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The influence of Plato on Philo

Ephraim Shimoff

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THE INFLUENCE OF PLATO ON PHILO

BY

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
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JULY, 1946
TO MY WIFE
PREFACE

This thesis represents an original investigation into the works of Philo. It maintains that Philo was greatly influenced by Plato and Neo-Platonic or Stoic doctrines. While much has been written on Plato, very little secondary material is to be found on Philo, whom many regard as a weak-kneed eclectic and half-blind groper for the true light. The author maintains that Philo, although an eclectic had some originality in his thinking.

This work is in no way a substitute for a first-hand study of the works of Philo. It will serve a worthy purpose if it will prompt further original research in the field. The writer does not claim that his inferences and deductions concerning Philo's works are valid and without any error, but does state that no opinions are given without any serious reflective thought.

In the process of the development of this thesis the following libraries were mainly used: The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., The Richmond Public Library, The Union Theological Seminary Library and The University of Richmond Library. The author acknowledges here the
courtesies and kindnesses extended to him by the staffs of these libraries.

Last but not least, the writer wishes to express his indebtedness to Dr. B. C. Holtsclaw. His counsel and advice can not well be measured or expressed. The influence of his teaching and personality has been very stimulating and inspiring to the writer during his post graduate work.

Richmond, Va.                    E. S.
May, 1946
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INTRODUCTION

Very little is known about the life of Philo-Judaeus of Alexandria, but from his writings we see that he was one of the most spiritually-minded thinkers of his time. He came from an influential Jewish family and was trained in Greek as well as in Jewish learning. A citizen of the place which was at once the chief home of the Jewish Dispersion and the chief center of Hellenistic culture, he owes his position in the history of religious thought which we find in his voluminous writings, to that remarkable fusion of Judaism and Hellenism. He sought to bring harmony between those two cultures by means of allegory which he had learned from the Stoics.

Philo combines the strongest possible belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures with the freest possible criticism. Every word of the Scriptures is to him inspired. This is all part of his very nature and his patriotic instinct sought to confirm it. But at the same time he is profoundly conscious that the sacred words when taken in their literal sense are sometimes inadequate. There is a hidden meaning in every biblical statement and he therefore interprets it allegorically. But in spite of the fact that the law is allegorical the literal injunction must also be kept. It is true that all the rites have inner meaning, but that actual rites are to inner meaning as body is to soul, and the body demands our care as the dwelling of the soul.

§ De Isag. Ab. 82f.
Unfortunately, Philo is an inveterate rambler, which makes the reading of his work very difficult. This does not mean that his thoughts are disconnected. In fact it is the mark of a true rambler that his thoughts are always connected and that he is unable to restrain himself from following up each connection as it occurs. Philo takes his text and expounds its philosophical meaning and proceeds to illustrate it from some other text in which he discerns the same idea. But the second text generally contains some other words in which he finds some other idea, too valuable to be passed over. The process might, of course, go on indefinitely, but even Philo feels that there must be some limit to it and ultimately returns to his main subject.
CHAPTER I

Philonic Interpretations

There was an old tradition which lasted to the middle of the sixteenth century that Philo made a journey to Rome during the reign of the Emperor Claudius; that there he met Peter who preached to the Romans at that time, and became a Christian. Some went so far as including him in the first Church Fathers.

But while the Church Fathers up to the sixteenth century regarded Philo as a Christian, they still thought of him as a Greek philosopher and almost uniformly connected him with Plato. Bentwich quotes a proverb current among the Greeks "Either Plato Philonizes or Philo Platonizes."\(^1\) The discussions of Philo for many centuries were colored by this striking epigram. Scholars who approached his works were already prepared to connect him with Plato.

It is surprising, however, to find such a variety of interpretations in that very same formula. All accept the epigram as

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containing something permanently true; but some think that it means likeness in style only; others that the likeness is in thought alone; while others accept it in its fullest possible value and find resemblance both in thought and in style -- an opinion most widely accepted.

Many scholars consider Philo an eclectic. Ritter, in his History of Philosophy, declares that Philo minglest doctrines of Plato, the Pythagoreans, the Peripatetics and Stoics.2 Ritter also thinks that in spite of the mixture of heterogeneous elements in Philo, all his statements are based on certain general principles which come from Oriental sources and are religious rather than philosophical.3

The lack of coherence which ritter finds in Philo's thought, occupies his interpreters at the present day. While there have not been wanting scholars of note during the last century who have upheld Philo's consistency and retained him as one of the great thinkers,4 there has been strong opinion to regard him as of only second-rate power. Zeller thinks that Philo wavers between Stoicism and a Platonism which is fundamentally irreconcilable with it.5 Some even regard him as reproducing a doctrine of Posidonius and question whether he had any first hand knowledge of Plato.6

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3. Ibid. P. 411.
The eagerness to discover parallels in Philo to other writers has had the effect of serving to intensify the impressions of his uncritical eclecticism. In interpreting Philo, it is wrong to begin by searching for such parallels. Philo can be appreciated only when the task to which he set himself is understood. He was educated as a Greek, his mind was stored with the thoughts of Greek philosophy and his works show that it was on Greek speculation that he nourished his own spiritual and intellectual life. At the same time he was a loyal Jew with a pride of Jewish monotheism and morality, and a loyal acceptance of the Scriptures and traditions of his ancestral faith. He believed that all the truth of all the schools of Greek thought received full justice in Judaism. His more or less conscious reasoning seems to have been that Plato's thoughts were true, therefore all of Plato's thoughts were to be found in the Five Books of Moses. Philo does show that the philosophy of Plato can be found in detail in the Five Books of Moses, but only by straining language to the breaking point. The Greek world, however, was accustomed to such straining of language. The Stoic philosophers found their own ideas in Homer and the conviction grew that ancient books were allegorical presentations of philosophy. It was therefore no new method that Philo used when he interpreted the book of Genesis as the story of progress of the human soul. By regarding the stories of the Book of

7. Philo, De Cong. pp. 74-76.
8. Philo, De Mig. Abi, pp 90-94.
Genesis as the story of progress of the human soul. By regarding the stories of the Book of Genesis as allegory, he gave formal recognition to the authority and supremacy of the Law and at the same time secured the freedom to think the way he was trained.

But if the same truths is to be found expressed in such diverse forms as the Platonic dialogues and the Books of the Law, such comparatively slight variations as that between the Stoic and Platonic statements are of no importance whatever. Philo was convinced that there was a fundamental agreement. For example, the Platonic ideas, the Stoic logoi, the Old Testament angels and the Greek demons are the same.9 This does not mean that he did not see the varying points of view from which these proceeded. Indeed he saw these differences very clearly. He wages a vigorous war against what he calls the atheism and materialism of Stoic philosophy by stating: "These men imagined that this visible universe was the only thing in existence, either being itself God or containing God in itself as the soul of the whole. And they made Fate and Necessity divine, thus filling human life with much impiety, by teaching that apart from phenomena there is no originating cause of anything whatever, but that the circuits of sun and moon and other heavenly bodies determine for every being in existence both good things and their opposites. Moses, however,...... differs from their opinion about

God, holding that neither the universe nor its soul is the primal God, and that the constellations or their revolutions are not the primal causes of the things that happen to men. Nay, he teaches that the complete whole around us is held together by invisible powers, which the Creator has made to reach from the ends of the earth to heaven's furtherest bounds. But certain ideas and conceptions are, from this point of view, identical in spite of differences in background.

