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“Behold, it was very good” – God’s Praise of the Creation (Gen 1:4, 10,12,18,21,25,31) and its Background

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“Behold, it was very good“ – God’s praise of the creation (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) and its background.

Siegfried Kreuzer

Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a, the so called first creation account, in many regards is a very specific story. Not only its position as the first text of the bible and the first of the creation accounts led to its extraordinary importance and to its effect in the Wirkungsgeschichte, but also specific expressions like man created in the image of God and God’s work for six days and his resting on the seventh day. Another peculiarity of Gen 1 is that God praises his work: “Behold, it was very good”, and that he is doing so in regard of almost every single work while at the end this praise is heightened and concluded with an unsurpassable “and God saw every thing, that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.” (V. 31). In spite of the familiarity of these words the reason for this peculiar phrase and its possible background have rarely been asked for and not really answered.

I. History of research and exegetical aspects.

The statement “it was good” is made several times, but in slightly different form. At the first time it is given in connection with the object which is evaluated: “And God saw the light that it was good.” With this, the praise is connected with the light and separated from the darkness as light was separated from darkness before. The statement “and behold, it was good” is repeated in V. 10.12.18.21.25 and culminates in the final summary statement of V. 31.¹

What is the meaning of this statement? In one of the most extensive discussions of Gen 1, there are many references to this sentence (mostly by the expression “Billigungsformel”, but they mainly refer to the structure of Gen 1.² More in relation to the content are the words of W.H. Schmidt:³ „Wie auch im letzten Fall [Fehlen der Formel beim zweiten Schöpfungswerk] zu entscheiden sein mag, jedenfalls lassen jene absichtlich, aus theologischen Gründen vorgenommenen Abwandlungen den Sinn der Billigungsformel erkennen. Wie die Vollzugsbestätigung auf den Wortbericht, so bezieht sich die Billigungsformel auf den Tatbericht. Gott stellt über seinem eigenen Werk fest, daß es ‚gut‘, also ‚angemessen, sachgemäß‘ ist. Dies bedeutet gewiß nicht, daß sich Gottes Vollkommenheit irgendwie in der Vollkommenheit der Welt widerspiegelt, sondern daß die Dinge ihren rechten Platz haben und die ihnen zukommende Aufgabe erfüllen.“

(“However one may decide in the case [discussed] before [i.e. the absence of the formula in V. 8], the variations show the theological intentions of the formula: As the execution formula relates to

* An earlier German version of this paper was presented in the Festschrift for James Alfred Loader, WAS 5, 2010.

¹ In the Septuagint the phrase is also used in V. 8. That it is not found at this place in MT is not a criticism of the רָקִיעַ (why would it than be mentioned so prominently?), but rather because the whole unit is completed in V. 10. Whether the Septuagint (or already its Hebrew Vorlage) added the expression in V. 8 or if MT deleted it in order to get a sevenfold statement can hardly be decided.

² O. H. Steck, *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift* (FRLANT 155; Göttingen [1975] ²1981), e.g. p. 64; p. 83 fn. 311; p. 131 fn. 521.

³ W.H. Schmidt, *Die Schöpfungsgeschichte der Priesterschrift* (WMANT 17; 3. Aufl., Neukirchen, 1973), p. 61.

the word account, the approval formula refers to the deed account. God declares in regard to his work that it is 'good', i.e. appropriate, fitting. This certainly does not mean that God's perfectness is mirrored in the perfectness of the world, but it declares that all things have their right place and fulfil their function.”).

But why is this statement about the goodness of God's creation made at all? There is not such statement in the other creation texts. What is the intention and what may be the reason for this sevenfold statement? – Basically two answers have been tried, one refers to the behaviour / reaction of an artist / creator, the other tries to connect the praise of the creation to the praise of the creator as it can be found in some psalms.

