

[Johann Lorenz Schmidt], *Die göttlichen Schriften vor den Zeiten des Messie Jesus: nach einer freyen Uebersetzung, welche durch und durch mit Anmerkungen erläutert und bestätigt wird*

[The Divine Scriptures from before the Times of Jesus:  
According to a Free Translation which is Completely Explicated and Affirmed with  
Annotations]  
(Wertheim, 1735).

The Laws of the Israelites.  
The First Book.  
[Genesis]

§1. All worldly bodies, and our earth too, were created at the beginning by God. Concerning Earth in particular, it was at the start completely desolate: it was surrounded with a dark fog, and water flowed around it, atop which strong winds began to blow. It soon became rather light on it, however, as divine purpose demanded. And because this was very necessary and useful: thus it happened according to the arrangement which God had made in this case, that from now on light and darkness would continually alternate; and this is the origin of day and night. This night and day together made up the first day.

Primal state of the earth, and how it at this beginning became light.

§2. Now a portion of the earth was to be separated from the water according to divine purpose, and make a sphere around the earth. A sphere around the earth thus came about which contained a portion of the waters in itself, while the other portion remained below: and this sphere is the air. And again night and day were past, and made the second day.

How the air was created around the earth, and the vapors were drawn into it.

Notes to §1.

1. **All worldly bodies]** Hebrew: the sky. This word means all phenomena which are seen beyond our earth. They must indeed stand so high that we can't see any earthly bodies, i.e. mountain, spire, and so forth, at the same time. Here, since heaven and earth stand next to each other, stars and worldly bodies beyond our earth are understood as the sky.

2. **were created at the beginning by God.]** Heb. the gods have created. All nations [*Nationen*] in Moses' time worshipped more than one god. In this manner of speech Moses would have it known that the properties which one would in general ascribe to many were befitting only to one [God].

3. **it was surrounded with a dark fog,]** Heb. it was dark upon the same. Because this first day and night and day comes to pass, and is placed with the following in one class: so must they all issue from one kind, and thus in total from the daily motion of the earth and the sun; if one does not want to fabricate [poetize]. Let alone that the bodies which belong to one world structure have a pressure against one another, and thus the motion of one cannot be understood without the others. The sun was thus there, and shone upon the upper surfaces of the earth, which consisted of sheer water. All the vapors came about from this, which could not however ascend to the heights, because the fluid matter around the earth was then of a lighter kind. They thus remained suspended below and made a thick fog, and this was the cause of the darkness.

§3. Henceforth the water was only on some places, and the earth shone out from behind it. The earth which shone out is the land, and the water is the sea. God had resolved to let the earth be covered with grass and herbs, which was to be carried by their seeds: likewise, to fill it with fruitful trees, and these were to bear fruit with seeds in it. This resulted from that time on. The grass appeared, and at the same time so many kinds of herbs which were multiplied by their own seeds: and many kinds of fruitful trees grew which bore their seeds in their own fruits. And the third day was past.

The water is still to be seen only in the depths, and on the land the plants emerge.

#### Notes

4. **atop which strong winds began to blow.**] Because the vapors would prefer to thin and rise into the sky at the equator, rather than at the poles, thus the equilibrium of the liquid matter would be destroyed, and hence the wind. This equilibrium was not produced earlier than the second day.

5. **It soon became rather light on the same,**] Heb. God said, it should become light. To say that something should happen means as much as to make our intention achieve reality.

6. **and this is the origin of day and night.**] Heb. God gave this alternation of light and darkness the names day and night. He made namely the things to which one subsequently ascribes these names.

#### To §2.

7. **Now a portion was to be separated from the water, in order to make a sphere around the earth.**] Heb. Something extended emerged within the water, and this was to separate the water into two parts. [NB: here “extended” would resonate with any Cartesian or Newtonian talk about bodies extended in space, rather than idealized as geometric points for mathematical purposes.] The matter around the earth presents itself to our eyes like an elliptic hollow globe whose causes are to be sought in optics. From its extending force alone one knows that one sees it in all places at one elevation on the earth, and thus it makes one sphere around it whose compass has a similar figure with it.

8. **and this sphere is the air.**] Heb. heaven. This means here the liquid bodies in which the phenomena above the earth are seen (note 1). It consists of rarified matter and of the vapors which float in it: and it is this together that we actually call air.