The identification of similar ideas leads to a peculiar eclecticism of style throughout the entire field of Philo's works. Looking at Greek philosophy as he did from a standpoint which he regarded as superior, he seems to see that the differences of the schools were in many cases a mere matter of terminology. By varying the expression of his ideas he emphasizes similarities and establishes parallels quite strongly. No doubt this variation of terminology and phrasing was in part adopted with an apologetic purpose. The leaders of the Dispersion were under the constant necessity of counteracting the attraction of the Gentile speculation in order to retain their own people. By his eclecticism in philosophical vocabulary, Philo exhibits Judaism as the transcendent philosophy, which is the source of all that is true in all schools of Greek thought.

The clue to his thought is to be found in Platonism. There is a basis of clear logical reasoning with a frank recognition of the limits of human thought. Then, using the principle of speculative idealism, he gives a probable account of the universe, particularly of man and his duties and relations. He is convinced that life comes to its fulfilment not in the pursuit of the lower life of the body, but in the field of the spirit. It scarcely needs to be said that he is no mere copyist of Plato. The intervening centuries had by no means been barren in the fields of philosophy and science. Jewish elements naturally enter into his thought, as evidenced in his "Life of Moses," where at the very beginning he declares that he based it upon "many traditions, which I have received from the elders of my nation." Again his interest is primarily religious and theological, and this bias determines the emphasis he lays on the different aspects of Plato's thought. Ideas originating in Plato are at times expanded and developed in certain directions with details that come from later sources. The point of view is, however, Platonic. The following chapters will deal with Philo's solution of the more important problems of philosophy, and illustrate the influence of Plato's thought and language in those fields.
CHAPTER II

Philo's Conception of Reality

Just like Plato, Philo teaches a dualistic conception of the universe. God to Philo brings order into a world of flux or chaos. But this power that shapes in the physical world the images of His own thought can not make the images perfect. Matter is always disobedient to some extent. Physical necessity limits God's activity and distorts his work. God and matter stand opposed to one another.

The aim of Philo's work was to show that of these two elements the spiritual alone has genuine value and therefore man's life can come to its fulfilment only in the life of the spirit. He is convinced that the sensible world with all the materialistic endeavor and sense enjoyment does not have the reality that to our perception it seems to have. It is subject to decay and nothing in it can give rest to the soul. Such rest comes only from the knowledge of that true reality in which there is

no shadow of turning. In this sense Philo comments on the biblical verse "And so Abraham fell and laughed" (Gen. XVII : 17) "He fell not from God but from himself, for in clinging to the immovable Being he stood, but fell from his own conceit. The true joy is the joy which befits the virtuous alone." It is then of supreme importance that man should be made aware of the permanent reality of which the world is but a distorted reflection. This true reality is the mind or will which is beyond all existence as its cause and principle, the living self-conscious Being who created the universe and who now governs and guides it.

In his description of this ultimate reality, Philo has been accused of some inconsistency. While he insists that God absolutely transcends the universe, he is equally insistent on the Stoic doctrine that the universe is created and governed by Him. This inconsistency although present in Philo's thought can not be granted as an imperfect fusion of opposing doctrines.

The inconsistency between the transcendence and immanence of God, is one which no system that holds to the doctrine of an unchanging reality beyond the world of sense can escape. Exactly the same difficulty presents itself in Plato's Theory of Ideas. The ideas, too, are at once transcendent and immanent.

14. De Nat. Nom. 175
15. Inge, Article on Philo, Hastings's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics
In view of such considerations, it must not be assumed that 
Philo is holding two incompatible doctrines, if in spite of his emphasis 
on the transcendence of God, he frequently uses the language of Stoicism 
in speaking of His immanence. One expression must here be considered. 
God, according to Philo, fills all things not with His thought only but 
also with His essence. In another of his books, Philo, also states 
that, "God since His fullness is everywhere is near us and since His eyes 
behold us ........" This expression seems to imply the complete adoption 
of the Stoics. However, the context shows in every case that this expression 
does no more than emphasize God's omnipresence. His essence is opposed 
to thought not because it is matter but because it is something beyond 
thought. God is present, not as we in thought participate in events far 
distant in space or time, but actually present. Philo therefore uses 
metaphors from the material world to express immanence of the transcendent 
God.

Another expression used of God which has been similarly 
interpreted in a Stoic sense is that "God is the soul of the universe." This is significant in view of the passage in "De Migrations Abrahami" he states: "He (Moses) differs from their opinion about God, holding 
that neither the universe nor its soul is the primal God." The apparent

16. Leg. All. 3:4.
17. De Gig. 47.
18. Leg. All. 1:91.
contradiction disappears when we see that in "De Migratione Abrahami" 181 he is speaking of God as He is in His essence, while the other phrases are used to express over thoughts of him. In His essence He stands outside the universe. Not He but His powers support it.19 We can speak of God as the soul of the universe only by analogy, but the analogy is not perfect. Our soul did not create the body. God is beyond the universe not in thought only but in essence and He created it.20 The description of God as the soul of the universe though Stoic originates with Plato. He clearly states: "And the Soul of the Universe ......... began a divine beginning of unceasing and intelligent life lasting throughout all time. And whereas the body of the Heaven is visible, the Soul is herself invisible but partakes in reasoning and in harmony, having come into existence by the agency of the best things intelligible and ever existing as the best thing generated."21

A more detailed study of Philo's doctrine of God shows beyond all question his essential agreement with Plato. It has been said that God in Plato is the Idea of Good and as such is a part of the ideal world to be grasped by our thought, while in Philo He is beyond the world of ideas and we must pass even beyond mind to receive the vision of Him.

20. Ibid. 192-194.
21. Timaeus 36 Dc.
This interpretation of Philo is correct but he is not in this respect to be contrasted with Plato. We can not boldly identify Plato's God with the Idea of Good and whether we make this identification or not God is still for Plato "beyond the world of Ideas." The Idea of Good is "not essence in itself but still transcend essence," just as for Philo God is beyond the world of ideas as their ultimate cause and as the most generic idea. The Idea of Good in Plato is never attainable in human knowledge. The identification of God with the Idea of Good can not be stated positively as a doctrine of Plato. With much greater plausibility the God of Plato may be identified with "pure being" and impersonal. The identification is clearly made in "Sophists" 249A where in an eloquent digression, Plato speaks of being as having soul and mind. Logically, pure being is unknown according to Plato. It is simply a religious concept.

Since this is so, it can not be maintained that the ecstasy in which the vision of reality is received, is for Plato more intellectual in its character than it is for Philo. It is important to point out that the vision of true being is for Plato attained not through intellectual activity but in moments of divine madness. He states: "All my discourse so far has been about the fourth kind of madness which causes him to be

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22. Republic 509 B.
23. Timaeus 44C, 46D.
24. Sophists 248 D E.
regarded as mad, who, when he sees the beauty on earth, remembering the true beauty, feels his wings growing and longs to stretch them for an upright flight, but can not do so, and like a bird gazes upward and neglects the things below. My discourse has shown that this is of all inspirations, the best and of the highest origin to him who has it or who shares it and that he loves the beautiful partaking in this madness is called a lover. The vision of the divine is for Plato as for Philo the vague consciousness of something infinite. We must emphasize the fact, however, that the notion of the contemplation of the divine is for both thinkers a religious concept.

