



Prologue

Technical civilization is man's conquest of space. It is a triumph frequently achieved by sacrificing an essential ingredient of existence, namely, time. In technical civilization, we expend time to gain space. To enhance our power in the world of space is our main objective. Yet to have more does not mean to be more. The power we attain in the world of space terminates abruptly at the borderline of time. But time is the heart of existence.¹

To gain control of the world of space is certainly one of our tasks. The danger begins when in gaining power in the realm of space we forfeit all aspirations in the realm of time. There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of space, becomes our sole concern.

Nothing is more useful than power, nothing more frightful. We have often suffered from degradation by poverty, now we are threatened with degradation through power. There is happiness in the love of labor, there is misery in the love of gain. Many hearts and pitchers are broken at the fountain of profit. Selling himself into slavery to things, man becomes a utensil that is broken at the fountain.

Technical civilization stems primarily from the de-

4 *the Sabbath*

sire of man to subdue and manage the forces of nature. The manufacture of tools, the art of spinning and farming, the building of houses, the craft of sailing—all this goes on in man's spatial surroundings. The mind's preoccupation with things of space affects, to this day, all activities of man. Even religions are frequently dominated by the notion that the deity resides in space, within particular localities like mountains, forests, trees or stones, which are, therefore, singled out as holy places; the deity is bound to a particular land; holiness a quality associated with things of space, and the primary question is: Where is the god? There is much enthusiasm for the idea that God is present in the universe, but that idea is taken to mean His presence in space rather than in time, in nature rather than in history; as if He were a thing, not a spirit.

Even pantheistic philosophy is a religion of space: the Supreme Being is thought to be the infinite space. *Deus sive natura* has extension, or space, as its attribute, not time; time to Spinoza is merely an accident of motion, a mode of thinking. And his desire to develop a philosophy *more geometrico*, in the manner of geometry, which is the science of space, is significant of his space-mindedness.

The primitive mind finds it hard to realize an idea without the aid of imagination, and it is the realm of space where imagination wields its sway. Of the gods it must have a visible image; where there is no image, there is no god. The reverence for the sacred image, for the sacred monument or place, is not only indigenous to most religions, it has even been retained by men of all ages, all nations, pious, superstitious or even antireligious; they all continue to pay homage to banners and flags, to national shrines, to monuments erected to kings or heroes. Everywhere the desecration of holy shrines is considered a sacrilege, and the

shrine may become so important that the idea it stands for is consigned to oblivion. The memorial becomes an aid to amnesia; the means stultify the end. For things of space are at the mercy of man. Though too sacred to be polluted, they are not too sacred to be exploited. To retain the holy, to perpetuate the presence of god, his image is fashioned. Yet a god who can be fashioned, a god who can be confined, is but a shadow of man.

We are all infatuated with the splendor of space, with the grandeur of things of space. Thing is a category that lies heavy on our minds, tyrannizing all our thoughts. Our imagination tends to mold all concepts in its image. In our daily lives we attend primarily to that which the senses are spelling out for us: to what the eyes perceive, to what the fingers touch. Reality to us is thinghood, consisting of substances that occupy space; even God is conceived by most of us as a thing.

The result of our thinginess is our blindness to all reality that fails to identify itself as a thing, as a matter of fact. This is obvious in our understanding of time, which, being thingless and insubstantial, appears to us as if it had no reality.²

Indeed, we know what to do with space but do not know what to do about time, except to make it subservient to space. Most of us seem to labor for the sake of things of space. As a result we suffer from a deeply rooted dread of time and stand aghast when compelled to look into its face.³ Time to us is sarcasm, a slick treacherous monster with a jaw like a furnace incinerating every moment of our lives. Shrinking, therefore, from facing time, we escape for shelter to things of space. The intentions we are unable to carry out we deposit in space; possessions become the symbols of our repressions, jubilees of frustrations. But things of space are not fireproof; they only add fuel to the

CHAPTER XI (BERESHITH)

1. AND GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY (II, 3). *The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich* (Prov. x, 22): this refers to the Sabbath, as it is written, AND GOD BLESSED, etc. *And grief addeth nothing thereto* (ib.): this refers to mourning,¹ as you read, *The king grieveth for his son* (II Sam. xix, 3).

