

Philo on Jacob’s Ladder: Dream Interpretation or Allegory As Usual?

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Abstract: Philo’s interpretation of Gen 28:10–15 in the *De somniis* and previous research related to it are examined. Philo’s classification of dreams, the interpretations he presents for the vision of the heavenly ladder, and his usual way of working with Biblical texts are compared. The classification is found to be disconnected with the interpretations, which on the other hand are shown to contain ideas which Philo often repeats in his works and especially in his commentary in the *Somn.* of the events preceding the dream. The fact that Philo is interpreting a dream has no effect on how he works with the text of the Genesis. Points for further research are identified.

1. Introduction

1.1 The *De somniis* and Philo’s Classification of Dreams

Philo of Alexandria expounds the dream about the heavenly ladder which Jacob saw on his way to Mesopotamia (Gen 28:12–15)¹ in the *De somniis* (1.2–188) and briefly also in the *Quaestiones in Genesim*.² He gives four, mostly allegorical interpretations. The interpretations form an intricate web of symbols related to “the mystical journey toward the contemplation of God”, as Sofia Torallas Tovar aptly formulates.³ In this paper I mainly discuss Philo’s interpretations of Gen. 28:12 and their basis. (See section 1.3 for the precise task definition.)

At the outset of both books of the *De somniis* Philo presents a classification of God-sent dreams. These are of three types, and Philo wrote one book on each class. What was originally the first book has been lost, and the extant books 1 and 2 deal with the second and third class of dreams, respectively. The characteristics of the three classes of dreams, as described in the introductory passages of *Somn.* 1 and 2, are given below. As this paper focuses on the first dream of the second class, the description of the other categories is more cursory.

1. In the first kind “the Deity of His own motion sends to us the visions which are presented to us in sleep” (*Somn.* 1.1).⁴ A reasonably well-founded suggestion

¹ “And he dreamed, and see, a ladder set firmly in the earth, whose top was reaching into heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³And the Lord leaned on it and said, ‘I am the Lord, the God of Abraam your father and the God of Isaak; do not be afraid; as for the land which you are sleeping on, I will give it to you and to your offspring. ¹⁴And your offspring shall be like the sand of the earth, and it shall widen out to the sea and to the southwest and to the north and to the east, and all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. ¹⁵And see, I am with you, carefully guarding you in every way where you might go, and I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done all the things that I talked about to you.’” Unless otherwise indicated, the English translations of the LXX are taken from *A New English Translation of the Septuagint*, © 2007 by the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc. Used by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. For Philo’s deviations from the text of the LXX, see the Appendix.

² QG 4.29. This article focuses on the interpretations in the *Somn.*

³ Torallas Tovar (2003) 43.

⁴ Unless otherwise indicated, the translations of Philo’s texts are from the PLCL.

has been made by Torallas Tovar that the dream of this type, addressed in the lost book, was the appearance of the Lord to Isaac in Gen 26:2–5.⁵

2. “The second kind of dreams is that in which our mind (νοῦς), moving out of itself together with the Mind (νοῦς) of the Universe, seems to be possessed and God-inspired, and so capable of receiving some foretaste and foreknowledge of things to come” (*Somn.* 1.2).⁶ In *Somn.* 2.2 the description is very similar with some variation of vocabulary; in these dreams “our understanding (διάνοια) moves in concert with the soul (ψυχή) of the Universe”. A little later (2.3) Philo adds that the “the Sacred Guide”⁷ interpreted these dreams “neither with consummate clearness nor with excessive indistinctness” and that the dream of the ladder “was indeed enigmatic, but the riddle was not in very high degree concealed from the quick-sighted.” The second dream interpreted in *Somn.* 1 is also Jacob’s, the one about the markings of the sheep and goats and the exhortation to return home (Gen 31:10–13).
3. The third type of dreams “arises when the soul in sleep, setting itself in motion and agitation of its own accord, becomes frenzied, and – – foretells the future” (*Somn.* 2.1). These dreams make up the most obscure category. They necessitate “a scientific skill in discerning the meaning of dreams” (*Somn.* 2.4; cf. 2.110). Dream type three is thus the only type in the context of which this science is mentioned. Three pairs of dreams are interpreted, those of Joseph, Pharaoh’s chief cupbearer and chief baker, and Pharaoh himself (Genesis 37, 40, and 41, respectively).