Philo is, then, giving what is at least a plausible interpretation of Plato when he identifies God with pur being. Now, of pure being, we can say nothing more except that it exists. Philo asserts: "for to none has He shown His nature, but He has rendered it invisible to our whole race. In a word, who can make any positive assertion concerning His essence or quality or state or movement." To both thinkers God's name is unknown. He is beyond perception, beyond knowledge, the unmoved, the unchangeable and beyond time.

We must remember, however, that the very denial of qualities to God is due to the effort to describe perfection. "God is not below qualities, He transcends them. The active cause is perfectly pure and

25. Phaedrus 249 DE.
26. Leg. All. 3:206.
unsullied Mind of the universe, transcending knowledge, transcending virtue, transcending the good itself and the beautiful itself. 27 The doctrine of the perfection of God is at the basis of the theology of the Republic. "The true quality of God we must always surely attribute to him, whether we compose in epic, melic or tragic verse. And is not God of course good in reality and always spoken of as such? Certainly .... For the good we must assume no other cause than God, but the cause of evil we must look for in other things and not in God. .... But God surely and everything that belongs to God is in every way in the best possible state." 28 Absolute perfection can be described only negatively. The absolute simplicity of the divine is the simplicity of a unity in which differences are transcended and united. God is then perfect and in our efforts to get an approximate conception of Him we have a right to attribute to Him the qualities of our ideal of perfection. Strictly speaking such statements about God are untrue but they are partly true. God is at least as good as the content of our human word. We get over notions of the Unbegotten, Philo tells us, from the things that happen to ourselves. 29 Although he is beyond the reach of language, we must speak of Him in words we know, if we are to have our comprehension of Him at all. So Plato finds it necessary to give positive determinations

28. Republic 372 B, 381 B.
29. De Conf. Ling. 96.
of God if He is to be the object of aspirations and devotion. The account we give of Him is only a probable account, an approximation of the truth. "Rather we should be content if we can furnish accounts that are inferior to none in likelihood, remembering that both I who speak and you who judge are both human creatures, so it becomes us to accept the likely account of these matters and forbear to search beyond it."30 Plato thinks that this must be so when we attempt to speak of any Absolute, even absolute ideas. Any terms we use are used by analogy. But such language as we can use we have a right to use, even while we remember that the perfection we attempt to represent escapes and transcends all determinations.

We must remember too that this transcendent Being is the only cause, the father and creator of the universe, that He fills all things not only with His thought but also with His essence. True His essence, is not exhausted in the universe. He is above it and beyond it. We may say that only His powers are in the universe. But while He is above His powers, He includes them. What they do, He does through them. Now, they are visible, working in the world. From their activity in the world, we get a clue to the nature of God. "It was from the world and its constituent parts, that we gained an apprehension of the First Cause. Should a man see a house carefully constructed ....... he will be of the opinion that the house never reached the completeness without the skill

30. Timaeus 29 D.
of the craftsmen ....... Just so anyone entering the world."31 In Plato's 
Cratylus there is a discussion concerning the naming of gods from their 
powers.

The ideal of perfection set forth by Philo is in striking accord 
with that of Plato. The chief point emphasized is the unchangeability 
of God in contrast to the changing things of sense. "It is impossible 
even for a god to wish to alter himself, but as it appears each of them 
being the fairest and the best possible abides forever simply in its own 
form."32 "For what greater impiety could there be than to suppose that 
the Unchangeable changes?"33 Other points held in common are the perfect 
goodness of God, a goodness which means fatherly care for men and for all 
creation; His perfect knowledge and power.

The figure of the sun in Plato,34 there applied to the Idea of 
the Good is a frequent figure in Philo to represent God. He is the sun 
of the intelligible world.35 Philo carries the analogy farther than Plato 
does. For example, he says that just as the physical sun dazzles by its 
brightness so the glory of God dazzles over minds.36

Over against the perfect Unchangeable Being, Plato had set in 
his thought the world of change in which we live. The world is a constant

31. Leg. All. 310E.
32. Republic 361 B.C.
33. Qued Deus Im. Sit 22.
34. Republic 508a.
35. De Ab. 119a.
flux. Evil is due to the fact that the world of matter by its very nature does not receive the motions of order but moves in confusion. 37 This teaching is also that of Philo. This world is to him, too, a world of constant flux, where things are waveriing and uncertain, where evil clings to us by the very fact that we are on the earth and bound to becoming. 38

Philo's Platonism can also be recognized in connection with his doctrine of matter. Matter is in his system completely passive, without quality or motion, capable under the influence of divine power of becoming anything and everything in sensible existence but of itself dead and formless. The language used is borrowed from Plato's description of primary matter. Primary matter is for Philo and Plato alike, uncreated and a kind of eternal being. The following passage from Philo implies the independent existence of matter: "For when out of that confused matter, God produced all things, He did not do so with His own handiwork, since His Nature forbear that He should touch the limitless chaotic matter. Instead He made use of incorporeal potencies." 39 Both authors in describing primal matter so emphasize its nothingness in comparison with God that all notions are abstracted from it, except of extension, though Philo does not identify primal matter with space as explicitly as Plato does.

37. Timæus 47E-48A.
38. Conf. ling. 177.
Both authors again while they think of primal matter as qualified only by extension are unable in picturing creation to escape the notion of a pre-cosmic chaos. Here, too, Plato is more explicit than Philo.

40. Sp. leg. 1:328 Plato's Timaeus 30 A, 50 C.
CHAPTER III

The Intermediary Powers

Between God and creation, mediating God’s activity in the world, Philo has described a series of beings arranged in various hierarchies. Here some have found bits of Stoic, Platonic and Oriental mystic teaching mingled together without any effort to discover and state the principle which gives to all of these their unity of content. However, it is more widely believed that Philo’s eclectic style is responsible for permitting himself to use the expressions of many schools without departing at all from the unity and consistency of his own thought. The clue to his thought on this subject, too, is Platonism, the mingling in Plato of sound logical thought with the imagination of the religious teacher and founder of myths. These two elements are present in Philo’s teaching. Perhaps they are not so clearly and explicitly distinguished as they are in Plato, but they are to be found nevertheless.
In order to understand the thoughts of Philo, we must think of these intermediary beings or powers as thoughts of God or modes of His activity. We must remember, however, that for the religious imagination, the Logos or logoi are persons. If any distinction is made between angels and powers it is that the powers are ideal counterparts of the angels, or higher angels belonging more to the ideal world. But this distinction is not preserved throughout his teaching. In "De Somniis" 1:134-43 Logoi are described exactly as are angels in "De Flandtions" 14 and powers in "De Gigantibus" 6. Powers and Logoi are identified in "De Somniis." "For God not deeming it meet that sense should perceive Him sends forth His Words to succor the lovers of virtue and they act as physicians of the soul and completely heal its infirmities, giving holy exhortations with all the force of irreversible enactments and calling to the exercise and practice of these and like trainers implanting strength and power and vigor that no adversary can withstand." 42

Whether the Logos is to be regarded as a person or not has been a problem to many philosophers. Heinse 43 regards the following section from "De Somniis" 1:127 as decisive proof that Philo considered the Logos as a person. "The divine place, the holy country is full of

41. Conf. Ling. 171.
42. De Somm. 1:69.
incorporeal Logoi. These Logoi are immortal souls. Of these Logoi
He takes one, choosing as the best the highest one, one which is so to
speak the head of the united body and gives it a firm foundation near
His own thought." The personification is purely mythical. The Logos is
one of God's thoughts, the supreme one, it is true, but still one among
others, and so not to be regarded as completely exhaustive of His thought.