2. AND GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY, AND HALLOWED IT. R. Ishmael said: He blessed it with manna and hallowed it with manna. He blessed it with manna, for every day of the week there descended one 'omer [per person], but on the eve of the Sabbath two 'omers. And He hallowed it through manna, which did not descend on the Sabbath at all. R. Nathan said: He blessed it with manna and hallowed it with a blessing. R. Isaac said: He blessed it with manna and hallowed it through the man who gathered [sticks].²

He blessed it with [the distinction of] robing.³ R. Huna said: A man must change [his garments on the Sabbath]. R. Hiyya said in R. Johanan's name: A man must mingle [his garments].⁴ Abin b. Hasde said: He must let [his cloak] hang down.⁵ R. Jeremiah and R. Ze'ira were walking together [on the Sabbath], R. Jeremiah's cloak being tucked up, whereupon R. Ze'ira pulled it down. This shows that one must let his cloak hang down.

R. Liezer said: He blessed it in the matter of a lamp, and this happened in my case. I once lit a lamp for the Sabbath night, and when I came at the termination of the Sabbath I found it still burning and not at all diminished.

He blessed it with the light of a man's face: the light of

¹ Which is absent on the Sabbath.

² V. Num. xv, 32. The sanctity of the Sabbath was thereby emphasised.

³ A special cloak should be worn on the Sabbath.

⁴ If he cannot afford a complete change, he must have something different to mingle with his week-day attire.

⁵ Instead of tucking it up as on the week-days, when he works in the fields.

a man's face during the week is not the same as it is on the Sabbath.

He blessed it in respect of the luminaries. R. Simeon b. Judah said: Though the luminaries were spoilt¹ on the eve of the Sabbath, yet they were not smitten until the termination of the Sabbath. This agrees with the Rabbis but not with R. Assi,² who maintained: Adam's glory did not abide the night with him.³ What is the proof? *But Adam passeth not the night in glory* (Ps. xlix, 13).⁴ The Rabbis maintain: His glory abode with him, but at the termination of the Sabbath He deprived him of his splendour⁵ and expelled him from the Garden of Eden, as it is written, *Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away* (Job xiv, 20). As soon as the sun set on the night of the Sabbath, the Holy One, blessed be He, wished to hide the light, but He showed honour to the Sabbath; hence it is written, AND GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY: wherewith did He bless it? With light. When the sun set on the night of the Sabbath, the light continued to function,⁶ whereupon all began praising, as it is written, *Under the whole heaven they sing praises to Him* (ib. xxxvii, 3)⁷; wherefore? Because *His light* [reaches] *unto the ends of the earth* (ib.).⁸ R. Levi said in the name of the son of Nezirah: That light functioned thirty-six hours,⁹ twelve on the eve of the Sabbath [i.e. Friday], twelve during the night of the Sabbath, and twelve on the Sabbath [day]. When the sun sank at the termination of the Sabbath, darkness began to set in. Adam was terrified, [thinking,] *Surely indeed the darkness shall bruise* [E.V. 'envelop'] *me* (Ps. cxxxix, 11): shall he of whom it was written, *He shall bruise thy head* (Gen. iii, 15), now come to attack me!¹⁰

¹ Through Adam's sin it was decreed that the primeval light should be hidden. *Var. lec.*: cursed. ² More correctly: R. Jose.

³ I.e. the primeval light, which was smitten immediately he sinned, before the Sabbath. ⁴ E.V. 'But man abideth not in honour'.

⁵ By hiding the primeval light. Others: He deprived Adam's countenance of its lustre. ⁶ At night—this primeval light is meant.

⁷ This derives *yishrehu* from *shir*, to sing. E.V. 'He sendeth it forth under, etc.' ⁸ I.e. for Adam, who was created on the sixth day. ⁹ Under cover of darkness.

