The metaphor equating the unintelligent man with the beasts is not unknown to the psalmist. It occurs, in another form, in Ps. xxxii 9: “Be not like a horse, like a mule, that does not understand”. A similar figure of speech is to be found in Ps. lxxii 9: “Be not like a horse, like a mule; I have been (as) beasts with you”. Of interest in this connection is Ps. xxxvii 20: kiyêqar kārim. AJT translates: “as the fat of lambs”, where the sense would be improved if we read beqar kārim, “cattle of the meadows”. The enemies of the Lord are thus compared to cattle which, being sacrificed, “go up like smoke”.

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1) Prof. J. A. Emerton has kindly pointed out that this part of my suggestion has been anticipated by A. B. Ehrlich in his Randglossen zur hebräischen Bibel 6 (Leipzig, 1913), p. 3, and has actually been adopted in, for example, the New English Bible.

LIFNÊ HAŠŠABBÂT and ’AHAR HAŠŠABBÂT = “ON THE DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH” AND “ON THE DAY AFTER THE SABBATH” (NEHEMIAH XIII 19)

In reporting on his order to close the gates of Jerusalem in order to prevent the desecration of the sabbath, Nehemiah describes his action in Neh. xiii 19. Most modern English translations render the verse more or less as does the 1917 Jewish Publication Society translation: “And it came to pass that, when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark1) before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut, and commanded that they should not be opened till after the sabbath.” The literal translation2) of the phrases lifné hafabbdt and apar ha.sfabbat gives the impression that the first conveys the meaning “just before the sabbath” and the second means after sundown on Saturday. This, indeed, is how The Jerusalem Bible translates the phrases: “just before the sabbath” (with a footnote referring to Friday at sunset) and “until the sabbath is over”3). There is no question but that Nehemiah gave his order some time on Friday afternoon. That is made clear by the opening words of the verse. What is in question is whether the phrase lifné haf.sabbat also indicates, though vaguely, the time of the day4), or whether it is in fact a term (like be’serekh sabbat) for (any time) on the day before the sabbath. Similarly, the question regarding the phrase ’ahar haššabbat is whether it refers to Saturday night or is in fact a term for (any time) in the
twenty-four hour period following the sabbath (as \textit{bemōsā'ē šabbāt} sometimes is\textsuperscript{5}).

With reference to the second term, the book of Nehemiah itself gives evidence that \textit{'ahar hašabbāt} must refer to Sunday, for we read in Neh. vii 3 that, for reasons of security, Nehemiah had earlier commanded that the gates of Jerusalem should not be opened until the sun was hot, which means that his command in xiii 19 must refer to the following day and not to the night following the sabbath\textsuperscript{6}).

Sources of the Second Temple and Tannaitic periods indicate that \textit{lifnē hašabbāt} and \textit{'ahar (ha)šabbāt} were actually phrases for “on Friday” and “on Sunday”\textsuperscript{7}). In texts of Palestinian provenance of M. Shabbat XXII 2 we read: \textit{kol šebbā‘ bahammin millifnē hašabbāt}, “Whatever was put into hot water before the sabbath,” in place of the more common \textit{mišereb šabbāt}, “on the eve of the sabbath” (i.e., Friday), found in texts of Babylonian provenance\textsuperscript{8}). The same term is reflected in Hellenistic sources where Greek \textit{pro toī sabbátōn} and the nominalized \textit{prosabbátōn} are standard terms for Friday. For example, Judith viii 6 states that Judith used to fast “all the days of her widowhood except (the day) before the sabbath (\textit{prosabbátōn}, etc.”\textsuperscript{9}). Similar terminology is used for the day preceding Passover and the New Moon. \textit{‘ad lifnē bappesab} (variant \textit{pene}) in M. Nedarim VIII 2 is explained by R. Abin in the Palestinian Talmud, Nedarim VIII 3, 41a, as referring to \textit{perōs} (i.e. Gk \textit{pros}) \textit{bappesab}, the day before Passover\textsuperscript{10}). In the passage just quoted from Judith the heroine also does not fast on \textit{pronoumenōn}, the day before the New Moon. As for “after the sabbath,” Tosefta Ketubot I 1 refers to most of the days of the week by their numerical designations except for Friday (\textit{'ereh šabbāt}) and Sunday: \textit{‘im kën tinnātē le'ahar šabbāt}, “If so, let her be married after the sabbath.” That the latter reference is not restricted to Saturday night is made clear by the variant reading in one manuscript of the Tosefta\textsuperscript{11}) and in the quotation of this passage in the Babylonian Talmud, Ketubot 3b: \textit{bē’ēbād baštabāt}, “on the first (day) of the week.” M. Shabbat XIX 4 discusses: “He who had two infants, one to circumcise after the sabbath and one to circumcise on the sabbath.” The phrase \textit{'ahar hašabbāt} cannot refer to Saturday night here since circumcision is normally to take place in daytime\textsuperscript{12}). This term is also reflected in Greek: Justin Martyr (died ca. 165 C.E.) refers to the Sunday of Jesus’s resurrection as \textit{tē metā tēn Kroni-kēn, hētis estin Helion, bēmēra}, “the (day) after Saturn’s (day), that is, the Sun’s day”\textsuperscript{13}).