In addition to this classification (henceforth “introductory definitions”), in *Somn.* 1.190 Philo gives what I call a *supplementary specification* concerning at least some dreams of the second type:

You see that the Divine word proclaims as dreams sent from God not only those which appear before the mind under the direct action of the Highest of Causes, but those also which are revealed through [the agency of] His interpreters and attendant messengers who have been held meet to receive from the Father, to Whom they owe their being, a divine and happy portion.⁸

The specification comes after Philo has introduced the latter of the two dreams of the second type, Jacob’s dream about the flock. Since an angel of God is explicitly mentioned as a messenger in the dream, the specification seems to fit much better to the second dream than to the ladder dream. However, it can be concluded that the role of angels in mediating dreams applies to the dream of the ladder as well.⁹ It should be not-

⁵ Torallas Tovar (2003) 44. The fact that the appearance of the Lord is not mentioned to have been a dream would not necessarily have prevented Philo from including it in the lost book of *Somn.* I would like to add the second, nightly appearance of the Lord to Isaac in the same chapter (Gen 26:24) as a candidate.

⁶ The expression “out of itself” is rendering ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ, for which it is by no means the only possible interpretation; also “of itself” or “by itself” can be considered. See, e.g., the other occurrences of ἐκ with a reflexive pronoun in *Somn.* (1.91, 191, 249; 2.40, 200).

⁷ ὁ ἱεροφάντης, i.e., Moses (mentioned in *Somn.* 2.1). Philo usually comments on the Pentateuch as if written by Moses, but the anomaly here, of course, is that in Genesis no interpretation is given for the dream of the ladder.

⁸ I have bracketed “the agency of” as the Greek contains no direct mention of *activity* on the part of angels (διὰ τῶν ὑποφητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁπαδῶν ἀγγελῶν) and added the last two commas for clarity. The Thesaurus Linguae Graecae at www.tlg.uci.edu (© TLG & Regents of the University of California) has been used in finding the occurrences of words.

⁹ The passage warranting this conclusion is *Somn.* 1.70:

ed that the introductory definitions of the second dream type do not mention such a feature, and there is thus a discrepancy between them and the supplementary specification.

It may be useful to present the structure of the *Somn.* schematically as follows:

Somn. 1	1.1–2, 190: Classification & description of dreams	1.3–4: Quotations from the LXX: Jacob's dream and the prefatory passage	1.5–132: Interpr. of Gen 28:10–11 (the <i>πρῶσιμιον</i> ; see section 2.2 below)	1.133–156: Interpr. of the ladder & its angels (Gen 28:12)	1.157–188: Interpr. of the Lord's words (Gen 28:13–15)	1.189–256: Interpr. of Gen 31:10–13
Somn. 2	2.1–4: Classification & description of dreams	2.5–302: Interpretation of the dreams in Genesis 37, 40, and 41				

1.2 The Interpretations of the Dream of the Heavenly Ladder

In *Somn.* 1.133–56 Philo gives four, mutually non-exclusive interpretations to the dream about the heavenly ladder and the angels ascending and descending on it before turning to the vision of the Lord in the same dream.¹⁰

- (a) Cosmologically, the ladder symbolizes the air, which extends from earth to heaven. The air is full of incorporeal and immortal souls who descend to be bound in bodies and ascend again after being released at death at certain periods determined by nature. Some long for mortal life and return, while others pronounce the bodily life folly and flee toward the ether as from a prison or a grave.¹¹ In what is almost a literal interpretation of the vision Philo adds that there are also the angels; they have never desired anything earthly, and they descend and ascend in their job of being mediators between God and human beings. The angels form an entirely parallel system of ascenders and descenders without there being anything suggestive of such duplicity in the dream itself. (*Somn.* 1.134–45.)
- (b) Anthropologically, the ladder is the symbol of the human soul, in which God's λόγοι, or angels, ascend and draw the soul up with them, and descend, not cast-

Meet and right then is it that Jacob, having come to Sense-perception, meets not God but a word of God, even as did Abraham – – [who had a] meeting with sacred Words of a kind from which the God Who is prior to all things has withdrawn, ceasing to extend visions (*φαντασίας*) that proceed from Himself, but only those that proceed from the potencies (*δυνάμεων*) inferior to Him.