The first line of reasoning was used by H. Gunkel in his famous commentary on Genesis: “‘God found the light good.’... A similar statement recurs in the subsequent creations. Like the artist who evaluates his work critically when the ecstasy of creation has subsided, so God inspects each creation afterward, testing it. And he finds each good and beautiful. The work has succeeded, ‘God rejoices over his creation’ (Ps 104:31).”⁴

This explanation is surprising because it is not originating from the exegetical or religio-historical context but rather from the idea of a modern artist. This is different from Gunkel's regular use of Mesopotamian or Egyptian material and at least indirectly shows that Gunkel did not know any comparable tradition, be it from Mesopotamia or from Egypt. The explanation or comparison as such goes back at least to the 18th century. W.C.L. Ziegler, 1794, wrote:⁵ „Der Verf. denkt sich nemlich [sic!] Gott höchst einfach und sinnlich, als einen Baumeister, der die einzelnen Teile seines begonnenen Werkes ansieht, nachdem sie fertig geworden sind, und nichts weiter dabei zu erinnern [d.h. wohl: nichts daran auszusetzen; SK] findet.“ (“The author thinks God in a very simple and sensual way, as a master builder who looks at the single parts of the work he just began, and who, after having completed it, finds nothing to criticise.”)

Applying the basic idea to Gen 1 Ziegler speaks of the single steps of his work the master builder is looking at. – Ziegler's idea is only rarely taken over as directly as Gunkel did, but in a more or less adopted form it can be found with different authors, even – besides all other differences to Gunkel – e.g. in G. Wenham's commentary: Observing that in V. 31 instead of the usual *ki* there is *hinne*, he concludes that this is „suggesting God's enthusiasm as he contemplated his handiwork.“⁶

U. Cassuto, in spite of his usual polemics against Gunkel, took up Gunkel's explanation quite closely, although without naming him: „An analogy might be found in an artist who, having completed his masterpiece, steps back a little and surveys his handwork with delight, for both in detail and in its entirety it had emerged perfect from his hand.“⁷

J. Skinner criticised Gunkel's explanation as to anthropomorphic, but his own interpretation is quite weak: „‘Good’ expresses the contrast of God's work to the chaos of which darkness is an

⁴ H. Gunkel, *Genesis* translated by M. E. Biddle foreword by E. W. Nicholson (Macon, Ga., 1997) p. 107 (=H. Gunkel, *Genesis* (HK.AT I/1, Göttingen 1917) p. 105).

⁵ C.W. Ziegler, „Kritik über den Artikel von der Schöpfung nach unserer gewöhnlichen Dogmatik“ (Magazin für Religionsphilosophie, Exegese und Kirchengeschichte, Band 2, 1–130. Helmstädt, 1794), quoted in: Schmidt, *Schöpfungsgeschichte*, p. 62, fn. 3.

⁶ G. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15 (WBC 1, Waco TX, 1987)*, p. 34.

⁷ U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis. Part I.* (Jerusalem 1961).

element. Gu. [= Gunkel] goes to far in suggesting that the expression covers a ‚strong anthropomorphism‘ (the possibility of failure, happily overcome). But he rightly calls attention to the bright view of the world implied in the series of approving verdicts, as opposed to the pessimistic estimate which became common in later Judaism.“⁸

Even more wanting is the explanation given by E.A. Speiser, who refers to the word “good” only at Gen 1: 4 and only says „Heb. good has a broader range than its English equivalent.“⁹

W.H. Schmidt starts close to Gunkel’s explanation. Asking about the “Sitz im Leben” of the formula he mentions that the sentence “to see that something is good/beautiful” can be found at different places and asks: Where else are there statements which confirm a work as well done and that failure is excluded?¹⁰ He goes on mentioning the evidence from Egypt as it has been collected by A. S. Yahuda.¹¹ There, craftsmen are considering their work and saying: “You will see (or: I will see) that it will be good.” Schmidt also mentions Jer 18 (Jeremiah at the potter’s) – although there for the (negative) statement the word used is not טוב but יִשָּׁר – and from there proceeds to Gen 2 where God also acts like a potter and goes on to ask if probably P – contrasting J – wants to exclude the possibility of failure by emphasizing the success.¹² This chain of reasoning is not impossible, but it looks rather strained and does not fit Gen 1 very well as it looks defensive while Gen 1 certainly is different and sounds very competent and confident.¹³

Another way of explanation refers to a sentence from the Shabaka stone (“Denkmal memphitischer Theologie”; about 700 B.C.): “And therefore, Ptah was satisfied after he had made all things and all divine words” („Und so war Ptah zufrieden, nachdem er alle Dinge und alle Gottesworte gemacht hatte.“). - Similarly to Gen 1:31 this sentence comes at the end of the creation account, yet it goes in a different direction: Ptah is content with himself, while Gen 1 does not refer to God himself but to his creation.¹⁴ – All these comparisons are interesting at first sight, but looking closer they don’t really fit.

