological Gleanings II', *BASOR*, 93 (February, 1944), pp. 16–17, No. vi; H. and J. Lewy, 'The Origin of the Week and the Oldest West Asiatic Calendar', *HUCA*, xvii (1943), pp. 1–152 c.

INTRODUCTORY VERSE

I. 1. *In the beginning God created / the heavens and the earth.*

RASHI [Rabbi Solomon son of Isaac] and Abraham ibn Ezra and many modern commentators are of the opinion that this verse is not an independent sentence but is subordinate to what follows and should be rendered either (1) 'At the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth, the earth was without form and void', or (2) 'At the beginning of the creation of the heavens and the earth, when the earth was without form and void... God said "Let there be light"', etc. The verb בָּרָא *bārā* is used here, according to Rashi, as though it were the infinitive, בְּרֹא *berō*, and so, in fact, the modern commentators referred to above vocalize the word. The arguments that have hitherto been advanced against both these interpretations are not conclusive; but a decisive objection can be raised on the basis of the syntactical construction of v. 2. If the first rendering were correct, the predicate in the second verse would precede the subject, viz וַתְּהִי הָאָרֶץ *wattehī hā'āreṣ* ['and was the earth'], or וַתְּהִי הָאֵתֶר *hāyethā hā'āreṣ* ['was the earth']; cf. Jer. xxvi 1, *In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim... CAME THIS WORD*, etc.; so, too, *ibid.* xxvii 1, xxviii 1, and Hos. i 2: *When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, SAID THE LORD to Hosea.* Had the second translation been correct, the wording would have been:

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וְהָאָרֶץ תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *wehā'āreṣ tōhū wābhōhū* ['and the earth without form and void'], omitting הָיְתָה *bāyethā* ['was']; cf. i Sam. iii 2–4, where שָׁכַב *śōkhēbb* ['lying down'] occurs twice, but not הָיָא שָׁכַב *bāyā śōkhēbb* ['was lying down']. The construction וְהָאָרֶץ תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *wehā'āreṣ bāyethā tōhū wābhōhū* proves (see on this below) that v. 2 begins a new subject. It follows, therefore, that the first verse is an independent sentence that constitutes a formal introduction to the entire section, and expresses at the outset, with majestic brevity, the main thought of the section: that in the beginning, that is, at the commencement of time, in the remotest past that the human mind can conceive, God created the heavens and the earth. How He created them will be related in detail further on. Following the principle that one should 'first state the general proposition and then specify the particulars', the Bible will now pass in review before us all the component parts of the universe, one by one, and tell us, concerning each one, that it was created by the word of God.

The heavens and the earth] It has been widely held that Scripture used this phrase because classical Hebrew had no special word for what we call today 'the universe'; hence it was necessary to employ a circumlocution of this kind. But this view is incorrect. The concept of the unity of the world was unknown among the Israelites till a late period, and then the appropriate term for it was immediately coined. The ancient Hebrew conceived God alone as a unity; what we designate 'the universe', they regarded as two separate entities: *the HEAVENS are the Lord's heavens, but the EARTH He has given to the sons of men* (Psa. cxv 16). By earth is to be understood here everything under the heavens, including the sea; cf. Psa. cxlviii 7: *Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps*.

FIRST PARAGRAPH

THE STORY OF THE FIRST DAY

2. *As for the earth, it was without form or life, / and darkness was upon the face of the Deep; but the Spirit of God / was hovering over the face of the waters.*
3. *And God said, 'Let there be light'; / and there was light.*
4. *And God saw / that the light was good; and God separated / the light from the darkness.*
5. *And God called the light Day, / and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, / one day.*

2. *As for the earth, it was, etc.*] Whenever the subject comes before the predicate, as here, the intention of the Bible is to give emphasis to the subject and to tell us something new about it; see, for instance, iii 1: *Now the serpent was cunning*, etc. (the serpent had not previously been mentioned by name, but was merely implied in the general term *beast of the field* — ii 19, 20). But in most cases, including our own, the subject has already been mentioned earlier, and the verse comes to focus the reader's attention on it; e.g. iv 1, 18 (four times); vii 16, 19; x 8, 9, 13, 15, 24, 26; xi 12, 14; xiii 14; xviii 17, 18; xx 4; xxi 1; xxii 23; etc., etc. It is as though Scripture said: 'As for this subject, I have to tell you that this is what happened, or what he did, or what befel him'. Here, too, the meaning is: 'As for the earth alluded to in the first verse, I must tell you that at the beginning of its creation, it was without form or life,' etc. In v. 1 the heavens come first, because in referring to the two parts of the universe together, the more important part must be given precedence; but when the Bible proceeds to describe the work of creation in detail, the earth, which was created first, is mentioned first, whereas the heavens are dealt with in the second paragraph.

Without form or life [וְהָאָרֶץ תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *tōhū wābhōhū*] / This poetic expression seems to have been used already in the ancient Hebrew epos, which I discussed in the Introduction, § 3; possibly it was to

be found even in the still earlier poems of the Canaanites (Philo of Byblus mentions Βάαυ as a goddess of the primal night, the mother of the first mortals; but there is no connection apparently with the Mesopotamian goddess *Ba-u*). To ascertain the precise meaning of the phrase תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *tōhū wābhōhū*, one cannot rely, as the commentators usually do, only on the etymological signification of its two component words: תֹּהוּ *tōhū*, 'wilderness'; בֹּהוּ *bōhū*, 'emptiness'. In language, as in chemistry, a compound may be found to possess qualities absent from its constituent elements. For example, any one who does not know what 'broadcast' denotes, will not be able to guess the connotation of the word from its separate elements 'broad' and 'cast'. * For the same reason it is profitless to compare other passages in which either of the words תֹּהוּ *tōhū* or בֹּהוּ *bōhū* occurs; and even Jer. iv 23, where the complete phrase in the identical form is found (*I looked on the earth, and lo, it was תֹּהוּ *tōhū* [E.V. waste] and בֹּהוּ *bōhū* [E.V. void], throws no light on the meaning, since it is only an allusion, without further explanation, to our own passage. The same applies to Isa. xxxiv 11: And He shall stretch over it the line of תֹּהוּ *tōhū* [E.V. confusion] and the plummet of בֹּהוּ *bōhū* [E.V. chaos].*

The sense of the idiom can be determined only from the context, that is, from the continuation of the verse, which reads, *and darkness was upon the face of the deep*, as though the reader already knew that a 'deep' [תְּהוֹם *tehōm*] existed in the world, despite the fact that it had not yet been mentioned in our section. From this we may infer that the notion of the *deep* was subsumed, according to the conception of the ancient Israelites, in that of תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *tōhū wābhōhū*. Now the Deep is to be identified with the World-Ocean, as we shall see later, and hence it was possible for the sentence to conclude with the words, *upon the face of the waters*, although no mention had yet been made of the waters.

There is something else, too, that we learn from the phrasing of the verse. Since we are told that the darkness, which was spread over everything, was *upon the face of the deep*, it follows that the

* In the original Hebrew the example is קולנו *qōlnōa'* ['a sound film']; the etymological sense of the stems, קל *qōl* ['voice'] and נו *nōa'* ['moving'], would not convey to the uninitiated the meaning of the compound word.

water of the deep formed the uppermost layer, which was in direct contact with the surrounding darkness; this agrees with the specific statement in Psa. civ 6: *Thou didst cover it [mas.] with the deep as with a garment* (the Targum and other ancient versions read, *Thou didst cover her*, that is, Thou didst cover the earth with the waters of the deep); *the waters stood above the mountains*. Just as the potter, when he wishes to fashion a beautiful vessel, takes first of all a lump of clay, and places it upon his wheel in order to mould it according to his wish, so the Creator first prepared for Himself the raw material of the universe with a view to giving it afterwards order and life. In this chaos of unformed matter, the heaviest materials were naturally at the bottom, and the waters, which were the lightest, floated on top. This apart, the whole material was an undifferentiated, unorganized, confused and lifeless agglomeration. It is this terrestrial state that is called תֹּהוּ וָבֹהוּ *tōhū and bōhū*.

As for the earth, it was *tōhū and bōhū*, that is to say, the unformed material from which the earth was to be fashioned was at the beginning of its creation in a state of *tōhū and bōhū*, to wit, water above and solid matter beneath, and the whole a chaotic mass, without order or life.

And darkness was upon the face of the deep] Until the light was created, the unformed matter was enveloped in utter darkness.

The word תְּהוֹם *tehōm*, rendered 'deep', undoubtedly belonged to the poetic tradition of antiquity, and consequently it is used without the definite article, which is rarely found in Biblical verse and is entirely wanting in Canaanite poetry. Linguistically, the word corresponds precisely to the Arabic word *Tihāmat*, تِهَامَة which denotes the low-lying Arabian littoral (the Arabic تَهْمُن *tahmun* generally signifies, 'land sloping towards the sea' [see G. W. Freytag, *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, s.v.]), and to the Akkadian word *Tiamat*, the name of the goddess of the primeval World-Ocean, who had existed from time immemorial and was the mighty foe of the Creative God. Although the equivalent noun in Hebrew lacks the feminine termination ת-*t*, it is nevertheless treated as a feminine substantive.

In the Bible, the word occurs a number of times as a synonym for the *sea*. But in the ancient Israelite poetry, to which the prophets and the Biblical poets allude on occasion (see above, Introduction,

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§ 3), the Deep was still depicted as a creature endowed with its own volition, which rebelled against God and was ultimately subdued by the Divine might (see, for instance, Isa. li 9–10: *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not Thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces, that didst pierce the dragon? Was it not Thou that didst dry up the sea, the waters of the great DEEP . . . ?*).

The Torah, however, refrained from accepting any part of this tradition. In the Pentateuch, תְּהוֹם *tehōm* denotes simply the primeval World-Ocean — a purely physical concept. It is matter and has no personality or autonomy; it had not existed from time immemorial but was created by the will of God, and was ready to receive whatever form its Maker would be pleased to fashion for it.

BUT THE SPIRIT [רוּחַ *werūah*] of God was HOVERING [מְרַחֶפֶת *merāḥepheth*] over the face of the waters]. The *Wāw* [literally, 'and'] of רוּחַ *werūah* ['wind, spirit'] has an adversative sense: 'Although the earth was without form or life, and all was steeped in darkness, yet above the unformed matter hovered the רוּחַ *rūah* of God, the source of light and life'. According to the Talmudic interpretation (Hagiga 12a), the word רוּחַ *rūah* denotes here an actual wind, moving air — an entity created by God on the first day. The majority of present-day commentators likewise understand the word to signify a powerful wind that came to separate the upper waters from the lower waters, or the lower waters from the dry land. But this does not appear to accord with the real meaning of the verse. These tasks of separation were to be executed only on the second and the third day, and they were to be performed solely by the word of God not with the help of any additional agency. Furthermore, neither the verb מְרַחֶפֶת *merāḥepheth* nor the expression over the face of the waters fits this explanation. The meaning of רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים *rūah 'Elōhim* in our verse is the same as that of רוּחַ אֵל *rūah 'El* ['Spirit of God'] in Job xxxiii 4: *The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.*

מְרַחֶפֶת *merāḥepheth*. Many modern exegetes render the word, on the basis of one of the senses of the root in Syriac, 'brooding' (like a bird brooding over its eggs) and see here a reference to the idea of the World-Egg, which is found in the cosmogonies of several peoples, including the Canaanites. The myth tells of an egg that

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existed since the days of creation, and a power from on high came and brooded over it, and from it the world was hatched. But the expression used in the Bible is *over the face of the waters*, and the waters of the deep are not an egg or anything resembling one.