The passage contains a clear reference to the vision which Jacob is about to behold in his dream: Philo uses the word *φαντασία* about what Jacob saw while resting in “the place” in *Somn.* 1.4, 133 as well. That “potencies” is to be equated with the λόγοι is clear not only from the context but also from the fact that Philo says about “the place” both that it is filled with incorporeal potencies (*ἄσωμάτοι δυνάμεις*, *Somn.* 1.62) and that it is full of incorporeal “words” (*ἄσωμάτοι λόγοι*, *Somn.* 1.127).

¹⁰ Cf. Colson in PLCL IV, 581: “It must be remembered that when [Philo] gives two alternative meanings for a passage, he does not think, as we should, that one *must* be the right one. To his mind they may both be intended.”

¹¹ The theme of my forthcoming dissertation is Philo's relation to the doctrine of reincarnation. This passage (*Somn.* 1.138–139) contains his clearest statement in favor of the tenet. There are others that seem to refer to it (esp. *QE* 2.40, perhaps *Cher.* 114), but the question cannot be solved without an analysis of Philo's whole *oeuvre* from the viewpoint of his soteriology, anthropology and individual eschatology, both in itself and in relation to other, primarily Greek and Jewish texts bearing on the subject.

ing the soul down but condescending out of love and helping those that are still undergoing purification in the body like in a river. (*Somn.* 1.146–49.)

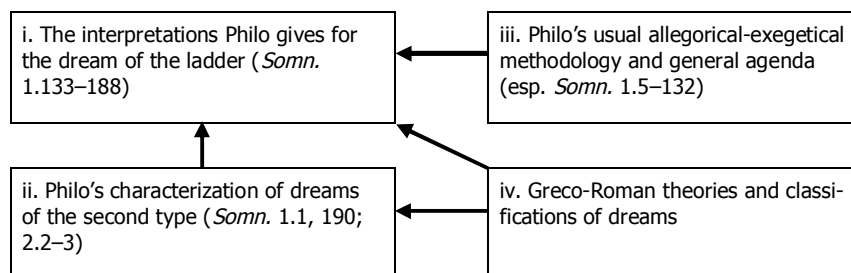
- (c) In the third interpretation, Philo compares to a stairway the life of the Practiser (ὁ ἀσκητής), which is rife with ascents and descents. (*Somn.* 1.150–52.)
- (d) Finally, the human affairs with their ups and downs "are naturally likened to a ladder". (*Somn.* 1.153–56.)

A further mention of the ladder is found in an interpretation of Gen 18:33 in *QG* 4.29.¹²

In *Somn.* 1.157–188 Philo presents his comments on the latter part of the dream, the Lord's words to Jacob. These are also summarized and briefly discussed below, see p. 20.

1.3 The Research Task

There are four main elements involved in the research task:



I argue below for my contention that Philo's interpretations of the ladder dream (i) are *not* informed by the introductory definitions of dream type two (ii) but guided instead by his general agenda and ways of working with biblical texts (iii) and that the ladder dream is to be regarded as mediated by angels or λόγοι in accordance with the supplementary specification of *Somn.* 1.190. The influence exerted on Philo by representatives of classical dream-interpretation (iv) is also addressed as it has been the focus of studies reviewed below (pp. 5–10).

2. Earlier Research

Earlier research on the *De somniis* has focused on three areas: the relationship between the treatise and classical theories of dream interpretation, the structure of the books or that of the interpretations contained therein, and the contents of the interpretations. I first comment on studies related to the first point and then others that mostly deal with the second and third point.

¹² The text of Genesis runs, "Then the Lord went away, when he had left off speaking to Abraam, and Abraam returned to his place." Philo comments on this in *QG* 4.29:

The one who is begotten and brought into being is not wont to be God-possessed always, but when he has been divinely inspired for some time he then goes and returns to himself. – – But it is necessary that the most pure and luminous mind should be mixed with the mortal (element) for necessary uses. This is what is indicated by the heavenly ladder, (where) not only an ascent but also a descent of the angels is mentioned.

The last "this" apparently refers to the compulsory nature of the mind-body union. Philo seems to present a fifth interpretation for the dream: the ascent and descent are those of the soul or mind when it enters and exits a contemplative state. (Cf. *Spec.* 3.1–6, where Philo tells of his own experiences of the ascent and descent of the soul as mental events.)