Besides referring to the artist, Gunkel had also mentioned Ps 104:31. The question about Old Testament parallels has been taken up by Westermann more explicitly and in a wider range. Starting with the idea of the craftsman and considering the expression “to see / to look at” in Gen 1:4 Westermann goes on to relate God’s praise of his creation in Gen 1 to the praise men and the whole creation according to Ps 104:31 and Job 38:7 would later on give to God: „Der Vorgang als

⁸ J. Skinner, *Genesis* (ICC; Edinburgh, 1930), p. 19f.

⁹ E.A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AncB 1, New York, 1964), p. 5.

¹⁰ Schmidt, *Genesis*, 62.

¹¹ A.S. Yahuda, *Die Sprache des Pentateuch in ihren Beziehungen zum Ägyptischen I.* (Berlin, 1929).

¹² Schmidt, *Genesis*, 62.

¹³ H.J. Stoebe, „טוב, tōb gut“ (THAT I, München / Zürich, 1971), pp. 652-664: p. 659f. makes a similar connection with the fall (Gen 3): „Es ist nicht unwahrscheinlich, daß die Billigungsformel des priesterlichen Schöpfungsberichtes ... in bewusster Beziehung zum Thema Sündenfall steht. Unabhängig von der Herkunft und der syntaktischen Bedeutung der Formel ... ist mit ihr gesagt, daß die von Gott gewollte Welt in Ordnung ist ..., d.h. daß sie ihrem Zweck entspricht.“ Certainly, Gen 1 contrasts god’s good creation to later reality (but not necessarily in view of the text of Gen 3). Also, the declaration that God’s creation is טוב and even טוב מאד certainly means more than just that it is adequate for its purpose (“daß sie ihrem Zweck entspricht”).

¹⁴ S. Herrmann, „Die Naturlehre des Schöpfungsberichtes. Erwägungen zur Vorgeschichte von Genesis 1“, *ThLZ* 86 (1961), pp. 413–424: p. 422f. also mentions a difference: „Ptah stellt am Ende seiner Schöpfung seine Überlegenheit über alle Mächte und anderen Götter fest“, während in Gen 1 kein solcher Ausdruck „selbstzufriedener Superiorität“ ist.

solcher ist klar: Ein Meister hat ein Werk abgeschlossen, sieht es sich an und findet es gelungen oder beurteilt es als gut. Im hebräischen Satz ist das ‚finden‘ oder ‚beurteilen‘ schon im Ansehen enthalten: Er sieht das Werk als gut an. ... Die Beurteilung des Lichtes als gut lässt sich dann nicht einfach von diesem Ansehen Gottes trennen; daß das Licht gut ist, bleibt im Ansehen Gottes begründet. ... Während des Erschaffens bleibt sie [sc. die Anerkennung] im Ansehen Gottes beruhend; nach Abschluß der Schöpfung wird sie zum Lob des Schöpfers, das von den Kreaturen widerhallte, Hi 38,7. An dieser Stelle, im Ansehen Gottes, der sein Werk als gut anerkennt, liegt die deutlichste Verbindung zwischen Schöpfungsbericht und Schöpferlob; das Lob des Schöpfers setzt die Anerkennung durch den Schöpfer fort.“¹⁵

Westermann goes on relating to creation texts in Mesopotamia where at the end of the creation process God, e.g. Marduk, is praised for his creation: „Das ist auch außerhalb Israels so: Die Weltschöpfung Marduks in Enūma eliš steht im Zusammenhang des Preises Marduks, und in den sumerischen Mythen begegnet manchmal das Lob des Schöpfergottes am Ende der Schöpfungsdarstellung. [there follows a passage from a Sumerian creation hymn] ... Gewöhnlich aber begegnet das Gotteslob in den Schöpfungserzählungen nicht. Bei P ist das im Gotteslob liegende Motiv der Anerkennung in das Urteil des Schöpfers über sein Werk zurückverlegt: Was später das Lob der Kreatur sein wird, das ist jetzt bei der Schöpfung selbst da im Ansehen Gottes.“¹⁶

This line of reasoning would fit well into an Old Testament theology where the connection and relation of different theological themes should be explained. But for our question it must be stated that there are two different themes and Ps 104:31 and Job 38,7 may shed some light on Gen 1, but do not explain it. This difference is underlined by the fact that Ps 104 and Job 38 belong to literary contexts different from Gen 1. Things would be different if there were another P-text relating to Gen 1. So, Gen 1 remains special and also Westermann's reference to Enūma eliš does not explain the statements in Gen 1 but underlines the difference.