It should also be noted that the verb רָחַף *rāḥaph* never has the connotation of 'brooding' in Hebrew, and that even in Syriac this is only a secondary meaning of the word, flowing from its primary signification, 'to fly to and fro, flutter', the sense in which it is used in Deut. xxxii 11: *Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that FLUTTERS over its young.* Likewise in the Ugaritic writings, the meaning of the stem *rḥp* is 'to flutter' ('The Epic of Dan'el', Tablet I, line 32; *ibid.*, Tablet III, col. i, lines 20–21, 31–32). Other mythological explanations that have recently been suggested are also incompatible with the wording of our verse, the sense of which, it seems, corresponds exactly to the meaning of the root רָחַף *rāḥaph* in Deut. xxxii 11, to wit, that just as the young eaglets, which are not yet capable of fending for themselves, are unable by their own efforts to subsist and grow strong and become fully-grown eagles, and only the care of their parents, who hover over them, enables them to survive and develop, so, too, in the case of the earth, which was still an unformed, lifeless mass, the paternal care of the Divine Spirit, which hovered over it, assured its future evolution and life.

Over the face of the waters — that is, the waters of the deep, which, as stated, covered everything. The phrase *over the face of the waters* at the end of the second half of the verse corresponds to the concluding words of the first half, *upon the face of the deep*. Both of these expressions recur in Biblical poetry and precisely in those passages that reflect the poetic tradition concerning the waters of the primordial deep (see below, on v. 9); cf. Prov. viii 27, Job xxvi 10. 3. *And God said, 'Let there be light'* 'It is like the case of a king who wishes to build a palace, but the site was in darkness. What did he do? He kindled lamps and torches to see where to lay the foundations' (Bereshith Rabba iii 1; for the variant readings consult Theodor's edition). Adapting the parable to our interpretation of v. 2, we might say: It is like the case of a man who came to arrange various articles that were lying in confusion in a dark room. What does he do first of all? He kindles lamps in the room and so illumines the chamber and everything in it.

And there was light] It is a basic rule of style in ancient epic poetry that after citing the words of the command or charge given by any one, the poet *repeats* the *ipsissima verba* of the directive when relating that it had been fulfilled. In the Introduction to this section (§ 6, p. 16), I have indicated how this literary convention, subject to certain modifications, continues in the prose style of Bible narrative. In the present verse, this formal repetition assumes its tersest form (fiat: '*Let there be light*'; execution: *and there was light*) to show the precision and celerity with which the injunction was carried out: as He commanded, and as soon as He commanded.

The rabbinic statement that this light was hidden away for the benefit of the saints in the world to come and the views expressed in recent publications on the bearing of our verse on eschatological speculation (see especially the study by May mentioned in the bibliography) do not accord with the actual meaning of the verse.

The existence of light even before the creation of the luminaries does not, of course, present any difficulty, for we are all familiar with light that does not emanate from the heavenly bodies, e.g. lightning. The real problem is how there could be a *day* when there was no *sun*. On this question see the notes to verses 14–15.

4. *And God saw that the light was good*] An optimistic formula that occurs, as we have noted, seven times in the section: all that God has made is good. This verse, unlike the corresponding verses, specifies the thing that is good — the *light* — to prevent the misconception that the darkness is also good. It is the light that God created; the darkness is only the absence of light, and therefore is not good (the declaration, *I form light and create darkness*, in Isa. xlv 7, is directed against the dualistic doctrine of the Persians).

And God separated the light from the darkness] It was not the Creator's intention that there should be perpetual light and no darkness at all, but that the light and the darkness should operate consecutively for given periods and in unchanging order. Consequently, God divided the one from the other, that is, He separated their respective spheres of activity.

5. *And God called the light Day*, etc.] According to the conception current in the ancient East, the name of a thing was to be identified with its essential nature and existence; hence to name a thing meant to bring it into being. The Babylonian account of

creation begins as follows: 'Ere the heavens above were named, or the foundation below was given an appellation', that is, before the creation of heaven and earth (I shall explain elsewhere my reason for translating the word *ammatu* in the original by 'foundation'). Many commentators detect a similar concept in our verse. But this interpretation is difficult, since it has already been stated earlier that the darkness and the light were in existence before they were given names. It is more correct to suppose that the intention here, in conformity with the general thought of the section (see the beginning of my Introduction), is to explain that the two divisions of time known to us as Day and Night are precisely the same as those that God established at the time of creation, the *light* being the Day, and the *darkness* the Night. The same applies to the naming of the *heavens* and the *earth* and the *seas* referred to in v. 8 and v. 10. The three parts of the universe that we designate by these names are precisely those that God organized in the period of creation: the firmament that He made is none other than the *heavens* that we know; the pool into which the waters were gathered is our *sea*; and the dry land that appeared then is our *earth*.

And the darkness He called Night] It is a fundamental rule of Biblical narrative style that verbs describing acts that took place in sequence should head their respective clauses, and take the form of the *imperfect* with consecutive *Wāw*, thus: וַיֹּאמֶר wayyōmer ['and... said'], וַיְהִי wayehi ['and there was'], וַיִּקְרָא wayyiqra' ['and... called'] and so forth. But when the same verb occurs twice in two consecutive clauses, then the second verb usually occupies the second or third place in the sentence and is in the *perfect*, as in the present case (see my remarks on this subject in my book *The Documentary Hypothesis*, English translation, pp. 91–92, where many instances are cited). Three consecutive examples are found in the story of Cain and Abel (iv 2–5): וַיְהִי wayehi ['and (Abel) was'] ... וַיָּבֵא bāyā ['(Cain) was']; וַיִּבְרָא wayyābbē' ['and (Cain) brought'] ... וַיִּבְרָא hēbbi' ['(Abel) brought']; וַיִּשָּׂא wayyisā' ['and (God) turned'] ... וַיִּשָּׂא šā'ā ['He turned']. At the end of our verse, the brevity of the clauses and the tendency to stress the parallelism resulted in the verbs appearing twice in the form required by the general rule [to wit, that the past tense be expressed by the imperfect with consecutive *Wāw*], וַיְהִי wayehi ['and there was'] ... וַיְהִי wayehi.

And there was evening and there was morning, one day] When day-time had passed, the period allotted to darkness returned (and there was evening), and when night-time came to an end, the light held sway a second time (and there was morning), and this completed the first calendar day (one day), which had begun *with the creation of light*.

This method of reckoning the day [i.e. a day and a night] from sunrise appears to be at variance with the accepted Israelite practice of connecting the day-time with the preceding night, that is, the custom of regarding sunset as the starting-point of the day. In order to remove this inconsistency, Jewish exegetes, both medieval and modern (among the latter, Hoffman and Jacob), sought to place forced and improbable interpretations on the words, *and there was evening and there was morning*. Only a few, like Rashbam [Rabbi Samuel son of Meir], gave the correct explanation of the verse, which Ibn Ezra, nevertheless, endeavoured to refute by composing his *Sabbath Letter*.

Present-day scholars are of the opinion either that our section reflects an old usage that subsequently fell into desuetude (so, for instance, Dillmann and Holzinger), or that the two methods of reckoning the day were used concurrently in different circles (so, for example, Gunkel and, among Jewish exegetes, Bornstein, see *חטקופה Hatkufa*, vi, pp. 302–311). But the verse remains difficult, even for those who accept the documentary hypothesis, since the account of creation and the laws of the Pentateuch are attributed by them to P [Priestly Code], and it is unthinkable that this source should mention at the beginning a detail that conflicts with the statutes recorded in subsequent sections of the document.

It would appear, therefore, that the solution to the problem must be sought in another direction. An examination of the narrative passages of the Bible makes it evident that whenever clear reference is made to the relationship between a given day and the next, it is precisely sunrise that is accounted the beginning of the second day. For example: *They made their father drink wine that night . . . and ON THE NEXT DAY*, etc. (xix 33–34). Similarly: *When he arose early NEXT MORNING* (Jud. vi 38); *and ON THE MORROW the people rose early* (ibid. xxi 4); *If you do not save your life tonight, TOMORROW you will be killed*. (I Sam. xix 11); *and TOMORROW*

you and your sons shall be with me (ibid. xxviii 19). Consonant with this tradition is the use of the expressions: הַיּוֹם *hayyôm* ['the day' = *today*], הַלַּיְלָה *hallaylā* ['the night' = *tonight*], אָמֵשׁ *'emeš* ['yesterday' = *last night*].

Nor is this all. If we consider the Scriptural sections dealing with the ritual laws, particularly those that prescribe that the observance of Israel's holy days must begin in the evening, we see clearly that these passages corroborate, in their method of reckoning the dates, the evidence of the narrative portions. In Exod. xii 18, it is stated: *In the first month, on the FOURTEENTH day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread*. It is on the evening preceding the fifteenth day that the obligation of eating unleavened bread comes into force, yet that evening is referred to as the *fourteenth*. So, too, in Lev. xxiii 32, with regard to the Day of Atonement, it is enjoined: *and you shall afflict yourselves on the NINTH day of the month beginning at evening, from evening to evening shall you keep your Sabbath*; thus the evening before the tenth is called *the ninth of the month*.

It will thus be seen that throughout the Bible there obtains only one system of *computing time*: the day is considered to begin in the morning; but in regard to the festivals and appointed times, the Torah ordains that they shall be observed also on the night of the *preceding day*. This point is explicitly emphasized whenever a certain precept has to be observed particularly at *night*, like the eating of unleavened bread on the night of Passover and fasting on the evening of the Day of Atonement. In the case of the Sabbath and the other festival days, however, there was no need to *stress* that work was prohibited on the night preceding, since agricultural tasks (and it is specifically these that the Torah has in mind) are performed only by day. There is no discrepancy, therefore, in our verse at all.

The underlying reason of the particular rule applying to the incidence of festivals and appointed times may be explained thus: the method of counting the day from the evening, which is customary among nomads, was the older usage; but when in civil life a new system came into force, which regarded sunrise as the commencement of the day in accordance with the conditions prevailing in the Land of Canaan, the change did not affect the religious tradition,

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which is by nature conservative, and just as of old the holy days began at evening, so the custom remained and was embodied in the laws of the Bible. The sacrificial regulations, which connect the night with the preceding day, offer no difficulty to our hypothesis. On the contrary, they tally with our explanation, for all the laws relating to the sacrifices were framed to accord specifically with the conditions obtaining in the Land of Canaan.

At a later period, when the whole of Jewish life was concentrated in the sphere of religion, the mode of reckoning appertaining to the Sabbath and festivals once again became norm for civil affairs, too. Nevertheless, traces of the former civil practice are still to be discerned in such Talmudic expressions as 'the night after the thirteenth which is the evening preceding the fourteenth' (B. Berakhoth 4a), and in some penitential hymns for the evening of the Day of Atonement, which refer to the Day of Atonement as *tomorrow* (e.g. the hymn יְיָ שֶׁ אֵין עִיבָהּ יִרְצֶה עָם אֲבֵינוּ *Yirše 'am 'ebhyōn* — 'May He regard the needy people with favour' by Isaac ibn Gi'at).

One Day] The use here of the *cardinal* instead of the *ordinal* number, as for the other days, is to be explained, with Nahmanides [Rabbi Moses son of Nahman], as follows: 'First implies precedence over another in number or grading, when both are in existence', but in our case there was only *one day*, for the second had not yet been created. In the same way we may explain expressions like בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ *be'ehādh laḥōdheš* [literally, 'on one of the month', that is, on the first of the month] and בְּאֶחָד בְּשַׁבָּת *be'ehādh bešabbāth* ['on one of the week', that is, on the first day of the week]; see Gesenius — Buhl, *Hebr. und aram. Handwörterbuch über das A T*, s.v. אֶחָד *'ehādh*. But verses like ii 11, *The name of the first* [literally, 'one'] *is Pishon*, compel us to extend the rule of Nahmanides and to state that even when all the objects enumerated together exist at the same time, we are able, momentarily, to pay attention only to the first of them, and must therefore designate it *one*.

SECOND PARAGRAPH

THE STORY OF THE SECOND DAY

6. *And God said,*
'Let there be a firmament / in the midst of the waters,
and let it serve as a means of separating / the waters from the
waters.'
7. *And God made the firmament / and separated*
the waters / which were under the firmament
from the waters / which were above the firmament.
And it was so.
8. *And God called / the firmament Heaven.*
And there was evening and there was morning, / a second day.