What did the Lord do for him? He made him find two flints which he struck against each other; light came forth and he uttered a blessing over it; hence it is written, *But the night was light about me—ba'adani* (Ps. *loc. cit.*), i.e. the night was light in my Eden (*be'edni*).¹ This agrees with Samuel, for Samuel said: Why do we recite a blessing over a lamp [fire] at the termination of the Sabbath? Because it was then created for the first time.² R. Huna in Rab's name, and R. Abbahu in R. Johanan's name said: At the termination of the Day of Atonement, too, we recite a blessing over it, because the fire rested the whole day.³

3. He blessed it by providing for additional expenditure. R. Levi said in the name of R. Jose b. R. Hanina: A blessing is written in connection with every day in which there is a decrease, and so it suffers no loss at all. [E.g.] on the fifth day birds and fish were created; now people kill birds and eat them, and catch fish and eat them, yet since a blessing is written in connection with it, the stock does not in any way decrease. Then what can you say of the seventh day?⁴ R. Levi said in the name of R. Hama b. R. Hanina: [It is written] on account of the [additional] expenditure.⁵ R. Leazar said in R. Jose's name: [The blessing was given] on account of people with delicate digestions.⁶

4. He blessed it with tasty dishes. Our Teacher⁷ made a meal for Antoninus⁸ on the Sabbath. Cold dishes were set before him; he ate them and found them delicious. [On another occasion] he made a meal for him during the week, when hot dishes were set before him. Said he to him: 'Those others I enjoyed more.' 'These lack a certain con-

¹ The meaning of the original is not clear, and the translation is a conjecture.

² Sc. artificial light. ³ I.e. no fire was lit on that day. V. Pes. 53b, 54a.

⁴ When nothing was created.

⁵ Incurred, without one's wealth being thereby diminished; cf. Bez. 16a.

⁶ The blessing enables them to enjoy the additional fare provided.

⁷ R. Judah the Nasi, called Rabbi (teacher) *par excellence*.

⁸ On the identity of Antoninus v. Sanh. (Sonc. ed.), p. 610, n. 7.

diment,' he replied. 'Does then the royal pantry lack anything?' he exclaimed. 'They lack the Sabbath,' he retorted; 'do you indeed possess the Sabbath?'

R. Ishmael b. R. Jose asked Rabbi: On account of what virtue do the Babylonians live [a life of wealth]? In virtue of the Torah [which they study]. And in Eretz Israel? In virtue of the tithes. And the people of the Diaspora? Because they honour the Sabbaths and festivals. R. Hiyya b. Abba said: I was once invited by a man in Laodicea²; they brought before us a table borne on sixteen staves, and on it was of everything created in the first six days; a child sat in the middle and recited, *The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof* (Ps. xxiv, 1). Why? So that the owner should not grow conceited. Said I to him, 'My son, whence did you merit all this wealth?' 'I was a butcher,' replied he, 'and whenever I saw a well-favoured animal, I set it aside for the Sabbath.'³

R. Tanhuma said: It once happened in Rome on the eve of the great fast [sc. the Day of Atonement] that a certain tailor went to buy a fish, and it fell out that he and the governor's servant began bargaining for it. Each overbid the other until it reached twelve *dinars*, at which price the tailor bought it. At dinner the governor demanded of the servant, 'Why have you not served fish?' 'I will tell you the truth, sir,' he replied. 'A certain Jew did thus to me: did you really want me to bring you a single fish for twelve *dinars*!' 'Who was it?' inquired he. 'So-and-so, the Jew,' he answered. He had him summoned and said to him, 'A Jewish tailor can eat a fish at twelve *dinars*!' 'Sir,' replied he, 'we have one day when all our sins of the year are forgiven, and we honour it greatly.' When he produced proof of his words, he dismissed him.⁴

5. The wicked Tinneus Rufus⁵ asked R. Akiba: 'Why does this day [the Sabbath] differ from other days?' 'Why does one man differ from other men?' he retorted.

¹ Shab. 119a. ² A town of Syria. ³ V. Shab. 119a.

⁴ Cf. story in Shab., *loc. cit.*, of a certain Joseph, who honoured the Sabbath. ⁵ A Roman governor of Judea; v. Sanh. 65b.

