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ALEXANDRIAN JUDAISM AND HEBREWS

Grothe, S.T.M.

1967

COSMOLOGY AND SOTERIOLOGY IN  
ALEXANDRIAN JUDAISM AND THE  
CHRISTOLOGY OF HEBREWS

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Exegetical Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Sacred Theology

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by

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## ABBREVIATIONS

### Works of Philo

<u>Abr.:</u>	De <u>Abrahamo.</u>
<u>Aet.:</u>	De <u>Aeternitate Mundi.</u>
<u>Agr.:</u>	De <u>Agricultura.</u>
<u>Cher.:</u>	De <u>Cherubim.</u>
<u>Conf.:</u>	De <u>Confusione Linguarum.</u>
<u>Cong.:</u>	De <u>Congressu Bruditionis Gratia.</u>
<u>Cont.:</u>	De <u>Vita Contemplativa.</u>
<u>Decal.:</u>	De <u>Decalogo.</u>
<u>Det.:</u>	<u>Quod Deterius Potiori Insidiari soleat.</u>
<u>Dec:</u>	De <u>Deo.</u>
<u>Ebr.:</u>	De <u>Ebrietate.</u>
<u>Fug.:</u>	De <u>Fuga et Inventione (De Profugis).</u>
<u>Gig.:</u>	De <u>Gigantibus.</u>
<u>Heres:</u>	<u>Quis rerum divinarum Heres.</u>
<u>Immut.:</u>	<u>Quod Deus sit Immutabilis.</u>
<u>Jos.:</u>	De <u>Josepho.</u>
<u>LA I, II, III:</u>	<u>Legum Allegoria I, II, III.</u>
<u>Legat.:</u>	<u>Legatio ad Caium.</u>
<u>Mig.:</u>	De <u>Migratione Abrahami.</u>
<u>Mos. I, II:</u>	De <u>Vita Mosis I, II.</u>
<u>Mut.:</u>	De <u>Mutatione Nominum.</u>
<u>Opif.:</u>	De <u>Opificio Mundi.</u>
<u>Plant.:</u>	De <u>Plantatione.</u>
<u>Post.:</u>	De <u>Posteritate Caini.</u>
<u>Praem.:</u>	De <u>Praemiis et Poenis.</u>
<u>Prob.:</u>	<u>Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit.</u>
<u>Provid.:</u>	De <u>Providentia.</u>
<u>QE I, II:</u>	<u>Quaestiones et Solutiones in Exodum I, II.</u>
<u>QG I, II, III, IV:</u>	<u>Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesim I, II, III, IV.</u>
<u>Sac.:</u>	De <u>Sacrificiis Abelis et Caini.</u>
<u>Sob.:</u>	De <u>Sobrietate.</u>
<u>Som. I, II:</u>	De <u>Somniis I, II.</u>
<u>Spec. I, II, III, IV:</u>	De <u>Specialibus Legibus I, II, III, IV.</u>
<u>Virt.:</u>	De <u>Virtutibus.</u>

### Others

BAG: Bauer, Walter, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Translated and revised by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. 4th edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1952.

BDF: Blass, F. and A. Debrunner. A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Translated and revised from the 9th German edition by Robert A. Funk. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961.

LSJ: Henry Stuart, and Robert McKenzie, et al., editors. A Greek-English Lexicon. Compiled by Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott. A New (9th) Edition. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1940.

Pr. Ev.: Mraz, Karl, editor. Die Praepartio Evangelica. Eusebius Werke, VIII. Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Jahrhunderte. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1954.

S.V.F.: Arnim, Ioannes ab, editor. Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta. 3 vols. Vol. IV, Index by Maximilianus Adler. Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1964.

TWNT: Kittel, Gerhard, editor. Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1932--.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship of the Christology of Hebrews<sup>1</sup> to Hellenistic Jewish thought. Both in Hebrews and in the writings of Alexandrian Judaism intermediary figures play an important part in the relationship of God to the world as creator and as savior. In both writings there is an agent of creation and a mediator of salvation. This thesis will compare and contrast the description of the agent of creation and the mediator of salvation in the writings of Alexandrian Judaism with the Christology of Hebrews. In this way we hope to achieve a greater understanding of the unique character of the witness to Jesus Christ in Hebrews.

It is not easy to understand Hebrews thoroughly because of the inability of scholars to determine satisfactorily the historical and theological background of its author and readers. It is generally recognized that while the identity of the author of Hebrews is no longer ascertainable, none of his other writings received the church's canonization.<sup>2</sup> Because of Hebrews' stylistic and theological uniqueness, there is difficulty in drawing together materials for a close comparison. The precise context of Hebrews is not clear.

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<sup>1</sup>We shall use the simpler expression "Hebrews" rather than the more cumbersome "Epistle to the Hebrews."

<sup>2</sup>Werner Georg Kümmel, editor, Introduction to the New Testament, founded by Paul Feine and Johannes Behm, translated by A. J. Mattill, Jr. (14th revised edition; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1966), pp. 281-282.



Some scholars hold that portions of the New Testament reflect a theology best understood as emanating from congregations made up of Christians converted from Hellenistic Judaism.<sup>3</sup> Some scholars likewise hold that Hebrews clearly reflects points of contact with Alexandrian Judaism and that its author was probably a Hellenistic Jewish Christian.<sup>4</sup> The Philo scholar E. R. Goodenough surmises that the writings of Philo exemplify the type of Hellenistic Judaism from which these Hellenistic Jewish Christians were converted.<sup>5</sup> These generally held views that Alexandrian Judaism is a possible proper context in which to attempt to understand Hebrews from our point of departure. If this comparison of the Christology of Hebrews to the writings of Alexandrian Judaism contributes any convincing and helpful results, the case for the validity of these already widely held assumptions will have been strengthened all the more.<sup>6</sup>

#### Scope

Therefore in our attempt to isolate an element in the background of Hebrews we will concentrate our interest on the works of Philo Judaeus,

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<sup>3</sup>Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951, 1955), I, 63, and Reginald H. Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1965), pp. 62, 182-197.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Kümmel, pp. 277, 282.

<sup>5</sup>An Introduction to Philo Judaeus (2nd edition; New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1962), p. 27.

<sup>6</sup>We do not mean to imply that there are not other factors, for instance the eschatological expectations of the early church, which are valid elements in the background of Hebrews.

for these are the major writings which survive from Alexandrian Judaism.<sup>7</sup> In chapter II we shall summarize current scholarship's evidence for a relationship in the language and thought between Hebrews and Philo. Chapter III will be devoted to a discussion of Philo; after considering the relationship of Philo to the tradition of Alexandrian Judaism and summarizing the various modern interpretations of Philo, we shall discuss Philo's philosophical terminology, cosmology, and soteriology. Chapter IV will then discuss the cosmological and soteriological functions ascribed to Jesus Christ in Hebrews. The concluding chapter will recapitulate our findings, refer briefly to other passages in the New Testament which may be illuminated by our findings in this study, and note the questions for further study which this investigation might prompt.

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<sup>7</sup>Pertinent material in the Wisdom of Solomon, the Letter of Aristeas, and the fragments of Aristebulus preserved in Eusebius will also be cited. Chap. III will discuss these documents and their relationship to Philo.

CHAPTER II  
THE AFFINITIES BETWEEN HEBREWS  
AND ALEXANDRIAN JUDAISM

It is indeed difficult to establish a direct literary relationship between two ancient documents or to prove that one ancient author has borrowed from the thought of another. With rare exceptions, the evidence in such a task is circumstantial, subject to refutation by reference to other similar documents, and generally tenuous due to the possibility of some third body of material's having been since lost. In the attempt to understand Hebrews in its context, we have accepted as a working hypothesis that the circle out of which the Christian author and the intended readers of Hebrews emerged was one which stood in the traditions of Alexandrian Judaism. This chapter will summarize the results of previous scholars' studies of the affinities between Hebrews and Alexandrian Judaism.

C. Spicq offers a short survey of the history of the study of Philonism in Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> H. Grotius, in 1644,<sup>2</sup> was the first scholar in the history of New Testament study to note the similarity between Hebrews and the writings of Philo. He was followed in 1750 by J. B. Carpzov,<sup>3</sup> and in 1752

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<sup>1</sup>L'Épître aux Hébreux (2nd edition; Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1952), I, 39-40. He makes reference to a similar summary in H. J. Holtzmann, Lehrbuch der neutestamentliche Theologie (2nd edition; Fribourg-en-B., 1911), II, 329ff.

<sup>2</sup>In Hebr. IV, 10: "Philonem quem legisse videtur hic scriptor," as quoted in Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>3</sup>Sacrae Exercitationes in S. Pauli epistolam ad Hebraeos ex Philone alexandrino, (Amsterdam, 1750), as cited in Spicq, I, 39.

by J. J. Wettstein.<sup>4</sup> The contention that the author of Hebrews knew Philo's writings, Spicq continues, received further support and elaboration in the nineteenth century, especially by such men as Grossmann,<sup>5</sup> Bleek and A. Gfrörer,<sup>6</sup> C. Siegfried,<sup>7</sup> and E. Ménégez.<sup>8</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, Spicq concludes, a close relationship of language and thought between Hebrews and Philo was accepted by most commentators as an achieved result of literary criticism.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century and in the beginning of the twentieth century this relationship was questioned. Some scholars, among them S. Davidson,<sup>9</sup> B. Weiss,<sup>10</sup> B. F. Westcott,<sup>11</sup> G. Milligan,<sup>12</sup> and

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<sup>4</sup>Novum Testamentum Graecum (Amsterdam, 1752), II, 348: "Comparantes scripta Philonis judaei et Epistolam ad Hebraeos deprehendimus magnam utrumque scriptum et rerum et verborum similitudinem. Nimirum potuit Paulus, qui imperante Nerone scripsit, libros Philonis, qui sub Caio floruit, legisse, iisque uti ad Hebraeos, apud quos Philo in maxima tunc erat existimatione," as quoted in Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>5</sup>De Philos. jud. sacrae vestigiis in epistola ad Hebraeos conspicuis (Paris, 1833), as cited in Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>6</sup>Philo und die alexandrinische Theosophie, oder vom Einflusse der jüdisch-ägyptischen Schule auf die Lehre des Neuen Testaments (2nd edition; Stuttgart, 1835), I, 398-403, as cited by Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>7</sup>Philo von Alexandria als Ausleger des Alten Testaments (Iena: Verlag von Hermann Dufft, 1875), p. 321, where he expresses doubt, however, whether the author of Hebrews necessarily had read Philo; cf. pp. 321-330 passim.

<sup>8</sup>La théologie de l'épître aux Hébreux. (Paris, 1894), pp. 197-219, as cited in Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>9</sup>An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament (2nd edition; London, 1882), I, 219, as cited by Spicq, I, 39.

<sup>10</sup>Der Brief an die Hebräer, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, XIII Abteilung (5th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht's Verlag, 1888), 11-13.

<sup>11</sup>The Epistle to the Hebrews (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), p. lxi.

<sup>12</sup>The Theology of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh, 1899), pp. 203-211, as cited by Spicq, I, 39.

Th. Zahn,<sup>13</sup> held that other elements were predominant in the origin and background of Hebrews. A. B. Bruce,<sup>14</sup> admitting that there are some affinities between Hebrews and Philo, felt that it is possible to over-emphasize the importance of Philonic parallels for the proper understanding of Hebrews. This position of caution seems to be the consensus of most of the commentators of the first half of the current century, as Spicq notes; he offers these examples: Ed. Riegenbach,<sup>15</sup> H. Windisch,<sup>16</sup> V. Burch,<sup>17</sup> E. F. Scott,<sup>18</sup> E. Jacquier,<sup>19</sup> P. J. Lebreton,<sup>20</sup> F. Pratt,<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Introduction to the New Testament, translated from the 3rd German edition by M. W. Jacobs et al. (3 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), II, 347.

<sup>14</sup>"Hebrews, Epistle to," A Dictionary of the Bible, edited by James Hastings (5 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), II, 335; cf. The Epistle to the Hebrews (2nd edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), pp. 5, 25.

<sup>15</sup>Der Brief an die Hebräer, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament, XIV (Leipzig; A. Deichert, 1913), xxxvi-xxxviii.

<sup>16</sup>Der Hebräerbrief, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, XIV (2nd edition; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1931), 131-135.

<sup>17</sup>The Epistle to the Hebrews (London: Williams & Norgate, 1936), pp. 16-21, where he argues the proper background of the epistle is to be found in apocalyptic Judaism.

<sup>18</sup>The Epistle to the Hebrews (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1922), pp. 50-58, where he admits traceable relationships but, noting divergences at vital points, questions whether the Hellenistic strain of the epistle is derived from Alexandria.

<sup>19</sup>Historie des livres du Nouveau Testament (8th edition; Paris, 1908), I, 478ff., as cited by Spicq, I, 40.

<sup>20</sup>Histoire du dogme de la Trinite, 2 vols. (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne 1919), note G: La Doctrine du Logos chez Philon et la doctrine du Fils dans l'Épître aux Hébreux, I, 570-581, where, after a short systematic comparison, he admits similarities but concludes that there is no direct dependence of the Christology of Hebrews on the logos teaching of Philo.

<sup>21</sup>La Theologie de Saint Paul (9th edition; Paris, 1920), pp. 428-430, as cited by Spicq.

A. Medebielle,<sup>22</sup> and J. Bonsirven.<sup>23</sup> The rationale for this general retreat to a more cautious, and in some cases negative, position is perhaps best summarized in the two points offered by O. Michel.<sup>24</sup> He suggests that the influence of Philo on Hebrews, accepted earlier, is now doubted because the connection of Hebrews to rabbinic materials and apocalyptic motifs has been demonstrated by Fr. Delitzsch, E. Riehm, and J. Bonsirven. As a second reason he suggests the variance of theological structure between Hebrews and Philo in that Philo's writings represent a metaphysical thought system while Hebrews is a historical and eschatological message, lacking any logos teaching proper. Therefore, Michel concludes, one can isolate individual traditions which Philo and Hebrews hold in common, but the attempt to assemble these isolated similarities into a description of a whole formal relationship is of secondary significance, for "der Hellenismus Philos ist von anderer Art als der unseres Briefes,"<sup>25</sup> and the issue of eschatology completely divides the

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<sup>22</sup>Épître aux Hébreux, La Sainte Bible, XII (Paris, 1938), 277-278, as cited by Spicq, I, 40.

<sup>23</sup>Épître aux Hébreux (Paris, 1943), pp. 69ff., as cited by Spicq, I, 40.

<sup>24</sup>Der Brief an die Hebräer, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, XIII Abteilung (10th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), 372-373. Spicq, I, 39, cites Michel's 7th edition, 1936, p. 175, as recording a similar opinion, but claims to have found that passage to have been suppressed in the 8th edition, 1949, cf. pp. 284-286. The excursus dealing with the Philonism of Hebrews, which we have found in Michel's 10th edition, appears to be lacking in his 8th edition (which was the earliest edition available to us).

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 372

two authors. E. Käsemann<sup>26</sup> has advanced a significant theory according to which both Philo and Hebrews, independent of each other, represent a fusion of the late Jewish expectation of a priest-Messiah with the gnostic Urmensch myth. Thus he considers intertestamental (and some post-New Testament documents) Jewish, apocalyptic, and gnostic writings as the proper background against which to understand Hebrews and regards Philo's works as an independent development parallel to Hebrews. As might be expected, the writings of the Qumran community have also been suggested as representative of the milieu in which Hebrews is to be understood.<sup>27</sup>

After his extended discussion of the Philonism of Hebrews, Spicq concludes that the author of Hebrews had at least studied the works of Philo, and that it is credible that he even knew Philo personally and had been educated by Philo.<sup>28</sup> Among the more recent commentators, F. F. Bruce makes the cautious comment that "some Alexandrian association is evident throughout the epistle," and that the author is evidently acquainted with the literature of Alexandrian Judaism, especially the writings of Philo.<sup>29</sup> H. W. Montefiore notes some fundamental differences in the

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<sup>26</sup>Das wandernde Gottesvolk, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Neue Folge, XXXVII (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), 140.

<sup>27</sup>Sidney G. Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews, Basel Studies of Theology, no. 1 (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1965), p. 65, cites Y. Yadin, "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Epistle to the Hebrews," Scripta Hierosolymitana, 4 (Jerusalem, 1957), and H. Kosmala, Hebräer-Essener-Christen, Studien zur Vorgeschichte der frühchristlichen Verkündigung (Leiden: Brill, 1959).

<sup>28</sup>I, 88-89.

<sup>29</sup>The Epistle to the Hebrews, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. xxxiii.

thought of Hebrews and Philo, but also sees striking non-theological similarities.<sup>30</sup> He concurs with those who have considered the author of Hebrews to be a Philonian converted to Christianity.

Thus the problem of the matrix of the thought of Hebrews is as yet not completely resolved. The possibility of some, even a very close relationship between Hebrews and Alexandrian Judaism is still present. Our goal in this chapter is to describe what similarities there are in vocabulary, argumentation, and religious teaching and to reach a conclusion on the basis of the cumulative effect.

We shall summarize the findings of scholars, organizing our summary under the three headings which include the subjects we shall compare and contrast: cosmology, soteriology, and the intermediary figures.

#### Parallels concerning Cosmology

We turn first to the creation and structure of the world. There is considerable evidence that Philo and the author of Hebrews held very similar world-views. Both share, quite naturally, the Old Testament faith in God as the creator and cause of all, and both use phrases taken over from Greek philosophy to express that faith. Thus Heb. 2:10 reads: *δι' ὧν* [θεῶν] τὰ πάντα καὶ δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα, applying a variation of the classical τὰ πάντα formula to God.<sup>31</sup> Aristobulus demonstrates the

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<sup>30</sup>A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), pp. 7-8.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. also Heb. 3:4, ὁ δὲ πάντα κατασκευάσας θεός, and 1 Cor. 8:6 (where the δι' οὗ is applied to Christ); Rom. 11:36; Col. 1:16-17; Eph. 4:6. Eduard Norden, Agnostos Theos (Leipzig: Verlag B. G. Teubner, 1913), pp. 240-243, relates all of these passages to Stoic formulae quoting Chryssipus in Stobaeus, Ecl. I, 1, 26, and many other testimonies.



early tendency of Alexandrian Judaism to consider such formulae as proper descriptions of God as creator. Making the point that the teachings of Moses are to be found in Greek literature, he favorably quotes an Orphic poem which includes the line:<sup>32</sup> "εἷς ἔστι αὐτοτελής, αὐτοῦ δ' ὑπο πάντα τελεῖται." A similar passage can also be found in the letter of Aristeas, 16: "δεῖ δὲ ὅν ζωοποιοῦντα τὰ πάντα καὶ γίνεταί, τοῦτον ἀπάντων ἡγεῖσθαι τε καὶ κυριεύειν"<sup>33</sup> Philo likewise describes God as the creator, employing the language of philosophy. Having described the four Aristotelian causes, he turns to contemplate the universe:

We shall see that its [the universe's] cause is God, by whom it has come into being (τὸν θεὸν ὑφ' οὗ γέγονεν), its material the four elements from which it was compounded, its instrument the word of God through which it was framed (ὄργανον δὲ λόγον θεοῦ δι' οὗ κατεσκευάσθη), and the final cause of the building is the goodness of the architect.<sup>34</sup>

Spicq<sup>35</sup> asserts that the phrase in Heb. 2:10 corresponds to this Philonic definition of the efficient and final causes. This probably overstates the connection. What is significant is that philosophical expressions similar to that used in Heb. 2:10 were, in a similar manner, readily

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<sup>32</sup>Fr. 4, in Eusebius, Pr. Ev. XIII, 12, 5.

<sup>33</sup>This phrase is actually applied in this passage to Zeus. The author, however, is asserting that Zeus and Yahweh are basically the same. The significant thing is that this terminology can be used to describe God.

<sup>34</sup>Cher. 127. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Philo are from F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, editors and translators, Philo With an English Translation, The Loeb Classical Library (10 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949-1953). Supplements I-II translated by R. Marcus.