6. *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters*] In the midst of the waters of the deep, which constituted the upper stratum of the original amorphous matter, there was to be formed a *firmament* [רָקִיעַ *rāqia'*]. The root of the word is the same as that of וַיַּרְקֵעַ *wayeraqqe'ū* ['and they did hammer out'] in Exod. xxxix 3: *And they did hammer out gold leaf*; the term signifies a kind of horizontal area, extending through the very heart of the mass of water and cleaving it into two layers, one above the other — the upper and lower layers of water.

How the space between heaven and earth was formed we are not told here explicitly; nor are the attempts of the commentators to elucidate the matter satisfactory (see my remarks on this subject in my aforementioned article in *Annuario*, p. 24, note 1). To me it seems that the sense of the passage is to be explained in the light of the statement in v. 8: *And God called the firmament Heaven*, that is, this firmament is none other than what we designate *heaven*. From this we may infer that immediately after its formation, the firmament occupied of its own accord the place appointed for it by the will of God, which is the site of the heavens as we know it. Thus as soon as the firmament was established in the midst of the layer of water, it began to rise in the middle, arching like a vault, and in the course of its upward expansion it lifted at the same time the upper waters resting on top of it. This marked a considerable advance in the marshalling of the components of the universe.

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Above now stands the vault of heaven surmounted by the upper waters; beneath stretches the expanse of lower waters, that is, the waters of the vast sea, which still covers all the heavy, solid matter below. The universe is beginning to take shape.

When we consider how the Mesopotamian mythology portrays the making of heaven and earth, we cannot but realize the enormous difference, despite a few points of resemblance, between this creation story and that of the Bible, nor can we fail to appreciate the originality of the Torah account. The former relates that after the god Marduk (or a different deity according to other versions) had vanquished Tiamat, the goddess of the world-ocean, depicted as a great and mighty sea-monster, as well as the other monsters and monstrosities that she had created to aid her in her combat, and after he had slain his chief enemy with his weapons, he cut her carcass horizontally, dividing it into two halves, which lay one on top of the other, and out of the upper half he formed the heavens and of the lower half he made the earth (which includes, of course, the sea, the 'Deep'). Here is a quotation from the Babylonian account of creation (Tablet iv, 137-140):

He split her like a fish into two parts;

The one half of her he set up and laid therewith the beams of the heavens (cf. *Psa. civ 3 WHO HAST LAID THE BEAMS of Thy chambers on the waters*).

He pulled down a bar and stationed a watch,
He enjoined them not to let her waters go forth.

The last two lines ('He pulled down a bar', etc.) do not refer to the heavens, as they are usually understood, but apply to the earth and the sea. In the Greek summary of the myth by the Babylonian priest Berossus, it is clearly stated that the god Bel, that is, Marduk, sliced the body of Thamte (Tiamat, Tāmtu) into two, and of the one half he formed the *earth* and of the other half the *heavens*. With the parallel traditions in the Canaanite and the ancient Israelite poetry, I shall deal in my annotations below, on *v. 9*. Here it will suffice to note the opposition of the Torah to the entire mythological account. It is true that in the Pentateuch, too, reference is made to the division of the primeval world-ocean into two halves, situated one above the other, but the entire mythological picture is completely erased. Here we have neither war nor weapons; a body is not carved

up, nor are its segments used for construction; a simple process of physical unfoldment takes the place of the mythical train of events described in the pagan legends.

7. *And God made the firmament*, etc.] Here, too, as in verse 3, the words of the Divine fiat are repeated in the announcement that it had been executed. But in the present case, since the theme is much more comprehensive than that of the two short words [יְהי אוֹר *yehi 'ôr*, 'Let there be light'] in *v. 3*, modifications have been introduced in accordance with the principle described above in the Introduction § 6, p. 16f., and the verbal changes serve to explain the subject more clearly. The phrase, *separating the waters from the waters*, of the preceding verse is here elucidated thus: *separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament*.

On the use of the verb *made*, see below on ii 3.

And separated] The subject is God and not, as some interpret, the firmament; compare *v. 4: and GOD separated the light from the darkness*. Furthermore, in *v. 6* it is not written: Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and *let it separate* [וַיַּבְדֵּל *weyabhdēl*] the waters from the waters; the text is: וַיְהִי מַבְדִּיל *wēyabhdīl* . . . — 'and let it be a separator', etc., that is, and let it be the means that I shall use for the purpose of separating the waters from the waters.

And it was so] At first sight this clause seems redundant, for we have already been told that *God made the firmament*, etc. Hence some modern commentators transfer the words, in agreement with the Septuagint, to the end of *v. 6*. Others, on the contrary, are of the opinion that the sentence, *And God made*, etc., is a later interpolation and that originally the text had only: *And it was so*.

But if we examine the two verses carefully, we shall see that both are necessary. The reiteration of the words of the Divine utterance is required, as previously stated, by the rules of Biblical narrative style; moreover, the separation mentioned here as a work of God provides a fitting parallel to the separation described in *v. 3* — also as a work of God. As for the expression *and it was so*, it is needed here, but not in *v. 3*, because the two separations differed from each other: the first was *temporal* and was due to recur at regular intervals; the second was *spatial* and was destined to remain unchanged

for ever (see Nahmanides *ad loc.*). This then is the meaning of the expression *and it was so* [יָדָה כֵּן] throughout the section: *and it was FIRM* [which is the root signification of יָדָה כֵּן], like an established thing; so it came to pass, and so it has remained for all time.

8. *And God called the firmament Heaven*] See the notes to vv. 5-6. After the word *Heaven*, the Septuagint reads: *And God saw that it was good*, and many modern scholars consider this reading to be correct, since this formula is found in the account of each of the other days. But, as we have explained earlier, the repetitions that occur in Biblical narrative prose are characterised, as a rule, by verbal changes, and we must not expect the word-for-word reiteration of an unvarying formula on every occasion. In so far as our verse is concerned, the Rabbinic Sages already (Bereshith Rabba iv 8, according to one of the opinions cited) noted correctly — and their view is shared by some modern exegetes (e.g. Gunkel and Budde) — that the words *it was good* were not appropriate at this stage, in as much as the work of the water had not yet been completed. The situation was not yet *good*; for had it been good, there would have been no necessity for another separation on the third day. For the same reason, it is not stated here that God gave a name to the sea just as He had named the heavens. For the lower waters had not yet reached their final distribution, and were still covering everything beneath the heavens. The Greek translator has added at this point the usual formula ['that it is good'] for the sake of mechanical uniformity; this is typical of his method throughout the section.

And there was evening and there was morning, a second day] A fitting parallel to the concluding sentence of the preceding paragraph and of the subsequent paragraphs.

9. *And God said,*
'Let the waters be gathered together / under the heavens
into one place, / and let the dry land appear.'
And it was so.
10. *And God called the dry land Earth, / and the waters that were*
gathered together He called Seas.
And God saw that it was good.
11. *And God said,*
'Let the earth put forth vegetation, / plants yielding seed,
[and] fruit trees bearing fruit each according to its kind, / in
which is their seed, upon the earth.'
And it was so.
12. *And the earth brought forth vegetation, / plants yielding seed*
according to their own kinds,
and trees bearing fruit / in which is their seed, each according
to its kind.
And God saw that it was good.
13. *And there was evening and there was morning, / a third day.*

9. *Let the waters be gathered together, etc.*] The waters, which were still covering everything under the heavens, were to be concentrated in one place, and, as a result, the solid matter hidden beneath them would be revealed in the remaining areas.

Into one PLACE [מִקְוֵה *māqōm*] / The Septuagint reads: *into one POOL* [συναγωγὴ = מִקְוֵה *mikwe*, literally, 'gathering'], and the vast majority of modern commentators prefer this reading. But it is hard to accept it as correct, for two reasons: (a) there was no pool of water till the waters had been gathered together; (b) the number *one* can readily be understood in connection with *place* — that is, *one place* in contradistinction to *every place*, which the waters had previously occupied — but it is not appropriate to *pool*, for there were no other pools in existence. Possibly Scripture intended a play on the words מִקְוֵה *māqōm*, 'place' [in this verse] and מִקְוֵה *mikwe*, 'pool' (in v. 10), that is, the *place* became a *pool*.

And it was so] As we have explained in our note on v. 7, the meaning is: according to the word of God so it was, and so the situation remained for ever.

Also this verse, which speaks of the assignment of a fixed place for the waters of the sea, should be studied against the background of the myths current in the Orient, as well as, needless to say, the ancient epic poems of the Israelites. The peoples of the East used to tell many stories about the battle waged by one of the great gods against the deity of the sea. It was indicated above; on v. 6, that the Mesopotamian mythology described in detail the combat of the creative god against Tiamat and his ultimate victory over her; we quoted there the verses from the Babylonian account of creation that relate how Marduk, after his victory,

'... pulled down a bar and stationed a watch;

He enjoined them not to let the waters (of Tiamat) go forth.'

and we stated that these lines refer only to the lower waters.

Similar myths were known to the Canaanites. In one of the Ugaritic texts — Tablet III AB (Baal V in Ginsberg's Hebrew edition) — the story of Baal's fight with the lord of the sea is narrated. But it is impossible to say with certainty whether it also made mention of the limitation of the area to be occupied by the sea, because the tablet is damaged and only a fragment of it remains. But if we may assume the word *l'ašš'i*, found in one of the incomplete lines of the tablet (line 2), to be composed of the negative *l-* and of some form of the verb *ys'* in the *šaph'el* conjugation (which would make it an exact parallel to the expression *la šu-ša-a* in the stanza of the Babylonian creation-story quoted above), the term may be presumed to refer to the confinement of the sea.

As for the Israelites, it is clear from many allusions in the Bible, as well as from a number of legends in rabbinic literature, that there had existed among them an ancient poetic tradition that told of *Rahab*, the lord of the sea, who opposed the will of God and would not confine his waters within given limits, until the Holy One, blessed be He, subdued him and slew him, and fixed a boundary for the waters of the sea that they should never be able to pass. Here there is no trace of war between the gods as related by the gentile myths, but only the revolt of one of the creatures against

his Creator; the tradition has acquired an aspect more in keeping with the ethos of the people of Israel.

The question of the existence of Israelite epic poetry in general and of this poem on the revolt of the sea in particular, I have discussed at length in my aforementioned Hebrew essay in *Keneseth*. I do not propose to repeat here the proofs that I advanced in the article, or the detailed reconstruction of the poem from the sources at our disposal that I attempted there; I shall merely cite a few examples from the Bible and from rabbinic dicta in which the rebellion of the sea is reflected, quoting particularly those passages that allude to the setting of bounds for the waters of the sea.

(1) Examples from the Bible:

Isa. li 9–10: *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake as in days of old, the generations of long ago. Was it not Thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces, that didst pierce the dragon? Was it not Thou that didst dry up the sea, the waters of the great deep...?*

Jer. v 22: *... I placed the sand as the bound for the sea, a perpetual barrier which it cannot pass; though the waves toss, they cannot prevail, though they roar, they cannot pass over it.*

Psa. lxxiv 13: *Thou didst divide the sea by Thy might; Thou didst break the heads of the dragons on the waters, etc..*

Ibid. lxxxix 10 (Hebrew, v. 11): *Thou didst crush Rahab like a carcass, Thou didst scatter Thy enemies with Thy mighty arm.*

Ibid. civ 7–9: *At Thy rebuke they (the waters of the Deep) fled: at the sound of Thy thunder they took to flight. The mountains rose, the valleys sank down to the place which Thou didst appoint for them. Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth.*

Prov. viii 27–29: *When He established the Heavens, I was there, when He drew a circle on the face of the deep... when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress His command.*

Job vii 12: *Am I the sea, or a sea monster, that Thou settest a guard over me? (cf. He stationed a watch in the Babylonian epic quoted above).*

Ibid. ix 13: *God will not turn back His anger; beneath Him bowed the helpers of Rahab.*

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Ibid. xxvi 10-12: *He described a circle upon the face of the waters at the boundary between light and darkness . . . By His power He stilled the sea; by His understanding He smote Rahab.*

Ibid. xxxviii 8-10: *Or who shut in the sea with doors, when it burst forth from the womb; when I made clouds its garment, and thick darkness its swaddling band, and prescribed bounds for it, and set bars and doors (cf. He pulled down a bar in the Babylonian epic cited above), and said, 'Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed?'*

Similar references to the subjugation of the sea are to be found in many other verses, which need not be quoted here.