2.1 Studies on Philo and Classical Dream Interpretation¹³

Philo's classification of dreams has been the main material analyzed in studies that have sought to compare the *De somniis* with representatives of classical dream interpretation. Several scholars beginning with Paul Wendland have noted that Philo's classification exhibits features that are also found in Quintus's description in Cicero's *De divinatione* 1.64 of the dream categories used by the Stoic philosopher Posidonius of Apamea (d. c. 50 B.C.E.).¹⁴ Claims of Philo's "using" Posidonius's classification are found in re-search literature, but, as a rule, without any elaboration of *how* he did this.

Posidonius classified dreams according to their origin, and his first class of dreams corresponds roughly to Philo's third (the soul is the source), and vice versa (God is / gods are the source). Similarities have also been seen between the second dream types. The description of Posidonius's second class runs in its entirety as follows: "second, the air is full of immortal souls, [already] clearly stamped, as it were, with the marks of truth."¹⁵ As this is supposed to be a description of one of the "ways" (*modi*) of dreaming, something seems to be missing: what the reader tends to assume is that the dreamer can somehow be in contact with these souls and thereby receive some portion of their truth.¹⁶

Colson is somewhat skeptical about a direct use of Posidonius by Philo, but he does note "distinct points of contact" with the description in *De divinatione* 1.64 and the dreams of *Somn.* 1.¹⁷ As for the dreams of the second kind, Colson says that Philo's λόγοι in *Somn.* 1.127 are not unlike Posidonius's immortal souls.¹⁸ He also refers to *Somn.* 1.241 where Philo says that it was the Logos and not God himself the dreamer beheld.¹⁹ Colson's conclusion (based on his discussion of all three classes) is that while

¹³ As I am not discussing the influence of other dream theories on Philo's unless they have been seen to have an impact on his actual interpretations, I examine these studies very selectively.

¹⁴ See PCW, and further, Hilgert (1987) 398–399.

¹⁵ The Latin contains no counterpart for the "already" which I have bracketed: "altero, quod plenus aer sit immortalium animorum, in quibus tamquam insignitae notae veritatis apparent."

¹⁶ Thus for example Kessels (1969) 408 writes, "[The second] class originates from cooperation with the souls in the air, as Cicero puts it." According to Dodson (2003) 305, in this type there takes place "the soul's contact with other intermediary souls."

¹⁷ PLCL V, 593–94.

¹⁸ Here Philo says that the "place" of Gen 28:11 where Jacob was to dream "is full of incorporeal 'words'; and these words are immortal souls." In the sequel these λόγοι are the stones one of which Jacob puts at his head. Philo comes even closer to Posidonius in *Somn.* 1.135–37 where he says, e.g., that "The air [symbolized by the ladder] is the abode of incorporeal souls" and that the "citizens – [of the air are] imperishable and immortal souls", but Philo's context is not the classification of dreams but the interpretation of one particular dream. Harmonizing Posidonius's and Philo's ideas would imply that the immortal souls of the air can impart dreams in which they themselves appear. While this is not impossible, the occurrence of these souls in both thinkers within the context of dream interpretation but in different positions is puzzling and would seem to require a more satisfactory explanation.

¹⁹ This applies at least to Jacob's dream about the markings of the flock; Colson thinks it might include the ladder dream as well (PLCL V, 422). Philo's conception of the Logos is far too complex a subject to be brought up here in any detail. But a rough sketch is that for Philo the Logos is the *image of God* of Gen 1:27. The human mind (νοῦς), made as it is *after* that image, is the logos in the human being (*Her.* 230–231). One of the many complications is that Philo can write about *the* Divine Logos and God's λόγοι in plural in a manner that makes them seem almost interchangeable (*Somn.* 1.62, 68–69).

Philo “probably had the Stoic classification in mind, he has put it into a very different shape.”

