

## Chapter 1

### The Memorial of the World's Creation

At the end of the account of the creation of the world with which the book of Genesis begins, we read:

On the seventh day God finished his work which he had made (or done); and he rested (Heb. *šābat*) on the seventh day from all his work which he had made (Gen. 2 : 2).

The story of the Old Testament sabbath therefore begins with the sabbath or repose of God after his work of creation. The following verse goes on to say:

And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he rested (*šābat*) from all his work which God had created and made.

In what way God 'blessed' or 'sanctified' the seventh day, we are not told, but it is hard to give the words any meaning unless one understands them to imply that God forthwith appointed the day to be observed in some fashion by mankind, whom he had just created.<sup>1</sup> The fashion in which the day was appointed to be observed is explained in another part of the Pentateuch, in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue as recorded in Exod. 20 : 8-11, where reference is made to Gen. 2 : 2f, and the same words 'blessed' and 'sanctified' (Heb. *bārak* and *ḥādās*) are used:

Remember the sabbath day to sanctify it. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is a sabbath unto the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son nor thy daughter, thy manservant nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger who is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and sanctified it. The seventh day, then, was 'blessed' and 'sanctified' to be a day of rest: indeed, by a significant variation of language we are told that it was not the seventh day but the 'sabbath' day (Heb. *šabbāt*, day of rest) which God blessed and sanctified at the creation. So what Gen. 2 : 2f. implies, when read in the light of this commentary supplied by Exodus, is that at the creation God commanded man to imitate his Maker by

'doing work' for six days and 'resting' on the seventh. Since man had been 'made in the image of God' (Gen. 1 : 26f.), imitation of his Maker was no inappropriate vocation. Man's work was to rule the animal creation and tend the vegetable creation (Gen. 1 : 26, 28; 2 : 15). And after his work, there followed rest.<sup>2</sup>

That this is what Gen. 2 means seems so apparent that it is somewhat surprising that there has been so much controversy about it over the centuries. Reluctance to agree that the sabbath goes back to the creation may be traced to various sources. Among the rabbis and the Fathers it seems to have been mainly due to the absence of explicit reference to sabbath-keeping by the patriarchs. In later times it seems to have been mainly due to fear of being brought into bondage through legalistic misinterpretations of the sabbath-rest, when applied to Sunday. In our own day it seems to be mainly due to doubt about the way the creation-narrative is to be interpreted in relation to scientific enquiry (though sometimes to a general agnosticism about the historicity of the Old Testament).

#### THE SABBATH IN THE PATRIARCHAL AGE

It is certainly true that there is no explicit reference to sabbath-keeping by the patriarchs. It is also true that there is no clear evidence for a sabbath or seven-day week in sources outside the Bible dating from the pre-Mosaic period: for if the sabbath goes back to creation, one might expect to find traces of it among many ancient peoples. Traces, indeed, there are, but not the institution in its fullness. As Willy Rordorf shows,<sup>3</sup> those who have tried to find the source from which Israel derived its seven-day week and sabbath in Babylonian or other non-Jewish cultures have failed. Yet the evidence to which these writers have appealed could well be the last relics of an earlier sabbath-institution, even if they are not sufficiently similar to deserve to be regarded as the formative origins of a later one. The 'Pentecontad Calendar', which Hildegard and Julius Lewy (followed by Julius Morgenstern) claim to have traced among Semitic peoples of Assyria, Babylonia, Syria, and Palestine from the end of the third millennium BC onwards, was an annual calendar to some extent at least based on periods of seven or eight days (Lewy, 'Origin', pp. 1-152); and it seems certain from the evidence quoted by Rordorf that the Babylonians divided the month into four parts, particularly distinguishing the seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, and twenty-eighth days, and called the full moon (round about the fourteenth day) *šapattū*. In neither of these cases is there a

continuous sequence of seven-day periods (the former being geared to a year of 365 days and the latter to a lunar month); nor is it certain that *šapattū* is etymologically connected with *šabbāt*, or likely that the full moon actually fell on the fourteenth day of the month; but the parallels do not appear to be imaginary, and could go back to a common source.