We may thus conclude that Philo speaks of the Logos and Logoi
as personal. It is unfair to interpret as Zeller has done the
fluctuation of Philo's expression between the notions of personality and
non-personality as the violent effort of a thinker who regards God as
completely transcendent to bring Him somehow into relation with the world.
Zeller thinks that for Philo the transcendence is preserved by regarding
the Logoi as personal while immanence is attained by regarding them as
mere phases of God's activity. This is true as far as it goes, but it
should be added that it is with conscious use of myth that Philo adopts
this way of speaking. Philo is here laboring under the same difficulty
that all believers in an Absolute have to face. We can not attain to God
Himself. God Himself can not come into relation with the world of change.
Yet, somehow, if He is to be a God, He must do so. How He does is an
unsolved mystery. Only some such violet method as Philo has adopted, some
mystical and metaphorical use of language can serve to give an appearance
of reconciling these two necessary aspects of an Absolute which yet enters
into relations with the universe.

The personality of the Logos is not, then, the aspect which affords the clue to its meaning in Philo's system. The Logos is primarily the idea of the universe. The name which Philo adopts for this metaphysical entity was probably current in his day in many schools of thought. It was made popular by the Stoics who used it to designate the reason or law of the universe. As such, it is their system equivalent to God, the Supreme Divinity. In Stoic teaching this reason or law is the sum of those forces which have produced the universe and the individual things in it. These forces are material.

But in spite of the materialism to which the Stoic monism led, their doctrine of the Logos has close affinities with the Platonic Idea of Good and is in fact a development from it. Both are in their respective systems logical first principles; both are represented as the cause of all that exists; both are the objects of aspiration and desire. Let us trace the development of that notion from Plato to the Stoics.

In dialectics the Idea of Good in the Republic is the final hypothesis the first principle which is axiomatic, beyond which we can not go into any discussion. No discussion is possible unless the persons who carry it on agree on some first principle. The dialectician, however, is always ready to reject this provisional hypothesis and fall back on one that is still more fundamental. He is willing to go back this way as far as he needs. Theoretically there must be a final hypothesis which is not a mere provisional hypothesis but is the truth beyond all question.

45. Republic 504 E.
This final hypothesis is the Good "so far as we assume that idea to be attainable in ethics or physics." Again in studying conduct we find that one thing is loved for the sake of another, but if we retrace this series of ends far enough we come to the ultimate Good. So in the sphere of physical science, Plato believes that the true explanation of each thing is its purpose, the good it is meant to accomplish. But this particular good is a means to a larger good and finally we come to the all-inclusive Good, an aim great enough to comprehend in itself all those subordinate aims which are the cause of the existence of all that is. The Good is, then, the end of controversy in physics and in ethics.

The Logos of the Stoics occupies the place in their system which the Idea of the Good does in that of Plato. It is at once a logical and ethical hypothesis, and an explanation of things in the universe. It is embodied in the universe. "As in Plato we trace things back to one supreme idea, so in the Stoics we trace the Logoi back to the supreme Logos. The Logos is the hypothesis in physics and in ethics, just as the Idea of Good is in Plato. Discussion for the Stoic is settled when one discovers what is the Logos, the reason of a thing."46 This reason differs from the Platonic Idea of the Good in that it is identified with God and that it is material. The Stoics were Monists and did away with the opposition between matter and thought by declaring that nothing

46. Reinz op. cit. p. 120.
exists which has no corporeal form. The Logos is, for them, the fiery mind of the universe.

Philo's doctrine differs from that of the Stoics in just these two conceptions. Logos does not, according to his teaching, exhaust the divine nature. It has already become evident above that the Logos is God's thought in so far as can be manifested in material forms. It is, then, the revelation of God as far as this can be made in the world of becoming the supreme idea that can be grasped by finite minds. As much it is "the God of us who are imperfect,"47 and metaphors are applied to the Supreme Being. The Logos is thus distinguished from the Supreme Being. It is no contradiction if at times activities are in some passages assigned to Tod and in others to the Logos. The Logos does not act of its own will. The subordinate powers can not act independently.48 It is always God who acts through the Logos or through the powers.49

The second main difference between the Logos in Philo and in the Stoics is that in Philo the Logos is not material. It is true that Philo describes the Logos as the unbreakable bond of the universe50 and as extended through all things51 filling all things with its essence52

47. Leg. All. 3:207.
48. Confing. 179.
49. Leg. All. 3:96.; De Mag. Ab. 6.
50. De Plant. 9.
51. Quis rer. div. 217.
52. Ibid 188.
But this does not necessarily imply materialism. Plato's language in Phaedo 99c "the good which must embrace and hold together all things" does not imply materialism either. It is impossible to avoid the metaphorical use of materialistic language in order to represent the relation of an idea to its material embodiment. It is wrong to misinterpret such metaphors and make Philo abandon his doctrine as the dualistic separation between matter and thought.

Philo's doctrine differs from that of the Stoics, then, in these two ways; he rejects their materialism and their identification of the Logos with the Supreme Being. It is in these two aspects and only in these that the Stoic Logos differs from the Platonic Idea of the Good. In spite, then, of the fact that Philo adopts the language of the Stoics in regards to the Logos his teaching is Platonic.

Philo also speaks of the reason or reasonableness of God which is not essential by different from Plato's Good. It is the hypothesis, the final standard in all dialectic. Human thought can see the reason in things and no more. We can not go any further. All thought, all existence must, in order to be finally valid, be based on this hypothesis.

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It is at once the law of nature and an ideal to which man must conform his life. Now, the visible universe is a perfect being so that in it "right reason" is completely embodied. Hence, Philo's "right reason" is at times spoken of as a copy of the divine Logos and sometimes as itself the divine Logos.54 The Logos is the law of the visible universe. In "De Migrat.ione Abrahami" Philo states: "Law" being evidently nothing else than the divine word enjoining what we ought to do and forbidding what we should not do as Moses testified by saying 'He received a Law from His Words'.'55

While there is this emphasis on the moral aspects of the Logos, we must not think of it as composed of moral beings and ideal virtues only. It contains the ideas of sensation and sensible things as well as of mind and of virtues. In Philo as in Plato, the emphasis is naturally on the high moral concepts, but in both thinkers the ideas are counterparts of things as well as of moral elements. "He not (in describing world creation) manifestly describing the incorporeal ideas present only to the mind by which the finished objects that meet our senses were moulded? For before grass sprang up in the field, there was in existence invisible grass. We must suppose that in case of all other objects also on which the senses pronounce judgement the original forms to which

54. De Gig. 17 - "The sciences and virtues are daughters of 'right reason'."
55. De Hig. Ab. 130.
all things that come into being owe shape and size, subsisted before
them."\(^{56}\) In Plato's "Republic" 596 AB a similar thought is to be found.