Claes Blum also considers Posidonius as Philo’s “ultimate source”, and claims that Philo “use[d] the system of Posidonius – – for interpreting the dreams of Genesis.”²⁰ A. H. M. Kessels repeats these views and says Philo “explain[ed] the dreams he found in the Old Testament by means of this system.”²¹ Kessels appeals to Blum’s having “shown” that Philo’s second class of dreams “does go back to the same origin as Cicero’s second category”.²² By this he undoubtedly means the conclusion Blum draws from the following passage in *De divinatione* 2.119 where Cicero utilizes, and at the same time blurs, Posidonius’s classification in his attack against divination (defended by Quintus):

‘Our souls’ (according to the view of your school) ‘are divine and are derived from an external source; the universe is filled with a multitude of harmonious souls; therefore, because of its divinity and its contact with other souls, the human soul during sleep foresees what is to come.’

Based on this, Blum, although admitting that the identity of the second classes is less evident than that of the other ones, concludes, “[Cicero] no doubt means to say that dreams of [the second] type are produced by συμπάθεια, or, as Philo puts it, through συγκίνησις of the soul with other souls.”²³ Yet if we once more take a look at what Philo in fact says about the second class, Blum’s argument makes no sense:

– – our mind (νοῦς), moving out of itself together with the Mind (νοῦς) of the Universe, seems to be possessed and God-inspired, and so capable of receiving some foretaste and foreknowledge of things to come. (*Somn.* 1.2)

The similarities are restricted to a reference to divinity exhibited (Cicero) or experienced (Philo) by the soul and the possibility of knowing future things. Philo does not say the dreamer’s soul moves “with other souls” but with God.²⁴ The difference between Philo’s first and second classes is not so much one of source but of the initiator of movement; God or the soul. Unlike in Posidonius, God is essential in both.

Robert M. Berchman presents an overview of dream theories before Philo and compares them with the *De somniis* in his article which “attempts to demonstrate that Philo’s *De Somniis* belongs to a long oneirocritic tradition, and that his understanding of prophecy, divination, and magic must be assessed from an oneirological perspective.”²⁵ He pays much attention to Philo’s dream terminology and finds an elaborate, not three- but five-fold classification of dreams in the *De somniis* – not presented in any one place but inferable from different passages in the work. Berchman’s study has not without some

²⁰ Blum (1936) 59, 68.

²¹ Kessels (1969) 396. Neither Blum nor Kessels presents any analysis of how Philo actually used Posidonius’s system.

²² Kessels (1969) 397.

²³ Blum (1936) 66.

²⁴ A similar kind of carelessness with respect to Philo’s actual words is shown by Kessels (1969) 398 who says that Philo mentions “dreams directly sent by the gods” in *Somn.* 2.3. Although Philo can sometimes use the word “god” in plural without criticism (e.g., about the heavenly bodies in *Opif.* 27; cf. *Timaeus* 41a), there is no question of his monotheism in general and of there being the one and only God behind the “god-sent” dreams in particular (see *Somn.* 1.190, 229).

²⁵ Berchman (1987) 404 and (the same article) (1998) 116.

reason been criticized for a presentation of evidence that is “at best reckless and at worst misleading.”²⁶

While Philo himself unequivocally declares the dream of the heavenly ladder to belong to the second type, Berchman says it contains an “aspect” of the third type, which class he calls “*chrēsmos* or *eidōlon*” or “*Oνειροι-Eidola*”.²⁷ Berchman’s evidence is the occurrence of the word εἰδωλον in interpretation (d): “I must not fail to mention another idea (εἰδωλον) which is present in the vision” (*Somn.* 1.153).²⁸ But the dreams of the third type are supposed to contain a “deep and impenetrable – – enigma” (*Somn.* 2.4), and the ups and downs of human affairs hardly fit this description. Thus Berchman’s meticulous system of designations is put in question.

My contention that there is no difference between how Philo interprets the ladder dream and other material of the Pentateuch is accidentally supported by Berchman. After describing the way in which Artemidorus of Daldis (1st/2nd century C.E.) in his *Oνειροκριτικά* (2.27) treats *the well* as a dream symbol he proceeds to state that “Jacob’s dream – – offers the symbol of the well to teach the benefits of knowledge and the difficulties involved in acquiring it.”²⁹ What Berchman fails to notice is that the well of Gen 28:10 (LXX) is not part of the dream. It may be that Berchman means that Philo applies the art of dream interpretation in his exegesis as a rule and not just for dreams, but unfortunately this remains unclear as he writes, “Oneirocritical *topoi* abound in the *De somniis*. Their use suggests that they serve as an integral part of the exegetical arsenal employed by Philo.” In any case, he produces no evidence to the effect as regards the dream of the ladder.