<sup>35</sup>I, 53, note 4.

employed by the Alexandrian tradition of Judaism to describe the personal God of the Old Testament as the creator.

In describing that (heavenly) city which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob expected while they were dwelling in tents in the land of promise, Hebrews describes God as its *ΤΕΧΝΙΤΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΣ*, Heb. 11:10. *Δημιουργός* is a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, but is a well-known word in classical Greek philosophy and in Philo. The *δημιουργός* is the artificer of the universe in Plato's *Timaeus*,<sup>36</sup> Philo, whose philosophical terminology is at various points taken from Plato's, uses *δημιουργός* of God as the creator,<sup>37</sup> in conjunction also with the verb *τεχνιτεύω*.<sup>38</sup> More frequently Philo uses the verb *δημιουργῶ* in conjunction with the noun *τεχνίτης*.<sup>39</sup> Once again we have the application of terms carrying connotations from Greek philosophy to God as the creator by both Philo and Hebrews--in this instance in a usage unparalleled in the Scriptures.<sup>40</sup>

Philo, especially in *de Opificio Mundi*, explains the creation and the structure of reality in a manner roughly analogous to the Platonic pattern

<sup>36</sup>Cf. 28A, 29A.

<sup>37</sup>*Opif.*..10, 139.

<sup>38</sup>Thus *Mut.* 29: *διὰ γὰρ ταύτης τῆς δυναμείως ἔθηκε τὰ πάντα ὁ γεννήσας καὶ τεχνιτεύσας πατήρ, ὥστε τὸ "ἐγὼ εἶμι θεὸς σὺς" ἴσον ἔστι τῷ ἐγὼ εἶμι ποιητῆς καὶ δημιουργός;* cf. *Opif.* 146.

<sup>39</sup>*Immut.* 30: *τῶν δημιουργηθέντων τὸν τεχνίτην* ; cf. *Cher.* 127-128; *Heres* 133, 225; *Aet.* 41, 43; *Spec.* I, 35; *LA* III, 99.

<sup>40</sup>I.e. in the LXX as well as in the New Testament. Cf. Werner Foerster, "*δημιουργός*," *TWNT*, II, 61. *τεχνίτης* is applied to God only in *Wisdom of Solomon* 13:1.

of the world of ideas and the phenomenal world.<sup>41</sup> The creation of the *κόσμος νοητός*, the world perceptible to the mind, is first in the order of God's creation; the creation of the *κόσμος αἰσθητός*, the world perceptible to the senses, follows the pattern of the *κόσμος νοητός*. It appears quite probable that the author of Hebrews operated with a very similar understanding of the nature and structure of the universe. An admittedly difficult passage, Heb. 11:3, lends itself to an interpretation in harmony with this point: "Τίστει νοοῦμεν κατηρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων τὸ βλεπόμενον γιγνῆναι;" This passage can be explained as referring to that process of creation by which ideal patterns (*μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων*) become embodied in material, visible things (*τὸ βλεπόμενον*).<sup>42</sup>

Among the words which recur in Philo in connection with this distinction between the *κόσμος νοητός* and the *κόσμος αἰσθητός* are ἀρχέτυπος-παράδειγμα, and ἐκκῶν-σκιά-μίμημα. The totality of the *κόσμος νοητός* is the ἀρχέτυπος, while each individual idea is a

<sup>41</sup>Cf. *Opif.* 15-16, 19, 36.

<sup>42</sup>Cf. Spicq, II, 341 and H. L. MacNeill, *The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Historical and Linguistic Studies*, second series, vol. II, part 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1914), p. 53. (MacNeill is firmly convinced that the author of Hebrews was an Alexandrian who employed the Alexandrian contrast of the noetic and the phenomenal worlds, cf. p. 19: "Using this familiar Alexandrian contrast, the writer puts the stamp of perfection and finality upon Christianity by identifying it with the 'intelligible' of abiding ideas and realities.") Montefiore regards the assumption that Alexandrian cosmology is reflected in this verse as "hazardous," p. 188. F. F. Bruce, p. 281, feels that Heb. 11:3 reflects faith in a *creatio ex nihilo*. For Michel the expression has a theological (apocalyptic) and not a metaphysical meaning, pp. 251-252.

παράδειγμα whose phonomenal counterpart in the κόσμος αίσθητός is an εἰκών,<sup>43</sup> σκιά,<sup>44</sup> or μίμημα.<sup>45</sup> τύπος is also used by Philo as a synonym for ἰδέα.<sup>46</sup> Some of these words appear in similar contexts in Hebrews. Thus Heb. 10:1a reads: "Σκιάν γὰρ ἔχων ὁ νόμος τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων." σκιά is here clearly a pejorative term, being contrasted with the exact image of those good things to come, of which Christ is the High Priest, Heb. 9:11. σκιά is one further stage removed from the in heaven than is εἰκών. Spicq sees in this verse a polemic against the belief that the Mosaic law is a perfect image of the divine order of the universe, as it contradicts what Philo asserts of the law while using Philo's own terminology.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Ebr. 133: "The archetypal seal (ἀρχέτυπος σφραγίς) is an incorporeal idea, but the copy (εἰκών) which is made by the impression is something else--a material something. . . ." Cf. Praem. 29. The Logos, however, is both image (σκιά, εἰκών) in relation to God and pattern (παράδειγμα) or archetype (ἀρχέτυπον) in relation to the rest of creation, LA III, 96; cf. Spec. I, 171.

<sup>44</sup>LA III, 99 describes those who view the creation and conclude the existence of God as apprehending God "by means of a shadow cast (διὰ σκιάς), discerning the Artificer by means of his works," and 102 likewise contrasts Moses, who received the clear vision of God directly from the First Cause, and Bezalel, who "discerns the Artificer, as it were, from a shadow (ἀπὸ σκιάς), from created things by virtue of a process of reasoning." Cf. Som. I, 206.

<sup>45</sup>Ebr. 133: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ παντὸς τὸ μὲν παράδειγμα, τὸ δὲ μίμημα ὁ ποιῶν ἐποίησε; cf. Som. I, 206; LA III, 102, Mos. II, 74. This usage also occurs in Wisdom of Solomon 9:8: "Thou hast given command to build a temple on thy holy mountain, and an altar in the city of thy habitation, a copy (μίμημα) of the holy tent which thou didst prepare from the beginning." μίμημα in this passage is a hapax legomenon in the Old Testament.

<sup>46</sup>Opif. 34.

<sup>47</sup>Mos. II, 51: Spicq, I, 75.

Similar terms are also employed in the distinction between the heavenly and the earthly sanctuaries. Both Philo and Hebrews attach great importance to Ex. 25:40: "And see that you make them after the pattern (LXX ΤΥΠΟΝ) for them, which is being shown you on the mountain." Both regard this passage as reflecting God's revelation of the plan of the heavenly sanctuary to Moses, who then gave the instructions for the building of the earthly sanctuary.<sup>48</sup> Hebrews uses this distinction between the heavenly pattern and the earthly image in its witness to the superiority of Christ's priesthood, in contrasting the priesthood connected with the heavenly sanctuary with that connected with the earthly sanctuary.<sup>49</sup> Thus Heb. 8:5 argues that the high priests of the Old Testament cult "ὕποδείγματι καὶ σκιά λατρεύουσιν τῶν ἑπαιρανέων."<sup>50</sup> But Christ, is the "ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν γενομένων ἀγαθῶν, διὰ τῆς μετέθετος καὶ τελειοτέρας σκηνῆς οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως. . . . (Heb. 9:11), and οὐ γὰρ εἰς χειροποιήτα<sup>51</sup> εἰσῆλθεν ἅγια Χριστός, ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθειῶν, ἀλλ' εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν οὐρανόν (Heb. 9:24)." Unless the author of Hebrews is operating with this distinction between the superior, incorporeal, and heavenly on the one hand and the inferior, corporeal, and earthly on the

<sup>48</sup>Mos. II, 74; LA III, 102, where Philo preserves the LXX reading δεδεγμένον (for which Hebrews reads δεχθέντα), but reads παράδειγμα for the LXX ΤΥΠΟΝ (which Heb. 8:5 preserves).

<sup>49</sup>Spicq, I, 72; cf. Siegfried Schulz, "σκιά," TWNT, VII, 401.

<sup>50</sup>cf. Heb. 9:23.

<sup>51</sup>The term χειροποιήτος is known to Alexandrian Judaism: Wisdom of Solomon 14:8; Mos. II, 51, 88, 168.

other hand, the point of his argument in these verses would be incomprehensible.<sup>52</sup>

#### Parallels concerning God, Revelation, and Salvation

There is also a number of points of similarity and parallel expressions between Alexandrian Judaism and Hebrews concerning God, revelation, and salvation. Hebrews 11:6 states the content of faith thus: "ΠΙΣΤΕΥΣΑΝ γὰρ δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἔστιν καὶ τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδόσης γένηται" Spicq calls this the precise conception of God in Philo: the creator who truly exists and who provides.<sup>53</sup> And, indeed, in Philo we find Abraham's faith described: "He first grasped a firm and unswerving conception of the truth that there is one Cause above all, and that it provides for the world and all that there is therein."<sup>54</sup>

Both Philo and the author of Hebrews offer the same interpretation of Gen. 22:16: "By myself I have sworn." According to Heb. 6:13 this was ἔπειτα κατ' οὐδενὸς εἶχεν μείζονος ὁμοίαν. From verses 17-19 it

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<sup>52</sup>Spicq, I, 73: "Si l'ancien culte est condamné comme inférieur, c'est que la tente mosaïque est terrestre, fait à la main. Si le sacerdoce du Christ est plus grand, c'est qu'il est attaché au seul temple authentique, celui du ciel."

Also possibly reflecting this distinction in both authors is their common predilection for the argument *a minori ad maius*. Such arguments are carefully constructed in Heb. 2:1-3; 10:28-29 (both contrasting the old and the new dispensation); and 12:9; cf. Philo: *Fug.* 84; *Spec.* II, 255; Spicq, I, 53.

<sup>53</sup>I, 79.

<sup>54</sup>*Virt.* 216. Cf. *Virt.* 40: τοῦ ἑνὸς καὶ ὁμοῦ ὅντος . . . θεοῦ, and *Heres* 92-95.

is clear that the purpose of his swearing was to assist the faith of the heirs of the promise.<sup>55</sup> Philo's comments on this verse from Genesis are virtually identical in content: "you mark that God swears not by some other thing, for nothing is higher than He, but by Himself, who is best of all things."<sup>56</sup> Philo then goes on to explain that an oath is added to assist faith and all the words of God are oaths of a sort, in that they surely come to pass, but in an oath the certainty is even greater.<sup>57</sup>

Implicit in Heb. 1:1-2 is a distinction between two facets of revelation, the one of old through the prophets and the other in the last days by the Son. This tendency to categorize media of revelation is also evidenced in Philo, who in this way exalts the status of the decalogue over against the other various types of prophetic oracles:

The legislative part [of the oracles delivered through Moses] has two divisions, one in which the subject matter is more general, the other consisting of the ordinances of specific laws. On the one hand there are the ten heads or summaries which we are told were not delivered through a spokesman but were shaped high above in the air into the form of articulate speech: on the other the specific ordinances of the oracles given through the lips of a prophet.<sup>58</sup>

Philo asserts that the prophecies not given directly from the mouth of God were given through a prophet, when he was inspired (*ἐνθεουσιζή*).

Most of the elements in his teaching of prophetic inspiration are present in Spec. IV, 49:

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<sup>55</sup>Sowers, p. 71.

<sup>56</sup>LA III, 203.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., 204.

<sup>58</sup>Praem. 2; cf. Decal. 18-19, 175; Mos. II, 188-191; also Sowers, pp. 35-36. The point here is not that the categorizations which they made were the same, but that both did make some distinctions.

For no pronouncement of a prophet is ever his own; he is an interpreter prompted by Another in all his utterances, when knowing not what he does he is filled with inspiration (ἐνθουσιᾷ), as the reason withdraws and surrenders the citadel of the soul to a new visitor and tenant, the Divine Spirit (τοῦ Θεοῦ πνεύματος) which plays upon the vocal organism and dictates words which clearly express its prophetic message.

Such a view of the inspiration of Scripture could well have been that of the author of Hebrews; for he, generally indifferent to the human factor in the authorship of any passage he cites, regularly either implies that the speaker of the words he is quoting is God<sup>59</sup> or names as the speaker the Holy Spirit.<sup>60</sup> Hence both employ also an indefinite formula of citation to introduce a quotation: ΠΟΥ ΤΙΣ, Heb. 2:6, and Εἶρηκεν . . . Που, Heb. 4:4; Ebr. 61; Plant. 90. (This likewise minimizes the importance of the human author and emphasizes the divine origin of the words.)

Philo and Hebrews apparently also operate with very similar textual recensions of the Old Testament Greek text. Both ordinarily quote the Septuagint.<sup>61</sup> But there are two variant readings in which they also agree. Both quote Gen. 2:2b in the same form:<sup>62</sup>

Gen. 2:2 LXX Καὶ συνετέλεισεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἕκτῃ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ, ἃ ἐποίησεν, καὶ κατέπαυσεν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ, ὧν ἐποίησεν.

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Heb. 5:12; implicit in Heb. 1:5, 6, 7, 13; 4:3; 5:5; 6:14; 7:21; 8:5, 8; 10:38; 13:5.

<sup>60</sup>Heb. 3:7; 10:15; cf. 9:8. Cf. Sowers, pp. 75-76; both Hebrews and Philo put the utmost confidence in the LXX text as inspired. Siegfried, pp. 322-323.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. Sowers, pp. 75-76 and 75, nn. 1 (for literature) and 3.

<sup>62</sup>That is, both Philo and Hebrews insert ὁ Θεός into their quotation.



Gen. 2:2b as quoted in Heb. 4:4 and Post. 64: *Καὶ κατέπαυσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ* [Philo only:] *ὧν ἐποίησε.*

Also, the quotation in Heb. 13:5, which does not correspond exactly to any Old Testament passage, is cited in the identical form in Conf. 166: *οὐ μὴ σε ἀνῶ, οὐδ' οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλίπω*<sup>63</sup>

When speaking of God's intended plan of salvation, Hebrews employs a phrase (known also in pagan writers) which Philo uses of God: *ἔπρεπεν . . . αὐτῷ [θεῷ]*.<sup>64</sup> Both employ likewise the phrase *αἴτιος σωτηρίας* of God or of his appointed means of salvation. Thus Heb. 5:9 applies it to Christ, and Agr. 96 to the serpent referred to in Num. 21:8.<sup>65</sup>

Philo and Hebrews both speak of man's relation to God in the context of sacrifice and the priesthood. Their thoughts run in similar directions also in these areas. The argument in Heb. 7:26-28 makes a point of the innocence of Christ as the high priest, *ὄσιος, ἄκακος, ἀμίαντος*. Christ's single offering of himself is contrasted with those of the other

<sup>63</sup>Hebrews is here possibly quoting a word of the Lord, echoing the thought of Matt. 6:25; the passage is, however, close enough to some Old Testament passages (Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5) to be considered a variant.

In this general regard, cf. also the recurrence of the technique of introducing subsequent quotations in a series with . . . *καὶ πάλιν . . .*, Heb. 1:5; 2:13; 4:5; 10:30, in Aristobulus fr. 5, in Eusebius, Pr. Ev. XIII, 12, 13, 14, 16, and in Philo: Heres 2, 122; Conf. 169; Som. I, 166; II, 19; Sob. 8; Plant. 171; and LA III, 4.

<sup>64</sup>Heb. 2:10; in Heb. 7:26 the word *ἔπρεπεν* is also applied to Christ, a suitable high priest for us; cf. Philo: LA I, 48; Aet. 41.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. Spec. I, 252; Virt. 202 (both of God); Cont. 86 (of the sea in the Exodus account). The use of this phrase in other writers is generally in a profane rather than in a religious context, Spicq, I, 44.

high priests, who had to bring forth daily offerings on behalf of their own sins; they are weak, but he is the Son who has been made perfect forever. Philo describes the logos as the high priest in a similar way.<sup>66</sup> One must be physically and morally whole to be qualified as a priest.<sup>67</sup> So also with Christ it is his personal perfection, his being without blemish and his doing the will of God, which validates his sacrifice of the new covenant for the total purification of sins.<sup>68</sup>

The word which Philo prefers for prayer is ἱκετεύω and its derivatives.<sup>69</sup> For him ἱκετηρία is the proper cultic prayer<sup>70</sup> and the prayer of intercession proper to Moses, the mediator of the covenant.<sup>71</sup> In Hebrews 5:7, ἱκετηρία is employed, with δειήσεις, of the intercessions and supplications which Jesus offered up during the days of his flesh, when he was undergoing the perfect obedience and becoming the cause of the salvation of those obedient to him, being designated by God as high priest. Thus ἱκετηρία, a hapex legomenon in the New Testament, is used in connection with the figure whom Hebrews is presenting as the perfect high priest.

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<sup>66</sup>Fug. 108; 115; "ἀμείαντος," 118.

<sup>67</sup>Spec. I, 242-243; 80-81.

<sup>68</sup>Heb. 9:14; 10:5-10. Spicq calls this "une notable coïncidence de réflexion sur l'efficacité sacrificielle, qu'on ne rencontre pas ailleurs dans la Bible," I, 72-73.

<sup>69</sup>Spicq, I, 45.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. Spec. I, 312.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., I, 41, 42; Mos. I, 125, 184, 216; II, 177, 279.

In Heb. 13:22 the author appeals to the brethren to accept his *λόγος* *Παρακλήσεως*; indeed, we find hortatory sections constantly interspersed throughout Hebrews.<sup>72</sup> In some striking instances even the content of these parenetic sections has parallels in Hellenistic-Jewish and Philonic paraeneses. Thus Heb. 5:11-6:3 records words of censure and exhortation which have throughout phrases reminiscent of the words of a teacher of ethics to his pupils.<sup>73</sup> For instance, Heb. 5:13-14 contrasts the *νηπίος*, who needs milk, and the *τελείος* ("mature"), who takes solid food.<sup>74</sup> This contrast is also found in Stoic ethics<sup>75</sup> and in Philo:

Ἔπει δὲ νηπίος μὲν ἔστι γάλα τροφή, τελείος δὲ τὰ ἐκ  
πυρῶν πέμματα.<sup>76</sup>

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews also follows a form of the Hellenistic-Jewish homily described by Bultmann as: "Series of examples collected from

<sup>72</sup>Cf. Heb. 2:1-4; 4:14-16; 5:11-14; 6:9-12; 10:19-13:18. Also in its general pattern (as well as in many particulars of form) of a major portion of theological subject matter with small admonitions inserted (Heb. 1:1-10:18) followed by a smaller section of less tightly woven together exhortations (Heb. 10:19-13:18), Hebrews is an example of the general scheme of the hellenistic-Jewish homily. Whether this scheme was known to Philo, however, is not known due to the commentary nature of his writings; H. Thyen, *Der Stil der Jüdisch-Hellenistischen Homilie, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, Neue Folge 47, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), 89-90; for particulars cf. 80-100, *passim*.

<sup>73</sup>Cf. James Moffatt, *Epistle to the Hebrews, The International Critical Commentary*, Vol. XL (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 69-76; Spicq, I, 53-55; 53: "l'expression d'une pensée qui s'est formée letterairement à une source précise, identifiable, une parénese alexandrine;" MacNeil, p. 28.

<sup>74</sup>Cf. 1 Cor. 2:6; 3:1.

<sup>75</sup>Epictetus, *Discourses*, II, 16.39.