A recent and one of the few specific contributions to our subject is M. A. Klopfenstein, „Und siehe es war sehr gut“ (Genesis 1,31). Worin besteht die Güte der Schöpfung nach dem ersten Kapitel der hebräischen Bibel? Klopfenstein looks especially for the meaning of the term „good“ (טוב), but he also briefly discusses V. 31 and the so called Billigungsformel. He basically follows Westermann and he also refers to the praise of the creator God as it is expressed in Enūma eliš. But he also says explicitly that there is no real parallel to the sevenfold טוב / מאד – declaration, be it in the Old Testament, be it in Egypt or Mesopotamia: „Da diese schon innerhalb des Alten Testaments selber eine Besonderheit darstellt, hat man umso eifriger nach vergleichbarer Reflexion in altorientalischen Schöpfungsmythen, nämlich ägyptischen und mesopotamischen, Ausschau gehalten. Doch stößt man dabei ins Leere. Wenn der neueste mir bekannte Genesis-Kommentar von H. Seebass feststellt: ‚Für die Gesamtanlage [sc. von Gen 1,1–2,4a] hat man bisher nichts

¹⁵ C. Westermann, *Genesis 1-11* (BK I,1; 3. Aufl., Neukirchen 1983), p. 156. Ähnlich auch in der Einleitung, ebd., p. 118. – Also this idea can be found in Gunkel's commentary already as he continued the above quotation (cf. above, fn. 4): “The narrator's assessment naturally corresponds to God's assessment of the world; the world is good. In the hymn of jubilation ancient Israel sang of the wisdom and goodness of the creator of the world.” Gunkel, 1997, p. 107.

¹⁶ Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, p. 228. Ähnlich auch Westermann, *Schöpfung* (Themen der Theologie 12, Berlin 1971, wo in dem umfangreichen Abschnitt II.4 „Siehe, es war sehr gut“ (pp. 88–93) ebenfalls die Verbindung zum Gotteslob (vor allem in den Psalmen 148 und 104) hergestellt wird.

Vergleichbares gefunden‘, so gilt dieses Urteil gerade auch für den טוב / מאד – Refrain.“¹⁷ - To this concluding remark on the basis of the new commentary of H. Seebass,¹⁸ nothing needs to be added.

II. A new suggestion for the טוב / מאד - formula in Gen 1

So far we have seen that the טוב / מאד – formula in Gen 1 has no real parallel, neither in the Old Testament nor in its Umwelt. Now, it is not necessary, to have a parallel. The expression and its meaning in the context of Gen 1 can be understood by itself. Gen 1 is a unique text, why not also in this regard. - On the other hand, even if Gen 1 is a unique text, there are clearly ideas and texts Gen 1 is relating to and reacting. It relates to Enūma eliš and other creation texts, it reacts to Babylonian astronomy/astrology by not using the words for sun and moon and by mentioning these celestial bodies rather late, it reacts to the Sabbath by forming the whole account according to the 7-day-pattern although it does not mention its very name, and it takes up the expressions דמות and צלם, forming it into a new idea. These observations suggest looking for some background of the טוב / מאד - formula as well.

And indeed, there is such a point of relation, an impulse taken up in Gen 1; not in the form of a new text which would not yet have been discovered or adduced, but rather a semantic impulse from the Mesopotamian world, in this case: from the Akkadian language, which is the starting point for this specific trait of praising the single works and the whole creation by a statement of the creator.

This impulse in my view is given by the akkadian word *banûm*, to make, to create, and its double meaning, because *banûm* means both, “to make / to create” and “to be good”.