Be this as it may, one would not *necessarily* expect to find evidence of the preservation of a primeval sabbath among heathen peoples, but only among the faithful patriarchs. Even among these (and their descendants), the Bible makes no explicit reference to sabbath-keeping until Exod. 16. But this could mean either that the ordinance is so taken for granted that it is not mentioned (compare the absence of references to circumcision from the narrative books of the Old Testament after Joshua, and to the sabbath itself from the books between Deuteronomy and 2 Kings), or that for one reason or another it was not observed, although it had undoubtedly been instituted (compare the non-observance of circumcision in the wilderness, and the non-observance of the ceremony of booths for many centuries, Josh. 5 : 2-9; Neh. 8 : 17). The former explanation is the more likely one, since the existence of the seven-day week (probably implying the sabbath as the division between one week and the next) is reflected right through the book of Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus. Periods of seven days (counting exclusively) or eight days (counting inclusively) are repeatedly referred to (Gen. 7 : 4, 10; 8 : 10, 12; 17 : 12; 21 : 4; 31 : 23; 50 : 10; Exod. 7 : 25; 12 : 15f., 19; 13 : 6f.), three being the only other number of days which occurs with comparable frequency; and in Gen. 29 : 27f. technical reference seems to be made to a 'week'.<sup>4</sup>

When one does at length reach an explicit reference to the sabbath, in Exod. 16, it does not look like the first institution of the festival. The rule about the seventh day is there incidental to the directions about gathering the manna, and seems more like conformity to a pre-existing observance. The fourth commandment in Exod. 20 could more easily be the institution of the sabbath, but in the chronology of Exodus the events of Exod. 16 are undoubtedly earlier. And even if Exod. 20 is taken by itself, one must not ignore the fact that it represents the sabbath as a memorial of creation. Can it then be instituting the festival? It would surely be odd to be instituting a memorial of creation as late as the Exodus. It seems better therefore to see Exod. 16 and 20 not as imposing a new ordinance but as reiterating a much older one (that of Gen. 2, to which Exod. 20, as we have seen, refers),

in a manner comparable to the reiteration of the institution of circumcision in Exod. 4 and Lev. 12, long after its first institution in Gen. 17. Exod. 16 may indeed be the *revival* of the sabbath, as something *relatively* new, after its inevitable disuse during the Egyptian bondage. This would account for the absence of the article before 'sabbath' until v. 29, and for the mild treatment of sabbath-breaking in vv. 25-30, as contrasted with Num. 15 : 32-36.

How the patriarchs kept the sabbath is a subject on which speculation could easily run riot. In the nature of the case, if they did keep it, they kept it by resting. But is there any evidence, some will ask, that it was a day of worship as well as a day of rest? The answer to this is that the distinction is a false one: their very resting was worship. For on the sabbath they did not merely rest as they rested at night, involuntarily, to restore and refresh their powers of body and mind; on the sabbath they rested deliberately, in obedience to God's command, in commemoration of his creative work, and in imitation of his own rest at the end of that work. The day had been 'sanctified', and their resting was a holy sign. Such resting was worship not only in the figurative New Testament sense, according to which all obedience to God's will is spiritual worship, spiritual sacrifice; it was also worship in the formal and literal sense, according to which it consists of words or symbols used for the glory of God and the edification of man.<sup>5</sup>

This being so, it is quite credible that the day was used also for those other acts of worship which we know the patriarchs to have performed, and for which the release from normal tasks on the sabbath would give liberty. Some of the acts of worship by the patriarchs described in Genesis are purely personal or purely occasional, but their normal public worship (or household worship, for in the patriarchal age there is little distinction between the two), consists of prayer (Gen. 4 : 26; 12 : 8; 26 : 25), sacrifice (Gen. 12 : 8; 13 : 18; 26 : 25; 28 : 22; 33 : 20), and teaching (Gen. 18 : 19). That these acts were regularly performed on the sabbath, even if to some extent on other days also, seems entirely probable.