<sup>76</sup>*Agg.* 9; cf. *Cong.* 19.

history according to a particular catch-word."<sup>77</sup> After a formal definition of faith, Heb. 11:1, <sup>78</sup> a series of paradigms of faith from Old Testament history are introduced anaphorically, *πίστευε*. . . . Philo, who considered biographical material as examples to be used in exhortation,<sup>79</sup> also includes a passage following this same form in Praem. 11 (concerning hope)<sup>80</sup> and offers a series of Biblical examples of the prophet<sup>81</sup> and the sojourner.<sup>82</sup>

#### Parallels concerning Intermediary Figures

Another intriguing area of affinities between Hebrews and Alexandrian Judaism lies in their presentation of the intermediary figures between God and his world, namely: sophia, logos, the high priest, Melchizedek and

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<sup>77</sup>Theology of the New Testament, translated by Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951, 1955), I, 96; cf. Thyen, lll. In the New Testament cf. Jude 5-7 (on judgment) and James 5:10-11 (on steadfastness). The use of a series of examples collected from history in exhortation is also found in Sirach 44-50; it is not necessarily a Hellenistic-Jewish phenomenon. The arrangement of the examples according to a particular catch-word does appear to be a Hellenistic-Jewish form of paraenesis.

<sup>78</sup>For a detailed discussion of the Hellenistic background of the concept of faith in Hebrews, cf. E. Grässer, Der Glaube im Hebräerbrief, Marburger Theologische Studien, no. 2 (Marburg: N. G. Elwert Verlag, 1965), pp. 95-146.

<sup>79</sup>Post. 135; Agr. 107-113. Cf. Emile Bréhier, Les Idées Philosophiques et Religieuses de Philon D'Alexandrie, Études de Philosophie Médiévale, VIII (3rd edition; Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1950), 25-29.

<sup>80</sup>In this passage, it must be emphasized, the similarity is one of form; the paradigms offered are non-Biblical and non-historical. But it is a series of paradigms, introduced anaphorically, highlighting a single virtue. Spicq, I, 76-77 notes also these further parallels of form: reference to those who oppose or lack the virtue of being described (Heb. 11:6, 31; Praem. 12), and a concluding metaphor of an athletic contest (Heb. 12:1; Praem. 13-15).

<sup>81</sup>Heres 260-262.

<sup>82</sup>Conf. 79-82. Cf. also Sac. 5-6; LA II, 56-59; and the similar form of Wisdom of Solomon 10.

Moses,<sup>83</sup> and, in Hebrews, Jesus Christ. Most striking is the description of Christ in Heb. 1:2-3. Ἀπαύγασμα, here applied to the Son, a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, is applied to σοφία in Wisdom of Solomon 7:26, a hapax legomenon in the Septuagint.<sup>84</sup> Χαρακτήρ,<sup>85</sup> likewise a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, is also used by Philo to describe the imprint and seal of God, which is the logos, which is engraved on the human spirit,<sup>86</sup> and of the world of ideas which was given form in the material things.<sup>87</sup> Heb. 1:6 also uses τὸν πρωτότοκον, referring to Christ the Son. This, in the form πρωτόγονος, is also an epithet of the logos.<sup>88</sup>

Heb. 1:2 also attributes to Christ the role of the agent of creation: εἰς οὓς καὶ ἐποίησεν [Θεός] τοὺς αἰῶνας.<sup>89</sup> This is paralleled in the assertions concerning sophia-logos in the Alexandrian tradition.

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<sup>83</sup>The relationship of these last three figures named to the figure of the logos in Philo will be described in chap. III.

<sup>84</sup>The word is also used by Philo, of the relationship of the world (Plant. 50) or of the ethereal breath which God breathed into the first man (Spec. IV 123) to God, and of the relationship of the human mind to the divine logos (Opif. 146, as a synonym of ἀπόσπασμα).

<sup>85</sup>LSJ: I. 1. engraver, 2. graving tool, 3. die, stamp, 4. branding iron; II. 1. mark engraved, stamp, impress. . . . 6. (in which Heb. 1:3 is cited) impress, image.

<sup>86</sup>Plant. 18; Fuga 12.

<sup>87</sup>Opif. 18; cf. Som. II, 45: ἐσφράγισε [Θεός] κόσμον εἰκόνι καὶ ἰδέει, τῷ ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ.

<sup>88</sup>Agg. 51; Conf. 62-63, 146; Som. I, 215; cf. concerning σοφία: Wisdom of Solomon 9:9; Prov. 8:22.

<sup>89</sup>This is also implied in the ascription of the words of Ps. 102:25-27 to the Son in Heb. 1:10.

Rooted in the Old Testament wisdom school's teaching of the role of  $\aleph \beth \daleth \pi$  in the creation (Prov. 8:22-30), the Alexandrian development of this was influenced by Greek philosophy, and especially the logos teaching.<sup>90</sup>

Thus Wisdom of Solomon says of σοφία: ἡ γὰρ πάντων τεχνίτης.<sup>91</sup>

Philo also identifies the logos as the agent of creation: "And the image of God is the Word (λόγος) through whom (δι' οὗ) the whole universe was framed."<sup>92</sup>

Heb. 1:3 says of the Son: φέρων . . . τὰ πάντα. This expression of the mediator's immanent providential power also parallels what is said of σοφία in Wisdom of Solomon 7:24: πάσης γὰρ κινήσεως κινήτικώτερον σοφία, δέχεται δὲ καὶ χωρεῖ διὰ πάντων διὰ τὴν καθαρότητα, and 8:11: διατρίβει δὲ ἀπὸ πέρας ἐπὶ πέρας εὐρύστως καὶ διοικεῖ τὰ πάντα χρηστῶς. Philo expresses similar thoughts concerning the logos: ἵνα στηριχθῆ [τὸ πᾶν] βεβαίως τῷ κραταίῳ καὶ ὑπάρκῳ μου λόγῳ.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup>Thus Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-2 places σοφία and λόγος in a parallel construction. In Philo σοφία and λόγος are all but identical terms in the function they have in his thought, λόγος being the more predominant. Cf. Wis. Sol. 18:15 and chap. III.

<sup>91</sup>7:21; cf. 8:6; 9:2a: τῇ σοφίᾳ σου κατασκευάσας ἄνθρωπον and 9:9a. καὶ μετὰ σοῦ ἡ σοφία, ἡ εὐδοία τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ παρούσα, ὅτε ἔποιεις τὸν κόσμον.

<sup>92</sup>Spec. I, 81. Cf. also Immut. 57; Cher. 127; Mig. 6; and Sac. 8, where λόγος and ῥῆμα (cf. Heb. 11:3: Κατηρτίσθη τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ) are both used: ἀλλὰ "διὰ ῥήματος" τοῦ αἰτίου μετανίσταται [Μωυσῆς] (Deut. 34:5), δι' οὗ καὶ ὁ σύμπας κόσμος ἐδημιουργεῖτο . . . [Θεός] τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ καὶ τὸ πᾶν ἐργασούμενος καὶ τὸν τέλος ἀπὸ τῶν περιγεῖν ἀνάγων ὡς ἑαυτὸν. (Philo also uses ῥῆμα Θεοῦ and λόγον Θεοῦ as synonyms also in Fug. 137.) But whether Heb. 11:3 is Christological is questionable. Cf. chap. IV.

<sup>93</sup>Som. I, 241. Cf. Plant. 8: "no material thing is so strong as to be able to bear the burden (ἀχθοφορεῖν) of the world . . . the everlasting Word of the eternal God is the very sure and staunch prop (ἔρεισμα) of the Whole."

While Heb. 1:1-3 does not actually use the word *λόγος*, in 4:12-13 it does speak of the *λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ*, but without any explicit application of the term to Jesus Christ. The context of Heb. 4:12-13 is a warning to the readers lest they be judged unworthy to enter the sabbath rest (Heb. 4:1-11), but the description of the *λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ* in these verses is strikingly similar to Philo's *λόγος τορμεύς*.<sup>94</sup> The *λόγος τορμεύς* in Philo is the cosmic logical principle of discrimination and distinction (analogous to the logical function of the human mind).<sup>95</sup>

Thus both Hebrews and Philo employ the figure of a sharp sword to describe this all-discriminating *λόγος*, Heb. 4:12: *τορμώτερος ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν μάχαιραν δίστομον*; Philo: *ῥομφαίον, ὄξυκνητότατον*.<sup>96</sup>

In Philo the *λόγος* is identified with the high priest and is the mediator of a personal covenant,<sup>97</sup> or the Mosaic high priest is considered an image of the *λόγος*.<sup>98</sup> He is the cosmic high priest, whose intercession extends to heaven:

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<sup>94</sup>Cf. Sowers, pp. 67-69; Spicq, I, 51-53. Spicq parallels *ζῶν ὁ λόγος καὶ ἐνεργής* with Philo's *λόγια ζῶντα*, the disseminated powers of the *λόγος* which are the source of all virtues and generators of all good, LA III, 150; Opif. 43; Immut. 71. For general parallels to this passage cf. also Sac. 65-66 and LA III, 171.

<sup>95</sup>Heres 130-132, 140, 225, 234-235; Mut. 108; Post. 159; Det. 110-111.

<sup>96</sup>Cher. 28, identifying the fiery sword of Gen. 3:24 as the *λόγος*. Also the vocable *πραχλιζω*, a hapax legomenon in the New Testament (Heb. 4:13), is used similarly, in the metaphorical sense of "to subdue" (LSJ: "inflict hardship upon"), by Philo: Mut. 81; Som. II, 134; Heres 274; Prob. 159; Cher. 78. All things are naked before the *λόγος*: Cher. 17; LA III, 157; cf. LA II, 53, 56, 59-60, 64; Cher. 31.

<sup>97</sup>Fug. 108; Gig. 52; Som. II, 237; cf. Mos. II, 117-135, esp. 134-135.

<sup>98</sup>Mos. II, 117-135; Fug. 109-118, esp. 109-112.

To His Word, His chief messenger, highest in the age and honour, the Father of all has given the special prerogative, to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator. This same Word both pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject.<sup>99</sup>

In Hebrews, of course, Jesus is the great, perfect high priest,<sup>100</sup> who intercedes in heaven.<sup>101</sup>

Jesus' priesthood, moreover is *κατὰ τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδεκ*.<sup>102</sup>

In interpreting Melchizedek<sup>103</sup> as a typological pre-figurement of Christ, Hebrews offers a portrait of that mysterious figure, who is ignored by the other New Testament authors, which is tinted in Alexandrian hues: he is *ἕρως τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ὑψίστου*, has received an autodidactic priesthood, and his name means "king of peace."<sup>104</sup>

Spicq<sup>105</sup> also sees Philo's description of Moses, the mediator of the covenant, as king, lawgiver, priest and prophet,<sup>106</sup> the perfect *ἡγεμῶν*<sup>107</sup> of the people of God, reflected in Hebrews' presentation of Christ the king,<sup>108</sup>

<sup>99</sup>Heres 205; cf. 206.

<sup>100</sup>Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 5:5; 8:1.

<sup>101</sup>Heb. 7:25; 9:24.

<sup>102</sup>Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17.

<sup>103</sup>In contrast to the *Λευιτικῆς* priesthood (Heb. 7:11), another hapax legonemon in the New Testament which is found in Philo: Fug. 87, 93; Mut. 2.

<sup>104</sup>Heb. 7:1-2; LA III, 79, 82; Cong. 99; cf. Gen. 14:18.

<sup>105</sup>I, 67.

<sup>106</sup>Mos. II, 2, 187; cf. 66.

<sup>107</sup>Mos. I, 243; II, 187; Virt. 70.

<sup>108</sup>Cf. the coronation overtones of Heb. 1:4,8.



lawgiver, prophet,<sup>109</sup> priest,<sup>110</sup> and ἀρχηγός.<sup>111</sup>

The parallels described in this chapter vary in their value as evidence for our point. Some admit to alternate explanations. But the cumulative effect of such evidence lends greater probability to the uncertain items, that is, the demonstration of clear parallels increases the likelihood of the validity of the less convincing similarities. This cumulative effect, in this case, may not warrant the assertion that the author of Hebrews was "un philonien converti au christianisme,"<sup>112</sup> but it is sufficient for the assertion that Alexandrian Judaism is a legitimate context in which to study Hebrews.<sup>113</sup> Having established this as a working hypothesis, let us now proceed.

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<sup>109</sup>God speaks through him, Heb. 1:2; he is the ἀπόστολος, Heb. 3:1.

<sup>110</sup>Heb. 3:1; 4:14; 5:5; 8:1.

<sup>111</sup>Heb. 2:10; 12:2.

<sup>112</sup>Spicq, I, 91, favorably quoting Ménégos, p. 198. Cf. C. Spicq, "Alexandrinismes dans l'Épître aux Hébreux," Revue Biblique, LVIII (1951), 481.

<sup>113</sup>Sowers, p. 66: "Philo's writings still offer us the best single body of religionsgeschichtlich material we have for this N. T. document."

## CHAPTER III

### COSMOLOGY AND SOTERIOLOGY IN PHILO JUDAEUS

Das einzige unter den orientalischen Völkern, welches die griechisch Philosophie eigenartig modificirte, um sie mit seinen nationalen Ueberlieferungen in Einklang zu bringen, sind die Juden.<sup>1</sup>

To do this, continues the great historian of philosophy, was the goal of Alexandrian Jewish philosophy. The result of this process of modification culminated in the writings of Philo Judaeus, but Philo was not without his predecessors in this effort. Philo stands in a line of Alexandrian tradition of Hellenized Judaism.<sup>2</sup> In the task of relating the God of the Old Testament to the abstract God of the Greek philosophers, these Alexandrian Jews, who "could not help getting the impression that [the Greek philosophers] had risen above the idol-worshipping and abomination-loving heathen,"<sup>3</sup> found in the Old Testament some useful points of contact: the philosophical concept of transcendence could be linked to the holiness of God and the mediating powers could be linked to the angels or to the figure of Wisdom in Proverbs.<sup>4</sup> Comparatively little is known of these Alexandrian

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<sup>1</sup>Eduard Zeller, Die nacharistotelische Philosophie, Die Philosophie der Griechen in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung, dritter Theil, zweite Abtheilung (5th edition; Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1923), p. 264.

<sup>2</sup>E. R. Goodenough, An Introduction to Philo Judaeus (2nd edition; New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1962), p. 27, asserts that this tradition extends well into the Christian era. Cf. also Nikolaus Walter, Der Thorausleger Aristobulos, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Altchristlichen Literatur, LXXXVI (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964), pp. 41-42.

<sup>3</sup>H. A. Wolfson, Philo (2 vols.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), I, 17.

<sup>4</sup>Zeller, p. 272.

predecessors of Philo, but there are a few documents which offer some background for the understanding of Philo and of his points of continuity with and departure from his tradition. As a preface to our study of Philo, we shall now deal briefly with these documents.

The Septuagint<sup>5</sup> represents, by its very existence, the fact of an adaptation of the Old Testament to the Greek environment. Some feel that traces of the synthesis of Judaism and Greek thought can be found already in the Septuagint.<sup>6</sup> The main points of evidence for this view lie in the translations of passages in which the translator presents creation as the ordering of material already at hand,<sup>7</sup> avoids anthropomorphisms or anthropopathisms,<sup>8</sup> or interprets an allegory.<sup>9</sup> But we are overzealous if we claim to find a knowledge of Greek philosophical ideas reflected in the translations of the Septuagint.<sup>10</sup>

Preserved in Eusebius of Caesarea is Praeparatio Evangelii are fragments of the writings of Aristobulus.<sup>11</sup> In these fragments this Alexandrian of

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<sup>5</sup>That the Septuagint, and certainly the Greek version of the Pentateuch, is to be associated with Alexandria is attested by the tradition reflected in the admittedly pseudepigraphical but still early Letter of Aristeas, which dates from the 2nd century B.C., cf. Andre Pelletier, editor, Lettre d'Aristée a Philocrate, Sources Chretiennes, LXXXIX (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1962), 57-58.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. the discussions and literature in Zeller, p. 274, and Sidney G. Sowers, The Hermeneutics of Philo and Hebrews, Basel Studies of Theology, no. 1 (Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1965), pp. 15-16.

<sup>7</sup>Gen. 1:2; Is. 45:18.

<sup>8</sup>Ex. 15:3; 33:14; Num. 11:11; 12:8; Deut. 33:10.

<sup>9</sup>Prov. 2:16-17.

<sup>10</sup>Zeller, 277.

<sup>11</sup>Fr. 1, Pr. Ev. VII, 14,1; fr. 2, VIII, 10, 1-17; fr. 3, XIII, 12, 1-2; Fr. 4, XIII, 12, 3-8; fr. 5, XIII 12, 9-16. There are scattered references in other church fathers.

the early second century B.C.<sup>12</sup> is reputed to have explained the "scientific" (*φυσικῶς*)<sup>13</sup> meaning of the Scriptures, especially of the anthropomorphic passages, and to have asserted the priority of Moses' writings over those of Greek philosophy. Yet he interpreted the writings of Moses with a concept of God which he found expressed in Greek writings.

Considerably more evidence for a movement of pre-Philonic Alexandrian philosophical Judaism is offered by the Wisdom of Solomon. This book, whose chief purpose is the defence of the Jewish belief in God through the use of the tools of Hellenistic learning, finds its context most naturally in the first century B.C. in Alexandria.<sup>14</sup> In this document we find, for instance, *σοφία* and *λόγος* used in similar ways,<sup>15</sup> although *σοφία*, which in 7:22-8:5 is nearly a fully hypostasized figure,<sup>16</sup> is more predominant.<sup>17</sup> We shall also be pointing out below the similarity of the things asserted here about *σοφία*<sup>18</sup> to Philo's teaching concerning *σοφία* and *λόγος*.

The Letter of Aristeas, purporting to be from the third century B.C. and offering information concerning the translation of the Torah into Greek

<sup>12</sup>Cf. the discussion of the date of Aristobulus in Walter, pp. 13-26.

<sup>13</sup>*φυσικῶς λαμβάνειν*, fr. 2, Pr. Ev. VIII, 10, 2, is a term for allegory which Aristobulus must have learned from Greek philosophy, perhaps as a direct borrowing from Stoicism, Max Heinze, *Die Lehre vom Logos in der griechischen Philosophie* (Oldenberg: Ferdinand Schmidt, 1872), p. 186.

<sup>14</sup>Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament An Introduction*, translated by Peter R. Ackroyd from the 3rd German edition (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 602.

<sup>15</sup>Wisdom of Solomon 9:1-2; compare 18:15 to 9:4,10.

<sup>16</sup>Zeller, 292.

<sup>17</sup>Other philosophical terms besides those which will be dealt with in detail below, appearing in Wisdom of Solomon include: *τὸν ὄντα (ὁ ὢν)* 13:1; *ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης*, 11:17.

<sup>18</sup>Both concerning creation, cf. Wis. Sol. 7:22,24-26; 8:11,4; 9:2,9; and salvation, cf. 7:27; 8:13; chap. 10.

in Egypt, is labelled by Eissfeldt as a clear fabrication, written certainly not before the end of the second century B.C.<sup>19</sup> Despite the fact that it is not contemporary with what it claims to describe, this is a pre-Philonic document. What can be gleaned from it concerning attitudes toward Scripture and toward Greek philosophy is of value for understanding the background of Philo.

Within the writings of Philo themselves are indications that he is sometimes drawing on traditions before him--especially for allegorical interpretations.<sup>20</sup> This type of evidence also testifies that Philo, as one would expect, is dependent on predecessors in Alexandrian Judaism.<sup>21</sup>

Wolfson<sup>22</sup> summarizes six areas in which pre-Philonic Alexandrian Judaism had made progress in its reconciliation with Greek philosophy and cites passages which indicate the reservations they still held as Jews: (1) God is incorporeal and free of emotions, yet he is not without personal relationships to men (Aristeas 192--he can be prayed to); (2) God has established a fixed order of nature, yet he can miraculously change it

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<sup>19</sup>Eissfeldt, p. 604; cf. Pelletier, pp. 57-58.

<sup>20</sup>Spec. II, 147, 159; Mut. 141; Plant. 52, 74; LA I, 59; QG I, 10, 18; II, 11; QE II, 71.