'What did I ask you and what did you answer me?' inquired he. 'You asked me,' he replied, 'why does the Sabbath differ from all other days,' and I answered you, 'Why does Rufus differ from other men.' 'Because the emperor desired to honour him,' said he. 'Then this day, too, the Holy One wished to honour.' 'How can you prove it to me?' 'Let the river Sambatyon prove it, which carries stones the whole week² but allows them to rest on the Sabbath.' 'You are evading the question,'³ he exclaimed. 'Then let him who brings up [the dead by] his male genital prove it,' he replied, 'for every day he [the dead] comes up but not on the Sabbath.'⁴ He went and made a test with his own father: every day he came up, but on the Sabbath he did not come up. After the Sabbath he brought him up [again]. 'Father,' said he, 'have you become a Jew after death! Why did you ascend during the whole week but not on the Sabbath?' 'He who does not keep the Sabbath among you of his own free will must keep it here in spite of himself.' 'But what toil have you there?' he demanded. 'The whole week we undergo judgment, but on the Sabbath we rest.' Then he went back to R. Akiba and said to him: 'If it is as you say that the Holy One, blessed be He, honours the Sabbath, then He should not stir up winds or cause the rain to fall on that day.' 'Woe to that man!'⁵ he exclaimed; 'it is like one who carries [objects] four cubits.'⁶

6. A philosopher asked R. Hoshaya: 'If circumcision is so precious, why was it not given to Adam?' 'If so,

¹ That this is indeed the seventh day.

² The strong force of its current carries along stones and rubble, rendering it unnavigable. It is a mythical river; v. Theodor *ad loc.* and Neub. *Géogr.*, p. 33.

³ Lit. 'you are drawing me away'—to a distant place;

you quote as proof a distant river I have never seen.

⁴ This refers to a kind of necromancer (*bā'al-ōb*) who brought up the dead by means of the membrum virile.

⁵ Lit. 'let fainting come upon that man'.
⁶ The whole universe is God's private domain, as it were, and when He moves the winds and rain it is to Him like carrying in private ground, which is permitted even on the Sabbath.

⁷ I.e. why was he not born circumcised?

he replied, 'why do you shave the corners of your head and leave your beard?' 'Because it grew with me in folly,'¹ was the answer. 'If so, you should blind your eye and cut off your hands!'² 'To such an argument have we come!' observed he.³ 'I cannot send you away empty-handed,' said he; '[the real reason is this:] whatever was created in the first six days requires further preparation, e.g., mustard needs sweetening, vetches need sweetening, wheat needs grinding, and man too needs to be finished off.'⁴

7. R. Johanan said in R. Jose's name: Abraham, who is not reported to have kept the Sabbath,⁵ inherited the world in [limited] measure, as it is written, *Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it* (Gen. XIII, 17). But Jacob, of whom the keeping of the Sabbath is mentioned, viz. *And he rested* [E.V. 'encamped'] before the city (*ib.* xxxiii, 18), which means that he entered at twilight and set boundaries before sunset,⁶ inherited the world without measure, [as it is written], *And thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, etc.* (*ib.* xxviii, 14).

8. Now why did He bless it? R. Berekiah said: Because it has no mate. The first day of the week has the second, the third has the fourth, the fifth has the sixth, but the Sabbath has no partner. R. Samuel b. Nahman said: Because it cannot be postponed: a festival can be postponed, the Day of Atonement can be postponed,⁷ but the Sabbath cannot be postponed.

R. Simeon b. Yoḥai taught: The Sabbath pleaded to the Holy One, blessed be He: 'All have a partner, while I have no partner!' 'The Community of Israel is your partner,' God answered. And when they stood before the mountain of Sinai, He said to them, 'Remember what I said to the

¹ In childhood and youth, before I reached the years of discretion. Hence it is of less value and I cut it.

² These, too, you have from birth.

³ Your arguments are mere sophistries.

⁴ By circumcission.

⁵ Mah.: it is not stated specifically that he kept the Sabbath, but only in general terms that he kept God's law; v. *infra*, LXIV, 4.