The second and third of the three difficulties, mentioned on p. 3, in the way of taking Gen. 2 : 3 at its face value, can be more briefly dealt with. The second is the legalistic manner in which some who emphasise the creation sabbath have applied the doctrine to Christian practice. This, of course, is no argument against the doctrine itself—it only seems to be. Legalism forgets that our Lord's own attitude to the sabbath was the reverse of legalistic, and that there is an important

sense in which Christians are free from the Law—not only from its penalty, but also from its obligation. Literal obedience to the detailed outward observances of the Law was seen by the first Christians as a burdensome yoke from which Christ had freed them (Acts 15: 10), and as a middle wall of partition, hindering the conversion of the Gentiles, which Christ had broken down (Eph. 2: 14f.). The New Testament stresses the fact that observance of the Law is summed up in love (Matt. 22: 36-40; Rom. 13: 8-10; Gal. 5: 14), and that consequently the Christian is not bound to obey the Law literally except in so far as love of God and man binds him to do so. This 'fulfilment' of the Law makes very far-reaching demands on the Christian—greater demands, in fact, than the old literal interpretation made (Matt. 5: 17-48); but they are demands which do not enslave the Christian but set him free, since they are accompanied by the gift of God's Spirit (Rom. 8: 1-17). However, we must say more about this when we come to consider the Mosaic sabbath in the following chapter.

The third and last difficulty is doubt about the way the creation narrative is to be interpreted in relation to modern scientific enquiry. Is the creation narrative really speaking of literal days? If not, was it a literal day on which God rested and which he sanctified? This raises very large issues, but it is not necessary to decide how the creation narrative should be interpreted before answering the question whether God sanctified a literal day. The latter question is answered for us by the commentary on Gen. 2: 3 which is provided in the fourth commandment, quoted earlier, where a literal day of rest is undoubtedly commanded, and where the reason given is that God sanctified the seventh day when he created the world. He may have appointed the literal day as being merely analagous to the figurative 'days' on which he himself worked and rested, but it was a literal day that he appointed, and he did appoint it at the creation. On this, the fourth commandment leaves us in no doubt.

#### THE SABBATH AS A CREATION-ORDINANCE

If the sabbath goes back to creation, and belongs to the nature of things as God intended them from the beginning, it stands on a different plane from the ordinances which originated in the Mosaic Law. These, as we have seen, are not necessarily binding in their literal sense on Christians, since they were not given to all mankind but to Israel only, and have now, with the coming of the gospel, been 'fulfilled'. The Mosaic Law, as Paul teaches in Gal. 3, was in one sense a parenthesis between

the age of the patriarchs and the age of the gospel. Yet even those features of revelation which are older than the Mosaic Law and belong to the age of the patriarchs have sometimes been fulfilled, and in the literal sense abolished, under the gospel: circumcision and ritual sacrifice (both prominent in the book of Genesis) are cases in point. The mark of a 'creation ordinance', as theologians call it, is not that it antedates the Law but that it begins with man's very creation. John Murray, in the chapter on 'Creation Ordinances' in his book *Principles of Conduct* distinguishes four such ordinances for mankind in the creation narrative: parenthood, marriage, the sabbath, and work. Each of them is instituted before the Fall (marriage in Gen. 1: 27; 2: 18-24, parenthood in Gen. 1: 28, work in Gen. 1: 26, 28; 2: 15, and the sabbath in Gen. 2: 3), and three of them are specifically endorsed, and attendant penalties imposed, when the Fall takes place (for marriage and parenthood, see Gen. 3: 16; and for work, Gen. 3: 17-19). The significance of the fact that marriage goes back to creation, and of the form in which it is found at creation, is emphasised by our Lord in Matt. 19: 3-9, where the parenthetical character of the Law again comes to the fore. 'Moses', he says, 'for the hardness of your hearts permitted you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so'. Another aspect of this ordinance is stressed by Paul. Since the woman was created 'from the man' (from his side) and 'for the man' (as a help meet for him), not the other way round, and since this subordination of the woman to the man was reiterated at the Fall (Gen. 3: 16), it should always have a place in human families and human society, he teaches (1 Cor. 11: 7-9; 14: 34; 1 Tim. 2: 11-14).<sup>6</sup> The unchanging validity of the other three creation ordinances is not so clearly stated in the New Testament, but what is true of one is presumably true of all, and in the case of the ordinance which most concerns us, the sabbath, its unchanging validity is probably implicit in our Lord's statement that 'the sabbath was made for man' (Mark. 2: 27), as we shall see later in this chapter. If so, there can be no grounds for doubting the immutability of the other two ordinances, since they clearly belong in pairs. The ordinance of parenthood belongs with the ordinance of marriage, and the ordinance of work with the ordinance of rest. The relationship between work and rest makes it significant also that the New Testament so insists on work as a Christian duty (Acts 20: 35; Eph. 4: 28; 1 Thess. 4: 11; 5: 14; 2 Thess. 3: 6-12; 1 Tim. 5: 13). If rest is a creation ordinance, presumably work is also. If work is a Christian duty, so, presumably, is rest.