<sup>21</sup>Items which might logically be considered as testimony to pre-Philonic Alexandrian Judaism but which will not be dealt with here due to the extreme difficulties of date and composition involved include: Book III of the Sibylline Oracles (in which there are many interpolations, Eissfeldt, p. 616), The Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach (which is Palestinian in origin, *ibid.* p. 597), III Maccabees (which cannot be undisputably dated more specifically than 100 B.C.-70A.D., *ibid.*, p. 582), III Esdras, pseudo-Phocylides (cf. Zeller, pp. 291-292), and IV Maccabees (cf. Zeller, pp. 297-298).

<sup>22</sup>I, 26-27.

(Wis. Sol. 11:17-20; 19:6-12, 18-22; 12:18); (3) God is providence, yet his providence is individual, rewarding and punishing individually (Wis. Sol. 14:3-4; 19:13); (4) Man is a part of nature and his actions follow the laws of cause and effect, yet God by his grace has given him freedom (Aristeas 231, 236, 237; Wis. Sol. 1:12); (5) The soul is immortal, yet it is also destructible as a punishment (Wis. Sol. 3:11; 4:19); (6) The laws of Moses are for virtue as are the laws of other philosophers, yet those of Moses are the best means for virtue, revealed by God and to be obeyed as divine ordinances (Aristeas 127, 313; Wis. Sol. 6:18). Add to these the σοφία-λόγος parallelism of the Wisdom of Solomon and the precursors of allegorical interpretation in Aristobulus and Aristeas, and we have a general picture of the line of tradition in which Philo Judaeus, ca. 20 B.C.-ca. 42 A.D., appears.

An unusual figure and a prolific writer in the history of thought, Philo has been interpreted in various ways and against various backgrounds. This is especially true of the interpretations of his religious thoughts, an area of our special interest. Therefore a brief synopsis of the major modern interpretations may be helpful.<sup>23</sup>

The writings of Philo can be--and have been--considered the proper domain of historians of classical philosophy, of Judaism, and of the history of

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<sup>23</sup>Our synopsis will deal primarily with the issues involved in our two areas of interest: cosmology and soteriology. No one interested in the literature on Philo can ignore Louis Feldman, Studies in Judaica, Scholarship on Philo and Josephus (1937-1962) (New York: Yeshiva University, n.d.), an excellent and extensive annotated bibliography. Cf. also the overview of Philo interpretation given by Roger Arnaldez, "Introduction Generale," Les Oeuvres de Philon d'Alexandrie, ed. and tr. by Roger Arnaldez, Jean Pouilloux, and Claude Mondésert (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1961) I, 17-112.

religions. All recognize in Philonic thought the general phenomenon of the Hellenistic Age, the syncretism of oriental and occidental thought and religion. But how should one more precisely describe the relationship of the Greek and the Jewish elements in Philo? Various answers are offered.

Eduard Zeller sees Philo as a religious philosopher, for whom theology is the central point of all wisdom, whose task was the demonstration of the superiority of the religion taught through Moses, the greatest philosopher, over that of the Greek philosophies in his environment.<sup>24</sup> In this task Philo employed two resources: the argument of the dependence of what is true in Greek philosophy on the Jewish revelation, and the allegorical interpretation of the Scriptures.<sup>25</sup> In so doing, Philo betrayed his own philosophical presuppositions, expressed in a system that borrows most heavily from Stoicism and Platonism, though elements from other schools are not lacking from his writings. Zeller views the doctrine of God as the major point at which Philo had to work in relating Jewish and Greek thought. Philo held a view of God in relation to the world that is similar to that of neo-Pythagoreanism: God is eternal, perfect, and real, in contrast to the material world, which is perishable, imperfect, and unreal.<sup>26</sup> It is not possible that such a perfect God be related to the imperfect world and to men. Therefore, borrowing from Stoicism (but avoiding Stoic pantheism), Philo described the mediating powers which are active in the

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<sup>24</sup>Pp. 390-391.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., pp. 393-394.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 400.

world for the perfect and transcendent God.<sup>27</sup> These powers man can recognize, but the transcendent God cannot be known. Zeller sees this skeptical element tentatively resolved in a mystical strain in Philo: the one who gives himself up and who turns away his mind from all temporal things knows the eternal.<sup>28</sup>

Philo, according to Johannes Leisegang, was essentially a Stoic.<sup>29</sup> Philo dealt very little with any of the key religious concepts of the Old Testament, such as the covenant or the Messiah. Instead, Philo turned to Stoic philosophy for a way to express the intermediaries between the spirit of man and the spirit of God; for to know God was to comprehend the metaphysical key to reality for which Greek philosophy had searched. While there is some surface resemblance to Platonism, Stoicism is the dominant influence.<sup>30</sup> Philo deviated from basic Stoicism only in so far as he posited a personal transcendent God as the key to reality. Mystery-revelation terminology attached itself to the description of man's relationship to this transcendent personal God.<sup>31</sup>

Émile Bréhier emphasizes that Philo was more than a philosopher with a new combination of theories into a system. Philo was a religious writer,

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 407-408.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 459, citing Som. I, 60.

<sup>29</sup>"Philon aus Alexandria," Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, edited by Georg Wissowa (Neue Bearbeitung; Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1914), XX, 1, cols. 1-50; cf. col. 39.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., col. 41: the Logos is the reason of the world, of God, and of man, so God, nature, and man are all brought together in an essential unity.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., col. 42.



whose dominant idea is the relationship of the soul of man to God.<sup>32</sup>

For Philo, the soul was completely related to God neither through contemplation nor reflection, but rather through an act of humility. The soul must become less and less, withdrawing from involvement in the mundane life, and thus become prepared to achieve union with God.<sup>33</sup> The nature of this God and the way to union with him is revealed, to those who can grasp it, through the sacred books of the Old Testament, but it is also the conclusion of correct philosophy.<sup>34</sup> Revelation and reason coincide; revelation is rational and philosophy is nothing other than the divine word revealed.<sup>35</sup> The intermediary principles and figures through which man comes to a relationship with the supreme being are the instruments of revelation and at the same time the causes and principles of being which philosophy has defined: the logos, the spirit.<sup>36</sup> In his theology of intermediaries of revelation Philo was most heavily indebted to Stoicism. Philo represents the syncretism of his times: in his system of God, creation, and ecstasy, there were elements which have their origin in Platonism,

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<sup>32</sup>Les Idées philosophiques et religieuses de Philon d'Alexandrie, Études de Philosophie médiévale, VIII (3rd edition; Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1950), 311: "Ces rapports ne font pas l'objet d'une théorie philosophique à concepts limités et définis: ils sont l'expression même de l'expérience intime de l'auteur. Une telle expérience ne trouve pas d'analogue dans la pensée grecque." The substitution of a moral relationship to a personal God, based on inspired knowledge and revelation, was a revolutionary element in Philo over against Greek philosophy's desire for a relationship to existence of a physical or mathematical nature, 316.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., pp. 311-312. But the characteristic ecstasy of the later mysteries, in which there is a fusion of God with the human person, is lacking in Philo.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 312.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 316.

Pythagoreanism, or the mysteries. But in this syncretistic system it is Stoicism which was the dominant and underlying influence.<sup>37</sup> Bréhier considers Philo to have been a part of an Alexandrian-Hellenistic tradition (whose later development can be seen in such writings as the Hermetic corpus) which desired a mystical experience of God, for which Scripture and philosophy alike can prepare man.<sup>38</sup>

Bréhier's carefully worked out description of Philo as a religious writer leads us to these scholars who have considered Philo in the light of the history of religions. The religious (rather than the philosophical) side of Philo's writings is emphasized by these men. Philo is considered as a representative of a circle of Alexandrian Jews who came to understand their religion as a Hellenistic mystery religion. Thus Wilhelm Bousset describes Philo as the first mystic and ecstatic in a specifically monotheistic piety.<sup>39</sup> The foundation of this piety was a principle of the Greek mysteries: the opposition of spirit and matter.<sup>40</sup> Thus Philo used a characteristic Hellenistic conception of life and piety.<sup>41</sup> Similarly Hans Jonas has studied Philo in connection with the gnostic elements of Hellenistic religion, finding in Philo the gnostic primal opposition

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 72; cf. Arnaldez, p. 73.

<sup>38</sup>Bréhier, p. 248.

<sup>39</sup>Die Religion des Judentums im spät-hellenistischen Zeitalter, hrsg. von Hugo Gressman, Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, XXI (3rd edition; Tübingen: Verlag von J. C. B. Mohr, 1926), 452; cf. Arnaldez, pp. 86-87.

<sup>40</sup>Bousset, p. 441.

<sup>41</sup>Cf. H. Hegermann, Die Vorstellung vom Schöpfungsmittler im hellenistischen Judentum und Urchristentum, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, Bd. 82 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961), 6, where similar views are cited in Reitzenstein and Pascher.

between God and the world and the gnostic denial of man's world-existence as freedom.<sup>42</sup>

But perhaps no one has a more thoroughly worked out interpretation along these lines than E. R. Goodenough.<sup>43</sup> Assuming that Philo was an initiate of a Jewish mystery cult, Goodenough concentrates his study on the allegorical writings, where Philo's speculative and mystical notions are expressed. Claiming to stand in the best tradition of Philo's interpretation, Goodenough explains his basic point of view:

the basic departure of Philo from "normative" Judaism lies in the fact that he took to his heart the pagan idea of salvation; that is that the spirit be realised from the flesh in order to return to its spiritual source in God.<sup>44</sup>

This adoption of the pagan concept of salvation, then, and not the use of the formal philosophy of the classical Greek schools, was the distinctive contribution of Philo and his circle to the synthesis of Judaism and Hellenism. The allegorical method of exegesis was this mystic circle's way of finding in the Old Testament the revelation of God as the source of a great stream of Being to whom man must ascend in ever-increasing degrees of participation. Philo's entire life at work--the interpretation of the Jewish Scripture--testifies to his conviction that in the cryptic stories and rites of Judaism, properly (mystically) understood, is the

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., where Hegermann cites Gnosis und spätantiker Geist, II, 117 and offers a criticism.

<sup>43</sup>By Light, Light (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935), whose subtitle, The Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism, indicates at once his basic point of view.

<sup>44</sup>Introduction, p. 14.

true mystery.<sup>45</sup>

This type of interpretation--especially the work of Goodenough--has prompted responses in two major subsequent studies of Philo: Walter Völker's Fortschritt und Vollendung bei Philo von Alexandrien<sup>46</sup> and H. A. Wolfson's Philo.<sup>47</sup> Each proposes his own study as an alternative explication of the thought of Philo. Völker, feeling that there is no coherent "system" in Philo, has attempted an examination of one of the fundamental points, namely: piety. He characterizes Philo as basically a "pious Jew," who employed, in some passages, the philosophical and religious vocabulary of his Greek environment. But he sees nothing in the pagan religiosity that could possibly have been appealing to Philo the Jew and considers Philo's piety in relation to that of the Psalms and of Sirach.<sup>48</sup>

Wolfson's study of Philo is one part of an as yet incomplete study of the history of the relationship of philosophy to religious faith. He considers Philo, a philosopher in the grand manner, as the ancestor of the philosophers of the Middle Ages, for whom religion is a set of revealed principles which must serve as a touchstone for reason.<sup>49</sup> While Philo employed

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<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 88; cf. pp. 139-140: "Man's salvation was the mystic approach to immaterial reality," and Philo attempted to demonstrate that "the true mystery that had been revealed by Moses in both cryptic story and Jewish rite." Goodenough admits the possibility that he has overemphasized one aspect of Philo, Ibid., p. 19, and confesses that his own predilection for a mystical form of religion may have affected his studies, p. 29.

<sup>46</sup>Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur, Bd. 49, 1 (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1938), cf. pp. 194-196.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. esp. I, 49.

<sup>48</sup>Cf. Arnaldez, pp. 102-103.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. Wolfson, I, v-viii; Arnaldez, pp. 83.

the terminology of Greek philosophy and pagan religion, he considered the Scriptural books to be divine revelation and always subordinated his philosophy to revelation. His philosophy had these Scriptural presuppositions, a "preamble of faith": (1) the existence of God, (2) the unity of God, (3) divine providence, (4) the creation of the world, (5) the unity of the world, (6) the existence of incorporeal ideas, (7) the revelation of the Law, and (8) the eternity of the Law.<sup>50</sup> Thus the religion of Philo was not that of the Greek mysteries, even though he used these terms, but that of the Old Testament Law.<sup>51</sup>

Each of these interpretations of Philo has its points of validity--precisely because Philo was a syncretistic thinker and a prolific writer. As we interpret Philo, we shall have to keep an open mind to the many-faceted nature of his thoughts. While attempting to beware of the bias of any secondary materials we may cite, our own understanding of Philo is perhaps most in sympathy with that of Bréhier: that for Philo philosophy was a sort of channel of revelation coincident with (but inferior to) Scripture, that there was a higher religious relationship than simple knowledge of facts, and that the intermediaries of this relationship with God were at the same time figures which mediated the creative power of God in the world. While we agree that the terminology of some passages is that of the mysteries and that Philo believed the highest relationship to God to be an experience

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<sup>50</sup>Wolfson, I, 164-165.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., I, 49. Wolfson understands such passages as Immut. 61-62; Sac. 62, 63 as an altered way of presenting the ethical system of the Old Testament law.

which can be described as "mystical," we do not think it proper to assume that Philo was making Judaism into a Hellenistic mystery religion or that he had adopted the "pagan concept of salvation."<sup>52</sup>

With this as introduction, let us turn to our explication of Philo's cosmology and soteriology. The cosmological passages, understandably enough, employ terminology borrowed mostly from the realm of Greek philosophy, while it is in the soteriological passages<sup>53</sup> that much of the mystery and mystical terminology which he uses occurs. But these are now two unrelated topics in Philo, for some of the basic concepts in his explanation of the creation and structure of the world recur in his description of man's religious relationship to God. We shall return to this congruence in the conclusion of this chapter.

#### Philo's Cosmology

"The style of Philo, like that of any writer, is the product of all that has been written before him."<sup>54</sup> Thus the works of Philo represent a veritable museum of the philosophical ideas of his time. And yet, "one cannot determine the affiliation of a philosopher by the parentage of the terms he uses;" rather, "it is in the inner speech of thought, and the

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<sup>52</sup>Hegermann, pp. 13, 25, rightly criticizes the attempt to make either a philosopher or a mystagog out of Philo. Rather, Philo desires to teach the blessed joy connected with true virtue and true submission to God.

<sup>53</sup>By this we refer to Philo's statements on the attainment of the highest religious relationship with God, whether or not the actual word *σωτηρια* itself is found in the passage.

<sup>54</sup>Wolfson, I, 102.

latent process of reasoning behind it," that we find the philosopher.<sup>55</sup> Thus while the terms which Philo employs and which we are about to discuss have their background in Greek philosophies, hardly any of them have been incorporated into Philo's teachings without some alteration in meaning.<sup>56</sup> We shall first discuss the use of the most important of these terms in Philo's cosmology. This "word study" approach will help us define Philo's terminology. Then we shall give a synopsis of two longer sections from Philo's writings which deal with cosmology. In this way we shall be able to present the way in which the terms which we have discussed were incorporated by Philo into a cosmological system.

Philo was concerned in his cosmology to demonstrate that the transcendent, perfect and immaterial God was the ultimate cause of the creation and preservation of the *κόσμος*. But in as much as the transcendent One could not be in contact with the created world, Philo constantly explained the work of God in the world as being effected through intermediary figures.<sup>57</sup> In his description of the creation and structure of the world, Philo used the Old Testament, Alexandrian Judaism's *σοφία* speculation, the Stoic doctrines of the *λόγος* and the active powers, and the Platonic concepts

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., I, 101-102.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., I, 111-113: despite his use of Stoic and Platonic terms, "Philo was thus a critic of Stoicism and a reviser of Platonism," p. 113.

<sup>57</sup>Cf. Zeller, pp. 407-408; Heinze, pp. 209-210; Émil Bréhier, The Hellenistic and Roman Age, translated by Wade Baskin, The History of Philosophy, II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), 169-170; and Bréhier, Idées, p. 175, where he emphasizes that the mediators are necessary not because of any limitations placed on God, but because of the inability of the creation to come into contact with God except through intermediaries.

ἰδέα and εἰκὼν.<sup>58</sup> Therefore we shall study Philo's use of these words: σοφία, λόγος, δύναμις, ἰδέα, εἰκὼν.

## Σοφία

Alexandrian Judaism, standing in the tradition of the Hebrew wisdom school, developed further the thought reflected in Prov. 8:22-30.<sup>59</sup> The Wisdom of Solomon thus predicated the presence of the σοφία of God at the creation: "καὶ μετὰ σοῦ ἡ σοφία ἢ εἰδυῖα τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ παρούσα, ὅτε ἐποίησ τὸν κόσμον."<sup>60</sup> More than being just present, σοφία is actually called ἡ γὰρ πάντων τεχνίτης,<sup>61</sup> who τὰ πάντα ἐργασομένης.<sup>62</sup> Philosophical ideas also contribute to the description of the immanence of σοφία in the universe, as σοφία has a spirit which is: ΠΑΝΤΟΔΥΝΑΜΟΝ, ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑ ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΧΩΡΟΥΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΩΝ ΝΟΙΩΝ ΚΑΘΑΡΩΝ ΛΙΠΠΟΤΑΤΩΝ... Διήκει δὲ καὶ χωρεῖ διὰ πάντων.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup>Cf. Zeller, pp. 408-409; Philo's system reflects a combining of Stoic pantheism with Aristotelian theism, a combining which Zeller asserts had taken place already before Philo.

<sup>59</sup>Prov. 8:22-23: Κύριος ἐκτίσεν μου ἀρχὴν ὁδῶν αὐτοῦ, / πρὸ τοῦ ἔσται αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέν με ἐν ἀρχῇ... 30a: ἤμην παρ' αὐτῷ ἀρμόγουσα, / ἐγὼ ἤμην, ἢ προσέλαβεν.

<sup>60</sup>Wis. Sol. 9:9a; cf. 8:4b; 10:1

<sup>61</sup>Wis. Sol. 7:21; cf. 8:6.

<sup>62</sup>Wis. Sol. 8:5

<sup>63</sup>Wis. Sol. 7:23b-24; cf. 8:1; 1:7.



Such terms as *διέκειν* were used of the *λόγος* in Stoicism.<sup>64</sup> Thus in Wisdom of Solomon things are predicated of *σοφία* which are drawn both from the biblical tradition and from the Greek philosophical vocabulary.<sup>65</sup>

Philo has preserved this tradition, ascribing the agency of creation to *σοφία* in Fug. 109: *σοφίας, δι' ἧς τὰ ὅλα ἦλθεν εἰς γένεσιν*, and calling *σοφία* Bethuel, which is the daughter of God (Fug. 50), the highest of the powers of God (LA II, 86; Fug. 5), and the bringer of perfect joy and happiness (Immut. 92). But in Philo *σοφία* is eclipsed--practically replaced--by the figure of the *λόγος*.<sup>66</sup> Already in the Wisdom of Solomon *σοφία* and *λόγος* are used in parallel constructions: *ὁ ποιήσας τὰ πάντα ἐν λόγῳ σου καὶ τῇ σοφίᾳ σου κατασκευάσας ἄνθρωπον*,<sup>67</sup> and the terminology, as we have seen, of the Stoic *λόγος* is applied to *σοφία*. With this as precedent, Philo, while not ignoring the figure of *σοφία* completely, has made use of further philosophical language for his description of the mediating figures in the creation, especially of the *λόγος*.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. Marc. Aurelius, V. 32; Stobaeus, Ecl. I, 324; as cited in Heinze, p. 85, cf. note 1. God or the *λόγος* can also be referred to as a *πνεῦμα* in Stoicism, Heinze, pp. 92-93. The term *διοικεῖν* appears, being placed in the mouth of a philosopher, Menedemos of Eretris, applied to *πρόνοια*, in Letter of Aristeas 201.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. also Heinze's discussion of the naming of *σοφία* as the source of all light in Aristobulus, fr. 5 in Pr. Ev. XIII, 12, 10, pp. 190-191. He sees creation overtones in this figure.