(2) Examples from rabbinic literature:

B. Hagiga 12a. 'Resh Lakish said: When the Holy One, blessed be He, created the sea it continued to expand until the Holy One, blessed be He, rebuked it and caused it to dry up.'

B. Baba Bathra 74b: 'R. Judah said in the name of Rab: When the Holy One, blessed be He, desired to create the world, He said to the lord of the sea: "Open thy mouth and swallow up all the waters of the world". The latter answered: "Sovereign of the universe, I have enough with my own!" Thereupon God instantly trod him down and slew him, as it is said: *By this power He stamped down [E. V. 'stilled'] the sea; by His understanding He smote Rahab.* R. Isaac said: From this you may infer that the lord of the sea is called Rahab.'

Pirke Rabbi Eliezer, V: 'Thereupon the waters immediately became turbulent and rose up to cover the earth as in the beginning, until the Holy One, blessed be He, rebuked them and subdued them, placing them under the soles of his feet; and He measured them with His palm so as not to augment or diminish them, and He made the sand the boundary of the sea, like a man who makes a fence for his vineyard; and when they [the waters] rise up and see the sand before them, they turn back, as it is said: *Do you not fear Me? says the Lord; do you not tremble before Me? I placed the sand as the bound for the sea,* etc. (Jer. v 22).

Many more rabbinic dicta of the same genre occur in Talmudic and Midrashic literature and also in the works of the Cabala, but there is no need to prolong the series of quotations. Any

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one who wishes to study the whole of the relevant material in Hebrew literature will find the passages listed in Ginzberg's work, *The Legends of the Jews*, v, pp. 17-18, 26-27, notes 50-53, 71-73.

From our investigations so far we may draw the following conclusions: (a) that the prophets and Biblical poets were accustomed to employ allusions to the ancient epic concerning the revolt of the sea as poetic similes and figures of speech (compare above, Introduction, § 3); (b) that the Rabbis included in their tradition the myth of the sea's rebellion, which the memory of the people continued to keep alive even after the ancient epic had, in the course of time, become lost; and they did not feel any misgivings about those elements in it that resembled the heathen mythology, since in their day paganism was no longer a danger to Judaism. But the Torah, which uses a simple prose style as the vehicle of its teachings, without undue embellishment of poetic metaphors and figures of speech, not only meticulously avoided making any use whatsoever of this legendary poetic material, which, if embodied in a book of prose, might have been understood literally by the reader, but it even voiced a kind of protest against these myths whose pagan origin was still discernible, and more particularly against the concepts of the heathens themselves (Introduction, § 4). In the verse, *And God said, 'Let the waters be gathered together'*, etc., the underlying thought of the Torah is: Far be it from you to think, as do the Gentiles, that the sea is endowed with an autonomous divine power that fought, as it were, against the Creator of the universe; and far be it also from you to imagine, as the Israelite poets relate, that the sea refused to do the will of its Maker, and that He was compelled to subdue it and force it to obey. It is true that the Torah, too, records that God assigned a fixed place for the waters of the sea, but this was not done by suppressing the will of the sea, which sought to rebel against God, Heaven forbid. God said: *'Let the waters be gathered together'*, and forthwith *it was so*.

10. *And God called the dry land Earth*] Since the earth then received the form that it has retained to this day, it became entitled to the name by which it is still called today. See above, on v. 5.

And the waters that were gathered together He called Seas] The sea likewise acquired at that time the aspect with which we are familiar; hence God gave it the name appropriate to it. *And He*

called [וַיִּקְרָא] *wayyiqrā*, imperfect with *Wāw* consecutive] — He called [קָרָא] *qārā*, perfect]; see above, on v. 5.

Seas. Poetic plural; cf. xlix 13: *Zebulun shall dwell at the shore of the SEAS* [E.V. *sea*]; Jud. v 17: *Asher sat still at the coast of the SEAS* [E.V. *sea*]. It may be that a play upon words is also intended here, viz מַיִם *mayim* ['waters'] — יָמִים *yammim* ['seas'].

And God saw that it was good] Now that the work of the water was completed and the world had assumed its proper tripartite form of Heaven, Earth and Sea, it is possible to declare, *that it was good*.

11. *And God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation', etc.]* On the selfsame day, as soon as the inanimate matter, which serves as a foundation for plant-life, had been set in order, there were created, without delay, the various kinds of vegetation. Similarly on the sixth day: immediately after the formation of vegetable and animal life, which, in turn, are the basis of human life — on the same day — man was created.

Let the earth put forth VEGETATION [עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb*], PLANTS [עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb*] *yielding seed, fruit trees, etc.]* The exact nature of this classification of the various species of plants has proved a difficult exegetical problem, and many different explanations have been offered (I have discussed them in detail in *Questione*, pp. 261–262). The most likely interpretation appears to be that the classification here is not threefold — עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb* [=grass], עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb* [=herbs] and עֵץ *ēṣ* [=trees] — but only twofold. The noun עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb* and the verb תַּדְבִּשֶׂה *tadbšē*, derived from it, refer to vegetation generally, and the clause עֵשֶׂב תַּדְבִּשֶׂה הָאָרֶץ *ēsebb tadbšē hā'āreṣ* ['Let the earth put forth vegetation'] means: Let the earth be covered with a fresh green mantle of verdure. Thereafter two categories of vegetation are distinguished: עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb* ['plants'] and עֵץ *ēṣ* ['trees']. The correctness of this interpretation is attested by the fact that in vv. 29–30 only the two categories, *plants* and *trees*, are mentioned.

Fruit trees include shade-trees, for these, too, bear fruit, although it is not edible.

Each according to its kind [לְמִינֵהוּ *lemīnō*] / Here the expression refers to the trees alone, but in v. 12 (there the form is לְמִינֵהוּ *lemīnēhū*) it is applied to the *plants* as well; see Rashi *ad loc*.

Yielding seed . . . in which is their seed, upon the earth] The

Torah emphasizes and re-emphasizes, both here and in the next verse, and again in v. 29, the matter of the seed and the producing of seed (in these three verses the stem זרע *zr'* ['seed, to yield seed'] occurs no less than ten times), as though it wished to draw the reader's attention to the fact that the plants that were created on the third day were capable of reproducing themselves after their likeness by means of the seed. Undoubtedly there is a definite purpose in all this; what this purpose is we shall see further on (on ii 5).

Upon the earth — to continue existing on the earth.

And it was so] It was so instantly, in accordance with God's fiat; and thus were different species of plants perpetuated through the seed. This is a general statement; the details follow in v. 12.

12. *And the earth brought forth, etc.]* In accordance with the rule explained above, the fulfilment of the Divine command is related in terms similar to, but not identical with, those of the command itself. Characteristically, the Septuagint has harmonized the two verses completely.

The verbal changes that appear in the announcement made here of the execution of the Divine fiat are partly a matter of outward form only: for example *and trees* is substituted for *trees* (but it must be noted that most of the ancient versions and a few Hebrew MSS read *and trees* also in v. 11); so, too, לְמִינֵהוּ *lemīnēhū* ['according to its kind'] with the termination הוּ *-ēhū*, on the analogy of nouns derived from stems whose third radical is a *Hē*, takes the place of לְמִינוֹ *lemīnō*. But some of the modifications are introduced for the purpose of clarification: the use of the word וַתֵּצֵא *wattōṣē* ['and (the earth) brought forth'] instead of תַּדְבִּשֶׂה *tadbšē* ['Let (the earth) be covered with verdure'] indicates that the intention of the command was that the vegetation should be produced by germination from the ground. So, too, from the repetition of the word לְמִינֵהוּ *lemīnēhū*, which is used to qualify עֵשֶׂב *ēsebb* as well, we infer that it was the Divine intention that the latter should connote all kinds of plants.

And God saw that it was good] He saw that also the vegetation was good. Two works were performed on the third day, the separation of the sea from the dry land and the creation of plants; hence the formula *that it was good* is uttered twice on this day.

FOURTH PARAGRAPH THE STORY OF THE FOURTH DAY

14. *And God said,
'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens / to separate the day from the night;
and let them be for signs and for seasons / and for days and years;*
15. *and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens / to give light upon the earth.'*
And it was so.
16. *And God made / the two great lights,
the greater light / to rule the day,
and the lesser light / to rule the night;
He made the stars also.*
17. *And God set them in the firmament of the heavens / to give light upon the earth,*
18. *to rule over [or during] the day and over [or during] the night, / and to separate the light from the darkness.*
And God saw that it was good.
19. *And there was evening and there was morning, / a fourth day.*

Now begins the second phase of the six days of creation. In the first stage were created the three sections of the inanimate world, followed by vegetation, that is, all the created entities that cannot move by themselves. In the second there were made, in precisely parallel order to that of the first, the mobile beings, to wit, on the fourth day the luminaries, the moving bodies in which the light formed on the first day is crystallized; and on the fifth and sixth days, in like manner, the creatures that correspond to the works of the second and third days (see the Introduction, § 6 end).

14-15. *And God said, 'Let there be lights', etc.]* It would appear, at first sight, that there is a redundancy in the Divine fiat; hence present-day commentators delete, as a rule, some words from the text. But if we analyse the content of the two verses carefully we shall find that every detail fits into its place. The luminaries were given three functions by the Divine command: (a) to separate day

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from night; (b) to be for signs and for seasons and for days and years; (c) to serve as luminaries and to give light upon the earth. In verses 17-18, all these functions are mentioned again, according to the recognized rule, in similar, but not completely identical, terms.

In connection with this paragraph, too, we must pay attention to the concepts prevailing among the peoples of the ancient East. Also in the Babylonian creation epic these three functions of the luminaries are to be found; an additional example is thus provided of the common traditional approach in apprehending physical phenomena. The verses relating to the sun in this epic have been lost; but concerning the moon and its god, Nannaru, we read (Tablet V, lines 12-13):

He caused Nannaru to shine (that is, Marduk gave brightness to the moon; this is the third task in our paragraph); *He set it over the night* (the first duty in our account); *He made it the adornment of the night for the fixing of the days* (the second function in our narrative).

But there is a vast difference in the interpretation of the phenomena: the Babylonian poem presents the luminaries and stars to us as the "likeness" (*tamšilšunu*, line 2) of the gods, and to a certain extent identifies them with the gods, endowing them with personality and mind and will. The Torah, on the contrary, depicts them as material entities, created by the word of the One God, and wholly devoid of personality, mind or will. The fact that in the rabbinic legends the heavenly bodies appear again as personalities, who hold intercourse with the Creator, is to be explained in the same way as the similar attitude adopted by the Rabbis towards the myths about the revolt of the sea. In the age of the Talmudic sages idolatry had long ceased to be a source of danger to Israel, and consequently they saw no further necessity for undue caution in regard to mythological themes, nor the need to obliterate all references to them.

The first function: *to separate the day from the night*. This expression enables us to comprehend the existence of the first three days, when there was as yet no sun in the world. To separate one thing from another means to mark the distinction between two things *already in existence*. It is manifest that the night exists even

without the presence of moon and stars. Similarly, according to the view reflected here, the sun is not the *cause* of daytime, for the latter is to be found without the former. This is an empirical concept based on the observation that light pervades the atmosphere even before sunrise and also after sundown. Although we know that this light emanates from the sun only, nevertheless it is a fact that there is daylight even when the sun is not visible in the sky. This then is the meaning of the verse: that just as at the beginning and at the end of every day there is light without sun, so throughout those first three days God caused light to shine upon the earth from some other source without recourse to the sun; but when He created the luminaries He handed over to them the task of separation, that is, He commanded that the one should serve by day and the others should serve at night, and thus they would all become signs for distinguishing the two periods of time. In addition, the sun's light would naturally augment the already-existing daylight, but this would form its third function, as we shall see later. Note also verse 18: *and to separate the light from the darkness*, and my annotation thereon.