#### THE PRIMEVAL SABBATH IN HELLENISTIC JUDAISM

The traditions of interpretation of the Old Testament which developed among the Jews in the intertestamental period, and are represented in surviving literature, can be broadly distinguished, according to language and origin, as Hellenistic or Alexandrian, and Semitic or Palestinian. The latter tradition can then be subdivided into the Pharisaic, Sadducean, and Essene streams. In some respects, the last three schools of thought seem to have had a lot more in common with each other than with Hellenistic Judaism, but it is easy to exaggerate the extent to which the latter diverged. Hellenistic literature was regarded with suspicion by many Pharisees; it sometimes showed great sympathy towards Greek philosophy; and some of its most distinguished representatives were ignorant of the Semitic languages. Yet this is only half the picture. Palestinian literature was eagerly translated into Greek at Alexandria by Jews who did understand Hebrew and Aramaic, and the Greek translations often found their way back into Palestine, where Greek was widely spoken, accompanied (no doubt) by original literature in the Greek language. In this Greek literature, the opinions of the Palestinian schools are frequently reflected; and conversely, the rabbinical literature sometimes reflects ideas which seem to have originated at Alexandria, as does the New Testament also. On the matter of the sabbath, it is characteristic of Hellenistic literature to view it as a creation ordinance, common to all men, and it is characteristic of Semitic literature (though with some qualifications) to view it as an ordinance peculiar to Israel. The New Testament treatment of the matter seems to owe quite as much to the Hellenistic tradition as to the Semitic.

One of the earliest Hellenistic theologians of whom anything is extant is the philosophically-minded Alexandrian writer Aristobulus, Philo's great predecessor, who in the second century BC produced an exposition of the Old Testament Law, fragments of which are preserved by Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius.<sup>7</sup> One of these fragments is concerned with the sabbath. Aristobulus writes:

With this it is closely connected, that God the creator of the whole world has also given us the seventh day as a rest, because for all men (*pari*) life is full of troubles: which day indeed might naturally be called the first birth of light, whereby all things are beheld. The same thought might also be metaphorically applied in the case of wisdom, for from it all light proceeds . . . But more clearly and more beauti-

fully one of our fore-fathers, Solomon, said that it (i.e., Wisdom) has existed before heaven and earth; which indeed agrees with what has been said above. But what is clearly stated by the Law, that God rested on the seventh day, means not, as some suppose, that God henceforth ceases to do anything, but it refers to the fact that, after he has brought the arrangement of his works to completion, he has arranged them thus for all time . . . He has also plainly declared that the seventh day is ordained for us by the Law, to be a sign of that which is our seventh faculty, namely reason, whereby we have knowledge of things human and divine.

Though what Aristobulus says is not entirely explicit, he appears to be making three main points:

(i) God who created the world gave the sabbath to all men (not just to Israel) as a rest from the troubles of life.

(ii) The sabbath (as the memorial of creation, or because God on the first sabbath 'saw everything that he had made')<sup>8</sup> may be called the birthday of light, by which all things are beheld. To light corresponds the metaphorical light of reason and wisdom; and (though the sabbath is the seventh day, not the first day, on which light was created) it must be remembered that wisdom existed even before the first day (and the day before the first day corresponds to the seventh day). This involved argument is apparently aimed to show that the sabbath is the day for the exercise of reason and the pursuit of wisdom.

(iii) The fact that God rested on the seventh day does not mean that thereafter he ceased to do anything, but that his creative work was then complete for all time. (Thus, God's sabbath rest continues for all time, during which he is constantly active, but not as creator.)

Philo's exposition of the sabbath two centuries later is much fuller, the theme appearing at many places in his works, but he likewise dwells on these three points, in a manner strikingly similar even if not absolutely identical.