In "De Opificio Mundi" 25\(^{57}\) the Logos seems to be the model
according to which visible human beings were formed. Here the Logos
would naturally be regarded as the idea of the composite being formed
of soul and body. But "De Opificio Mundi" 69\(^{58}\) shows that we are not to
interpret the passage in this sense. So in "De Opificio Mundi" 139\(^{59}\)
the Logos is the model for the soul only and it is in this sense that the


\(^{57}\) "Witness his (Moses') express acknowledgement in the sequel, when
setting on record the creation of man, that he was moulded after
the image of God. Now, if the part is an image of an image it
is manifest that the whole is so too, and if the whole creation,
this entire world perceived by our senses is a copy of the divine
image it is manifest that the archetypal seal also which we aver
to be the world described by the mind, would be the very Word of

\(^{58}\) "Moses tells us that man was created after the image of God and
after His likeness (Gen. 1:26). Right well does he say this for
nothing earth-born is more like God than man. Let no one represent
the likeness as one to a bodily form, for neither is God in
human form nor is the human body God like. No, it is in respect
to the mind, the sovereign element of the soul that the word image
is used; for after the pattern of a single Mind, even the Mind
of the Universe as an archetype, the mind in each of those who
successfully came into being was moulded." De Op. Mund. 69.

\(^{59}\) For the Creator, we know, employed for its (soul's) making no
pattern taken from among the created things, but solely, as I have
said His own Word (or Logos). It is on this account that he
says that man was made in a likeness and imitation of the Word,
when the Divine Breath was breathed into his face.
Logos may be regarded as the idea of man. It is the idea of man in the feature that distinguishes him from the animals, the distinctly human element in us.

In the mythology of the Logos there is no doubt that Philo was greatly influenced by Plato. Plato’s Symposium contains many thoughts used by Philo to describe the Logos in its function as a mediator between God and man. A citation of parallels is sufficient to show the Platonic influence:

**PHILO**

"To His Word, His chief messenger, highest in age and honor, the Father of all has given the special prerogative, to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator. The same Word both pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject. He glories in this prerogative and proudly describes it in these words: 'and I stood between the Lord and you' (Deut. V 5) that is neither uncreated as God nor created as you but midway between the two extremes, a surety to both sides; to the parent, pledging the creature that it should never altogether rebel against the reign and whose disorder rather than order to the child, warranting his hopes that the merciful God will never forget His own work." (Quis. rer. div. 205-206)

**PLATO**

"What can love be! As I previously suggested between a mortal and an immortal ......... A great spirit for the whole of the spiritual is between divine and mortal ......... Interpreting and transporting human things to the gods and divine things to men; entreaties and sacrifices from below, and ordinances and requitals from above; being midway between, it makes each to supplement the other, so that the whole is combined in one. Through it are conveyed all divination and priestcraft concerning sacrifice and ritual and all soothsaying and sorcery." 60 (Symposium 202 D8)

60. It is on basis of this passage that the doctrine of Logos as High Priest is based. (De Somn. 1:215; De Somn. 2:163, 185-189).
"For God not deeming it meet that sense should perceive Him, sends forth His Words to succor the lovers of virtue and they act as physicians of the soul and completely heal its infirmities." (De Somn. 1:69)

"God with men does not mingle, but the spiritual is the means of all society and converse of men with gods and of gods with men whether waking or asleep. Whosoever has skill in these affairs is a spiritual man." (Symposium 203A)

"......... for the Word of Him that IS is, as has been stated, the bond of all existence and holds and knits together all parts, preventing them from being dissolved and separated." (Pug. et Inv. 112)

"......... They give no thought to the good which must embrace and hold together all things." (Phaedo 99 C).

A second Platonic source is the doctrine of the younger gods in Timaeus. This passage suggests that the part which the Logoi play as creators of man in Philo. The reason given for the assignment of man's reason to subordinate beings is the same in Philo and in Plato. God can not be responsible for evil. Man, with his weak nature prone to sin and evil, must be created by some subordinate power.

A third Platonic source is the myth of the Phaedrus. In the "Symposium" Plato had spoken of, "the tribe of demons which, being in the midst betwixt these twain -- the Godhead and Mankind -- filleth up that distance."61 In the Phaedrus,62 Plato speaks as if he thought of souls

62. Phaedrus 247 A.
dwelling in the air. It was easy to identify these souls with the demons of the myth of the "Symposium." This is what Philo does, too, as we can see from the following passage:

"What other philosophers call demons, Moses was accustomed to call angels. They are souls that flit about the air. Of these souls some descend into bodies, others demanded that they be not conformed to any of the parts on earth. These being sanctified and embracing the service of the Father, the Creator is wont to use as His servants and ministers for the government of mortals. The others, after descending into the body as into a river, at times are seized and drawn as by the suction of the most violent whirlpools, at times again through their ability to resist the current they at first swim up, then soar aloft to the place from whence they came. These are the souls of the genuine philosophers that from the beginning to the end practice to die from the bodily life that they may gain a share of the life that is incorruptible and free of the body, the life that is with the unbegotten and incorruptible."63

The explanation of the rise and fall of the soul is in striking accord with the Phaedrus. In the Phaedrus, those souls which are not able to rise above the air, "some filled with forgetfulness and wickedness and made heavy shed the feathers of their wings and fall unto earth." These are planted in the bodies of men or beasts. The soul which in its life in the air saw, most of the divine things" passes into the seed of a man who shall become a seeker after True Wisdom, a seeker after the True Beauty, a Friend of the Muse, a True Lover.64 Such a man "getteth wings and desireth with them to fly up but is not able."

The number of Platonic reminiscences in the passage in Philo indicates that he is here a dependent on Plato. It is worth while to exhibit these in detail.

63. De Gig. 6-18.
64. Myths of Plato - Stewart 248 CD.
PHILO

"The last, then, are the souls who have given themselves to genuine philosophy, who from first to last study to die to the life in the body." (De Gig. 14).

"These, being sanctified and embracing the service of the Father, the Creator is wont to use as His servants and ministers for the government of mortals." (De Gig. 13).

PLATO

"True philosophers practice dying .......... They are in every way hostile to the body and they desire to have the soul apart by itself alone." (Phaedo 67 E).

"So He, then, having given all these commands was abiding in His own proper and wonted state. And as He thus abode, His children gave heed to their Father's command and obeyed it." (Timaeus 43A).

Philo explains that evil demons are merely souls who have taken up their abode in bodies. The good demons are creative and governing spirits called younger gods in the "Timaeus."

According to Philo, the powers which are a phase of God's activity and divine thought share His transcendence of human thought. He states that the powers in their essence can not be comprehended.65

It is also stated that God uses his powers unmixed, but when they have to do with the world of becoming they are weakened. Otherwise, our human weakness could not bear their splendour. In that same passage the powers are not only God's virtues but His creative activities, more especially the ideas. These incorporeal natures are called timeless. Such exaltation leads directly toward personification of the powers in the

imagination as subordinate gods. 66

Zeller points out that Philo makes large use of Stoic vocabulary throughout this part of his teaching, 67 but the difference between his conception and that of the Stoics is that he regards these Logoi as thoughts of God and so as incorporeal laws of being, while the Stoics think of them as material air currents. Here as elsewhere we must remember that the use of material language does not necessarily imply materialism. Philo's constant emphasis on the incorporeality of the Logoi, his identification of them with the ideas, ought to be accepted as proof that he did not at any time seriously adopt the Stoic materialism.