⁶ V. *infra*, LXXIX, 6 *ad fin.*
⁷ These are dependent on the day which the Court declares to be New Moon; thus if New Moon is declared a day later these too fall later.

CHAPTER XII (BERESHITH)

1. THESE ARE THE GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVEN AND OF THE EARTH WHEN THEY WERE CREATED (II, 4). *Lo, these are but parts of His ways; and what blemish of aught is heard of Him! But the thunder of His mighty deeds who can understand* (Job xxvi, 14)? R. Huna said: Whatever things you see are but parts of the ways of the Holy One, blessed be He, as it says, 'Lo, these are but parts of His ways; and what blemish of aught is heard of Him': what defect is heard of Him? 'But the thunder of His mighty deeds who can understand'? R. Huna said: When thunder goes forth in its full force, no creature can understand it. It is not written, none understands, but 'who can understand?'¹ The intelligent know His hints and His thoughts.² Said R. Huna: If you cannot comprehend the essential nature of thunder, can you comprehend the essence of the world! If a man tells you, 'I can comprehend the essential character of the universe,' say to him, 'For what is the man that cometh after the king' (Eccl. II, 12)? i.e. after the King of the Universe, the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He! R. Nahman said³: This may be compared to a thicket of reeds which no man could enter, for whoever entered therein lost his way. What did a certain clever man do? He cut down [some reeds] and entered, then cut down more and penetrated further; thus he entered through the clearing and went out; then all began to enter through his clearing. R. Nahman gave another illustration. Imagine a large palace with many doors, so that whoever entered therein lost his way. What did a certain wise man do? He took a ball of cord and tied it near the door. Then all commenced to enter and go out

¹ Which implies that some may understand.

² Y.T.: they understand it as a hint to introspection and repentance.

³ Mah.: this is a comment on the first half of the verse just quoted, viz. *And I turned myself to behold wisdom*—i.e. I (sc. Solomon) endeavoured to find a method to understand the wisdom of the Torah. Cf. S.S. R. I, 1, § 8.

XI. 8-10] MIDRASH RABBAH

Sabbath, that the Community of Israel is your partner, [hence,] *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy* (Ex. xx, 8).

9. BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE RESTED FROM ALL HIS WORK WHICH GOD CREATED TO MAKE (II, 3).¹ R. Levi said in the name of R. Hama b. R. Hanina: The Holy One, blessed be He, created three objects on each day: on the first, heaven, earth, and light; on the second, the firmament, Gehenna, and the angels; on the third, trees, herbs, and the Garden of Eden; on the fourth, the sun, the moon, and the constellations; on the fifth, birds, fish, and the Leviathan; on the sixth, Adam, Eve, and moving creatures.² R. Phinchas said: In the sixth He created six things: Adam, Eve, creeping things, cattle, beasts, and demons. R. Banayah said: *Which God created* and made is not written here, but WHICH GOD CREATED TO MAKE: whatever the Holy One, blessed be He, was to have made on the seventh, He created beforehand on the sixth.³

10. R. Phinchas said in R. Oshaya's name: Although you read: BECAUSE THAT IN IT HE RESTED FROM ALL HIS WORK WHICH GOD CREATED TO MAKE, He rested from the work of [creating] His world, but not from the work of the wicked and the work of the righteous, for He works with the former and with the latter. He shows the former their essential character, and the latter their essential character. And how do we know that the punishment of the wicked is called work? Because it is said, *The Lord hath opened His armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of His indignation, for it is a work that the Lord God hath to do* (Jer. L, 25). And how do we know that the bestowing of reward upon the righteous is called work? Because it is said, *Oh how abundant is Thy goodness, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee, which Thou hast wrought for them that take refuge in Thee, in the sight of the sons of men* (Ps. xxxi, 20)!

¹ Lit. translation. E.V. . . . 'Which God in creating had made.'

² *Remes*, which in his view includes animals and wild beasts.

³ Rendering: God created what He was to make (on the seventh day).

—Hence he made six things instead of three on the sixth day.