(i) He teaches that the sabbath has existed from the creation, and for all people, not just for Israel. It is 'the festival not of a single city or country but of the universe, and it alone strictly deserves to be called public, as belonging to all people' (*De Opificio Mundi* 89). God at the creation bade 'those who should live as citizens under this world-order (*politeia*) to follow God in this as in other matters' (*De Decalogo* 98). The sabbath has held the place of honour in nature 'from the time when the world was framed', and what happened at the Exodus was not that it was first instituted but that Israel was taught to date it aright,

after the true date had got lost through the upheavals of history (*De Vita Mosis* 1.207; 2.263).

(ii) The sabbath has not only existed from creation, but is the memorial of creation, and Philo therefore delights to call it 'the birthday of the world' (*De Opificio Mundi* 89; *De Vita Mosis* 1.207; *De Specialibus Legibus* 2.59). It is also the day of light: 'seven . . . may quite rightly be described as the light (*phōs*) of six, for seven reveals as completed what six has produced' (*De Specialibus Legibus* 2.59). The sabbath is consequently linked with 'the seventh and truly divine light', 'the seventh and perfect light', 'that most brilliant and truly divine light', which is virtue (*Legum Allegoriae* 1.16–18). It also goes back, in a sense, before creation: 'that day has held the place of honour in nature, not merely from the time when the world was framed, but even before the heaven and all that sense perceives came into being' (*De Vita Mosis* 2.263). As the day of light, it is the day of contemplation and the pursuit of wisdom: 'In the story of the creation . . . we are told that the world was made in six days and that on the seventh God ceased from his works and began to contemplate what had been so well created, and therefore he bade those who should live as citizens under this world-order to follow God in this as in other matters. So he commanded that they should apply themselves to work for six days but rest on the seventh and turn to the study of wisdom . . . Always follow God . . . Find, too, in the seventh day the pattern of thy duty to study wisdom, that day in which we are told that he surveyed what he had wrought . . . Let us not then neglect this great archetype' (*De Decalogo* 97–101). The sabbath is the day set apart for the pursuit of 'philosophy' (*De Opificio Mundi* 128). 'On this day we are commanded to abstain from all work, not because the Law inculcates slackness—on the contrary . . . when he forbids bodily labour on the seventh day, he permits the exercise of the higher activities, namely, those employed in the study of the principles of virtue's lore' (*De Specialibus Legibus* 2.60f.; cp. also section 64). And in this connection he relates how public teaching is given in the synagogues on the sabbath (section 62f.), a theme to which he returns in *De Vita Mosis* 2. 215f., in *Hypothetica* 7.12f., where he speaks of the reading and exposition of the Law, in *De Legatione ad Gaium* 156f., where he speaks of instruction in the Jews' 'ancestral philosophy', and in his accounts of the Therapeutae (*De Vita Contemplativa* 30–33) and of the Essenes (*Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit* 80–82), where he again speaks of teaching and of the reading and exposition of Scripture.

(iii) Finally, Philo deals with God's perpetual sabbath, in which he

is not idle: 'On the seventh day the Creator, having brought to an end the formation of mortal things, begins the shaping of others more divine. For God never leaves off making, but even as it is the property of fire to burn and of snow to chill, so it is the property of God to make' (*Legum Allegoriae* 1.5–7; cp. also sections 16, 18). He says elsewhere that God alone truly and eternally rests, not because he is idle, but because he works with absolute ease (*De Cherubim* 87–90).

As will be seen in the next chapter, slight traces of some of these ideas are to be found in Palestinian Judaism, but little more than that.

#### THE PRIMEVAL SABBATH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

It was noted on p. 7 above that the conception of the sabbath as a creation ordinance is probably to be found in Mark. 2 : 27, where our Lord asserts that 'the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath'. A striking parallel to this saying occurs in one of the earliest Palestinian midrashim, *Mekilta*, where Rabbi Simeon ben Menasya interprets Exod. 31 : 14 as meaning 'the sabbath is given over to you, but you are not given over to the sabbath' (tractate *Shabbata* 1).<sup>9</sup> There is, however, one significant difference. In the teaching of *Mekilta*, and in the Palestinian tradition generally, the sabbath is an ordinance peculiar to Israel, and 'you' in Simeon's dictum means Israel. Christ, however, does not say that the sabbath was *given* to Israel, but that it was *made* for man, the word 'made' (*ginomai*) suggesting a connection with the 'making' of the world, and the word 'man' (*ho anthrōpos*) suggesting mankind as a whole. What our Lord's choice of words seems to imply, therefore, is that when God made the world, he also made the sabbath, and that he made it not just for Israel but for mankind. If so, he endorses the natural interpretation of Gen. 2 : 3, in the manner of Aristobulus and Philo, and declares the sabbath, like marriage, to be a creation ordinance of general and permanent validity.<sup>10</sup>