For this range of meaning it makes no difference if one assumes two different roots (or rather ranges of meaning) as the Chicago Assyrian Dictionary and the Akkadisches Handwörterbuch do, or if one assumes an evolution of meaning as Huehnergard is doing: *banûm* in the ground-stem: „to build, rebuild, construct, create“, and as verbal adjective: „well made, well-formed, fine, of good quality“.¹⁹

The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary²⁰ distinguishes *banû* A and *banû* B, with both words having a wide range of usage. *banû* A (Verb) means: „to build, construct, form“ used for buildings, walls, towns, canals, but also statues, stelas and even geometrical drawings; used with a deity it gets the meaning of creating: „to create, said of a deity“, both in regard of all of mankind: „Ea, the lord of mankind, whose hands have fashioned man“ or (in Gilgamesch III, 3) „when the gods created mankind“, and also in regard of individual people: „Marduk, who loves you, has created you (*ib-ni-ka*)“ or „I am your servant Assurbanipal, whom you (Ištar) yourself have created“, and even in

¹⁷ M.A.Klopfenstein, „’Und siehe es war sehr gut’ (Genesis 1,31). Worin besteht die Güte der Schöpfung nach dem ersten Kapitel der hebräischen Bibel?“; in H.P. Mathys (ed), *Ebenbild Gottes – Herrscher über die Welt. Studien zu Würde und Auftrag des Menschen* (BThSt 33, Neukirchen, 1998), pp. 56–74: p. 57.

¹⁸ H. Seebass, *Genesis I. Urgeschichte (1,1–11,26)*, (Neukirchen 1996).

¹⁹ J. Huehnergard, *A Grammar of Akkadian* (HSMS 45, Atlanta, Georgia 1997), p. 489.

²⁰ “banitu, banu” (in: I.J. Gelb / B. Landsberger / A.L. Oppenheim / E. Reiner, *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Vol. 2: B, Chicago IL / Glückstadt 1965 = 1998) pp. 80-95 = CAD.

relation to other gods: „Why should we destroy, what we have created“ (Enūma eliš I 45); „Where is Guškinbanda, who creates god and men?“ (pp. 83-90)

banû B (Verb) on the other hand means „to grow, to be pleasant, friendly...“, and *bunnû* means „to beautify, adorn (buildings), to improve (roads), to decorate, to prepare carefully...“. (pp. 90-93)

For the relation of the two verbs the following explanation is given: „The two verbs *banû* A and B have been separated according to the meanings suggested by their lexical equivalents, into *banû* A, ‚to build, construct‘ (Sum. *dím, dù, etc.*), and *banû* B, ‚to grow‘ (Sum. *ugunu = banû ša ramani, and SAR, ...*). *Banû* B denotes, on the one hand, the growth of vegetation, and supernatural growth ..., and, on the other, refers to plants, stones, animals, and the sky... as exceptionally well formed. In the latter contexts, it seems that the factitive *bunnû* is derived from the adjective in the meaning ‚*formosus*‘ and that the simple stem *banû* is a secondary late formation“. (p. 93)

According to this view, the verb *banû* B is derived from the adjektiv *banû*, fem. *banītu* which means „well-formed, well-made, of good quality (said of staples, objects), fine, beautiful (said of persons and animals), friendly, propitious“. It expresses “good” and “beautiful” in different context: „The girl who is so fair, so beautiful“, „I loved their (Marduk’s and Nabû’s) beautiful selves (lit.: stature) as my own precious life“, „glorify the beautiful one (Nanâ)“; or in personal names, e.g. „Šî-ba-na-at She-Is-Attractive ... cf. Šî-ba-ni-tum ...; Ba-ni-tum“; but also in relation to animals and goods: „good horses can run fast“, „send me six fine ...-garments“, „(our fathers) sent excellent gifts to one another“, „the barley is likewise of good quality“, or regarding news and messages: „I wrote these words to him as a friendly message“, „the state of friendly relations from old“, or „I treated them very well since their report was good“. Also in neo-assyrian and in neo-babylonian times *banû* is used in a wide range for people and objects: „the arable land ... is in good condition“, „(the governor answered him, saying) ‚The family is fine‘“, or in „absolute use (predicative): ‚... it is well that you have written“, „it is well, that you have seized them“, „may my LORD do whatever seems good to him“. (pp. 81-83)

The wide range of usage and the close relation of the two words is confirmed in W. von Soden’s Akkadisches Handwörterbuch.²¹ There, the words are grouped differently. Die Wörter sind hier anders angeordnet: CAD’s adjektiv *banû* equals *banû(m)* I with the meaning „gut, schön“. It is understood as adjektiv to the verb *banû(m)* II with the meaning „gut, schön sein, werden“ (vgl. CAD *banû* B). For *banû(m)* III. the meaning „gebaut“ is mentioned, but with only one example, and it is referred to *banû(m)* IV with the meaning „schaffen, bauen“(cf. CAD *banû* A). (pp.102f.)

