

regards as the main superiority of Moses over all other law-givers. This view he seeks to establish by the method of allegory, a method which was borrowed from Greek writers, and in Philo's time was generally accepted by Graeco-Jewish thinkers. By the use of this method Philo is enabled to find in scripture the philosophical doctrines which he has borrowed from his Greek teachers. The result is an extraordinary commingling of Greek and Jewish ideas.

Accordingly, the account of creation contained in Genesis is characterized in terms borrowed from the Platonic philosophy. The world is first produced in the Divine Mind, and is thus the archetype of the visible universe. Philo, while holding fast by the Jewish conception of God as transcending all finite existence, unconsciously transforms it, under the influence of Greek ideas, into the very different conception of God as the Architect or Former of the world, not its Creator. Hence for him 'matter' is uncreated and eternal. The 'beauty' of the cosmos is not comprehensible by the ordinary mind, but it is visible at times to those who attain by philosophical contemplation to the state of 'enthusiasm'. Even they, however, never reach that fulness of divine illumination, and consequent infallibility of utterance, which was granted to the biblical writers, and above all to Moses; and hence every word of Moses has a deep spiritual meaning.

While Philo admits the eternity of 'matter,' he rejects as impious the prevalent view of the Greek poets and