<sup>66</sup>Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, Das Evangelium des Johannes, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, 2. Abt. (18th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964), p. 9, note 1; Wolfson, I, 258, where he gives his own categorization of the identical meanings both terms can have.

<sup>67</sup>9:1b-2a; cf. 18:15, where the Angel of Death is described as: *ὁ παντοδύναμός σου λόγος*; *παντοδύναμον* is also an epithet of the spirit of *σοφία* in 7:23; cf. also 16:12.

## Λόγος

In his *λόγος*-teaching Philo was thus expanding Scriptural traditions<sup>68</sup> and those of Alexandrian Judaism as reflected in the Wisdom of Solomon. But in so doing, he has followed the precedent reflected in the Wisdom of Solomon for using non-Biblical philosophical concepts in his teaching, for his *λόγος*-teaching is clearly patterned after that of Stoicism, with some necessary alterations.<sup>69</sup>

Stoicism is rational and material. The Stoic god is the *λόγος*, a material principle which penetrates or dwells in everything (thus making Stoicism optimistic and pantheistic). The *κόσμος* is a perfect harmony. The *λόγος* is the moving power and guide of all things, and flows out into all individual beings; above all it is the soul of rational beings.<sup>70</sup>

Bréhier summarizes lucidly:

His [the Stoic Logos', God's] power penetrates everything, and his providence overlooks not even the slightest detail. His relation to man and to the universe appears in a new light; he is no longer a solitary stranger in the world which he attracts through his beauty but the operator of the world for which he has conceived a plan. The virtue of the sage is neither the assimilation to God that Plato envisioned nor the simple civic and political virtue depicted by Aristotle; it is rather his acceptance of the divine work and collaboration in this work through his knowledge of it.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Cf. Zeller, pp. 431-432, who mentions the Old Testament concepts of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, in addition to Wisdom. Any attempts to link Philo's *λόγος*-teaching to the *memrah* of later Judaism are highly questionable. Cf. Goodenough, Introduction, p. 76, where he offers further bibliography.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. Heinze, pp. 237-239.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. Wolfson I, 327-328; Zeller, p. 433; Heinze, pp. 81, 83-86, 99-100, 145. Max Pohlenz, Die Stoa (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1948), I, 64-69; II, 37-39.

<sup>71</sup>Hellenistic and Roman Age, p. 35.

Thus in Stoicism the three parts of philosophy (logic, physic, and ethics) are inseparably linked together,

since one and the same reason connects consequent propositions to antecedent propositions in the dialectic, links together all causes in nature, and establishes perfect agreement between acts in the realm of conduct.<sup>72</sup>

The *λόγος* of Philo likewise is the rational principle in the universe, directing and administering all things.<sup>73</sup> But in adopting this aspect of the *λόγος* teaching from Stoicism Philo necessarily<sup>74</sup> eliminated the materialism and the panentheism of Stoicism. Therefore Philo's *λόγος* is separated from the material of the created *κόσμος*; *λόγος* is the term for the totality of immaterial reality, and is a pattern which God stamps upon the material creation (but which has no physical intermingling with the material).<sup>75</sup> Philo's *λόγος* is not God himself, but exists in some degree separate from the transcendent God.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>73</sup>Mos. II, 133; cf. Mos. II, 127: τοῦ συνέχοντος καὶ διοσκοῦντος τὸ σύμπαντα τὸ λογέον. Heinze, p. 232: this indicates that Philo applies the distinction of *λόγος ἐνδιάθετος* and *λόγος προφορικός*, which he makes explicitly concerning the mind of man, also to the divine *λόγος*, Sac. 40. This also is the thought intended when the *λόγος* is called *Κυβερνήτης* (Cher. 36; Mig. 6), *δραστής* (Fug. 112), *τομαίς* (Heres 130), and the charioteer of the powers (Fug. 101).

<sup>74</sup>Because of his Jewish belief and in keeping with Platonism and neo-Pythagoreanism, Zeller, p. 433.

<sup>75</sup>Opif. 24, 25, 36. Thus the *λόγος* is the *χαρακτήρ*, stamped on the creation by God, cf. Som. II, 45.

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Cf. Heres 206; Opif. 20-23; Fug. 101, where the *λόγος* is the charioteer and God is the one seated in the chariot, giving directions. Cf. Goodenough, Introduction, p. 109.

The *λόγος* is not the immanent God of Stoicism and is also not to be identified with the transcendent God himself; it exists only relative to the transcendent. To ask whether the *λόγος* is an attribute of the transcendent God extended into the creation or a separate, intermediate, created personal being is to pose in modern terms the basic question which Philo was attempting to resolve: precisely how is the transcendent God related to the created universe.<sup>77</sup> We offer here a summary of the interpretations of Wolfson and of Goodenough for a description of this relationship of Philo's *λόγος* to God that attempts to take all of the various passages into consideration.

Wolfson categorizes Philo's references to the *λόγος* figure into three "stages" in the "career" of the *λόγος*. First, the *λόγος* existed as a property of God in the mind of God and contained both the ideas (*ἰδέα*) of all that was subsequently to come into being and the powers (*δύναμις*) by which each of them did come into being. But nothing as yet had been projected into existence outside the mind of God.<sup>78</sup> At this point the *λόγος* is the mind of God, at one with his essence.<sup>79</sup> But through an act of creation the *λόγος* was given a separate existence as a created being, as the mind created by God to encase the totality of the created ideas.<sup>80</sup> When the visible world was created through these powers and according to these patterns (the

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<sup>77</sup>Cf. Zeller, p. 429.

<sup>78</sup>Wolfson, I, 231.

<sup>79</sup>Cf. Zeller, p. 423; as an example of the type of passage from which this might be concluded, cf. LA I, 63-65.

<sup>80</sup>The "second stage," Wolfson, I, 231-232. This explains the many passages in which God is causally prior to the *λόγος*: Som. I, 65, 117; or in which the *λόγος* is created: LA III, 175; Det. 118.

totality of both of which is called the *λόγος*), the *λόγος* also became immanent in the world as the cause of the immutable laws of nature.<sup>81</sup> This interpretation is of value in assisting us to categorize the passages in Philo dealing with the *λόγος* and his relationship to God, but can hardly claim to represent the actual structuring of Philo's own thought.

Goodenough's diagram of the relationships between God, the *λόγος* and the powers, while also somewhat theoretical, has the advantage of appearing more congruous to the general thought-world of Philo's time. He explains that Philo describes God as related to the world through a "Stream of radiation," for which Philo's favorite summary term is the *λόγος*: "The Logos is now the reason of God and now the projected reason; it is the Law of Nature, and, for mystic purposes, the ultimate reality given an initiate."<sup>82</sup> But the activity of God in the world is of such diverse nature that this stream of radiation is divided by Philo into basic differentiations within the *λόγος*: the creative power, the ruling power, mercy, justice, and (both natural and Mosaic) law.<sup>83</sup> This description at least tries to say

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<sup>81</sup>The "third stage," *ibid.*, I, 327, 332. Namely, in the law: of opposites (*Πομεύς*), *Heres* 130, 133-148, 236; of the harmony of the opposites (*ἑξισμός*), *Fug.* 112; *Immut.* 35; *Heres* 188; *Mos.* II, 133; *Cher.* 36; *Mig.* 6; *Plant.* 9; and of the perpetuity of the species (*λόγος σπέρματικος*), *QE* II, 68; *Heres* 119; *Opif.* 43. Wolfson sees Philo distinguishing between the second and the third "stages" of the existence of the *λόγος* in *Mos.* II, 127; cf. *Sac.* 40; *ibid.*, I, 331.

<sup>82</sup>*Introduction*, p. 104.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.* Justification for this type of description comes largely from the passages in which Philo employs the imagery of light, such as *Som.* I, 35; cf. *LA* II, 21.

no more than what Philo himself said.

Philo presents the *λόγος* as the agent of creation, the mediator between the Ultimate cause and his creation. Thus he says: " *λόγος δ' ἔστιν εἰκὼν Θεοῦ, δι' οὗ συμπᾶς ὁ κόσμος ἐδημιουργεῖτο.*"<sup>84</sup> And,

having described the four Aristotelian causes, Philo says: " *ὄργανον δὲ λόγον Θεοῦ δι' οὗ κατασκευάσθη [ὁ κόσμος]. . .*"<sup>85</sup>

And in describing the created world as the *εἰκὼν* of God, Philo again places the *λόγος* between God and the visible creation. Thus in commenting on Gen. 1: 26, the creation of man in the image of God, he says:

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 of the Mind (*νοῦν*), the sovereign element of the soul, that the word "image" (*εἰκὼν*) is used; for after the pattern of a single Mind, even the Mind of the Universe as the archetype, the mind of each of those who successively came into being was moulded (*Opif.* 69).

Commenting on the same passage in *Opif.* 25, Philo identifies that divine *εἰκὼν* as the *λόγος* and concludes that the entire creation is created according to it:

Now if the part [*man*] 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 (seeing that it is greater than any human image) is a copy of the Divine image (*μυέτημα Θείας εἰκόνος*), it is manifest that the archetypal seal (*σφραγίς*) also, which we aver to be the world described by the mind, would be the very Word of God.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>84</sup>*Spec.* I, 81. Cf. *Sac.* 8.

<sup>85</sup>*Cher.* 127. Cf. *LA* III, 96, *Mig.* 6.

<sup>86</sup>Neither Colson and Whitaker nor Arnaldez translate the following additional words here ascribed to the *λόγος*, which are placed in brackets in Cohn's Greek text: τὸ παράδειγμα, ἀρχέτυπος ἰδέα πῶν ἰδεῶν.

Likewise the description of the *λόγος* as the *τόπος* of the totality of the incorporeal existence is an indication of Philo's unwillingness to say anything of God that may tend to describe the Transcendent as limited.<sup>87</sup> In this context too the *λόγος* is the bridge between the infinite and the finite. The incorporeal world of ideas, the *κόσμος νοητός*, is also identified as the *λόγος*, as a middle stage of the creation, between God and the material world: "οὐδὲν ἂν ἕτερον εἴποι τὸν νοητὸν κόσμον εἶναι ἢ Θεοῦ λόγον ἤδη κοσμοποιούντος" (Opif. 24).

The instrumentality of the *λόγος* is also implicit in the description of it as a *χαρακτήρ* (which can mean either an instrument used for impressing or engraving a pattern or the pattern left impressed or engraved by such an instrument), as Philo says: "σφραγίδι Θεοῦ, ἧς ὁ χαρακτήρ ἐστίν ὁ αἰδέος λόγος."<sup>88</sup> Lastly, the *λόγος* is not only the *τόπος* of the totality of the ideas, but also of the powers by which the universe was made: τὸν Θεῖον λόγον . . . ἐπεὶ τὶς ἂν εἴη τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτοῦ τόπος ἕτερος . . . . δύναμις δὲ καὶ ἡ κοσμοποιητική . . . (Opif. 20-21).

### Δυνάμεις

Philo has also adapted the Stoic doctrine of the active causes to describe the activity of the transcendent God in the universe.<sup>89</sup> Tied closely to

<sup>87</sup>Opif. 20; Som. I, 62. In Som I, 63 and Fug. 75 Philo says God can be called *τόπος*, if it is emphasized that while containing all he is not contained or limited himself.

<sup>88</sup>Plant. 18; cf. Opif. 18, 151. The *λόγος* is a *σφραγίς*: Fug. 12; Opif. 25; Som. II, 45.

<sup>89</sup>Cf. Zeller, p. 408; Heinze, p. 244.

the λόγος,<sup>90</sup> the δυνάμεις are extensions of God's creative and sustaining (ruling) activity into the world.<sup>91</sup> The δυνάμεις therefore also are not identical with the transcendent God, but are immanent aspects of his power. They are mediators in the creation of the world:

For when out of that confused matter God produced all things, He did not do so with His own handiwork, since His nature, happy and blessed as it was, forbade that He should touch the limitless chaotic matter. Instead He made full use of His incorporeal potencies (τῶν ἀσωμάτων δυνάμεσιν) well denoted by their name of Forms (ἰδέαι) to enable each kind to take its appropriate shape.<sup>92</sup>

In this passage the δυνάμεις are also called ἰδέαι. In some places Philo describes the δυνάμεις as the forces inherent within the idea-patterns through which the idea is realized into particular creations.<sup>93</sup>

In this description is a reflection of the Platonic teaching that the ideas are also αἰτίαι which have δυνάμεις.<sup>94</sup> Therefore let us turn to this term.

<sup>90</sup>The λόγος is the chief or the summation of the δυνάμεις, QE II, 68: "And from the divine Logos, as from a spring, there divide and break forth two powers." Cf. Cher. 27-28; Fug. 94-95; Som. I, 62; and Wolfson, I, 226-227; Zeller, pp. 418-419.

<sup>91</sup>Post. 14: "For [the Cause of all] has placed all creation under His control, and is contained by nothing, but transcends all. But through transcending and being beyond what He has made, none the less has He filled the universe with Himself; for He has caused His powers to extend themselves throughout the Universe to its utmost bounds. (διὰ γὰρ τῶν ὅλων τῶν ἑαυτοῦ δυνάμεσιν ἀχρὲ πέρατων τρένας). Cf. Conf. 136; Sac. 59; Abr. 121-122; QG IV, 2.

<sup>92</sup>Spec. I, 39; cf. Opif. 21 (Κοσμοποιητικῆ); Conf. 172.

<sup>93</sup>In addition to Spec. I, 329, quoted above, cf. Spec. I, 46-48; Cher. 51; and Zeller, pp. 409, 432; Wolfson, I, 222-223.

<sup>94</sup>Phaedo 95E; Sophist 247D-E; cf. Wolfson I, 217-218. This may also reflect the concept of potentiality as in Aristotle.



## Ἰδέα - Ἐκών

Philo's explanation of the structure of the universe also employs some Platonic terminology—specifically the concepts ἰδέα and ἐκών. Philo adopts the Platonic doctrine that reality is in a world of ἰδέαι, of which material manifestations are ἐκόνες, but he emphasizes that the transcendent God alone is eternal, uncreated, and the Cause of all and is neither the totality of the ἰδέαι nor one of them.<sup>95</sup> Thus on the first day of creation God created the entire world of ideas,<sup>96</sup> as Philo says:

He first fully formed the intelligible world (κόσμον . . . τὸν νοητὸν), in order that he might have the use of a pattern wholly God-like and incorporeal in producing the material world, as a later creation.

This κόσμος νοητός is the ἐκών of God, who is the pattern and archetype of all that he has created.<sup>98</sup> And, at the same time, the ἰδέαι are the patterns of which the material creations are ἐκόνες.<sup>99</sup> Thus the κόσμος

<sup>95</sup>Contrary to Plato, who regards the ἰδέαι as eternal, ungenerated, Timaeus 28A-29D, 39E, 52A, 55A. When Philo calls the ἰδέαι "αἰδικοί," Dec. 134; Mut. 122-123, this must be understood to mean, in the light of other passages, "everlasting," but not "uncreated;" cf. Wolfson, I, 208. For the ideas are created, and God is above them, even above αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, Opif. 23; LA 1-3; Virt. 65; vs. Plato, Republic II, 379B-C. Cf. Zeller, p. 411; Wolfson I, 201.

<sup>96</sup>The κόσμος νοητός, which is his term for the totality of the ἰδέαι, cf. Opif. 4; Som. I, 186; Conf. 172; Mos. II, 127; Gig. 61.

<sup>97</sup>Opif. 16; cf. 13, 19, 26-28; Virt. 214; LA I, 23, 24, 65; QG IV, 1.

<sup>98</sup>Opif. 25; Plant. 50; Ebr. 132-133; LA I, 33, 42, 53; III, 96; Som. II, 45; Det. 87; Spec. I, 279; Heres 230-231.

<sup>99</sup>Opif. 146; Ebr. 132, 134.

*νοητός* is another intermediate creation between the transcendent God and the material world.

The *ἰδέαι* are not always mere patterns but also are connected with the powers;<sup>100</sup> they are therefore also closely connected to the *λόγος*, who is described as the archetypal *ἰδέα* or the totality of all the *ἰδέαι*.<sup>101</sup> Thus, as we have already noted, the *λόγος* is also the *εἰκὼν* of God and at the same time the pattern of which the entire created world is the *εἰκὼν*.<sup>102</sup> The mediating function of *ἰδέα*, as also of *σοφία* and *δύναμις*, is associated with the figure of the *λόγος*.

As a summary of Philo's cosmology we now offer a series of selected passages from his major cosmological treatise, the De Opificio Mundi, plus a few pertinent passages from Quis rerum divinarum Heres. Philo opens De Opificio Mundi by noting that Moses has begun his giving of the law with an account of the creation of the world,

implying that the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the law is constituted thereby as a loyal citizen of the world.<sup>103</sup>

He then castigates, for the most part in Aristotelian terms, those who believe the world to be eternal and God to be inactive, and he praises Moses

<sup>100</sup>Cf. supra pp. 48-49; Zeller, p. 409.

<sup>101</sup>QG I, 4; Mig. 103; Opif. 25; Spec. III, 207; cf. Opif. 24; Sac. 83; Som. II, 45. In this Wolfson, I, 232, 246, cf. 226-227, sees a reflection of the principle from Aristotle that which thinks and that which is thought are identical when the knowledge is actual, de Anima, III, 7, 431A, 1-2.

<sup>102</sup>Opif. 25; cf. Zeller, p. 425.

<sup>103</sup>Opif. 3. The *κόσμος* as a *παλιός* is a Stoic idea, cf. Epictetus, Discourses, III, 19, 53; S. V. F. I, par. 262.

for having seen

that the universal must consist of two parts, one part active Cause and the other passive object; and that the active Cause is the perfectly pure and unsullied Mind ( *νοῦς* ) of the universe.<sup>104</sup>

Although the account describes the coming into being of all over a period of six days,

we must think of God as doing all things simultaneously, remembering that "all" includes with the commands that He issues the thought behind them. Six days are mentioned because for the things coming into existence there was need of order.<sup>105</sup>

Philo then proceeds with this discussion of the day called "one," not the "first," lest it should be reckoned like the others. Its predominant element was the *κόσμος νοητός*:

For God, being God, assumed that a beautiful copy would never be produced apart from a beautiful pattern, and that no object of perception would be faultless which was not made in the likeness of an original discerned only by the intellect. So when he willed to create this visible world He first fully formed the intelligible world, in order that He might have the use of a pattern wholly God-like and incorporeal in producing the material world, as a later creation, the very image of an earlier, to embrace in itself objects of perception of as many kinds as the other contained objects of intelligence.<sup>106</sup>

Thus here Philo is reproducing the terminology of the Platonic<sup>107</sup> cosmology except to make it clear that the world of ideas is not eternal, but is a creation, the first in order of the creation of God.

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<sup>104</sup>Opif. 8.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>106</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>107</sup>Some of these terms also appear in the Stoic cosmology, cf. Pholenz, II, 132.

He explains further the nature of this first element in the creation with an analogy of an architect about to build a city, who sketches in his own mind all the parts and imprints their patterns upon his mind as a seal imprints an image on wax. Then, with his eye on the image in his mind, he begins to build the city out of stones and timber.

Just such must be our thoughts about God. We must suppose that, when He was minded to found the one great city, He conceived beforehand the model of its parts, and that out of these He constituted and brought to completion a world discernible only by the mind, and then, with that for a pattern, the world which our senses can perceive.<sup>108</sup>

Where do these noetic patterns exist--inside or outside the mind of God? Are they a part of God or of his creation? Philo discusses where the *τόπος* of this *κόσμος νοητός* might be.