After what is said above, it may suffice to give just a few examples: *banû(m)* IV expresses „schaffen; bauen“ and is used for the creation activity of different gods, in late Babylonian times esp. for Marduk and Bel respectively. What gets created are artifacts but also abstract ‚things‘ like fate or fortune, a word or battles. The word may describe the creative activity of men, e.g. the making of images or of objects like a plough, and it simply is the general term for building, constructing or making, e.g. of a house, a city, a wall or a ship. (p. 103 a.b)

The adjektiv *banû(m)* I, „gut, schön“, is also used in a wide range, in regard of a (human) person but also for a deity, and for animals (cattle, sheep), or things (bread, a divine statue, fertile soil etc.); but also for abstracts like words, deeds, and signs (p. 102a.b).

²¹ W. von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch, Bd. 1: A-L (Wiesbaden, 1965, 2. Aufl. 1985) = AHw.

The verb *banû(m)* II, „gut, schön sein“, also has a wide array of usages: Especially in the D-stem with the meaning „gut, schön machen“, it refers to living beings as well as to objects and to actions (e.g. bread or good supply), or to buildings, parts of them or to working in general (e.g. „als am Ofen wir schöne Arbeit machten“). In many of these cases it comes close to *banû(m)* IV „schaffen; bauen“, for which on the other hand the aspect of good and beautiful resonates. (pp. 102b.103a)

In view of this wide usage of *banû* and the closeness and overlap of the meanings of „making / building / creating“ on the one hand and of „good / beautiful“ on the other hand,²² we can assume, that these semantic aspects were known to the author(s) of Gen 1 and that it became a challenge and an impulse for the presentation of God’s creating and his creation. They answered to this challenge and impulse by taking up not only the aspect of “making, creating”, but also the aspect of “good” and “beautiful”. In doing so they took up the praise of God the creator and explicated and applied it to what God has created. It must have become a very important aspect²³ because it is used for the individual works (1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25) and summed up and heightened at the end (V. 31).

Similar to the other themes mentioned above, the priestly authors of Gen 1 took up – in this case not a text or a tradition – but a semantic challenge and – in the light of the traditions of Israel and their specific insights and intentions – made it into an important aspect of their presentation of creation. – How important this aspect was to them can be seen in its sevenfold repetition.

III. Conclusion

The טוב / מאד – טוב – formula (or so called “Billigungsformel”) which in sevenfold repetition declares God’s creation works as „good“ and the whole creation as „very good“, may be related to the praise of God as creator as it is found in e.g. in Ps 104: 31 or in Job 38:7, but it is a specific and different theme. God declaring his works as good and very good, is clearly different from the praise of God offered by his creation, be it by mankind or entities as heavens or days (Ps 19:2-5a). So far the reason for the evidently important statement in Gen 1 has not been explained and no parallel from Egypt or Mesopotamia has been found.

In the above discussion it has been shown that the wide range of meaning of the Akkadian word *banû*, which means both, “to build / to create” and “to be good” most probably has been the reason and impulse for taking up the theme. As the authors of Gen 1 did with other religio-historical themes and ideas from their environment, they took this semantic peculiarity as a challenge and an impulse for their specific presentation of God creating the world, as it has found its unique expression in Gen 1, shaped by Israel’s belief and the specific situation and insights of the priestly writers.

²² For the way the word in actual life was heard and used, it makes no difference if in lexicography it is split up in different areas of meaning as CAD and AHW present it, or if it is considered as having developed from one single root, as Huehnerard evidently does and which seems quite plausible.

²³ Probably indeed in order to emphasize that the world was created good, in spite of what people would do later on, i.e. the sins which in the priestly world view will need offering and sacrifice (cf. the point made by Stoebe, „טוב / סָבָא gut“, see above, the quotation in fn. 13).