These angels, demons, powers or Logoi are grouped under two supreme Logoi, Goodness and Sovereignty. 68 These in turn are subordinate to the Divine Logos. The Logos is described as an angel in "De Cherubin." "Behold the armed angel, the reason of God standing in the way against you." 69 He is the "charioteer of the Powers." 70

66. They are prayed to in De Plant. 46.
69. De Cherub. 35.
70. De Fuge 101.
He is their father and guide, the place which God fills with them. He is the oldest of the angels, the archangel. He also speaks of a hierarchy of beings, God, the Logos, the creative and kingly powers, the beneficial and punishing powers and the intelligible world. The lack of consistency between the different classifications and groupings shows that Philo did not take the matter seriously.

71. De Somn. 2:165.
72. De Somn. 1:62. Place has threefold meaning, firstly that of a space filled by a material form, secondly that of a Divine Word, which God Himself has completely filled throughout with incorporeal potencies.
73. Conf. Ling. 146.
CHAPTER IV

Man's Soul and Its Powers

Philo's ethical convictions are the dominant influence in his psychology as well as in his theory of Reality. He is certain that virtue and happiness are somehow in accord, that man will find the fulfillment of his life not in the indulgence of his senses but in the activity of reason. His primary classification of the powers of the soul is the one which best accords with this conviction, the distinction that is, between the pure reason and the faculties subordinate to reason and dependent on the body. With this main point guarded, Philo adopts from the theories current in his day and details as he finds useful. The Stoic vocabulary so largely current in his day, is adopted at times even when it seems to contradict the main article of his ethical creed. The foundation of his thought is, however, to be found in Platonism. His teaching on the division of the soul can be presented more easily after a brief statement of views, held by his predecessors who largely influenced his thinking.
The main distinction on which Philo insists that between the rational and irrational soul is the primary distinction in Plato. The common division of the soul is reached by subdividing the irrational into the spirited and appetite souls. Reason is in a different category from the other two. Plato speaks of the parts of the soul as though they were separate divisions of the soul corresponding to these different functions and even locates these parts in different bodily organs.

Thought has its dwelling in the head, courage in the breast and desire in the lower part of the body.\(^74\) He does state, however, that "...... concerning the soul, then, what part of it is mortal, what part of it is immortal, and where and with what companions, and for what reason these have been housed apart, only if God concurred could we dare to affirm that our account is true; but that our account is probable we must dare to affirm now."\(^75\) He also questions whether we do not act with the whole soul in performing each function.\(^76\) Of these parts or functions of the soul, reason is peculiar to man, animals have courage,\(^77\) plants have desire.\(^78\) Where the higher part exists, the lower must be presupposed, but the converse is not true.\(^79\)

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74. Timaeus 69 B, 90 A.
75. Timaeus 72 D.
76. Republic 436 A.
77. Ibid. 441 G.
78. Timaeus 77B.
79. Republic 562 A.
Aristotle criticizes Plato's dual division of the soul on three grounds. His first ground of criticism is that, if the soul is capable of being divided, we have to look for some other incorporeal and indivisible δύναμις and we might as well let the soul itself serve. In the second place division of the soul is useless because if we are to divide it according to its functions we must make an infinite number of divisions. In the third place there are other functions that differ from one another more widely than do those which Plato has made the basis of his division. Aristotle therefore suggests another division.

In his general attitude to the soul and its divisions he does not differ from Plato in any important detail. The Platonic division of the soul into rational and irrational is accepted as sufficiently accurate for all purposes. He adopts a further division of the soul into nutritive assigned to plants, sensitive assigned to animals, and reasoning or thinking assigned man. This division is, as has been shown above, suggested in Plato. As in "The Republic" 582 the higher presupposes the lower, but the reverse is not true. Of these three divisions of the soul, reason, the form peculiar to man is exalted so that it is set off as a class by itself. This part of the soul, reason, the form peculiar to man is exalted so that it is set off as a class by

82. De An. II 2413 b 12.
itself. This part of the soul can not be entangled in the life of the body. It is simple, changeless, immortal, and eternal. The other parts of the soul form a group set over against it. Aristotle's position, then, is practically that of Plato.

The teachings of Philo can now be seen in its historical connections. In the study of its teaching it is important to notice that he uses the word "soul" in three different senses. It sometimes means that which distinguishes the principle of life in animals from plants and inorganic matter. The whole range of existence is divided according to the presence of cohesion, growth, soul and reasoning soul. Cohesion, the characteristic of inorganic things in defined as a current ever returning to itself. "It begins to extend itself from the center of the body in question to its extremes and when it has reached the outermost surface it reverses its course till it arrives at the place from which it first set out." Growth is the distinguishing feature of plants. Soul is assigned to animals. The highest class is characterized by the reasoning soul. In the fourfold divisions, soul stands for the special functions which distinguish animals from plants. It is in the sense of the animals soul that Philo says that the soul has its essence in the blood. He adopts the Stoic teaching only in this sense and not for the reasoning soul.

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83. Quod Deae 35.
84. Ibid.
But the word "soul" is used by Philo in other senses. "We use 'soul' in two senses, both for the whole soul and also for its dominant part, which properly speaking is the soul's soul, just as the eye can mean either the whole orb or the most important part by which we see. And therefore the Lawgiver held that the substance of the soul is twofold, blood being that of the soul as a whole and the Divine Breadth or Spirit that of its most dominant part." The όλη ψυχή is the house of the intellect. It is the principle of life, of thought, and of all human action. It is the pilot of the body as the intellect is its pilot.

The soul in the sense of όλη ψυχή is divided into parts called also functions or powers. According to one method of division there are seven parts, reason, speech, and the five senses; so in "De Abrahami" 29. Eight are mentioned in "Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres" 233, the undivided reasoning part and the reasoning divided into the five senses, speech and the reproductive faculty. The most common division is into the two parts the reasoning and the unreasoning. The Platonic division into reason, spirit and appetite is also adopted at times and following Plato, the reason is located in the head, spirit in the breast, and appetite about the navel and the diaphragm. Philo is uncertain

87. De Somn. 2:173.
88. De Decal. 60.
89. De Abe 272.
90. QuoJier Div. 132; Leg. all 2:6 Plato's Republic 605 B.
91. De Mig. Ab, 66-68; Leg. All 1:70; Tim. 69E, Phaed. 246 A.
whether to locate mind in the brain or in the heart.92 The Aristotelian
division into the nutritive, sensitive, and reasoning souls also occurs.93

There is a remarkable passage, "Quis Rerum Divinarum Hores" 225, in which Philo refers to soul as having been shown previously to be
divided into three parts and each of those into two. The reference seems
to be "Quis Rerum Divinarum Hores" 106-111 where men are said to receive
from God a deposit for which they must render an account. This deposit
consists of soul, speech and sense. Later in the same treatise94 he says
that these three are each divided into two parts -- soul into rational
and irrational, speech into true and false, sense into presentations where
object is real and apprehended and presentations where it is not.

This summary is sufficient to show how unimportant for Philo
all divisions are except the main one which gives the two parts rational
and irrational. The exigencies of the allegorical method lead him to
adopt now one, now another point of view. It is sufficient ground to base
an accusation of looseness of thought that in a matter such as this Philo
knows the various speculations and can adopt them as his literary method
demands.