#### To §3.

9. **Henceforth the water was only on some places,**] Heb. Water ought to flow together in one place. We refer to flowing together if the object is seen in a smaller space where it once occupied a greater one. The water lay in various elevations above the earth: it was thereby quite vaporized in some places, but much remained standing in the depths, for air does not take more vapors into itself [i.e. absorb, become saturated] than up to a certain degree of heaviness. One location means just the difference of space that the water and the [land] surfaces occupy, and the [difference of the] remaining space on it.

§4. But God also wanted bright bodies to be in the sky making day and night, from which one could derive much, then direct one's enterprises, and divide up time into days and years. These were to stand in the sky until the end, so that the earth would be illumined by them: and it was so. Two great lights lit the earth, the larger one doing service by day, the smaller one, along with the stars, by night. They were indeed placed in the sky by God in order to do service day and night, and illumine the earth and make the alternation of light and darkness upon it: as it had to be according to divine purposes. And this was the fourth day.

The air thus becomes so bright that one can see sun, moon, and stars.

§5. Henceforth the water teemed with large and small living animals, and birds flew from the earth into the heights. And the great sea creatures emerged and the various kinds of animals in the water, as well as many kinds of birds: everything as God would have it. By God's benevolence these had the ability to be able to multiply through procreation with one another: thus did the animals spread in the water as well as the birds on land. This was the fifth day.

Fishes emerge in the water, and birds on land.

#### Notes

10. **and the water is the sea.**] In Heb.: And God found that it was good. The good is the intention which God had when creating: and to find it good means to observe the similarity between the intention as God had once imagined it and that which was actually there. This has already been noted at the beginning of the section.

#### To §4.

11. **bright bodies to be in the sky,**] Heb. in the extended sky. In the sky means to be seen in the air: and if one is speaking of an illumined body, to cast its rays in the air (note 8).

12. **from which one could derive much.**] Heb. they should emit signs. A sign is a thing from which one observes that something was there, is there, or is still to come. But such things must occur for the right reasons. Thus one derives for example from the beginning of the darkneses, especially the moons of Jupiter, the location of places; the state of the air from the halo around the moon, etc.

13. **Two great lights lit the earth,**] Heb. God created two great lights. Here one simply says that they were there, because immediately thereafter is thought that they have their origin from God. Thus they exerted their full effect, after the fog was entirely dispersed (note 3).

14. **in order to do service day and night:**] Heb. they are to set the order. This manner of speaking has its origin in the opinion of those nations which attributed understanding and intention to the bodies which belong to our world structure, and believed that many events on earth were due to them. Moses, who had nothing to do with this opinion, understands by ordering the stars merely the guidance which the inhabitants of the earth take from them when carrying out their enterprises.

#### To §5.

15. **By God's benevolence these had the ability,**] Heb. God gave them the blessing. Giving the blessing means here to attribute a completeness [perfection] to it.

§6. There also ought to be living animals, beasts, insects, and wild animals on the earth: and these were there. There were all sorts of wild animals that came to the fore, as many sorts of beasts and as many kinds of insects as are located on earth.

Finally God also decided to bring forth humans which had a likeness to him, and to whom he could grant mastery over so many sorts of creatures: namely over the fish in the water, over the birds in the air, over the beasts and over the insects; in a word, over the whole earth. According to this divine purpose two humans were created, one male, the other female, who had a likeness to him: I say again, they were similar to God. He gave the following blessing. Multiply yourselves, he said, so that you will become many, and spread yourselves upon the earth; for I grant you this hereby as possession: and you shall have dominion over the fishes in the water, over the birds in the air, and over the animals on the earth. And he added: this herb here, which was propagated by its own seeds, and this fruit on the trees that likewise multiplies through its seeds, shall be your food. The remaining grass is meant for the animals: namely for the beasts, for the birds and for the insects. And this order was also immediately observed. So God regarded the earth with its creatures, and found it completely in keeping with his purposes. And this was the sixth day.

Both are directed to their food.

Henceforth the earth along with the other worldly bodies was complete, with all the creatures which are located in it.

To §6.