Sofia Torallas Tovar does not in her dissertation refer to Berchman’s work.³⁰ The aim of her study is to determine the contents of the lost book of the *Somn.* by analyzing the structure of the extant books of the *De somniis* and the roles of the patriarchs (as well as of Joseph) therein. She notes the connection between Philo’s and Posidonius’s dream types and sees important similarities. In a later article she says Philo “used” the three-fold classification “when he commented on texts from Genesis that included dreams.”³¹

For the second dream category she takes together Philo’s mention of the Mind of the Universe in *Somn.* 1.2 and the supplementary specification about the role of angels in *Somn.* 1.190 (both quoted above on p. 2). She writes:

This Mind of the Universe is the Divine Logos, who occupies in this case the same level as God’s messengers, the angels, in this hierarchy of the Divine. In this type of dream, God does not appear to the dreamer, but he sends his angels to deliver His message.³²

²⁶ Dodson (2003) 308. Somewhat illustrative is that Berchman says (p. 415) of Philo’s second dream type, without reservations, “Philo calls this dream, the *chrēsmos*.” In reality, Philo both uses other terms too for this type (such as ὄναρ, e.g., *Somn.* 1.159), and applies χρησμός in connection with dreams of the first type as well (*Somn.* 2.3).

²⁷ Berchman (1987) 414–416. Should this be the case, that would have to be taken into account in the search for the basis of Philo’s interpretation of the ladder dream.

²⁸ See Colson’s text-critical notes about the exceptional use of the word εἰδωλον here; PLCL V, 600–601.

²⁹ Berchman (1987) 421.

³⁰ Torallas Tovar (1995a).

³¹ Torallas Tovar (2003) 42.

³² Torallas Tovar, (1995b; this is an English abstract of her dissertation published as a web page, so there are no page numbers). The part “God does not appear to the dreamer” is of course not

Torallas Tovar thus equates the immortal souls in Posidonius with the angels, the Logos and the Mind of the Universe in Philo. Placing the Logos on the same level with angels is supported by Philo's text in, e.g., *Somn.* 1.115, 148, 239. However, the identification of the Logos with the Mind of the Universe is problematic. Were it correct, that would mean the contradiction between the introductory definitions and the supplementary specification of the second class of dreams noted earlier (section 1.1) did not exist.

In order to assess this question it is worthwhile to look at *Somn.* 1.228–230 (to which Torallas Tovar does not refer): Philo makes there the point that θεός, without the definite article, like in Gen 31:13, means the "chief Word" of God (ὁ πρεσβύτατος αὐτοῦ λόγος). In *Leg.* 3.29 the Mind of the Universe is identified with θεός (without the article). Based on these two passages, Torallas Tovar's identification would seem to hold. However, the Mind of the Universe is equated with ὁ θεός, with the article, in *Gig.* 40 and *Migr.* 4, 192, and the same identification is deducible from *Opif.* 7–8.³³ The balance of evidence is against the identification of the Logos with the Mind of the Universe.³⁴

Torallas Tovar makes a similar point about a discrepancy regarding the third type of dreams as I am arguing for regarding the second kind: description and interpretation do not coincide (as far as the introductory definitions are concerned):

In the description at the beginning of book II, these dreams are the visions that the soul sees due to its kinship <with> the Divine. But throughout book II they are presented as those of the soul drowned in passions – – .³⁵

However, the mention of kinship with the Divine is not found in Philo. It is in Cicero's description of Posidonius's first type of dreams that we read, "the soul is clairvoyant of itself because of its kinship with the Gods" (*De divinatione* 1.64).³⁶ Nevertheless I agree

literally true for either of the dreams in *Somn.* 1 (Gen 28:13, 31:13), but see Philo's discussion on whom the dreamer actually sees, e.g., in *Somn.* 1.70, 228–230, 241, and above, p. 2.

³³ Furthermore, given that the nature of Philo's interpretations is not seldom somewhat *ad hoc*, and that the distinction between θεός and ὁ θεός is clearly demanded by the situation, one should be careful in making conclusions about any wider applicability of the differentiation. See, e.g., *Somn.* 1.69–70 and 2.2–3 where Philo uses both θεός and ὁ θεός for God. See also below, footnote 40.