The question has also been raised: how could the plants grow on the third day without sun? This is not a difficult problem. Seeing that light was there already, and where there is light there must be heat, the requisite conditions for plant-life were already in existence.

The second function: *and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years*. Various interpretations of the clause, and particularly of the word *signs* (eclipses, portents, moments, and so forth) have been suggested. The correct explanation appears to be this: the verb *וְהָיָה* *wehāyā* ['and let them be'] signifies 'to serve', and *אֹתָם* *'ōtām* is used in its normal connotation of 'signs', that is, let them serve as signs unto the inhabitants of the world (Gunkel), to wit, as signs for the determination of the seasons (the *Wāw* ['and'] of *וְלַמִּצְדִּים* *ūlemō'āddim* ['and for seasons'] is explanatory) and for the division of time (*and for days and years*).

The third function: *and let them be lights in the firmament of the heavens*. At first the clause appears difficult; seeing that it speaks of lights [*מְאֹרֹת* *me'ōrōt*] how can it say that the lights should be for lights? Hence the Peshitta [Syriac version] and the Vulgate translate, 'that they may shine' (possibly they read: *לְמְאִירוֹת*

lime'irōt [*Hiph'il* participle fem. pl.] = 'for light-givers'), and some moderns have suggested that the word *לְמְאֹרֹת* *lime'ōrōt* ['for lights'] should be deleted as superfluous, or that it should be amended to *הַמְאֹרֹת* *hamme'ōrōt* ['the lights'; the sentence would then read: 'and let the lights in the firmament of the heavens be for giving light upon the earth']. But there is another expression similar to it in the Bible (Num. xv 38-39): *to make TASSELS . . . and it shall be to you a TASSEL*, the meaning being that the tassels that they would make would actually serve as tassels. Likewise here, the lights, just because they were lights — that is, sources of light — would serve as lights in the firmament, to *give light* upon the earth; the sun would augment the light of the day, as I have explained above, and the moon and stars would illumine the darkness of the night.

And it was so] As God had enjoined so it was, and so it remained for ever. After this general statement follows the usual detailed account.

16. *And God made, etc.*] In the narration, in this verse and in the two succeeding verses, of the fulfilment of God's purpose, the words of the Divine fiat are, as usual, repeated with certain modifications. Some of the changes serve to elucidate God's intention; in particular is the identity of the different lights made clear.

The two great lights, etc.] Some consider the word *הַגְּדֹלִים* *haggēdōlīm* ['great'] redundant, since *הַגְּדֹל* *haggadhōl* ['greater'] occurs soon afterwards; but the phrase in Psa. cxxxvi 7, *to Him who made the great lights*, corroborates the Massoretic reading here. The intention is to divide the heavenly host into two groups: the one consisting of the two great lights, that is, those that seem the biggest to us and that exert the greatest and most important influence on terrestrial life, and the other comprising a multitude of small lights, or those that appear small. Of the two great luminaries one is greater than the other; it is great in the group of great lights. It excels its companion particularly in its power and in its action.

To rule [*לְמַשְׁלָתָא* *lememšeleth* literally, 'for the rule of'] *the day . . . to rule the night*] In verse 18 the wording is: *וְלִמְשֹׁל בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה* *welimšōl bayyōm ūbbhallaylā* [E.V. *to rule over the day and over the night*]; the preposition-*ב* *b-* can be understood either in a temporal sense ['during'], or in the sense of *עַל* *'al* ['over'] as in xxxvii 8: *are you indeed to reign OVER us* [*בָּנוּ* *bānū*]; and in Psa. cxxxvi 8-9 the

text is: *לְמַמְשֵׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם ... לְמַמְשֵׁלֶת בַּלַּיְלָה* *lememšelet bayyôm ... le-memšelet ballaylā* [to rule over (or during) the day... to rule over (or during) the night], with a noun [לְמַמְשֵׁלֶת *lememšelet*] as in our verse (16), and with the preposition — *ב* — as in verse 18.

Apparently the expression was used in the ancient poetic tradition concerning the creation of the world. We need not assume that the Psalmist took it necessarily from our section, for he employs other phrases belonging to the poetic tradition that do not occur in our section. Thus in verse 5 [Psa. cxxxvi] he writes: *to Him who by UNDERSTANDING made the heavens*, recalling the words of Job xxvi 12: *by His UNDERSTANDING He smote Rahab* (on the connection between the two verses see above, on v. 6), and similar passages in Akkadian. In verse 6 (Psa. *ibid.*) we read: *to Him who SPREAD OUT THE EARTH upon the waters*, with which should be compared Isa. xlii 5: *WHO SPREAD FORTH THE EARTH and what comes from it*, and *ibid.* xlii 24: *who SPREAD OUT THE EARTH — Who was with Me?*

The primary source of the expressions derived from the stem *מָשַׁל* *māšal* ['to rule'] is certainly to be found in the literary tradition of the Gentiles, who regarded the lights as actual *rulers*. Generally speaking, the original connotation of traditional phrases in literature tends to become obscured and even to be forgotten; here, in our verse, the meaning is simply this: since the luminaries are situated *above the earth*, they appear to be ruling over it, as well as over its days and nights.

17–18. *And God set them, etc.* After God had *made* the lights (v. 16), He set them (וַיַּשְׁתֵּן *wayyittēn* [literally, 'and He gave'] = 'and He set') in the place appointed for them, in order that they should discharge the three functions, mentioned above, that had been assigned to them. The functions are enumerated here in reverse order to that given at first (chiastic order): (1) *to give light upon the earth* — the third function in the Divine fiat; (2) *to rule over [or during] the day and over [or during] the night* — the second task; (3) *and to separate the light from the darkness* — the first duty in the injunction.

And to rule over [or during] the day and over [or during] the night See above, at the end of the commentary to v. 16.

To separate the light from the darkness Ostensibly this presents

a difficulty: how is it possible for the luminaries, which by their nature shed light, to separate the light from the *darkness*? The meaning, however, is *to separate the day from the night*, as it is phrased in the Divine command in v. 14. The day and night are here called *light and darkness* in accordance with v. 5, which parallels this verse. If we now take into account my annotations above, on vv. 14–15, in relation to the first function of the luminaries, the sense of our text becomes clear: the sun serves during daylight, and the moon and the stars serve during the darkness of the night.

And God saw that it was good Some commentators consider that a clause stating that God called the greater light *sun* and the lesser light *moon* is missing; but this is unlikely. I have already stated above (on v. 5) that the purpose of naming the light, the darkness, the heavens, the earth and the seas was to inform us that what God created was precisely what we know today by the same names; otherwise the identification would not have been obvious. But in the present instance, we know perfectly well, without any need for further explanation, what is meant by the greater light and the lesser light. Had it been intended to assign names here, too, the stars would not have been specified by *their name* in v. 16.

FIFTH PARAGRAPH

THE STORY OF THE FIFTH DAY

20. *And God said,*
'Let the waters swarm / with swarming things, living creatures,
and let flying creatures fly above the earth / in front of the
firmament of the heavens.'
21. *So God created / the great sea monsters*
and every living creature that moves, / with which the waters
swarm, according to their kinds,
and every winged creature according to its kind.
And God saw that it was good.

and their confederates assumed an aspect in keeping with the spirit of Israel. No longer do divine forces oppose the supreme godhead, but, following the same principle as in the case of the lord of the sea, Scripture depicts them as creatures in revolt against their Maker. This Israelite tradition, which apparently assumed its literary form as part of the epic of the rebellion of the sea (see above, on *v.* 9), is alluded to in a number of Biblical verses and in various dicta in Talmudic, Midrashic and Cabbalistic literature. In Isa. xxvii 1, these monsters, bearing the very same names as occur in Canaanite poetry, are mentioned as symbols of the principle of evil, which God will ultimately uproot from the world: *In that day the Lord with His hard and great and strong sword will punish LEVIATHAN THE FLEEING SERPENT, LEVIATHAN THE TWISTING SERPENT, and He will slay the DRAGON that is in the sea.* A number of verses also refer to Leviathan and the sea monsters in connection with the revolt of the sea against God, implying that they joined forces with the rebellious lord of the sea and rose up against their Creator, but were compelled in the end to submit to Him. Above I have already quoted Isa. li 9–10 (*that DIDST PIERCE THE DRAGON in combination with that didst CUT RAHAB IN PIECES and that didst DRY UP THE SEA*); see also Ps. lxxiv 13–14: *Thou didst divide the SEA by Thy might; Thou didst break the heads of the DRAGONS on the WATERS. Thou didst crush the heads of LEVIATHAN, Thou didst give him as food to the folk inhabiting the wilderness*; Job vii 12: *Am I the SEA, or a SEA MONSTER, that Thou settest a guard over me?*; *ibid.* xxvi 13: *His hand pierced the FLEEING SERPENT.* In my aforementioned essay in *Keneseth* (Hebrew), I cite a number of additional verses. I likewise quote there passages from rabbinic literature that tell of the slaying of Leviathan by the hand of God, and of matters related thereto. I have already explained earlier how we have to interpret the attitude of the spiritual leaders of Israel — an attitude that varied with the different epochs — towards legends of this nature; here, too, in accordance with what I have stated previously, the Torah is entirely opposed to these myths. It voices its protest in its own quiet manner, relating: *So God created the great sea monsters.* It is as though the Torah said, in effect: Far be it from any one to suppose that the sea monsters were mythological beings opposed to God or in revolt against Him; they were as

natural as the rest of the creatures, and were formed in their proper time and in their proper place by the word of the Creator, in order that they might fulfil His will like the other created beings. Similarly it is stated in Ps. cxlviii 7: *Praise the Lord from the earth, YOU SEA MONSTERS AND ALL DEEPS.* The poet invites all created forms of life to praise the Lord, and among the terrestrial creatures, beneath the heavens, he invites, first and foremost, the sea monsters and the deeps specifically.

And every living creature that moves] — that is, in other words, the *swarms* mentioned in *v.* 20.

With which the waters swarmed] The meaning of this expression in the past tense is: with which they swarmed from that moment onward in obedience to the command in *v.* 20.

According to their kinds [לְמִינֵהֶם *lemīnēhem*]/The Hebrew form, which is the equivalent of לְמִינָם *lemīnām* [the regular form], is constructed on the analogy of nouns derived from *Lāmedh-Hē* stems. It nevertheless appears strange at first, since the pronominal suffix refers to נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה *nepheš hayyā* [sing. fem., 'living creature'], and therefore we should have expected לְמִינָהּ *lemīnāh* ['her kind']. But possibly the suffix is in agreement, by attraction, with the number and gender of the preceding word מַיִם *mayīm* ['waters']; cf. i Sam. ii 4: קֶשֶׁת גִּבּוֹרִים חֲטִימָה *qesheth gibbōrīm ḥattīm* ['the bow of the mighty men is broken']; חֲטִימָה *ḥattīm*, rendered 'broken', agrees in number and gender not with קֶשֶׁת *qēseth* (fem. sing., 'bow') but with גִּבּוֹרִים *gibbōrīm* (mas. pl., 'mighty men').