**16. Finally God also decided to bring forth humans which had a likeness to him,**] Heb. God said: we want to make humans which shall be our image and like unto us. God is here presented as if he were holding a conversation with others: namely, according to the manner of speaking at the time, for all nations, if they did not call anything in particular God, spoke not of God, but of gods, and ascribed all kinds of these conversations and deliberations to them. Moses understands it only from one God (note 2).

**17. So God regarded the earth with its creatures,**] Heb. everything that he had made. This is here referring to what has happened in these six days, and thus to the earth and its creatures.

**18. and found it completely in keeping with his purposes.**] Heb. it was all completely good (note 10).

**19. with all the creatures which are located in it.**] Heb. with its entire corps. The sexes and types [species] of things are understood here.

§7. After God had now brought the work which he had undertaken in six days completely to the end, he celebrated on the seventh day. And this is the reason why God gave preference to the seventh day, and set it aside for celebration, namely because he was the first to celebrate it, after the enterprises he had undertaken were fully completed.

God celebrates the seventh day.

These are the true circumstances of the origin of the world, which thus took its beginning, for it was created by the God Jehovah. God let trees come forth on the earth, where there had not yet been any, he let grass grow up before such things could have grown: for it had never yet rained, and there was no one there who could have sowed and planted. Furthermore, some of the vapors were in the air, by which the land was moistened.

Affirmation of the history of creation.

§8. God made the human (Adam) as an earthly body out of earth (Adama), and thereby brought him to life by the transmission of [His] breath, by which Adam became a living human. God had very specially prepared a certain domain of the land of Eden, which lay toward the East, because he wanted to grant it to Adam for residence. He had had the most beautiful trees grown in it, which bore magnificent fruits. Among these stood the Tree of Life and the Tree of Wisdom. In Eden a stream sprang up by which this domain was watered. From this four great rivers also came into being in this countryside. The first, Pishon, flows around the entire landscape of Havilah, in which there are gold mines, so one encounters in this land not only the finest gold, but also aromatic resin and onyx. The other river, Gihon, encompasses the landscape of Kush. The third, the Tigris, flows eastward into Asshur, and the fourth is the Euphrates. God led Adam to this domain, and gave it to him so that he would enjoy it and take good care of it. But at the same time God gave Adam the following order. It is permitted to you, he said, to eat from all of the trees of this domain: only from this tree (he pointed to the Tree of Wisdom) you may not enjoy [its fruits]; for if you eat from it, so you must die.

Circumstances of the creation of humans.

Description of the domain where he should tarry.

To §7.

20. **why God gave preference to the seventh day,**] Heb. he gave it his blessing (note 15).

21. **and set it aside for celebration:**] Heb. he hallowed it. To hallow means to designate something to the honor of God.

To §8.

22. **and the Tree of Wisdom.**] Heb. the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This name is here only provisionally ascribed to it. Thence it retains [the name] because it was given out as if it conveyed wisdom (note 26).

§9. God also thought it was not expedient to leave Adam alone: and he decided to create companionship [society] for him that would be suited to him. God had caused all types [species] of animals and birds to come forth upon the earth: these were to gather around Adam, and God charged him with naming them, for the animals have all gotten their names at the beginning from Adam. Now Adam gave each beast, bird, and animal its name: only he found nothing of his own kind among them with whom he could have joined in society. God thus had Adam fall into a deep sleep, and took a rib from his side, and let the flesh grow again around it. From this rib which God had taken from Adam's body he made the woman, and brought her to him. Adam said immediately: that is firstly something of my kind, and like unto me. Then she is called Eve (woman), because she has her origin in me (man). And this is also the reason that a man leaves his bodily parents and stays with his wife: for they make up, as it were, only one person. These people now, Adam and his wife, were indeed both naked, yet felt no shame before each other.

About the  
circumstances.

#### Notes to §9.

23. **that it was once something of my kind, and like unto me,**] Heb. this is at once limb of my limbs and flesh of my flesh. Adam saw that the woman was similar to him in external form, and concluded from this that she must be like him in other properties as well. Moses expressed this likeness of form with an idiom by which a close kinship, especially among siblings, is indicated, ones who for the most part resemble each other (note 277).

24. **for they make up, as it were, only one person.**] Heb. they should become one flesh. Flesh means here the human body. If we see the body of a living person, then at the same time we conceive of a being which possesses understanding and a free will, that is, a person.