The one distinction which persists throughout is the one which
is important for ethics, the distinction between the rational and
irrational parts of the soul. In exalting reason or rational over the

sensual or irrational he follows Plato rather strictly. Following Plato, he describes it as the only of the parts of our composite nature created by God, immortal, divine and heavenly.

Philo is, as we have shown, in accord with Plato in making the chief division of the soul that into reason and the irrational parts and exalting the reason into a different category. In this he is also in harmony with the Stoics. In the two points in which the Stoics differ from Plato, he is in accord with the latter. These two points are dogmatism and materialism.

Philo indicates clearly his lack of dogmatism. The mind or soul or reason in us is a mystery. "The mind in each of us can comprehend all other things but is unable to know itself. For let it say what is and whence it came, whether it is spirit; blood or fire, or some other substance, or only so much, whether it is corporeal or incorporeal." The soul is also said to be unknown in its essence. We are ignorant, too, of when it enters the body and where it lives in the body.

This attitude of conscious recognition of the limits of human thought is genuinely Platonic, especially as it goes with a conviction that the reality of our life is not found in the material, in the life of

95. Lower parts of the soul created by the instrumentality of inferior powers. Leg. All. 1:41; Conf. Ling. 179; Timaeus 41-42.
96. Timaeus 69c; De Nig. Ab. 185.
97. Timaeus 69c; Republic 589 D; Leg. All. 2:95; De Cig. 60.
98. Leg. All. 1:91.
100. De Nat. Hom. 10.
sense, but what we call the life of the spirit. This point of view
might also be described as Aristotelian, for Aristotle is essentially
in accord with Plato here. He holds firmly to the notion of a separable,
pure activity of thought, but he insists that it has no bodily organ
and he leaves unanswered the question of its relation to the world of
sense. 101

As regard materialism, Philo was convinced that the soul is
akin to God, a part of Him. In a number of passages, however, the language
seems to imply that Philo has, for the moment at least abandoned Platonism
and adopted the materialistic conception of the Stoics. One group of
these passages consists of those in which he uses the expression "spirit"
or the "spirit of God" of the soul. Now, among the Stoics such a term
implies materialism and the inference seems to be that Philo, too, uses
it in a materialistic sense.

There is no doubt that Philo does use the word in the sense
of Stoic materialism. The materialistic conception is probably present
in the account of the psychology of sensation where Philo makes large use
of Stoic language. The mind, he says, 102 extends a seeing spirit to the
eyes, a hearing spirit to the ears and so with the other senses. The
spirit thus extended from the mind is analogous to the spirit of God
which constitutes the essence of the mind itself. 103 God breathes only

101. Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics IX p.862
102. De Fuga. 182.
103. Leg. All. 1:40.
into the principle part of the soul. Into the other parts He does not breath. The lower parts are breathed into by the νεῦσ just as the νεῦσ itself is breathed into by God. It is probable that the spirits which constitute the organs of the sense are to be regarded here as material.

In any discussion of materialism in connection with the doctrines of the soul, it must be kept in mind that the relationship between God and the individual soul and between the soul and body is one which can only be represented by metaphors drawn from the material world. There is always the possibility that the language may be merely metaphorical. In the case of Philo, his insistence on the transcendence of God over matter and on the kinship of the soul to Him makes it necessary that we accept the materialistic interpretation of such passages only if we are compelled to do so. Now, Philo makes it very clear that "spirit" does not necessarily have any materialistic suggestions. The words "spirit of God" he tells us are used in two senses. In one sense the expression means the air that flows from the earth. It is in this sense that it is used in Genesis 1:2 where the spirit of God is said to be borne over the face of the waters. In the second sense it is "pure knowledge in which every wise man naturally shares." This shows beyond doubt that the word admits of an interpretation that is opposed

104. De Gig. 22.
105. Ibid.
to the Stoic materialism. In view of the general opposition to materialism in his writings and in view of the metaphorical character of Philo's passages, it is much more probable that the Stoic expressions are merely used in the interest of allegorical interpretations.

Another item of interest should not be omitted here. Discussing the verse "I will take of the spirit that is upon thee and put it upon the seventy elders," (Num. 11:17) Philo states that we must not suppose that there is any cutting of or dispersion in this case, "but such a separation as would take place from a fire, which even if kindles countless torches remains not a whit lessened and just as it was before."

On the whole Philo's account is Platonic. For both authors the mind is dependent on the senses for its knowledge of the external world.\textsuperscript{106} Philo repeats the statement of Theaetetus that the mind sees through the eye; the eye alone can not see.\textsuperscript{107} Where Philo adopts the Stoic theory at all, it is in the interest of the exaltation of mind as the only active power.\textsuperscript{108}

By meditation the mind can draw conclusions and from the seen can infer the unseen.\textsuperscript{109} Observing, for example, the visible universe, and especially the ordered movements of the stars, it reasons

\begin{align*}
\text{106. Quis Rep. Div. 53, 110; Leg. All. 2:7; De op. Mund 166; Timaeus 47A; Sophists 234 D; Theaet. 184CD.} \\
\text{107. De Cong. 143; Theaet. 184 B, D, C.} \\
\text{108. Leg. All. 1:30.} \\
\text{109. Phaed. 249 B; Tim. 47B; De Ab. 162; Leg. All 3:97; Conf. Ling. 98.}
\end{align*}
to the notions of a God who gives them motion and who cares for them.

Philo is never done telling of the excellences of sight. It is the most excellent and dominant of all the outward senses,\(^{110}\) by far the most precious power we possess,\(^{111}\) akin to the soul, like the sun,\(^{112}\) and the origin of philosophy.\(^{113}\) The notion of the perfection and wonder of the faculty of sight and its connection with philosophy through the effect that the sight of the ordered movements of the heavens has on the soul comes from Plato.\(^{114}\) Next, after sight, though far inferior, Philo puts hearing. It is a less trustworthy witness than sight,\(^{115}\) but it, too, is among the higher senses, is more detached from the body and so more philosophic than smell touch or taste.\(^{116}\) It is with respect to their function as supplying the data of knowledge that Philo speaks of the senses as aids of the soul and as forming its bodyguard.\(^{117}\)

There are many points in which Philo repeats Plato. The mind is the eye of the soul.\(^{118}\) By it we become aware of the ideas, the permanent and unchanging things whose imperfect copies appear in

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110. De Ab. 57, 60; Conf. Ling. 57, 140, 148.
111. De Eb. 154; Sp. Leg. 1:29.
112. Quod Deus. 79.
114. Phaedrus 250 D; Tim. 47A; Rep. 507C.
115. De Ab. 60,150; Conf. Ling. 57,140,148; Theaet. 201B.
117. Leg All. 215-8; For sense of bodyguard see De Somm. 1:27.
the changing flux of visible corporeal existence.\textsuperscript{119} Now while the mind is engaged in this reflection on its own experience, in the effort, that is, to compare and relate the multitude of particulars, the activity of the senses is distracting. The mind can best accomplish its own special work in abstraction from the outward senses.\textsuperscript{120} Moreover the conclusions of the mind have a higher truth than can be disordered reports of the senses.\textsuperscript{121} The general principles, the categories by which we know, are not given by the senses.\textsuperscript{122} In this effort of thought the mind reaches the comprehension of true realities. But the knowledge thus attained is weak, full of error, subject to change and revision.\textsuperscript{123} The ultimate nature of being we do not know.\textsuperscript{124} Only human analogies can be used and we have to recognize their inadequacy.\textsuperscript{125}