As, then, the city which was fashioned in beforehand within the mind of the architect held no place in the outer world, but had been engraved in the soul of the artificer as by a seal; even so the universe that consisted of ideas would have no other location (*τόπος*) than the Divine Reason which was the Author of this ordered frame (*τὸν θεῖον λόγον τὸν πάντα διακοσμήσαντα*).<sup>109</sup>

Philo explains this relationship again:

The world discerned only by the intellect is nothing else than the Word of God when He was already engaged in the act of creation (*θεοῦ λόγον ἡδὴ κοσμοποιούντος*). For (to revert to our illustration) the city discernible by the intellect alone is nothing else than the reasoning faculty of the architect in the act of planning to found the city.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup>*Opif.* 19.

<sup>109</sup>*Ibid.*, 20. LSJ records that *διακοσμίω* is a technical term in Stoicism for the reestablishment of the world order after the *ἐκπύρωσις*, citing Zeno, *S.V.F.*, I, par. 27.

<sup>110</sup>*Opif.* 24.

Thus the *λόγος* is identified, in the process of God's creating, as the *κόσμος νοητός*. This identification becomes even more explicit in the following section in which Philo comments on Gen. 1:27, that man 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 (seeing that it is greater than any human image) 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 God.<sup>111</sup>

Thus the *κόσμος αίσθητός* is an *εἰκὼν* of the *κόσμος νοητός*, which in turn is also referred to as the *εἰκὼν Θεοῦ* and is identified with the *λόγος*. This passage makes it clear that, according to Philo, God can be known in the creation, for the creation is the image of the image of God. (Here we see one purpose for the Philonic teaching.)

Philo therefore interprets the first verse of Genesis as referring to the creation of the incorporeal heaven, an invisible earth, the incorporeal essence of water and the incorporeal pattern of light, and to the setting of the boundaries between these. This concluded the creation of the intelligible world on day "one." Philo summarizes:

The incorporeal world, then, was now finished and firmly settled in the Divine Reason, and the world patent to the sense was ripe for birth after the pattern of the incorporeal.<sup>112</sup>

He then continues with the description of the coming into being of the corporeal world, according to the orders of creation as described in Genesis, often offering reasons why one segment should follow another, digressing into

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<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 25. Colson and Whitaker do not translate the following additional ascriptions to the *λόγος* here, bracketed in their text and in the Cohn-Wendland text: "the pattern, the archetypal idea of ideas."

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., 36.

the powers of the numbers of the days, or extolling the wonders and uses of the various parts of the creation.

As the crown of all, man is created after the image of God, which, Philo explains, does not refer to a bodily form:

No, it is in respect of the Mind ( $\nu\omicron\upsilon\nu$ ), 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 successively came into being was moulded.<sup>113</sup>

It is man's mind which gazes beyond the things discernible to sense, reaches out for the intelligible world, and longs to see God.

Philo then describes all the powers of the number seven, God having declared the seventh day the day of rest. He includes a discussion of the nature of corporeal man, created a "mixed being," of the creation of woman, and of the fall, and concludes with five points which it is necessary for us to learn from this account:

that God is and is from eternity, and that He that really IS ( $\delta\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\ \acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omega\varsigma$ ) is One, and that He has made the world and has made it one world, unique as Himself is unique, and that He ever exercises forethought ( $\acute{\alpha}\epsilon\iota\ \pi\rho\omicron\nu\omicron\epsilon\iota$ ) for His creation.<sup>114</sup>

In the treatise Quis rerum divinarum Heres Philo offers a series of passages in which the creative process is described further, from a point of view that emphasizes the role of the  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$  as  $\tau\omicron\mu\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma$  and  $\delta\epsilon\sigma\mu\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  : the principle which accounts both for the diversity and for the underlying unity of all existence.

Thus God sharpened the edge of his all-cutting Word and divided universal being, which before was without form or quality, and

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<sup>113</sup>Ibid., 69.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 172.

the four elements of the world which were formed by segregation from it, and the animals and plants which were framed with them as materials.<sup>115</sup>

The process of the *λόγος* in creation, making distinctions, is analogous to the logical process of man's own mind, which divides all things within its grasp, unceasingly making distinctions.<sup>116</sup> Thus the connection of the mind of man to the *λόγος* allows man to see and comprehend rightly, by virtue of his reason, the work of God through the *λόγος* in the created world. While the creation of the various forms of being was accomplished through the distinction-making activity of the *λόγος*, it is the same *λόγος* that holds all things together:

Other things are in themselves without coherence, and if they be condensed, it is because they are held tight by the divine Word, which is a glue and bond (*κόλλα γὰρ καὶ δεσμός*), filling up all things with his being.<sup>117</sup>

The centrality of the *λόγος* as a principle of mediation between God and man in all things is spelled out by Philo in no uncertain terms:

To His Word, His chief messenger, highest in age and honour, the Father of all has given the special prerogative, to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator. . . . He [the Word] 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 to both extremes, a surety to both sides.<sup>118</sup>

We have seen that in his account of the creation Philo has consistently introduced various terms, figures, or modes of created existence between God,

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<sup>115</sup>Heres 140.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid. 234-235.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 188.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., 205-206.

as the transcendent Cause of all, and the material world.<sup>119</sup> The ἰδέαι, the Δυναμεις inherent in them, and the Κόσμος νοητός are all projections or creations of the transcendent One, but are not to be regarded as equivalent with him. And all of these intermediaries can be included in a single figure, the λόγος, the key mediator of the power and plan of God in the creation and preservation of the world.<sup>120</sup>

#### Philo's Soteriology

In the Jewish tradition before Philo, (σώζω-σωτήρ-) σωτηρία was most generally God's action to defend the pious against the impious.<sup>121</sup> These words are also used with this denotation by Philo.<sup>122</sup> But Philo also uses the terms to describe God's providence active in the natural order.<sup>123</sup> Added to this in Philo is a connotation in which salvation is considered as God's help and reward for the soul which fight against the passions and the

<sup>119</sup>While Wolfson, I, 286, flatly denies that Philo introduces "intermediaries," Zeller, pp. 407-408, Bréhier, Hellenistic and Roman Age, pp. 169-170, and Goodenough, Introduction, pp. 99-100, all, rightly it appears, offer this explanation. Cf. Post. 14; Mig. 182.

<sup>120</sup>Cf. Zeller, p. 420; Goodenough, Introduction, p. 100; Johannes Leisegang, "Logos," Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, Neue Bearbeitung begonnen von Georg Wissowa, herausgegeben von Wilhelm Kroll (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1926), XIII, 1, col. 1037.

<sup>121</sup>Cf. Wis. Sol. 5:2; 16:6-7; 18:7.

<sup>122</sup>Cf. Virt. 47, 49.

<sup>123</sup>Cf. Praem. 34; Spec. I, 209-210; II, 198; Ebr. 199. This was the Stoic interpretation of the pagan application of σωτήρ to God, Bréhier, Idées, p. 235, where he cites Cornutus, De Natura Deorum, p. 51, 15 Lang.



earthly elements.<sup>124</sup> This last named understanding of salvation underlies Philo's description of the relationship of man to God, and it is to it that we now turn. (Thus we shall investigate *σωτηρία* in terms of the relationships between man and God in which man can ascend from the earthly to the divine.)<sup>125</sup> Our discussion will concentrate four areas: knowledge (the role of philosophy in the relationship with God), ethics (philosophical ethics and the true joy born of virtue), cult (the true inward piety), and mysticism (descriptions of the most nearly complete union with God). Within each of these sub-headings our interest will also be focused on the various figures named as guides, revealers, or mediators in that particular description of man's relation to God.

#### Knowledge

Philo has some positive emphases in regard to reason, creation and revelation. The mind of man is created after the image of God, that is, of the *λόγος* :

It is in respect of the Mind (*νοῦν*), 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 successively came into being was moulded.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup>Cf. *Ebr.* 72, 111; *Praem.* 117; *Mig.* 124 (compare the thought of this passage to *Wis. Sol.* 6:24). Also cf. Werner Foerster and Georg Fohrer, "σῶζω, σωτηρία," *TWNT*, VII, 989; Bréhier, *Idées*, p. 235: "le salut consistant essentiellement pour l'intelligence à se purifier complètement du corps et des passions, sous l'influence d'une attraction divine d'espèce presque physique." *λόγος* is also named in connection with this salvation in a few passages; cf. *Immut.* 129; *Som.* I, 112; *LA* III, 137.

<sup>125</sup>Cf. Bréhier, *Idées*, p. 311.

<sup>126</sup>*O*pif. 69.

Therefore the mind of man, rationally considering the created world, operating in the sphere of ideas, can learn two things about God: that God exists and that his divine providence is active in the world. Philo describes such philosophers:

Others again who have had the strength through knowledge to envisage the Maker and Ruler of all have in the common phrase advanced from down to up. Entering the world as a well-ordered city they have beheld the earth standing fast . . . . Struck with admiration and astonishment they arrived at a conception according with what they beheld, that surely all these beauties and this transcendent order has not come into being automatically but by the handiwork of an architect and world maker; also that there must be a providence, for it is a law of nature that a maker should take care of what has been made.<sup>127</sup>

Because the mind of man is created after the image of God, namely the *λόγος*, through which the entire world is created and sustained, man can know of the existence and providence of God.<sup>128</sup>

But this knowledge is only a knowledge about God. It is not a direct relationship with God himself, but only with his image, the *λόγος*, in the creation. Philo himself describes the limitation of this kind of knowledge, commenting on Deut. 32:39, "See, see that I am:"

When we say that the Existent One is visible, we are not using words in their literal sense, but it is an irregular use of the word by which it is referred to each one of His powers. In the passage just quoted He does not say "See Me," for it is impossible that the God who IS should be perceived at all by created beings. What he says is "See that I AM," that is, "Behold my subsistence." For it is quite enough for a man's reasoning faculty to advance as far as to learn that the Cause of the Universe is and subsists.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>Praem. 41-43; cf. LA III, 92-99. Cf. also Wis. Sol. 13:1-9.

<sup>128</sup>In respect to this knowledge, the *κόσμος* itself can be considered a mediator between man and God, for it can be called the *πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ*, Som. II, 246. Cf. Bréhier, Idées, p. 170.

<sup>129</sup>Post. 168; cf. Opif. 71; Bréhier, Idées, pp. 197, 293-294.

The transcendent One remains beyond even the intelligible world, unknowable.<sup>130</sup> In rational consideration of the *κόσμος*, man is related to God only as through an intermediary.<sup>131</sup> That intermediary is the *λόγος*, the agent of the creation and preservation of the *κόσμος*. By knowing the existence of God and observing the harmony of the *κόσμος*, man can try to live in accord with the will of God which is expressed in the *κόσμος*.

### Virtue

Natural law is identical with the law of Moses. For by fixing an account of the creation to the beginning of his laws, Moses implies:

that the world is in harmony with the Law, and the Law with the world, and that the man who observes the law is constituted thereby a loyal citizen of the world, regulating his doings by the purpose and will of Nature, in accordance with which the entire world itself is also administered.<sup>132</sup>

Philo repeats the teaching that physics and logic should bear ethical fruits.<sup>133</sup> Through philosophy man can hope to attain the joy which is the result of virtue and of living in harmony with God's providence.<sup>134</sup> The man who lives in that harmony is the true "citizen of the world."<sup>135</sup> For the one who

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<sup>130</sup>LA II, 2-4.

<sup>131</sup>Bréhier, Idées, p. 174.

<sup>132</sup>Opif. 31; cf. Mos. II, 48. Bréhier, Idées, p. 11: "Toute l'Exposition de la loi n'est qu'un long effort pour rattacher la loi positive de Moïse à cette loi naturelle."

<sup>133</sup>Agr. 14-17; Mut. 74-77, where the idea is attributed to "some of the ancients."

<sup>134</sup>Cf. QG I, 8; Spec. III, 1.

<sup>135</sup>A Stoic term (S.V.F. I, par. 262; cf. Epictetus, Discourses III, 19, 53) which is ascribed by Philo to the first created man, the fore-father of our race, Opif. 49, 142, cf. Opif. 50, 143-144 for a further description.

achieves virtue has joy: "virtue is by its very nature a thing for joy, and . . . he who possesses it ever rejoices."<sup>136</sup>

But only the first man was the true citizen of the world; all others, being progressively inferior copies, are so much the worse and are farther from that harmony and joy.<sup>137</sup> Philo knew that man is a neutral moral being but subject to radical evil.<sup>138</sup> Philo had a consciousness of sin<sup>139</sup> and knows the need for repentance.<sup>140</sup> Therefore Philo placed morality into the realm of inner piety, making it an inward affair of repentance, and he criticized the ability of the ethical trainings of philosophical schools to achieve the goal of virtue and the joy of a life in harmony with God.<sup>141</sup> That perfect joy is only for the "self-taught" Isaac, the miraculously born child of promise, born to Sarah, who is virtue.<sup>142</sup> It is *σοφία* or the *δουράμεις* which are the bringers of true virtue and joy.<sup>143</sup> The ethical goal of virtue and the joy of a life perfectly in harmony with God's providence are dependent upon the intervening powers of God. For the deeper relationships are inward, beyond philosophy and external morality.

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<sup>136</sup>Mut. 167; cf. QG II, 57.

<sup>137</sup>Opif. 140.

<sup>138</sup>QG II, 54; IV, 157; Mos. II, 147; Bréhier, Idées, p. 273.

<sup>139</sup>Mut. 48.

<sup>140</sup>Abr. 17, 18, cf. 24.

<sup>141</sup>Cf. Bréhier, Idées, p. 310; pp. 250-310 are a description of Philo's relationship to the current philosophical ethics.

<sup>142</sup>Mut. 255-260; cf. Hegermann, pp. 16-17: "Der Typ des Vollkommen geht aus der Synusie von Gott und Tugend hervor als Gottes Schöpfung."

<sup>143</sup>Inmut. 92, 88; Fug. 172; LA I, 82.

## Cult and Inward Piety

Without actually denouncing the performance of the external cultic ceremonies, Philo also reinterpreted the Jewish cult to describe his own emphasis on the interior life of morality and worship. As all morality is related to the inward piety of the one who practices virtue, so in the cult the significant thing is not the victim, but the piety of heart and the inward piety of the man who offers it.<sup>144</sup> Man must recognize that his purest offering is a life of true virtue, and that this life also, as well as any animal he may offer, is of divine origin and really God's possession already.<sup>145</sup> Therefore Bréhier summarizes:

Telle est la nature et la signification de culte intérieur, chez Philon. Au rapport purement extérieur des cérémonies a été substitué un rapport intérieur entre Dieu et l'âme, l'âme qui s'offre et Dieu qui la délivre.<sup>146</sup>

This relationship is one of a person infinitely weak to a person infinitely powerful.<sup>147</sup> Man is under the constant surveillance of God, who penetrates to the secret thoughts as a judge;<sup>148</sup> conscious of it, man attempts to live in accord with God's will.<sup>149</sup> God's wrath and judgment are tempered with mercy toward men.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>144</sup>QE II, 99; Sac. 97.

<sup>145</sup>Sac. 101-1041; Fug. 18.

<sup>146</sup>Idées, p. 230.

<sup>147</sup>Not without its points of analogy in the Psalms and Prophets, Bréhier, Idées, pp. 230-231.

<sup>148</sup>Cf. LA III, 1.

<sup>149</sup>Som. II, 179.

<sup>150</sup>Immut. 76.

The Old Testament descriptions of the cultic worship are interpreted in such a way that in this spiritual inward worship the cultic mediator between man and God is the *λόγος*-high priest. For the *λόγος* is the cosmic mediator:

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. This same Word both pleads with the immortal as suppliant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject.<sup>151</sup>

It is the *λόγος*-high priest who functions in the place of the highest, perfectly transcendent God in relationship to men in their inward spiritual lives of piety,<sup>152</sup> receiving the offerings of men and making intercession to the transcendent One on their behalf. In this relationship of inward worship man begins to come close to union with God himself (although the "perfect piety," as the perfect knowledge and the perfect virtue are not attainable by man, but only by "pure intelligence").<sup>153</sup>

#### Mysticism

In commenting on the Old Testament, Philo has occasion to deal with two phenomena which, for him, represent the highest kind of relationship, the most nearly complete union, that man can have with God: prophecy (ecstasy) and theophany. Both of these are described in mystical terms, related, on the one hand, to the later classical philosophies (Platonism

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<sup>151</sup>Heres 205; the *λόγος* is called the high priest in Som. I, 215; Cher. 17; Gig. 52. Cf. Bréhier, Idées, p. 237; Hegermann, p. 47.

<sup>152</sup>Cf. Hegermann, p. 53

<sup>153</sup>Bréhier, Idées, p. 236.

and neo-Pythagoreanism) and on the other hand to the Hellenistic mystery religions.<sup>154</sup>

Various of the patriarchs are described as having been in a mystical state of ecstasy. For instance Abraham is described, on the basis of Gen. 15:12, as having experienced an ecstasy (ἔκστασις),<sup>155</sup> having been enthused and moved by God (ἐνθουσιῶντος, θεοφορήτου). In such a state he became a prophet. He did not speak his own words, but rather his vocal instruments were used by another. Philo elsewhere explains further that in this experience the reason of the individual withdraws and the divine Spirit (πνεῦμα) enters and takes charge of the soul as a temporary resident, communicating the prophetic message through the physical equipment of the prophet.<sup>156</sup> In this experience the spirit of man must depart from the body. The full man does not experience the transcendent God. Rather, ἔκστασις is a strange fusion of the body of man and the πνεῦμα of God.

A second area in which Philo uses mystery terminology and is describing an important kind of relationship between God and man is in his descriptions of the theophanies at Sinai.<sup>157</sup> The covenant sacrifice described in Ex. 24:4-8

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<sup>154</sup>Whether Philo actually "transformed" Judaism into a "mystery religion" is highly questionable. But he employs the terminology to interpret Old Testament events in keeping with his own conceptions of God, the world, and the nature of man. Actually, Philo's mystical terminology is governed by the basic thrusts of the Scripture he is interpreting; some of the basic elements of a mystery religion are lacking; cf. Hegermann, pp. 37-41.

<sup>155</sup>Heres 258-259.

<sup>156</sup>Spec. IV, 49. This is a reflection of the Platonic teaching, in which ἔκστασις is the exiting of the human spirit and the entering of the divine spirit. Cf. Sowers, p. 34 and Timaeus 71D-E; Phaedrus 244D.

<sup>157</sup>QE II, 27-49; cf. Hegermann, pp. 26-47.

is presented at points by Philo as the act of preparation for the participants in the theophany. Thus he explains that the sin offering was not offered at that time because: "when God appears or is about to appear, is not every form and substance of sin first to be destroyed and removed?"<sup>158</sup> Likewise the blood of Ex. 24:6 is "a sacred unction in place of oil for sanctity and perfect purity, and, if one must speak the truth, in order that (men) may be inspired to receive the holy spirit."<sup>159</sup> Thus the participants are to be prepared through perfect purification and the reception of the holy spirit. The ascent up the mountain is described in terms of a full mystic experience of God. Moses was the only one to come near God, for "when the prophetic mind becomes divinely inspired and filled with God, it becomes like the monad, not being at all mixed with any of those things associated with duality."<sup>160</sup> Moses, the prime receiver of the mystic revelation and the leader of the people is called by Philo a hierophant.<sup>161</sup> He ascends

not to the air or to the ether or to heaven (which is) higher than all, but to (a region) above the heavens. And beyond the world there is no place but God.<sup>162</sup>

The goal of this ascent is the heavenly city.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>158</sup>QE II, 32.

<sup>159</sup>Ibid., II, 33.

<sup>160</sup>Ibid., II, 29.

<sup>161</sup>LA III, 173; Sac. 94; Post. 16.

<sup>162</sup>QE II, 40; cf. Gig. 54.

<sup>163</sup>QE II, 40; cf. Som. II, 253. In this description there is nothing lacking with respect to a full Vergottungslehre, Hegermann, p. 33.