³⁴ As regards the closely related term ἡ τῶν ὅλων ψυχή (the Soul of the Universe) in *Somn.* 2.2, it is equated with God in *Leg.* 1.91 with slight hesitation. But Philo rejects such terminology in *Migr.* 179, 181 – apparently because of the danger of suggesting "that God is contained in the universe" (so Colson in PLCL I, 478). In *Migr.* 181 Philo says that according to Moses "neither the universe nor its soul is the primal God (ὁ πρῶτος θεός)" thus implying that there indeed is such an entity as the soul of the universe. No other candidate can be thought of as the Logos; after all, Philo goes as far as calling the Logos "the second God" (*QG* 2.62). Is then the entity with which the soul moves with the Logos in *Somn.* 2.2 but God in *Somn.* 1.2? The introductory definitions of *Somn.* 1 and 2 are otherwise in mutual harmony, although Philo seems to have made it a point to change almost all the terminology he uses in the describing the first and second dream classes; thus, e.g., "they Deity" (τὸ θεῖον) of *Somn.* 1.1 becomes "God" (θεός) of *Somn.* 2.2. The context of the *Migr.* passage is polemical while that of the *Leg.* is not, and the less complicated assumption is that in the *Somn.* Philo once again accepts the appellation "Soul of the Universe" for God.

³⁵ Torallas Tovar (1995b).

³⁶ It might be thought that because of the divine element involved, this type should be matched with Philo's first and not third type. However, in Posidonius's third kind the divine aspect is even stronger: "the Gods in person converse with men when they are asleep" (*Div.* 1.64). Posidonius's first dream class is actually relatively close to Philo's second, although there God-possession is the cause of the soul's clairvoyance.

with Torallas Tovar's opinion that such a discrepancy might reflect the possibility that Philo did not invent the classification he mentioned but simply adopted Posidonius's. In any case dream theory has a limited role in the *Somn.*, as also Torallas Tovar writes: "Philo uses a classification of dreams to construct a treatise whose real aim is to present the types of soul and their possibility of communicating with God."³⁷

The most recent study I have found related to the dream-interpretation aspects of the *De somniis* is Derek S. Dodson's article. Its purpose is "to (1) survey Greco-Roman dream theories and classifications and (2) to interpret Philo's *De somniis* in this context, particularly in light of Artemidorus". The article presents a clear and fairly comprehensive overview of the subjects mentioned with the reservation that it cannot be said to "interpret Philo's *De somniis*" but certain limited aspects thereof. As noted on p. 7, Dodson criticizes Berchman; he does not refer to Torallas Tovar's work.

Dodson discusses Philo's second type of dreams based on *Somn.* 2.3 (see p. 2 above). According to him, these dreams "originate from the soul's interaction with the divine intermediary, whether angels, the archangel, or the logos."³⁸ This statement raises some questions.

Somn. 1.148, to which Dodson refers when attributing the mediation of the dream to angels, is part of interpretation (b) where the ladder represents the soul. In that passage Philo says that "in the understandings of those who are still undergoing cleansing – there walk angels, divine words". Jacob, as the archetypal Practiser, is not yet perfect (*Somn.* 1.213) and is thus counted among those needing further cleansing.³⁹

The next entity in Dodson's list of intermediaries is "the archangel" of *Somn.* 1.157. He has apparently not noticed that God is meant here, for God could not be properly called an "intermediary" of God-sent dreams.⁴⁰ In addition, Philo makes no mention of "the soul's interaction" with the archangel, or its resulting in a dream.

The last one is "the logos", for which Dodson refers to *Somn.* 1.190 and 1.230. In the former (quoted above on p. 2) Philo says that angel-mediated dreams too are God-sent. Given the connection between angels and the Logos this naturally makes the latter a qualified intermediary. However, by referring also to *Somn.* 1.230 (which contains Philo's statement, discussed on p. 8 **Error! Bookmark not defined.**, that θεός without the definite article means the Logos) Dodson appears to imply that Philo somewhere

³⁷ Here Torallas Tovar refers to E. Vanderlinden, 'Les divers modes de connaissance de Dieu selon Philon d'Alexandrie', *Mélanges de Science Religieuse*, p. IV (1944), pp. 285-304. It is not clear whether the whole idea comes from Vanderlinden, whose work I was unable to obtain, and, if so, what are that author's grounds for this conclusion.