The freedom for the speculative instinct, Plato gets partly by the use of the myth and partly by the allegorical interpretations of the poets. Philo secures it through the allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament. The doctrine of inspiration on

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{119} Plato = Symposium 211B, 247B, 250 C.
\item Philo = De Plant. 50; De 35, 70, 90, 124; Sp. Leg. 1:327-9.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Plato = Phaedo 65 BC.
\item Philo = De Migr. Ab. 190-204; Sp. Leg. 1:293.
\item \textsuperscript{121} Plato = Theaet. 157 E, 165 DE.
\item Philo = Quis Rer. Div. 71; De Char. 65, 70; Conf. Ling. 52.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Plato = Theaet. 185A-186A.
\item Philo = De Char. 97.
\item \textsuperscript{123} Plato = Timaeus 29 CD.
\item Philo = De Op. Mund. 5; De Plant. 80; De Somn. 1:6-10.
\item \textsuperscript{124} See chapter on "Conception of Reality."
\item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
which this is based can be paralleled in Plato. The poet, the philosopher, the lawgiver and the prophet act according to Plato under the influence of divine inspiration. This renders them incapable of themselves knowing what they say. The work produced under the influence of inspiration is at times half playfully taken as a source from which we may get truth inaccessible to ordinary human thought. The poets speak in riddles and have to be interpreted in the light of truths we know. So in Philo, not only the writers of the Old Testament, but the philosopher, the prophet and the lawgiver are all regarded as inspired. Philo has himself had the experience a countless number of times. Work done under such inspiration contains truth beyond the reach of the unaided human mind. But this truth is set forth in dark sayings which only those can interpret who are themselves inspired. The inspired speaker or writer is the mere mouthpiece of God and does not himself know what he is saying. The text of an interpretation of any given passage of Scriptures is its accordance with known truth and many

126. For Poets-Phaed. 245A, 265B; for Phil.-Phaed. 249 C D; For lawgiver-Meno 99D; for prophet-Meno 99C D.
127. Meno 99 C.
128. Meno 81 B.
129. Republic 332 B.
130. Philosopher-De Decal. 35; De Mig. Ab. 34; De Plant. 39; De Somn. 2:232; Prophet-Sp. Leg. 1:65; Lawgiver-De Decal. 175.
131. De Mig. Ab. 34; Sp. Leg. 3:1.
132. De Mig. Ab. 64.
133. Ibid. 35.
interpretations are possible for a given passage. Philo is sufficiently true to the traditions of his people to make full use of the opportunity this theory affords of making Moses the source of Greek thought, and he glorifies the Law in language that indicates the reverence, that as a loyal Jew, he felt for the Divine Word.

According to Philo man is naturally and of necessity oppressed by passion, imperfect and enslaved. Only God is completely sinless. The best that man can hope to do is to incline somewhat towards the better elements within him, but even this he can not do all his life. In spite of lofty professions we see men overcome by the false attraction of worldly goods. Even a perfect man since he is mortal can not escape sin. The rational movements of the senses must be ascribed to God, the irrational to the senses themselves, led astray by sensible objects. In other passages Philo says that all activities of our mind and senses are to be ascribed to God. Moreover God is the cause of

134. Conf. Ling. 180; Leg. All. 1:59.
136. De Mig. Ab. 60-62; De Somn. 2:123-22; De Decal 96-101.
137. Quis Per. Div. 272-275; De Fuga. 104.
138. De Mig. Ab. 175.
139. Sp. Leg. 1:252. But compare Sp. Leg. 3:134 where we are told that the High Priest may escape both voluntary and involuntary sin and that private persons may escape voluntary sin.
140. De Somn. 2:290; De Fuga. 135; Conf. Ling. 124-27.
al moral progress. It is fatal to think that the credit for any advance can be taken to one's self. 141

Such passages are in flat contradiction to the group in which man's freedom and responsibility are asserted. 142 But this inconsistency Philo shares with Plato and other determinists. Plato, too, 143 seeks to reconcile the conception that injustice is always involuntary with the necessary legal distinction between voluntary and involuntary injustice. It is verbally inconsistent with both his determinism and his doctrine of the freedom and responsibility of all men for Philo to maintain the Stoic Paradox that the wise man is free while the man who follows his senses is bound to the wheel of necessity. 144 But this inconsistency is one that moral teachers who believe in determinism can not escape.

142. Quos Deus. 45-50; De Cig. 47; De Op. Mund. 5.
143. Plato's Laws 860a.
144. For freedom of wise see De Fuga. 16; De Mig. Ab. 45.
For Wheel of Necessity see De Somn. 2:44.
CONCLUSION

Philo, as has already been pointed out, is an eclectic in his philosophical thinking. He borrows from nearly all schools. His insistence on the significance of particular numbers, 4, 7, 6, 10 is definitely an inheritance from the Pythagoreans. His profound sense of human weakness and ignorance makes him not disinclined to borrow from the Sceptics. To Aristotle he owes the doctrine of the virtues as a means between extremes. To Plato, however, he owes most of his thoughts. He was greatly fascinated by the mysterious theories of the "Timaeus" and the most famous of Plato's doctrines, the Theory of Ideas, is an essential part of Philo's philosophy. There is also a vast amount of Stoicism in Philo's philosophy such as the idea of the Logos, and the sevenfold division of bodily functions (the five senses, speech and the reproductive faculties) but the Platonists outweighs the Stoic.

But we need not conclude from all this that his philosophy is a mere chaos taking at random from different schools. Philo does contribute something original. In his philosophy we find the idea of an infinite and personal God which is absent in Plato. He also eliminates the "world soul" from his philosophy. He speaks of a physical world and matter, instead of a world soul, and physical world and matter found in Plato. Philo also objects to the materialism of Stoicism. Philo's Logos is not material. Another point of originality in the Logos idea of Philo is that it does not exhaust the divine nature. It does not act of its own will but it is God Who acts through the Logos or powers.
ABBREVIATIONS USED FOR THE REFERENCES

The references to Philo's works and the quotations are from the Loeb Classical Library edition, the translation prepared by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. I have employed the following abbreviations in the references:

Leg All. ...................................... Legum Allegoriæ.
De Op. Mund. ................................. De Opificio Mundi.
Quod Det. ..................................... Quod Deterius Potiori.
De Gig. ......................................... De Gigantibus.
Quod Deus. .................................... Quod Deus Sit Immutabilis.
De Agric. ....................................... De Agricultura.
De Plant. ....................................... De Plantationes.
De Ebr. ......................................... De Ebrietate.
De Conf. ....................................... De Confusione Liguarum.
De Mig. Ab. .................................... De Migratione Abrahami.
Quis Rer. Div. ................................. Quis Rerum Divinarum Heres.
De Fuga. ....................................... De Fuga et Inventiones.
De Mut. ........................................ De Mutatione Nominum.
De Somn. ...................................... De Somniis.
De Ab. ......................................... De Vita Abrahami.
De Sp. Leg. .................................... De Specialibus Legibus.
De Decal. ...................................... De Decalogo.
De Flacc. ...................................... De Flaccum.
De Cherub. .................................... De Cherubim.
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