But even in this very description of the theophany Philo also denies that it was the transcendent God himself who descended upon the mountain. The text speaks of the appearance of the glory (קְבוֹד) of God, Ex. 24:16a, and Philo makes this a cause to speak about the immobility and unchangeableness of God:

The notion of glory (δοξα) is twofold. On the one hand, it denotes the existence of the powers. . . . On the other hand, (it denotes) only a belief in and counting on the divine glory, so as to produce in the minds of those who happen to be there an appearance of the coming of God, Who was not there.<sup>164</sup>

Likewise he says:

for no one will boast of seeing the invisible God, (thus) yielding to arrogance. And holy and divine is this same place alone in which He is said to appear, for He Himself does not go away or change His position but He sends the powers, which are indicative of his essence.<sup>165</sup>

And again:

the divine place is truly inaccessible and unapproachable, for not even the holiest mind is able to ascend such a height to it so as merely to approach and touch it.<sup>166</sup>

Thus not even in Philo's description of the theophany, which Philo himself elsewhere constantly holds up as a superior kind of experience<sup>167</sup> which is interpreted by him as "being saved,"<sup>168</sup> is there any contact with the infinite God. Rather, here, as elsewhere, it is one of the figures of mediation which bridges the gap from God to man: God sends his powers to

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<sup>164</sup>QE II, 45.

<sup>165</sup>Ibid., II, 37.

<sup>166</sup>Ibid., II, 45.

<sup>167</sup>Cf. LA III, 97-100

<sup>168</sup>QE II, 43.

cause in the participants the effect of a union with him.<sup>169</sup> Fusing the three terms together into a σοφία-λόγος-δύναμις figure<sup>170</sup> we have, with the divine πνεῦμα, a description of the channels through which God is related to the world and to the souls of men.

This is precisely the point we have been forced to come to throughout this entire discussion of Philo's cosmology and soteriology: the centrality of the mediators, specifically of the σοφία-λόγος-δύναμις, in the relationship of creation--especially man--to God. In the creation of the world, the preservation of the world, man's knowledge that God exists, man's ability to attain (if imperfectly) some virtues and joys, man's inward spiritual worship of God, and in man's mystic experience of God through inspiration or theophany intermediary beings bridge the gap between the world and the infinite God. The same figures are consistently named by Philo as the intermediaries. The mediators of religious revelation and religious experiences are at the same time the causes and principles of being itself.<sup>171</sup> What Philo refers to as salvation is mediated by the same figures who were instruments in the creation and who are the instruments and principles of preservation. It is difficult, if not impossible, to make any distinctions in their nature as they fulfill these two different functions. One wonders, indeed, if there are two different functions. There

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<sup>169</sup>Ibid., II, 37.

<sup>170</sup>Cf. Hegermann, pp. 71 and 73, interpreting *Som.* I, 227-241, the theophany to Jacob. He sees the theophany-bearing function rooted in the σοφία-λόγος tradition as in *Wis. Sol.* 10:1-20; 18:14-19. That is an agent of a salvation event is testified to by *Wis. Sol.* 10:15; 9:9; 7:27; 19:18-21; 10:18-20; 11:17.

<sup>171</sup>Brehier, *Idées*, p. 316.

is nothing to contradict the assertion that Philo's soteriology is cosmologically based, that is: what Philo describes as the most nearly complete relationships with God are all possible to any individual within the created structure of the universe, because the mediators of creation are at the same time the mediators of salvation.

## CHAPTER IV

### COSMOLOGY AND SOTERIOLOGY IN HEBREWS

Hebrews asserts that Jesus Christ is the mediator of the new and better covenant between man and God.<sup>1</sup> As this mediator, he is called the Son of God; his work is described as being that of the agent of creation and of the high priest of the new covenant. As in the case of the intermediary figures in Philo, both cosmological and soteriological functions are ascribed to Christ. The purpose of this chapter is to study the relationship of these predications.

Hebrews had a definite purpose for making these Christological assertions; it was directed toward a specific historical situation. The unusual literary form of Hebrews causes some difficulties, but Hebrews is perhaps best considered as a *λόγος παρακλήσεως* (Heb. 13:22), a written form of early Christian preaching.<sup>2</sup> This sermon, then is organized around paraenetic sections, each of which is supported by a Christological exposition.<sup>3</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> *μωσείτης*, Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24, all three in connection with the *Κρείττονος*, *Καινός*, and *νέας* covenant.

<sup>2</sup> Werner Georg Kümmel, editor, *Introduction to the New Testament*, founded by Paul Feine and Johannes Behm, translated by A. J. Mattill, Jr. (14th revised edition; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1966), pp. 273, 278-279.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Wolfgang Nauck, "Zum Aufbau des Hebräerbriefes," *Judentum Urchristentum Kirche*, Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias, edited by Walter Eltester, *Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche*, XXVI (2nd edition; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1964), pp. 203, 206; Kümmel, p. 274; the train of thought is there outlined: (1) Hear the Word of God in the Son Jesus Christ who is higher than the angels and Moses (Heb. 1:1-4:13), (2) Let us draw near to the High Priest of the heavenly sanctuary and hold fast to our confession (Heb. 4:14-10:31), and (3) Hold fast to Jesus Christ, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 10:32-13:17).

precise historical situation to which this sermon was addressed is very difficult to determine. The destination to which this written sermon was sent cannot be named with certainty.<sup>4</sup> The people addressed are Christians, not in danger of any definite heresy, but subject to a waning of faith and a fear of suffering.<sup>5</sup> To such Christians the author of Hebrews sends his sermon of exhortation. He supports his exhortation with arguments concerning Christ.

#### Cosmological Assertions

The fullest description of Christ in relationship to cosmology in Hebrews is found in the opening period, 1:1-4, specifically verses 2b-4:

son,  
 whom he appointed heir of all,  
 through whom also he made the world,  
 who,  
     being the radiance of his glory and the seal-imprint of his  
     essence,  
     governing the universe by his powerful word,  
     having made purification for sins,  
 sat on the right of the majesty in the highest,  
     becoming greater than the angels, as much as the name he  
     has inherited is superior to them.<sup>6</sup>

Before discussing each of these phrases individually, we must be aware of the implication of their form. The recurrence of the relative pronoun and of the participle in such a passage alerts us to the possibility that

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<sup>4</sup>Rome is perhaps the most likely suggestion; cf. Kümmel, p. 281.

<sup>5</sup>Kümmel, p. 280; the distinction between Jewish and Gentile Christians is not explicitly made in Hebrews.

<sup>6</sup>My translation and form analysis.

these words are a portion of a hymn celebrating the enthronement of Christ.<sup>7</sup> If this is the case, the author is here incorporating into the opening of his treatise materials known and used by others before him and perhaps by his readers also. The content of verses 2b-3 especially may reflect earlier theological traditions from the congregations which the author knows. These words, then, he has woven into what must be one of the most remarkable periodic sentences in the entire New Testament.<sup>8</sup> There are more than cosmological assertions in this sentence; but let us first study in detail these phrases which do make cosmological assertions.

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<sup>7</sup>The relative pronoun, the participial, the rhythmical pattern and the "high" Christological content are all named as marks of hymnic fragments within the Pauline Epistles. Cf. Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 1:15-20; and A. M. Hunter, Paul and His Predecessors (Revised edition; London: SCM Press Ltd., 1961), pp. 42, 124.

While many commentators pass over these verses without considering their form, N. A. Dahl, "Christ, Creation and the Church," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, edited by W. D. Davies and D. Daube, in honor of C. H. Dodd (Cambridge University Press, 1956), pp. 432-433, feels that the author's scheme in Chap. 1 has more importance "than has generally been recognized." He sees a pattern of clauses concerning the enthronement or eschatological appointment of Christ alternating with clauses concerning his eternal status according to the scheme abba ab(ba), thus:

- by (his) Son
- a whom he hath appointed heir of all things
- b by whom he also made the worlds;
- b who being the brightness of his Glory . . .  
and upholding all things by the word of his power
- a when he had . . . purged (our) sins  
sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;
- a being made so much better than the angels
- b as he hath . . . obtained a more excellent name than they
- b For unto which. . . . Ps. 2:7 and 2 Sam 7:14
- a And again . . . Deut. 32:43 (LXX).

He notes a similar pattern in the hymn in 1 Tim. 3:16. Cf. also Otto Michel, Der Brief an die Hebräer, Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament, XIII (8th edition; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1949), 38, where he analyses 2b-3 as a 4-part hymn fragment.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. BDF, par. 464.

δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν τοὺς αἰῶνας, that is: through the son God also made the world.<sup>9</sup> διὰ with the genitive of the person denotes the "personal agent or intermediary through (the agency of),"<sup>10</sup> and this is clearly the sense in which it is used here.<sup>11</sup> This agency in creation, which is to be distinguished from the assertion of the preexistence of Christ, stems neither from the tradition concerning the historical Jesus, nor from the apocalyptic teaching of the Son of Man, nor from the Messianic expectations of Palestinian Judaism, but rather from the wisdom tradition of Judaism, but rather from the wisdom tradition of Judaism.<sup>12</sup> Therefore this assertion is more of an exegetical conclusion of the early church than a part of the tradition of the historical Jesus. This passage is the Christian culmination of the development of the tradition that can be traced in: Gen. 1:1; Prov. 8:30; Wis. Sol. 9:1; and Philo, Sac. 8; Spec. I, 81; Fug. 109; Det. 54.

<sup>9</sup>There are two variant readings in this phrase. Papyrus 46, the Chester Beatty (3rd cent.), and the Sahidic version (2nd or 3rd cent., upper Egypt, preserved in fragments from the 4th century) omit the *καὶ*. While these are not insignificant witnesses, we cannot follow their reading against the weight of all the other manuscripts together; moreover, in this construction of a series of three relative clauses, it is more likely that a *καὶ* would have been dropped at this point than inserted. Secondly, in codex P (Porfirianus, 10th cent.) and the koine-group (including, for Hebrews, codices K and L, both of the 9th cent., codex 0142 of the 10th cent., and many minuscules) there is an inversion of word order, reading *τοὺς αἰῶνας ἐποίησεν*. This reading, inconsequential to the meaning, is obviously to be rejected against the weight of all the earlier witnesses. Cf. Michel, p. 37, n. 1.

<sup>10</sup>BAG, *διὰ* III, 2, a. s.v. records this usage from Xenophon on and in John 1:3, 10; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16.

<sup>11</sup>In Heb. 2:10, where *θεός* is the antecedent to *οὗ*, in contrast to his son, the *ἀρχηγὸν τῆς σωτηρίας*, *διὰ* denotes the originator, rather than the agent, *ibid.*, III, 2, b, β, s.v.; BDF, par. 223 (2). For this use of *διὰ* cf. Aristaeas 313; 1 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 11:36.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Michel, p. 36, n. 2. In Matt. 11:28-30, however, the words of Jesus echo those referring to the one who has *σοφία* in Sirach 51:23,26; cf. 24:9. This is thus a portrayal of Jesus as *σοφία* in the Gospel tradition.

The *Kaí* is here an adjunctive rather than a copulative particle, for verse two is formed by joining two clauses asyndetically with an anaphoric use of the relative.<sup>13</sup> When used in this somewhat adverbial manner with a relative pronoun, *Kaí* lends a greater independence to the relative clause.<sup>14</sup> Thus *δι' οὗ καὶ ἐποίησεν* is not to be closely tied grammatically to the preceding assertion as a correlative, but might properly be considered as a second assertion offered in the way of an aside.<sup>15</sup> The use of *ποιέω* to denote God's creative activity is well-attested; it often is used to translate *קָרָא* in the Septuagint.<sup>16</sup> *τοὺς αἰῶνας* is here, as also in Heb. 11:3, to be translated "the world," as a spatial concept.<sup>17</sup> The plural here follows the Hebrew pattern "in an unclassical way,"<sup>18</sup> reflecting the late Hebrew form *עוֹלָמוֹת*, used for "world" not only in a temporal but also a spatial sense. It is thus not necessary to link this use of the word in Hebrews to the apocalyptic ages of the world as successions of time or to the gnostic concept of the emanation of the divine in the form

<sup>13</sup>BDF, par. 464

<sup>14</sup>BAG, *Kaí*, II, 6, s.v.

<sup>15</sup>This grammatical point supports the thought of James Moffatt, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, XL (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1924), 5, that this phrase is, theologically, a "passing allusion."

<sup>16</sup>It is also used in this sense in Wis. Sol. 1:13; 9:9; and subsequently in Aristobulus fr. 5, in Eusebius, Pr. Ev. XIII, 12, 12; in Philo, Sac. 65; and elsewhere in the New Testament, Acts 7:50. Cf. BAG, *ποιέω*, I, 1. a. β, s.v.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. BAG, *αἰῶν*, 3, s.v.

<sup>18</sup>BDF, par. 141.



of aeons.<sup>19</sup> The word αἰῶνας in this context is parallel to τὰ πάντα in verse three.<sup>20</sup>

ὅς, ὡν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ. These words do not explicitly attribute the agency of creation to Christ; they rather assert of the son a relationship to God in terms which are best understood in the light of passages from Jewish σοφία and λόγος speculation in which the relationship of the agent of creation to God is similarly described.<sup>21</sup> The two phrases form a kind of double hendyadis, being both complementary and supplementary. ἀπαύγασμα and χαρακτήρ are both hapax legomena in the New Testament. Both can have either a passive or an active connotation. Thus ἀπαύγασμα (despite its passive morphology, -σμα specifying the result of the action in contrast to σμος, specifying the action)<sup>22</sup> can carry the active meanings, "radiance, effulgence," or the passive meaning "reflection."<sup>23</sup> χαρακτήρ likewise can be the seal or the imprint which the seal leaves.<sup>24</sup>

Both words also have a history in the writings of Hellenistic Judaism. In Wisdom of Solomon 7:26 ἀπαύγασμα is used in parallelism with ἀπόρροια to define σοφία: "καὶ ἀπόρροια τῆς τοῦ παντοκράτορος δόξης ἐλεγκρηνῆς . . . . (25) ἀπαύγασμα γὰρ ἔστιν φωτὸς αὐτοῦ."

<sup>19</sup>C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, in *Études Bibliques* (2 vols.; Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1952), II, 5-6.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 6.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. Michel, p. 38, n. 1, where some possible rabbinic, gnostic, and Son of Man parallels are mentioned. Michel regards the Alexandrian wisdom tradition, as reflected in Wis. Sol., as the most nearly related materials.

<sup>22</sup>BDF, par. 109.

<sup>23</sup>BAG, ἀπαύγασμα, s.v.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. LSJ, χαρακτήρ, s.v.

Because of this parallelism the active sense seems to be intended in Wisdom of Solomon. Philo also uses the word ἀπαύγασμα to describe the relationship of the universe<sup>25</sup> and of the spirit of man<sup>26</sup> to God. Χαρακτήρ is used in Philo of the soul of man<sup>27</sup> and of the λόγος.<sup>28</sup> In these instances the denotation of Χαρακτήρ is no doubt passive, that is, signifying the imprint of the seal and meaning "impress, reproduction, representation."<sup>29</sup> While the tradition of the Greek fathers is unanimous in taking ἀπαύγασμα in the active sense in this passage<sup>30</sup> (whence the terminology φῶς ἐκ φωτός is the Symbolum Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum) and many modern commentators do likewise, Spicq offers three reasons for translating the word here in the passive sense:<sup>31</sup> (1) The word has a properly passive termination; (2) It is used in parallelism with a word having an apparently passive connotation, and (3) (Quoting Ménégos) the passive sense is more in conformity with the author's application of the word to the son, for a reflection is something more independent and even more personal than a radiance. Of these

<sup>25</sup>Plant. 12.

<sup>26</sup>Opif. 146; Spec. IV, 123. BAG prefers the active meaning in Philo, s.v.

<sup>27</sup>Det. 83.

<sup>28</sup>Plant. 18.

<sup>29</sup>BAG, Χαρακτήρ, 1; cf. b, s.v.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. Spicq, II, 6, where some citations are offered, and BAG, ἀπαύγασμα s.v. G. H. W. Lampe, editor, A Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1961), s.v., records the meaning "radiance;" the term was used in Trinitarian contexts to illustrate (1) the generation of the son as eternal, (2) the co-eternity of the persons, and (3) consubstantiality.

<sup>31</sup>Spicq, II, 7.

reasons, the first sets morphology over usage, the second has some but not necessarily conclusive validity, and the third reads the view of a later dogmatics into the text. It is not necessary to eliminate either one of these aspects of the meaning of the two words in favor of the other when they are thus used together. Thus we concur with Michel's well-worded summary:

Die Bezeichnungen ἀπαύγασμα und χαρακτήρ tragen ein passives und aktives Moment in sich: der Abglanz [ἀπαύγασμα] ist vom Licht abhängig, strahlt jedoch von sich aus weiter; der Abdruck [Χαρακτήρ] wird vom Wesen her genommen, gibt aber ein selbständiges Bild.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore we have chosen "radiance" as the most suitable English word to render this ambiguous Greek term; its thought is balanced by the clearly passive sense of "seal-imprint" in the second phrase. The two words together convey the thought both of dependent existence (such as an emanation) and of independent existence (such as a separate person).

The son is thus described in relationship to the δόξα and the ὑπόστασις of God. δόξα is the counterpart of  $\overline{\text{דָּוָה}}$ , the form of the appearance of God in the theophany, Ex. 24:16. It designates the numinous presence of God through the extension of that essential part of him, his δόξα. Fire and lightning are connected with its manifestation in the Old Testament.<sup>33</sup> The Greek word δόξα is likewise originally connected to the brightness of light; thus ἀπαύγασμα is properly associated with it as with a light-term. In the New Testament δόξα comes to denote the "glory, majesty, sublimity" of God as it is manifested to men.<sup>34</sup> While the meaning of δόξα is determined

<sup>32</sup>p. 39.

<sup>33</sup>Ex. 24:17; 19:18-19; Ps. 97:1-6.

<sup>34</sup>Cf. John 1:14; 2:11; Rom. 1:23; Spicq, II, 7; BAG, δόξα, 1, 2, s.v. It has a similar broadened meaning in Wis. Sol. 9:11 and in Philo: Spec. I, 45.

by the Old Testament usage, ὑπόστασις is comparatively rarer in the Jewish religious literature, although it is used in the Septuagint,<sup>35</sup> Wisdom of Solomon,<sup>36</sup> and Philo.<sup>37</sup> It denotes "substantial nature, essence, actual being."<sup>38</sup> Thus the two words here used together convey the thought that the son is a projection and a copy of the true, brilliantly majestic, and powerful essence of the living and active God.

These two phrases make no explicit assertion of agency in creation. The terms used, especially the less common ones: ἀπαύγασμα, χαρακτήρ, and ὑπόστασις, occur in later Hellenistic Jewish wisdom writings in connection with the figure σοφία-λόγος, of which the same writings also assert that it is the agent or instrument of creation. Clearly these epithets were attributed to Jesus Christ by the same rationale and for the same purpose that the agency of creation was attributed to him. These phrases assert an eternal<sup>39</sup> relationship of the son to God modeled on the description of the relationship of σοφία-λόγος to God in Alexandrian Judaism.<sup>40</sup> We have seen the great significance of this description of the

<sup>35</sup>Ps. 38:6 (RSV 39:5).

<sup>36</sup>Of God, 16:21.

<sup>37</sup>Aet. 88, 92.

<sup>38</sup>BAG, ὑπόστασις, s.v. where a translation of the phrase is offered: "a(n exact) representation of his (God's) real being."

<sup>39</sup>The pres. participle ὄν, denoting a permanent relationship, excludes any adoptionistic theory that these relationships are dependent on an act of God in the enthronement, Spicq, II, 9; cf. Michel, p. 40.

<sup>40</sup>Therefore these words are also properly considered analogous to the description of Christ as the εἰκών of God, Col. 1:15; 2 Cor. 4:4. Cf. F. F. Bruce, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. 6.

agent of creation in Philo's cosmological system. There is not sufficient evidence to assert that here this same cosmology has been transferred to Christ, but neither is there any reason to deny it.

φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ.<sup>41</sup> Having described the relationship of the son to the Father, our author or this hymn follows with a clause describing the relationship of the son to τὰ πάντα, the universe. The clauses are connected by a single τε,<sup>42</sup> indicating a "rather close connection and relationship."<sup>43</sup> φέρων τὰ πάντα is subject to illumination from a number of points of view. It may be taken as an expression of the continuing creative activity which is responsible for the orderly continuance of the universe.<sup>44</sup> Spicq also relates this use of φέρω to a Septuagint usage in which φέρω corresponds to לָקַח, as in Num. 11:14: "I am not able to carry all this people alone, the burden is

<sup>41</sup>In this phrase we again have two variant readings. For φέρων the first hand of Codex Vaticanus wrote φανερωῶν, clearly an error, as this is the only instance of that reading. (Although, after a second hand had corrected the reading by deleting the letters αν, a third hand, dated in the 13th cent., reinserted them and added a rebuke: "Most ignorant and wicked man, leave the original (reading) alone; do not change it!" as in Bruce, p. 1.) Spicq, II, 10, suggests that the variant may have originated in an attempt to oppose the Jewish Torah-mysticism, according to which all things were revealed in the preexistent Torah. Secondly, papyrus 46, the Chester Beatty, Codex M (9th cent.), the second hand of minuscule 424, and minuscule 1739 (both of which ordinarily follow the reading of the H-group) all omit αὐτοῦ. The text is, however, authentic, cf. Michel, p. 40, n. 3.

<sup>42</sup>In classical Greek almost exclusively in poetry, but found elsewhere in the New Testament, especially in connecting clauses. BAG, τε, s.v.

<sup>43</sup>BDF, par. 443 (3), where "and likewise" is offered as a rendering.

<sup>44</sup>Thus, apparently, BAG, φέρω, 1, b, s.v.: "who bears the universe by his mighty word."

too heavy for me."<sup>45</sup> Add to this the occurrence also cited by Spicq:<sup>46</sup>  
 φέρειν τὴν πόλιν, and we have the idea of government included, giving  
 the word a sense of bearing the governmental responsibility. A parallel  
 idea is also expressed by Philo in his application of the word κυβερνήτης  
 to the λόγος.<sup>47</sup>

But Philo also employs φέρω in the sense of "to produce, to bring into  
 existence."<sup>48</sup> If this is the sense here, the clause is an assertion of  
 agency in the actual creation and would refer ῥήματι directly to the  
 creative imperative utterances of Gen. 1.<sup>49</sup> Thus we are not to understand  
 in φέρων merely a static "bearing" or "supporting," but a continual  
 activity by which Christ is carefully governing and directing the world in  
 a movement progressing to an appointed end.<sup>50</sup>

The son does this τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, an instrumental  
 dative construction. The genitive<sup>51</sup> reflects the Hebrew usage of placing  
 an attributive in a construct state with the noun rather than using an  
 adjective. (This also explains the unusual position of αὐτοῦ.) Thus the

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Deut. 1:9; Spicq, II, 9, where he suggests the translation: "porter  
 la charge," and Michel, pp. 40-41, who reports Luther's reference to this as  
 a picture of Fürsorge.

<sup>46</sup>II, 9, from Plutarch, Lucullus 6.

<sup>47</sup>Cher. 36.

<sup>48</sup>Heres 36; Mut. 256.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. Moffatt, pp. 7-8, where this meaning is suggested as a good possibility.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. Spicq, II, 9-10.

<sup>51</sup>Of quality, BDF, par. 165, for which there are sparse classical parallels  
 in poetry only but which is common in Hebrews, cf. 3:12; 4:2, 16; 5:7; 9:5;  
 12:15.

phrase can be rightly translated: "by his powerful word." ῥῆμα, of course, denotes the spoken word or utterance, "command(ment), order, direction."<sup>52</sup> Its use here echoes the divine spoken fiat of the creation account in Gen. 1; thus Hebrews asserts that it is by a similar power-projecting command that the son, involved in the initial creation of all as the agent, continues his control over the created universe. The same term is used in Heb. 11:3: "By faith we understand that the world was created ῥήματι θεοῦ." Contrasting these two passages with the use of λόγος in Heb. 2:12; 4:12, Spicq concludes that ῥῆμα in Hebrews is the word of creation, while λόγος is the word of revelation.<sup>53</sup> This tenuous suggestion is contradicted by Michel's interpretation of 1:3.<sup>54</sup> He understands ῥῆμα as the cosmically significant, spirit-effected revelatory word of Christ (Heb. 2:3) and, secondly of the prophetic and apostolic witness (implicit in Heb. 10:5-7; that is, their words were the words of Christ). This understanding is gained by viewing the passage against the background of later Jewish Torah-speculation as found especially in the apocalyptic writings (influenced by Hellenistic religions); in these apocalyptic writings there is a cosmic secret which keeps the world from dissolving into nonexistence.<sup>55</sup> Then this verse asserts that the revelation given in Christ is the key to the continued existence of the world. Such an interpretation appears to stretch the phrase

<sup>52</sup>BAG, ῥῆμα, s.v.

<sup>53</sup>II, 10.

<sup>54</sup>Pp. 41-42.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. Enoch 69:14-25; Michel, p. 41, n. 2; Ernst Käsemann, Das wandernde Gottesvolk, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments, Neue Folge XXXVII (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1939), p. 63.

to include connotations unnecessary in the context and employs documents later than the text to help illuminate the supposed antithesis against which it was directed. It is more natural to consider *ῥῆμα* as the spoken commands of the son, analogous to the creative fiat of Gen. 1, by which he, as agent of creation, continues to direct and govern the universe.

Elsewhere in Hebrews the author refers to Christ in ways which may show that he considers Christ to have been involved in creation. Heb. 1:6 applies the word *πρωτότοκον* to the son. While this is certainly a word of wide Biblical usage (which often has no temporal connotation but means first in preeminence or the chosen one), it is a fact that *σοφία-λόγος*, as the eldest of the works of God, generated first and the generating agent of all, is called the first-born.<sup>56</sup>

Secondly, in the series of quotations which describe that firstborn son, verses 26-28 of Ps. 102 are applied to him:

Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment. . . .<sup>57</sup>

Thirdly, in Heb. 3:3-6 the superiority of Christ over Moses is argued on the basis of their different relationships to God the creator, the one as a servant, the other as a son: "Yet Jesus has been counted worthy of as much more glory than Moses as the builder of a house has more honour than the house."<sup>58</sup> Christ, the son, the mediator superior to Moses, the servant,

<sup>56</sup>Conf. 146; Agr. 51 (*πρωτόγονος*).

<sup>57</sup>Heb. 1:10-11. These verses did not apply to the son or the Messiah in the Old Testament, but because of the appearance of the word *κύριος* the author of Hebrews feels he can bring them forth as referring to Jesus Christ. Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptural translations are from The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1956, 1952, 1957).

<sup>58</sup>Heb. 3:3. While the next verse refers to the creation of all, verse 6b may indicate that the "house" which is meant here is not the world but the people of God.



has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses because a builder of a house has more honour than the house.

Fourthly, Hebrews 11:3 may be understood as referring to a personal agent of creation: "Πίστει νοοῦμεν καταρτίσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας ῥήματι Θεοῦ ." While it is improbable that Christ is here referred to,<sup>59</sup> it is not an impossibility.<sup>60</sup>

Lastly, Heb. 4:12-13 reproduces an apparently poetic description of the λόγος and employs words and phrases parallel to those of Philo's λόγος Πορευῶς.<sup>61</sup> But 4:12-13 is neither explicitly Christological nor does it have to do with technically cosmological assertions, although there are cosmological implications. The significance of the λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ in this passage<sup>62</sup> is taken by most modern commentators to include the totality of the revelation of God: the Old Testament's speaking to Israel, the apostolic preaching, and the Son of God Himself.<sup>63</sup> But it is by no means impossible that the author of Hebrews, for whom Jesus was the son by whom God had spoken to believers, thought very specifically

<sup>59</sup>Cf. Michel, p. 251.

<sup>60</sup>The words ῥήμα and λόγος are apparently interchangeable in Hebrews, although λόγος appears to have a mere independent mode of existence and ῥήμα is more the organ of communication of the divine will, Küsemann, p. 12, n. 2; cf. Michel, p. 116. Philo also speaks of the ῥήμα τοῦ Θεοῦ as a mediator of God's action and uses it in a parallel construction with λόγος, Sac. 8; Fug. 137.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. Michel, pp. 114-116.

<sup>62</sup>Which was taken by both Latin and Greek fathers as referring to Christ, Spicq, II, 87.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., II, 88.

of Jesus Christ as the one described by these two verses. But the verses, while reproducing Philonic terminology concerning the role of the *λόγος* in the creation, are here not in a context of creation but one of judgment. The hearers are exhorted to hold fast their confidence so as to be able to enter the sabbath rest of the people of God. The Old Testament people of God did not enter that sabbath rest because of their disobedience, and Christians now must beware lest they fall into that same disobedience. For the *λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ* is the judge of the innermost recesses of man; everything is open to him, and it is with him that we have to deal. This ability of the *λόγος* to penetrate into the parts of man is best explained, however, if that same *λόγος* were involved in the process of creating man and dividing him into those parts. Then, if by *λόγος* is meant here Christ, a creative function would be implied of him in these verses. This, however, is all highly conjectural.

Thus it is especially in Heb. 1:1-4 that cosmological functions are attributed to the son, Jesus Christ. Other passages are only possible reflections either of elements in the Alexandrian tradition which would be in accord with the assertion of the agency of creation to the *λόγος* of God or are passages in which the Christological reference is not only not explicit but is to be seriously questioned. But within 1:1-4, we may say, in summary, the assertion of the cosmological activity of the preexistent son as the agent of creation and as the principle of preservation is clearly made, and is made in terms reflecting the Alexandrian tradition of Jewish wisdom and philosophy.

## Soteriological Assertions

As in Alexandrian Judaism so also in Hebrews the agent of creation is preached as the mediator of God's salvation:

[Jesus, the son,] being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation ( *αἰτίας σωτηρίας αἰωνίου* ) to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.<sup>64</sup>

It is, specifically, by virtue of his having been designated as high priest that he is the cause of salvation. Let us look more closely at this high priesthood of Christ in Hebrews.

Jesus is the high priest who is able to save by his intercession in the true heavenly sanctuary. Thus Hebrews says of him: "Consequently he is able to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them,"<sup>65</sup> and: "For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf."<sup>66</sup> This presentation of Christ as the high priest before God is, as we have seen, paralleled by Philo's presentation of the *λόγος*-high priest. But the *λόγος*-high priest of Philo held that function by virtue of his position as the cosmic mediator between God and his creation.<sup>67</sup> The assertion of Christ's high priesthood is made on a different basis, the like of which is not to be found in Alexandrian Judaism.

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<sup>64</sup>Heb. 5:9-10.

<sup>65</sup>Heb. 7:25; cf. 6:19-20.

<sup>66</sup>Heb. 9:24; cf. 4:14.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. Mig. 102; Gig. 52; Som. I, 215; Heres 205.

Christ is the high priest in the heavenly sanctuary by virtue of his appointment and exaltation. Heb. 8:1-2 makes this clear:

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord.

Hebrews also emphasizes that Christ was appointed as high priest, quoting Ps. 95:11, which has enthronement overtones:

And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was.

So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee."<sup>68</sup>

And within Heb. 1:1-4 there is this same theme: "whom he has appointed heir of all things. . . . he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

And this exaltation has come, Hebrews asserts, only after Jesus was made perfect through suffering during the days of his flesh:

In the days of his flesh. . . . Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.<sup>69</sup>

To become the exalted intercessor, it was necessary that he became incarnate and share the life of his brothers:

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those who through fear

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<sup>68</sup>Heb. 5:4-5; cf. 1:13; 7:26.

<sup>69</sup>Heb. 5:7-10; cf. 7:28.

of death were subject to lifelong bondage. . . . Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted.<sup>70</sup>

Therefore he became incarnate, living a life and being subject to death:

But we see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.<sup>71</sup>

He is made perfect through suffering, qualifying as our high priest in being tempted as we but not sinning.<sup>72</sup>

Made perfect in obedience in his earthly life, he is now exalted to make intercession for us--and that intercession is made on the basis of his own spotless self-sacrifice. In his high priesthood it is his own blood which secures the eternal redemption:

He entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. . . . how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.<sup>73</sup>

and ends sin:

But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.<sup>74</sup>

It is his death which ratifies the eternal covenant of which he is the

<sup>70</sup>Heb. 2:14-15,17-18.

<sup>71</sup>Heb. 2:9.

<sup>72</sup>Heb. 4:15; cf. 12:3.

<sup>73</sup>Heb. 9:12, 14.

<sup>74</sup>Heb. 9:26.

mediator.<sup>75</sup> And "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."<sup>76</sup> This sacrifice sanctifies us<sup>77</sup> and gives us confidence to approach God.<sup>78</sup> And it is this death which is the reason for his being exalted: "But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God."<sup>79</sup>

Thus there are four interrelated points in the presentation of Jesus as the savior in Hebrews: he is the high priest for us in heaven; he is that because he has been appointed high priest by God and exalted to that office; he has qualified as high priest for men by becoming a man and being made perfect in his life of obedience through suffering; and that obedience culminated in his sacrificial death, which is the basis of his heavenly intercession. There are three verses in which this entire scheme is reflected:

For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever.<sup>80</sup>

The involvement in historical events of the mediator of salvation is also made clear in the opening sentence, in elements found there which are

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<sup>75</sup>Heb. 9:15; 13:12.

<sup>76</sup>Heb. 9:22b.

<sup>77</sup>Heb. 10:10.

<sup>78</sup>Heb. 10:19.

<sup>79</sup>Heb. 10:12; cf. 2:9.

<sup>80</sup>Heb. 7:26-28.

not found paralleled in Alexandrian Judaism. There it says of the son, Heb. 1:3b: "καθάρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλοσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς." Here there is a change in tense from the preceding predications about the preexistent Christ. In the aorist it says: "When he had made purification for sins, he sat down. . . ." We are not wrong in claiming to find here reference to the historical aspect of the work of the high priest, Jesus Christ.

Thus while in Hebrews the same figure, Jesus, the son of God, who is preexistent, is asserted to be both the agent of creation and the mediator of salvation, it is made unquestionably clear that the salvation he mediates is possible only because of his involvement in a historical life and death. The one who had appeared in history is described not only as presently enthroned at the right hand of God, but also as the preexistent agent in creation. Early Hellenistic Jewish Christian congregations had expressed their understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ partly in terms of their own religious background. Jesus, not *σοφία* - *λόγος*, was the agent of creation and the mediator of salvation. In preserving this assertion Hebrews reflects what must have been a polemical point and an apologetic device in the earliest contacts between the Gospel of Jesus Christ and Alexandrian Judaism. Yet Hebrews does not merely replace the *σοφία* *λόγος* figure with Jesus. Hebrews stands in the tradition of Christian preaching which emphasized the life, death, and exaltation of Jesus as the basis of salvation. This is the emphasis of Hebrews against the creation-based soteriology of Alexandrian Judaism.

Thus we can see in Heb. 1:1-4 and throughout the Epistle elements which reflect the thought world of Alexandrian Judaism and elements which are not

paralleled in Alexandrian Judaism. It is most plausible that the intended readers of Hebrews, as well as its author, stood in the tradition of Alexandrian Judaism. To these readers Hebrews brings a message of exhortation. The exhortation is based on an argument of the superiority of Jesus Christ. One of the main points of the argument is Jesus' involvement in historical life and death. It is certainly not impossible that this doctrinal point was directed against a misunderstanding of Christ among the readers in which the noetic and heavenly figure of σοφία-λόγος was simply replaced by another noetic and heavenly figure, Jesus. If it is correct to consider this Christological issue as part of the background of Hebrews, then one of the author's purposes in writing was to demonstrate how the Alexandrian-Jewish Christian Christology must be combined with the primitive Christian tradition concerning the life and death of Jesus. Then Hebrews would be not only a sermon of exhortation, but also an important document in the development of the Church's Christology. For Hebrews effects a combination of the early church's teaching with the thought world of Alexandrian Judaism--and does so in such a way as to preserve the basic thrust of the Gospel, the historical-eschatological event in Jesus Christ.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

We have now set side by side the teachings concerning the agent of creation and the mediator of salvation in the writings of two authors which we have shown to be worthy of comparison: Hebrews and the writings of Alexandrian Judaism. What are we able to gain towards a better understanding of Hebrews by seeing it in this context? In a detailed discussion of the mediators between God and the world in the writings of Alexandrian Judaism we have seen the centrality of the σοφία-λόγος figure and of the Δυναμεις of God and the world of ideas so closely associated with the λόγος. The world came into being and exists through these intermediaries. Likewise man is related to God only through these same intermediaries, whether in his knowledge that God exists, in his finding the true joy born of virtue, in his inward spiritual worship, or in his approach to a mystical experience of God. We observed that the mediators in these various descriptions of man's religious relationship to God were the same figures which mediate the creative and ruling activity of God in the world. The guides to salvation were precisely the same as the principles of existence. We found nothing in Philo that prohibited our concluding that his soteriology is cosmologically grounded, i.e. that it is because they are the principles of existence that these mediating figures can lead man to his proper relationship to God.

Turning to Hebrews, a document which we have demonstrated to have many affinities to Alexandrian Judaism and which we have concluded is properly

understood as representing the traditions of early Christian congregations which stood in the tradition of Alexandrian Judaism, we found a basic point of similarity and a basic point of difference. Hebrews also identifies the same figure as the agent of creation and the mediator of salvation. And Hebrews presents that mediator, Jesus Christ, in much the same terms that Alexandrian Judaism presents the σοφία-λόγος figure. Hebrews uses the phraseology of Alexandrian Judaism to describe Christ as the agent of creation and uses the figure of the cosmic high priest in the heavenly sanctuary to present Christ as the mediator of the new covenant between God and man. But at this point we found a difference. Whereas in Philo we found nothing to prohibit the conclusion that it is by virtue of the σοφία-λόγος figure's being the agent of creation that it is able to lead men to salvation, in Hebrews the cosmic high priesthood of Christ is based not on the fact of his agency in creation but on his incarnation, his perfect life, his spotless sacrifice for the sins of all in his death, and his appointment and exaltation by God. The one of whom it is also asserted that he was the agent in creation became incarnate, lived and died in history, was exalted and therefore makes intercession and saves those who are obedient to him and who cling to him. It is the fact of the savior's involvement in history which is the unique emphasis of Hebrews when viewed in the context of Alexandrian Judaism.<sup>1</sup>

We might point out here that this major emphasis on the incarnate one

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology, edited by W. D. Davies and D. Daube in Honor of Charles Harold Dodd (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), p. 388.

who died on the cross also occurs in two other significant passages in the New Testament in which Christ, again after the pattern of a σοφία-Christology, is named as the agent of creation. Thus John 1:3 asserts of the λόγος :

all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

And yet the same Gospel clearly asserts: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," John 1:14. Likewise Col. 1:16-17:

for in him all things were created . . . all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together,

is followed by Col. 1:19-20:

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

A study such as the one we have just completed prompts other questions with regard both to the New Testament and the literature of its environment. One might investigate the relationship of the traditions concerning the agent of creation in these three passages: Heb. 1:1-4; John 1:1-3; and Col. 1:15-20. The presentation of Christ as the high priest in Hebrews leads to the question of other possible backgrounds for this, such as the Palestinian Jewish hope for a priest-Messiah. Another possibility would be to concentrate upon another point for a comparison and contrast between Hebrews and Alexandrian Judaism, such as πνεῦμα or the sabbath rest. A complete and detailed study of the history of the interpretation of the figure of Melchizedek, extending into the church fathers, would be another related study. Such studies would not be mere academic excursions into forgotten writings but could be, as we hope this study has been, of benefit to

the church by eliminating misunderstandings and by defining more precisely the unique force of that Christian message which lives in the documents of the New Testament.

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