Another of Christ's recorded sayings, this time in the Fourth Gospel, is even more strikingly reminiscent of Aristobulus and Philo. Charged with healing on the sabbath, he replies, 'My Father worketh even until now (*heōs arti ergazetai*), and I work' (John. 5 : 17). Though this could be interpreted as meaning that God works on sabbaths as well as on weekdays, in accordance with the literalistic Palestinian idea of the relation of the days of the week to God (see chapter two), it is more straightforward to understand it in the Hellenistic manner, as meaning that God's sabbath is permanent. Hellenistic, too, is the unhesitating assertion that on his sabbath God continually *works*.<sup>11</sup> These traces of

Hellenistic teaching are not surprising when one notes how active Hellenistic Jews were in Jerusalem itself at the time when the Christian church originated (Acts 6 : 1, 9; 9 : 29). Our Lord was evidently ready to endorse Hellenistic teaching, where appropriate, no less than Palestinian.

The same theme of God's perpetual sabbath since the creation is taken up and developed by that great Christian Hellenist, the writer to the Hebrews (Heb. 3 : 7-4 : 11). The direction in which he develops the theme is eschatological: he is not concerned with God's activity during his sabbath rest, but with our promised opportunity of sharing in that rest. Yet his eschatology is different from that of Palestinian Judaism, which simply saw the sabbath as a type of the rest which the righteous will enjoy in the age to come (*M. Tamid* 7.4; *Mekilta. Shabbata* 1); it is a Christian eschatology, based on the Hellenistic conception of God's perpetual sabbath since the creation, and stressing that the rest promised is God's own rest (Heb. 4 : 3f., 10), and that those who enter into it are not unbelieving Jews of past generations but Christian believers (Heb. 3 : 12, 14, 19; 4 : 2f.). Also, it is probably a partially realised eschatology, like the eschatology of Hebrews in general, teaching that a foretaste of the promised rest is already enjoyed in this life (Heb. 4 : 1, 3, 10).

Neither in John 5 : 17 nor in Heb. 3-4 is anything explicit said about the observance of a literal sabbath. But the inference sometimes drawn that the two passages exclude this is, to say the least, gratuitous. According to their teaching, God is already enjoying his sabbath rest in heaven, and his promise that men will share in it is already being realised; so why should a literal sabbath not be a means of that realisation, and a pledge of the full realisation still to come? (See Gaffin, *Acts*, pp. 158-66.) More positively, the background of the two passages, as we have seen, lies in a tradition of Jewish thought in which the observance of the literal sabbath is basic—in which it is held that the God who began his perpetual sabbath on the seventh day has also sanctified that day for man. In the passages from John and Hebrews, therefore, this complementary truth is not so much excluded as implied. And in Mark 2 : 27 it seemingly comes to formal expression.

## Notes

### CHAPTER I (pp. 2-12)

1. In OT usage (as in NT usage) it is normally people that are 'blessed', and often people that are 'sanctified', not things. However, on those occasions when God 'blesses' a thing, he does good to it and good to men through it (Gen. 27: 27; Exod. 23: 25; Deut. 7: 13; 28: 5, 12; 33: 11, 13; Job 1: 10; Psalms 132: 15; Prov. 20: 21). Hence, for God to 'bless' the sabbath implies that he makes that day a blessing to men. One may compare the birthday that is 'cursed' and 'not blessed' in Jer. 20: 14 and Job 3: 1-9: it becomes a day of darkness and sorrow, instead of a day of light and joy. Again, when God 'sanctifies' a thing, he sets it apart as holy, to be treated as such by men (Exod. 29: 43f.; 1 Kgs. 9: 3, 7; 2 Chr. 7: 16, 20; 30: 8; 36: 14). He is not elsewhere said to 'sanctify' a *day*, but the meaning is doubtless the same as when he sanctifies any-