And God saw that it was good] Another allusion to the subject of the sea-monsters; of them, too, it is possible to say: *that it was good.*

22. *And God blessed them*] The reference is to the fish; this is shown by the continuation of the sentence: *and fill THE WATERS IN THE SEA.* The fecundity of the fish, which is so great as to have become proverbial, is indicative of the special blessing that was bestowed on them at the time of their creation. The blessing mentioned in this verse is purely one of fertility and increase: *BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY and fill*, etc. Also the blessing bestowed upon man on the sixth day (*v.* 28) is couched in similar terms, as though to say: *Be fruitful and multiply like the fish.* Many more expressions of benison, linked with the idea of fecundity, occur in

THE STORY OF CREATION

the book of Genesis, viz ix 1; xvii 16, 20; xxii 17; xxiv 60; xxvi 3-4, 24; xxviii 3; xxxv 9-11; xlvi 3-4; xlix 25. Compare also xlviii 15-16: 'AND HE BLESSED Joseph, and said . . . BLESS the lads . . . AND LET THEM GROW [וַיַּבְרֵךְ] *weyidhbgū*; cf. אִשׁ *dagb*, 'a fish'] *in multitude in the midst of the earth.*

In the seas] The reason for the omission of any reference to the rivers and pools is that the exact appellations used in v. 10 (*seas — earth*) are repeated in this verse. Apparently, the intention here is to inform us that one of these two portions of the world, to wit, the one containing the seas, would be the special domain of the fish and of other aquatic creatures, and that the air of the second portion, the air above the *earth*, would be the exclusive sphere of the flying creatures. The aerial creatures flying about in the air over the seas, and the fish in the rivers and in the pools, beneath the atmosphere appointed for the flying creatures, are mere details that do not materially affect the main partition, described in its general outline by our verse.

And let the flying creatures multiply upon the earth] The aerial creatures were not blessed with the same exceeding fertility as the fish, hence in their case only the term *multiply* is used.

Upon the earth] Although the winged creatures fly about *in front of the heavens*, their nests are made, and their young are hatched, upon the ground, or upon the trees, which are planted in the ground.

SIXTH PARAGRAPH THE STORY OF THE SIXTH DAY

24. *And God said,*
'Let the earth bring forth / living creatures according to their kinds;
cattle and creeping things / and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.'
And it was so.
25. *And God made / the beasts of the earth according to their kinds*
and the cattle according to their kinds, / and everything that
creeps upon the ground according to its kind.
And God saw that it was good.

GENESIS I 22-24

26. *Then God said,*
'Let us make man / in our image, after our likeness;
and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, / and over
the flying creatures of the air,
and over the cattle, / and over all the earth,
and over every creeping thing / that creeps upon the earth.'
27. *So God created / man in His own image,*
in the image of God / He created him;
male and female / He created them.
28. *And God blessed them, / and God said to them,*
'Be fruitful and multiply, / and fill the earth and subdue it;
and have dominion over the fish of the sea / and over the
flying creatures of the air
and over every living thing / that moves upon the earth.'
29. *And God said,*
'Behold, I have given you / every plant yielding seed
which is upon the face of all the earth,
and every tree / with seed in its fruit;
You shall have them for food.
30. *And to every beast of the earth, / and to every flying creature*
of the air,
and to everything that moves on the earth, / wherein there is
the breath of life,
[I have given] every green plant for food.'
And it was so.
31. *And God saw everything that He had made, / and behold,*
it was very good.
And there was evening and there was morning, / the sixth day.

24. *And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth', etc.]* The sixth day corresponds to the third: on the third day the earth was created, and on the sixth the living creatures of the earth were made; on the third day, immediately after the organization of inanimate nature had been completed, the plants, whose dominion extends throughout the earth, were brought into being; so, too, on the sixth day,

when vegetation and animal life had been fully established, man, who bears rule over all created life upon earth, was formed forthwith.

Living creatures according to their kinds] — a general statement followed by detailed specification, enumerating the three kinds of living creatures. These are: *cattle*, that is, living creatures whom man can domesticate or tame; *creeping things*, to wit, small creatures that creep about on the ground, or even big animals that have no legs, or have very short legs, so that they appear to be walking on their bellies; *beasts of the earth*: four-legged creatures that can never be domesticated or tamed.

Beasts of the earth [חַיְתוֹ אֲרֶצַּי *haythō-'eres*] / The expression is poetic. The view, it may be noted, that regards the termination י-ō as a substitute for the definite article is erroneous. It is particularly in poetic style that the definite article is most frequently omitted, and its omission is in no way connected with the presence of the suffix י-ō (Torczyner). Furthermore, in so far as our verse is concerned, there is no need here for the definite article; nor is it found with the other nouns occurring here, namely, נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה *nepheš hayyā* ['living creatures'], בְּהֵמָה *behemā* ['cattle'], רֶמֶשׂ *remes* ['creeping things']. In view of this, we may explain the reason for the difference that we find in our section between חַיְתוֹ אֲרֶצַּי *haythō-'eres* in this verse and חַיַּיִת הָאָרֶץ *hayyath hā'āreš* in vv. 25, 30, as follows: when there is need for the definite article חַיַּיִת הָאָרֶץ *hayyath hā'āreš* is used, and when the phrase is required without definition, it is written חַיְתוֹ אֲרֶצַּי *haythō-'eres*.

לְמִינָהּ *lēmīnāh* [literally, 'according to her kind'; rendered: *according to their kinds*] / The pronominal suffix [הָ -āh, third person fem. sing.] refers also to the cattle and the creeping things; thus the word should, properly, have been written לְמִינֵהֶם *lēmīnēhem* [pronominal suffix mas. pl.]. The existing termination [fem. sing.] must be due either to the attraction of the preceding word אֲרֶצַּי *'eres* [fem. sing.] or to that of the combined phrase חַיְתוֹ אֲרֶצַּי *haythō-'eres*; cf. the word לְמִינֵהֶם *lēmīnēhem* in v. 21.

And it was so] — a general statement to be followed, in v. 25, by a detailed account.

25. *The beasts of the earth, etc.*] The verse enumerates again the three categories of the living creatures of the earth, changing to

some extent the phrasing and the word-order, as is usual in recapitulations.

26. *Then God said, 'Let us make man', etc.*] Only in the case of man, because of his special importance, does Scripture allude to the Divine thought preceding the act of creation.

Let us make man, etc.] Many interpretations have been offered regarding the use of the plural in this verse. According to the rabbinic explanation, it connotes that God took counsel with someone or something. As to whom or what He consulted, there are divergent opinions (see Bereshith Rabba viii 3-7, and the parallel passages). The view that God took counsel with the ministering angels has been regarded by some commentators, both medieval and modern, as the actual meaning of the verse. But against this interpretation it can be contended: (1) that it conflicts with the central thought of the section that God *alone* created the entire world; (2) that the expression *Let us make* is not one of consultation; (3) that if the intention was to tell us that God took counsel, the Bible would have explicitly stated whom He consulted, as we are told in the other passages that are usually cited in support of this theory (i Kings xxii 19; Isa. vi 2-8; Job i-ii). The same objections, or some of them, or different arguments can be submitted in refutation of other interpretations (e.g. that God took counsel with Himself, or that the verse uses the language of kings who are accustomed to speak of themselves in the plural, or that there is a reference here to various elements within the Godhead, or that there is to be heard in the words of the Torah an echo, as it were, of the pagan myths, which relate that the decision to create man was taken in the assembly of the gods, and so forth). The best explanation, although rejected by the majority of contemporary commentators, is that we have here the plural of exhortation. When a person exhorts himself to do a given task he uses the plural: 'Let us go!' 'Let us rise up!' 'Let us sit!' and the like. Thus we find in ii Sam. xxiv 14: LET US FALL [נִפְּלָה *nippelā*] *into the hand of the Lord . . . but into the hand of man* LET ME *not* FALL [אַפְּלָה *'appōlā*]; at the end of the verse, since a negation is expressed, the self-exhortation no longer obtains, and consequently the singular form appears again (it is not to be supposed, as Yalon has suggested in *Kirjath Sepher*, xiii, p. 302 [Hebrew], that נִפְּלָה *nippelā* ['let us fall'], too, is singular, *Nūn*

taking the place of 'Aleph, in accordance with the linguistic rules of Palestinian Aramaic, for in that case Nūn should appear also in the last word of the verse). In the same way we must explain xi 7: *Come, LET US GO DOWN* [נִרְדָּה *nēredhā*], and *there LET US CONFUSE* [נִבְּלָה *nābbelā*] *their language*.

In our image, after our likeness] The Jewish exegetes have endeavoured to soften the corporeality implicit in the statement by means of forced interpretations (on these interpretations see Geiger, *Nachgel. Schriften*, V part i, Hebrew Section, pp. 102–105). On the other hand, many modern commentators take the view that in fact we have here an unquestionably corporeal concept. This view is also difficult, since corporeality of this kind is not in keeping with the general idea informing our section. The correct interpretation is to be sought elsewhere. There is no doubt that the original significance of this expression in the Canaanite tongue was, judging by Babylonian usage, corporeal, in accordance with the anthropomorphic conception of the godhead among the peoples of the ancient East. Nevertheless, when we use it in modern Hebrew, and say, for instance, 'all that has been created in the Divine image', we certainly do not associate any material idea with it, but give it a purely spiritual connotation, to wit, that man, although he resembles the creatures in his physical structure, approaches God in his thought and in his conscience. It is clear, therefore, that the meaning of the phrase changed in the course of time; it was corporeal to begin with but subsequently it became spiritual. The question then arises: when did this change come about? before or after our verse was written? Generally speaking, it is an error of perspective to regard all ancient texts as forming a single group. Although they are all far removed from us, they may also be distant from one another in time or in their degree of maturity. Reverting to our own subject, when we consider the lofty conception of God that is reflected in our section, we are compelled to conclude that the change referred to antedated its composition, and that the expression is used here in a sense similar to (if not actually identical with) that which it has in Hebrew today.

And let them (the plural is used because man is a collective noun) *have dominion over the fish of the sea*, etc.] The fish of the sea are mentioned first either because the different categories of

animal life are enumerated here in the order of their creation, or in order to emphasize that man would hold sway even over those creatures that were blessed with special fertility, or for both these reasons together.

And over the cattle, and over all the earth] Here and in vv. 28, 30, the categories of creatures mentioned previously in vv. 24, 25, are repeated; but not only do the terms undergo a change of form and order, in accordance with the usual practice in these recapitulations, but they are also shortened, and not all the categories are explicitly named, so as to avoid the monotony of their being listed five times in succession. However, Scripture has succeeded in finding in each verse a generic expression that includes also that which is not specifically named. In our verse we have the phrase, *and over all the earth*, which implies both the creeping things and the beasts. In v. 28 the words, *and over every living thing that moves upon the earth*, clearly do not refer to חַיָּה *hayyā* in the restricted sense of the term ['beast'], but to all living beings that move on the earth (חַרְוֵמֶשֶׁת *hārōmēšet* here means *moves*). The same applies to v. 30, which mentions *every beast of the earth* [חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ *hayyath hā'āreṣ*] first, and *everything that moves* [רֹמֵשׁ *rōmēš*] *on the earth, wherein there is a breath of life* later. Some amend the text, inserting in every verse what appears to be missing, but they only destroy the charm of the style.

27. *So God created man in His own image*, etc.] At this point the text assumes a more exalted tone and becomes poetic. The verse consists of three lines, each of which has four stresses and contains the verb בָּרָא *bārā* ['create'], the repetition being for emphasis. The first line speaks, in general terms, of man's *creation*; the second draws attention to the fact that he was created in the *Divine image*; the third notes the creation of *two sexes*. The poetic structure of the sentence, its stately diction and its particular emotional quality attest the special importance that the Torah attributes to the making of man — the noblest of the creatures.

Male and female He created them] According to the rabbinic interpretation (B. Berakoth 61a; B. 'Erubin 18a; Bereshith Rabba viii 1 and the parallel passages) man was created with two faces, that is, a hermaphrodite. This, too, is how many commentators of our own day, basing their view on similar legends that were current

in the ancient world (see especially the essay of Krappe mentioned above) understand the passage. But this is not the true sense of the verse, for it distinctly states: *He created THEM* — in the plural.

Schwally has proposed that we read *him* [חֵם 'ōthō] instead of *them* [אֲנֵם 'ōthām]. But the suggestion is unacceptable for three reasons: (1) it would make the second and third parts of the verse have identical endings, which is not possible; (2) the emendation is based on a hypothetical interpretation, which, in turn, assumes the emendation; (3) the plural is found again later (v 2): *Male and female He created THEM, and He blessed THEM and named THEM Man when THEY were created.*

28. *And God blessed them*, etc.] On the use of an expression of blessing in connection with fecundity, see above on v. 22. Here the benison contains also another concept, namely, that of dominion over the living creatures and over the earth as a whole (including the plants), since man alone was created in the Divine image and likeness.

Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it] Although you are only two, yet, through your fruitfulness and increase, your descendants will fill the land and subdue it. For similar expressions used of Noah and Abraham and the children of Israel, see my book, *The Documentary Hypothesis*, English translation, p. 39.

29–30. *Behold, I have given you*, etc.] You are permitted to make use of the living creatures and their service, you are allowed to exercise power over them so that they may promote your subsistence; but you may not treat the life-force within them contemptuously and slay them in order to eat their flesh; your proper diet shall be vegetable food. It is true that the eating of flesh is not specifically forbidden here, but the prohibition is clearly to be inferred. No contradiction in this regard is presented by iii 21 (*garments of skin*), iv 2 (*Abel was a keeper of sheep*), or by the sacrifices of Abel and Noah (iv 4; viii 20), as we shall show in our notes to these verses. Apparently, the Torah seeks to convey that in principle man should refrain from eating meat, and that when Noah and his sons were granted permission to eat flesh (ix 3) this was only a concession subject to the condition that the blood was not to be consumed. This prohibition implies respect for the

principle of life (*for the blood is the life*), and it serves also, in a sense, to remind us that rightly all parts of the flesh should have been forbidden; it behoves us, therefore, to eschew eating at least one element thereof in order to remember the earlier prohibition.

The Torah presents here a kind of idealized picture of the primeval world situation. Not only man but even the animals were expected to show reverence for the principle of life (see v. 30, which, too, is governed by the verb *I have given* of v. 29). In full accord with this standpoint is the prophetic view that the prohibition was never annulled, and that in the Messianic era it would be operative again and even the carnivorous beasts would then feed only on vegetation (Isa. xi 7; lxxv 25: *the lion shall eat straw like the ox*).

With regard to the gentile legends connected with the doctrine of vegetarianism in ancient times — in the 'Golden Age' — see the texts listed by Dillmann, *op. cit.* p. 36. The originality of the Israelite contribution consisted in the belief that in the millennial period the prohibition would come into force once more.

Concerning the classification of the living creatures in these two verses, see notes on v. 26.

And it was so] The explanation we have given of this expression (above, on v. 7) is not invalidated by its use here; despite the fact that a change came about later, when permission was given to Noah and his sons to eat meat, the prohibition was not, as we have explained, abrogated, but was only temporarily suspended.

31. *And God saw*, etc.] Instead of the usual simple formula, we have here, at the conclusion of the story of creation, a more elaborate and imposing statement that points to the general harmony prevailing in the world of the Almighty. On the previous days the words *that it was good* were applied to a specific detail; now *God saw EVERYTHING that He had made*, the creation in its totality, and He perceived that not only were the details, taken separately, good, but that each one harmonized with the rest; hence the whole was not just *good*, but *very good*. An analogy might be found in an artist who, having completed his masterpiece, steps back a little and surveys his handiwork with delight, for both in detail and in its entirety it had emerged perfect from his hand.

Since on the sixth day the whole work of creation was described

THE STORY OF CREATION

as *very good*, it was superfluous to state specifically of the last work, which was performed on this day, *that it was good*. Indeed it had to be omitted in order to avoid a seeming contradiction of what is subsequently written of man: *and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only EVIL continually* (vi 5); and afterwards: *for the imagination of man's heart is EVIL from his youth* (viii 21). In our commentary below we shall consider the meaning of these verses in relation to the statement here.

The sixth day [שֵׁשִׁי יוֹם *yōm haššišī*]/The use of יוֹם *yōm* ['day'] without the definite article followed by an ordinal number with the definite article is not rare in the Bible; compare, for example, ii 3; Exod. xii 15; xx 10, etc. The meaning in all these cases is the same as though the definite article were attached to the noun. This construction is found in our section only here, but not in connection with the other days, for the reason, apparently, that each of the preceding days was merely *one of the days* in the series of days of creation, whereas this was *the last day* in the sequence, the day *appointed* for the completion of the task, in accordance with the system described in the introduction to this section, in the first two paragraphs of § 5.

SEVENTH PARAGRAPH

THE SEVENTH DAY; END OF THE SECTION

CHAPTER II

1. *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, / and all the host of them.*
2. *And since God was finished on the seventh day / with His work which He had done,
He abstained on the seventh day / from all His work which He had done.*
3. *So God blessed the seventh day / and hallowed it,
because on it God abstained from all His work / which He had creatively made.*

GENESIS I 31, II 1-2

1. *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them*] The story of God's work in the six days of creation has come to an end, and there now stands before us the complete picture of the heavens and the earth and all that they contain in their harmonious perfection.

And all the host of them] — with the heavens the host of the heavens, and with the earth the fullness thereof. The phrase 'the host of the heavens' usually indicates the sun, the moon and the stars (sometimes, but certainly not in this instance, it refers to the angels). As a rule the word 'host' is not associated with the 'earth', but here, since the verse employs the term 'host' in connection with the heavens, it is used also in relation to the earth — a figure of speech that the Greeks called *zeugma*.

2. וַיִּכַּל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי *wayekhal 'Elōhīm bayyōm haššebī'ī* [E.V. *And on the seventh day God finished*] / Ostensibly this is difficult; for God did not finish His work on the *seventh* day but on the *sixth*! Hence the present-day tendency is to amend the text and to read the *sixth* instead of the *seventh* on the basis of the Samaritan Version, the Septuagint, the Peshitta and the Book of Jubilees ii 1, 16 (Talmudic sources also mention this reading as one of the textual changes introduced into the Greek translation of the Torah made for Ptolemy Philadelphus). But careful study of the passage will convince us that the correct reading is *on the seventh day*. Our verse consists of three consecutive, parallel lines, each of which contains *seven* words and is divided into two parts, the first part ending in every case, like a threefold refrain, with the words — *the seventh day*. Only one who is insensitive to the beauty and majesty of these lines could conceive the possibility of omitting the first mention of *the seventh day* and of substituting for it *on the sixth day*.

Other attempts that have been made to solve the problem by textual emendations have been equally unsuccessful. This is not surprising, because the problem does not inhere in the text, but stems from the erroneous interpretation put upon it. To understand the verse correctly we must examine similar sentences, such as 'And He finished talking with him, and God went up from Abraham' *

* This is the literal rendering of the Hebrew.

His work which He had done] The expression *His work* also occurs three times in this paragraph; likewise we find thrice: *which*

* This is the literal rendering of the Hebrew.

the principal ideas involved. **נִשְׁבַּח** *wayyisbōth* ['and He abstained from work'] / This verb has been translated or interpreted by many as if it signified 'to rest' or 'to cease work'; but this is incorrect. It has a negative connotation: 'not to do work'. Verses like Exod. xxiii 12: *Six days you shall DO YOUR WORK, but on the seventh day* **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth*; *ibid.* xxxiv 21: *Six days YOU SHALL WORK, but on the seventh day* **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth*; *in plowing time and in harvest* **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth*, make it clear that **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth* is simply the opposite of *you shall do your work* or *you shall work*. At times *you shall not do any work* actually takes the place of **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth*, which is found in the parallel verses: e.g. *Six days you shall labour and DO ALL YOUR WORK; but the seventh day . . . YOU SHALL NOT DO ANY WORK* (*ibid.* xx 9–10). Furthermore, the passages, *but on the seventh day* **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth*; *that your ox and your ass may have REST, and the son of your bondmaid, and the alien, may be REFRESHED* (*ibid.* xxiii 12), and **שָׁבַח** *šābbaṭh* [3rd pers. masc. sing. Perfect] *and was refreshed* (*ibid.* xxxi 17), clearly establish that the rest and refreshment are only the *outcome* of **נִשְׁבַּח** *tišbōth* and **שָׁבַח** *šābbaṭh*. In our section there is no mention of either rest or refreshment. Although elsewhere the Bible does employ such concepts in reference to God (*ibid.* xx 11: *and He RESTED on the seventh day*; *ibid.* xxxi 17: *He abstained from work and was REFRESHED*), nevertheless in this section, which avoids all possible use of anthropomorphic expressions in order to teach us, particularly in the account of creation, how great is the gulf between the Creator and the created, such notions would have been incongruous; hence the Bible uses only a term that signifies 'abstention from work'.

The verb שָׁבַת *šābath* also contains an allusion to the name יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת *yōm haššabbāth* ['the Sabbath day']. This name does not occur here, and is subsequently mentioned in other books of the Pentateuch only in connection with the commandment to keep the Sabbath, which was given to Israel. Here the hallowed day is called only *the seventh day* (the reason for this we shall see later). The Torah laid here the foundation for the precept of the Sabbath; this day was already sanctified by God at the beginning of the world's

history, and its greatness is not dependent on any other factor, not even on calendary determination by Israel, like the festivals, *which* [it is enjoined] *you shall proclaim*. Every seventh day, without intermission since the days of creation, serves as a memorial to the idea of the creation of the world by the word of God, and we must refrain from work thereon so that we may follow the Creator's example and cleave to His ways. Scripture wishes to emphasize that the sanctity of the Sabbath is older than Israel, and rests upon all mankind. The fact that the name אֱלֹהִים 'Elōhīm ['God'], which was current also among the Gentile nations, and not the name יהוה YHWH [E.V. 'Lord'], which was used by the Israelites only, occurs here is not without significance; the latter designation will be found in connection with the commandments concerning the proper *observance* of the Sabbath, which devolves only upon Israel. Thus in the Ten Commandments it is said, REMEMBER *the Sabbath day to keep it holy*, not, 'know that there is a Sabbath in the world'; that was already known. Possibly, in agreement with what I have stated above, at the beginning of § 5 of the Introduction, Scripture perceives a kind of dim recollection of the sanctity of the Sabbath in the day *šabattu* or *šapattu* of the Mesopotamian peoples. I shall deal with the day *šabattu-šapattu*, and with the problem connected with it, later in my annotations on v. 3.

It may be asked: In what way is the seventh day different from the succeeding days, since on them, too, God did no additional work? In answer to the question it may be said: (1) that the difference consists in the *novel character* of the seventh day; after a series of six days on each of which some work of creation was wrought, came a day on which God did not work or add anything to his creation; hence the remembrance of this abstinence from labour remained linked with the day on which this situation first arose; (2) that in accordance with what I have noted above in the Introduction § 5, seven days are considered a *period* [unit of time]; consequently, the seventh day, following on the six days of creation, completed the first period, and in every subsequent period the first day calls to mind the creation of the light, the second the creation of the heavens, and so forth, and the seventh reminds us of the day on which God did no work at all.

3. *So God blessed the seventh day*] This is the third time that an

expression of blessing occurs in our section. As previously stated, threefold repetition indicates emphasis, and the emphasis has again an optimistic significance: not only is the world *very good*, but it received from God a threefold blessing. The repeated blessings, it may be noted, are in a kind of ascending order: the fish are blessed with physical fertility: on man a twofold blessing is bestowed, comprising both physical fecundity and spiritual elevation; the benison of the Sabbath is wholly one of spiritual exaltation, a blessing imbued with sanctity (*and hallowed it*; cf. also Exod. xx 11: *therefore the Lord BLESSED the Sabbath day and HALLOWED it*).

And hallowed it] The real meaning of קְדוּשָׁה *qēdhūšā* ['holiness'] is elevation and exaltation above the usual level; the seventh day was lifted up above the plane of the other days.

It is not my intention to discuss here all the questions that some modern scholars have raised in regard to the origin of the Sabbath and its internal development among the Israelites. My aim is purely to explain the language and meaning of the text; whereas most of the views expressed on the former subjects are no more than hypotheses appertaining to the history of religion rather than to the field of exegesis. Those who wish to study these topics further are referred to the survey by Kraeling mentioned above. But the elucidation of the verse before us compels us to consider also here one of the questions alluded to. It is the question of *the relationship between the Israelite Sabbath and the days resembling it, in name or in order of their incidence, in the religious calendar of the Mesopotamian peoples* (for the sources and their interpretation see particularly the passages I have noted in the works of Landsberger and Langdon listed above in § 8 of the Introduction to this section). The Babylonians and the Assyrians used to call by the name of *šabattu* or *šapattu* the day of the full moon, the fifteenth of the month, which was specifically dedicated to the worship of the moon god, Sin-Nannaru, and of the gods related to it. The secondary meanings of this word, such as 'half the month, fourteen days', or that recently suggested by J. Lewy (*Archiv Orientalni*, xi [1939] pp. 44-45), to wit, the intercalated days required to equalize the lunar with the solar year, do not come within our purview. Of importance to us is only the use of the word to denote the day of the full moon. This day used to be called also *ām nūh*

libbi, 'day of the rest of the heart', that is, according to the generally accepted explanation, the day of the appeasement of the heart of the gods by means of worship. Germane to our problem are also the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first and twenty-eighth days of the month, which likewise have a special character in the Mesopotamian calendar. They are connected with the four phases of the moon, and are spaced *seven days* apart from one another, except for the seventh day of the month, which comes eight days after the twenty-eighth day of the preceding month if it is deficient, or nine days after it, if that month is full. These days, to which must be added the nineteenth of the month, which occurs seven weeks after the beginning of the preceding month, were regarded as unlucky days on which a man should afflict himself, eschew pleasures, and refrain from performing important works, for they would not prosper. This system was not just the product of a late development and sophistication, as was thought till a few years ago; nor is it reflected only in the arrangement of the Assyrian calendar, consisting of fifteen tablets, that was drawn up in the seventh century B.C.E. and called *inbu bēl arbim* ('the fruit [moon] is lord of the month'), but it is also found in an edition of the calendar belonging to the beginning of the tenth century, which contains much older material. The recension of the seventh century sets down the laws of those days as follows: "'The shepherd of many people" (that is, the king, or possibly one of the high priests) shall not eat cooked meat or baked bread, nor may he change the garment on his body or put on a clean garment; the king shall not ride in a chariot nor shall he speak words of rulership; the seer shall not enquire of his god; the physician shall not attend to the sick; and in general the day is not propitious for doing any desired thing'. The version of the tenth century likewise states that the seer shall not enquire of his god, that the physician shall not attend to the sick, and generally that those days are not favourable for doing the thing desired. It adds that anyone doing work on the fourteenth day of the month will lose his money, and that on the twenty-eighth day no one should undertake a journey. There are also other days that it mentions as 'unpropitious for doing the thing desired' (*viz* the first, the fifteenth, the twenty-ninth and the thirtieth); but on the first, it rules, the king *may* speak words of rulership and clean his garment. In regard to

the ninth, it declares that no one should appear thereon before the judge; and on the twenty-ninth and thirtieth, it prescribes that, just as on the twenty-eighth, no one should set out on a journey. So far the sources.

Many scholars have discussed the question of the relationship between these days and the Israelite Sabbath, and having regard to the highly complicated nature of the problem it is not surprising that their opinions differ; nor is it a matter for wonder that not all of them have been careful to express well-founded views. Some have supposed that the Israelite Sabbath, too, was originally the day of the full moon, but there is no basis for this theory (even the association of the words *new moon* and *Sabbath* does not prove anything); in the final analysis it is based only on the identification of the Israelite Sabbath with the Mesopotamian Sabbath, which itself requires proof, and thus begs the question. The same applies to the view that the 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th days of the month were also called by the Babylonians and Assyrians *šabattu-šapattu*; there is no evidence of this in the sources, and the hypothesis rests on the supposed connection between these days and the Israelite Sabbath: another instance of begging the question! Similarly, the surmise that the children of Israel derived the essential idea of the Sabbath and its detailed laws from the Mesopotamian system of 'rest days' on the 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th of the month, days 'on which work is forbidden', cannot be correct; it is clear from the regulations governing these days quoted above that they are not 'rest days' at all, and that this name was given to them only on the basis of the presumed connection with our Sabbath. Nor, for that matter, is 'work forbidden' on these days in the way that it is prohibited on the Sabbath; it is merely stated that important works should not be done on them lest they do not prosper. In truth, the Jewish people also observe days of a similar type and with comparable regulations, and in several respects the resemblance is quite *startling*, but they are not Sabbath days; they are the first nine days of the month of Ab, whose character, of course, is polarically different from that of the Sabbath.

An acceptable solution to the problem must be sought in a different direction. Undoubtedly, the Israelite Sabbath and what we find among the Babylonians and Assyrians have common elements.

The name *šabattu* or *šapattu* (be its etymology, on which opinion is divided, what it may), the expression synonymous with it, *ūm nūh libbi*, which brings to mind the concept of 'Sabbath rest' (most scholars have overlooked this point), the special days that occur every month once in seven days — all this is thought-provoking. On the other hand, there are many differences, and they are far more important than the resemblances; the former concern the inner content, whereas the points of correspondence are related to the external aspect. These divergences indicate that the solution to the problem is not to suppose that the children of Israel borrowed the idea of the Sabbath from the peoples of Mesopotamia, but, on the contrary, that the Israelite Sabbath was instituted in *opposition* to the Mesopotamian system. Since it is not my wish, as I have stated, to enter into the question of the internal development of the Sabbath among the Israelites, I shall base my argument only on the paragraph under consideration and on verses that are wholly parallel to it. The Torah, it seems to me, purports to say this: Israel's Sabbath day shall not be as the Sabbath of the heathen nations; it shall not be the day of the full moon, or any other day connected with the phases of the moon and linked, in consequence, with the worship of the moon, but it shall be the *seventh day* (this enables us to understand why this particular name, *the seventh day*, is emphasized here), the seventh in *perpetual* order, independent and free from any association with the signs of the heavens and any astrological concept. It shall not be a day appointed for the worship of the hosts of the heavens, but one sanctified to Him who created the heavenly hosts and the universe as a whole (cf. *but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God* in the Decalogue), as a memorial to the work of creation; not a day of self-affliction and misfortune, but one of *blessing* (*So God BLESSED the seventh day*; cf. also, in the Ten Commandments, Exod. xx 11: *therefore the Lord BLESSED the sabbath day and hallowed it*); not a day intended to *propitiate the angry godhead*, but one on which the *Divine work was not done*, thus a day that is worthy of serving as an example to humanity upon whom devolves the duty of imitating the ways of God, and that, consequently, is fitted to become a day of *rest for mankind*, who are weary and weighed down by the yoke of hard toil, and also for the brute creatures (cf. Deut. v 14: *that your manservant and your*

maidservant may REST as well as you; Exod. xxiii 12: *that your ox and your ass HAVE REST, and the son of your handmaid, and the alien, MAY BE REFRESHED*); hence a day that will serve as a memorial to the liberation of the children of Israel from the house of bondage (Deut. v 15). See further my remarks above, in the penultimate paragraph of my commentary on v. 2, commencing 'the verb שבת *šabbath*'.

אשר ברא אלהים לעשות 'āšer bārā' 'Elōhīm la'āsōth ['which God had creatively made'] / Many interpretations of this subordinate clause have been suggested, for example: that God created roots in all the species, endowing them with the power to reproduce their likeness (Ibn Ezra); that He created on the first day the elements with which to do all the works that are mentioned on the other days (Nahmanides); that He abstained thereon from doing any of the work that He had created (Nahmanides, second explanation, supported among the moderns by Schill in *ZAW*, xxiii, pp. 147–148); in making which He created (Dillmann); which He created and made (Gunkel, Heinisch); which He created in order to make it (Jacob), and so on and so forth. All these interpretations are difficult; certain emendations have also been proposed, but these are even more forced than the explanations of the existing text.

In order to understand the verse properly, we must first determine the manner in which the two roots, ברא *bārā'* ['create'] and עשה 'āšā ['make'], are used. The verb ברא *bārā'* signifies not only the making of the world in the six days of creation but connotes every act of God that transcends the bounds of normality (e.g. Exod. xxxiv 10: *Before all your people I will do marvels, such as have not been WROUGHT* [literally, 'created'] *in all the earth or in any nation*; Num. xvi 30: *But if the Lord CREATES SOMETHING NEW* [literally, 'creates a creation'] *and the ground opens its mouth*, etc.), and sometimes it refers to Divine acts that are quite normal (e.g. Isa. liv 16: *Behold, I have CREATED the smith . . . I have also CREATED the ravager to destroy*; ibid. lvii 19: *that CREATETH the fruit of the lips*; Ezek. xxi 35 [E.V. v. 30]; *In the place where you were CREATED, in the land of your origin*; Psa. li 12 [E.V. v. 10]: *CREATE in me a clean heart, O God*). In our section it is used only when Scripture wishes to stress the wonder of something, viz in the opening verse, in the concluding sentence, in connection with

the sea-monsters — abnormal beings — and with regard to man, the highest of all the creatures.

The verb *בָּרָא* 'āsā betokens, among its other meanings (it is used as a synonym of *בָּרָא* bārā' in Exod. xxxiv 10 quoted above), the making of something that did not exist before (it will suffice to mention i 7, 16, 25, 26, 27 and ii 2 of our section). As regards the construction of our clause, which contains two synonymous verbs, the second being in the infinitive with the preposition *Lamedh* ['to'], compare Psa. lxiii 3 [E.V. v. 2]: SO I HAVE LOOKED UPON THEE *in the sanctuary*, TO BEHOLD [E.V. 'beholding'] *Thy power and glory*. The second verb comes to elucidate the particular sense in which the first is to be understood. Similarly in our verse: the word *לַעֲשׂוֹת* la'āsōth ['to make'] comes after *בָּרָא* bārā' ['He created'] to specify the kind of creation of which the verse speaks, namely, an act of creation that is also a 'making', that is, a wondrous work implying the making of things that never existed before.

The closing verse corresponds to the introductory sentence of the section; in both it is written: *God created*. But whereas the word *בָּרָא* bārā' alludes to the first verse, *לַעֲשׂוֹת* la'āsōth recalls all the 'makings' mentioned in the rest of the section. Just as the prologue announces at the outset the main subject-matter of the account that follows, so the epilogue looks back and epitomizes within the limits of one short sentence the content of the preceding narrative, re-awakening in the heart of the reader, by means of this synthesis inherent in its words, the sentiments that were aroused within him in the course of his reading. A truly majestic conclusion to the section.

SECTION TWO

THE STORY OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

CHAPTER II, VERSE 4 — CHAPTER III, VERSE 24

INTRODUCTION

§ 1. In this section we are told how the first man was formed of dust from the ground, how he dwelt in the garden of Eden, of the creation of woman, of the sin that they both committed, and of the punishment meted out to them. The primary purpose of the Torah in these chapters is to explain how it is that in the Lord's world, the world of the good and beneficent God, evil should exist and man should endure pain and troubles and calamities. The answer given here to the burning question of the origin of evil in the world is this: although the world that issued from the hand of the Creator is, according to the testimony of the previous section, good — yea, very good — yet man corrupts it by his conduct and brings evil into the world as a result of his corruption. Apart from this primary teaching, it is also possible to draw, incidentally, other lessons from this section: we learn of the necessity of discipline founded on God's statutes; of man's innate conscience; of the law of Divine reward and punishment; of the bonds of brotherhood uniting the inhabitants of the world, who are all descended from one human pair, are all kin and all equal to one another; of the humane treatment that we should accord to animals, for like ourselves they were formed of the earth; of the value of marriage; of the importance of monogamy; of the humility with which it behoves us to conduct ourselves, seeing that we are dust and unto dust we return, and similar ideas.

§ 2. These teachings, like the truth that the Torah sought to convey in the preceding section, could not be imparted in abstract terms, for the reasons that I have indicated above, in the Introduction to the story of creation (p. 12, end of § 4). In this instance, too, Scripture had to inculcate its doctrines through the medium of concrete description, that is, by telling a story from which the reader