- thing else, namely, that he sets it apart to be observed as holy. Similarly, when it is men who 'sanctify' a day, or a year, they set it apart as holy, or (if already set apart by God) treat it as holy (Lev. 25 : 10; Neh. 13 : 22; Jer. 17 : 22, 24, 27; Ezek. 20 : 20; 44 : 24; Joel 1 : 14; 2 : 15).
2. In agreement with this, B. S. Childs affirms that Exod. 20 and Gen. 2 belong to a common tradition, and that both base the obligation of the sabbath on creation and date it from that era (*Exodus*, p. 416).
  3. *Sunday*, pp. 18–24. See also de Vaux, pp. 476ff. De Vaux is clear, however, that the sabbath is very ancient, possibly pre-Mosaic, being found in all strands of the Pentateuch and both forms of the Decalogue. The great antiquity of the sabbath is also recognised by Rowley (*Worship*, pp. 45f., 91f.) and Andreassen (*Sabbath*).
  4. It could be argued that the weeks of Genesis and the early chapters of Exodus are not necessarily in continuous sequence, and might simply be the approximate period of one of the phases of the moon. On this view, either of the above explanations of the absence of reference to sabbath-keeping would be as likely as the other. But there is no evidence that the biblical week changes its basis and character in the middle of the book of Exodus, and there are in fact examples in Genesis of two weeks in sequence (Gen. 8 : 10, 12; 29 : 27–30), even if not of a greater number. The sabbath so controls the biblical week that 'sabbath' is used as one of the names for the week (Lev. 23 : 15; 25 : 8).
  5. This is not to say that the sabbath rest did not also, like nightly rest, contribute to physical and mental refreshment. Exod. 23 : 12 and Deut. 5 : 14f. teach that human and even animal nature need not only sleep but a weekly change from toil. The anthropomorphic account of God's rest on the seventh day of creation in Exod. 31 : 16f. implies the same thing.
  6. This is not the place to attempt a full treatment of the topical and controversial issue of the subordination of the woman to the man. For a discussion of the subject, see Bruce and Duffield, *Why Not?*
  7. Gratuitous doubt was thrown on the genuineness of these fragments in the nineteenth century. For a thorough modern vindication of them, see Walter, *Thoraausleger*. The fragment here quoted comes in Eusebius, *Praep. Evan.* 13.12.
  8. In the biblical account, this is stated at the end of the sixth day (Gen. 1 : 31), but Philo, as we shall see, supposes it to have actually happened on the seventh day, and Aristobulus may have done the same.
  9. Rordorf, being conscious that Simeon is not attacking the sabbath, takes the bold and unusual step of denying any parallel with the saying of Jesus (op. cit., pp. 62f.). His grounds are that Simeon applies his saying not to the satisfying of hunger but to the saving of life, and that he did not live till the end of the second century AD. But the satisfying of hunger and the saving of life are in principle the same thing, and the saying probably did not originate with Simeon, since a parallel saying about the temple occurs in 2 Maccabees, a work written not later than the first century BC (see 2 Macc. 5 : 19).
  10. This interpretation of Mark 2 : 27 is early attested by the variant reading

'created', *ktizō*, for *ginomai*, and by the corresponding Syriac rendering *berā*'. The interpretation has been most recently defended by Jeremias, *Theology*, pp. 208f. The primeval origin and general application of the sabbath is not, in context, the main point which Christ is concerned to make, but in the light of the difference between Palestinian and Hellenistic teaching his choice of words is probably deliberate. The contrast between this saying on the sabbath and his saying in Mark 7 : 14–23 on distinctions of foods, when he 'made all foods clean', is striking, and appears to refute the idea that for Christ the sabbath was just one more ceremonial regulation, on a par with all others. There is a similar contrast with Mark 13 : 2, where he announces the approaching end of the temple (and its sacrifices).

11. This takes no account of Oscar Cullmann's interpretation of the verse, adopted by Jewett (*Lord's Day*, pp. 84–7), according to which God's sabbath follows his present 'work' and has not yet begun. Such an explanation cannot be judged completely impossible, but it ignores the OT and Jewish background of the saying, and the relation of the saying to first century Christian thought.