³⁸ Dodson (2003) 311.

³⁹ See PLCL X, 336–348 for J. W. Earp's extensive summary of how Jacob is presented in Philo's works. According to Earp, Jacob symbolizes the type who learns by practice, "making gradual progress, with toil" (p. 337). His advancement takes him all the way to perfection. "Philo mostly thinks of Jacob reaching perfection after his wrestling victory, when he becomes Israel" (p. 347).

⁴⁰ In *Somn.* 1.157 Philo explicitly identifies the archangel with the Lord (Ἐμήννε δὲ τὸ ὄναρ ἐστηριγμένον ἐπὶ τῆς κλίμακος τὸν ἀρχάγγελον, κύριον) and in 1.158 with God – and although he does not use the definite article with θεός, the context makes it clear that not the Logos but God is meant. On the other hand, in *Conf.* 146 and *Her.* 205, which are the other two passages where Philo uses the word ἀρχάγγελος, he explicitly equates the term with the Logos. This is hardly a question of Philo being uncertain about the real identity of "the archangel" but rather of him calling both God and the Logos by the name "the Ruler of the angels," as Whitaker translates in *Somn.* 1.157.

names θεός as a mediator of dreams of the second kind, but he does not point to, nor am I otherwise aware of, such a statement.

2.2 Dream Interpretation vs. Philo's Ordinary Exegesis

Irmgard Christiansen's monograph is one of the basic works on Philo's methodology of allegorical exegesis.⁴¹ In the footnote that serves as a general introduction to the *Somn.* Christiansen notes Philo's mentions of the three classes of dreams but she does not connect them with other dream classifications.⁴² In her analysis of Philo's symbolical exegesis she takes one example from Philo's interpretation of the verses preceding Jacob's dream (called τὸ προοίμιον, the prelude, by Philo in 1.133) and another from the dream-interpretation section.

Christiansen is the only scholar in this brief review to note the importance of the προοίμιον.⁴³ In it, Philo goes through the symbolism of Gen 28:10–11, which he calls προκατασκευὴ ἀναγκαία (necessary prefatory passage) of the vision (*Somn.* 1.4). Christiansen rightly states that the προοίμιον “ist nicht nur eine formale, sondern vor allem auch eine inhaltliche Einleitung.” However, the reason she emphasizes it seems to be that it contains “Jakobs Bekehrungsgeschichte” whereby Jacob becomes ὁρῶν, Israel (*Somn.* 1.129).⁴⁴ My own view is that the importance of this section does not lie so much in this detour but in what Philo states: it is “necessary” for the understanding of the vision that Jacob saw in his dream. This subject is returned to in section 3 below.

Christiansen's work is useful for answering the question if Philo's method in the προοίμιον (or elsewhere in his works) is different from what he applies in the interpretations of the ladder dream. She presents a general structure for his symbolic exegesis as follows:⁴⁵ (1) Philo first introduces a scriptural concept. (2) He then declares what “other” the concept symbolizes. (3) Finally he presents the evidence for this symbolic relation, often using the definitions of the concept and the “other”. In this way the sameness of both notions is established.⁴⁶

Christiansen uses as examples two passages from the *De somniis* (1.102–104; 1.133–56) and two from the *Legum allegoriae* (2.72–76 & 79–81; 3.90–93).⁴⁷ In the first of these, Philo comments on Ex 22:27 about the restoration of the indebted neighbor's garment – the scriptural concept. He then states unequivocally, “Well, then, we say that a garment is a figure (σύμβολον) for rational speech.” Finally comes the evidence (here, as often, beginning with γάρ) in the form of functional equivalence: both garment and rational speech protect, cover, and adorn a person.

Christiansen shows that Philo applies the complete scheme of symbolic exegesis in interpretations (a) and (b) of the ladder dream but a reduced version in (c) and (d). He declares the ladder (the scriptural concept) to be the symbol of the air and of the human soul. As the definitive characteristics of the ladder Christiansen presents, first, its being

⁴¹ Christiansen (1969).

⁴² Christiansen (1969) 49–50.

⁴³ Philo's words in *Somn.* 1.133 can be understood to refer either to Gen 28:10–11 or his exposition thereof: “Such then is the prelude of the God-sent vision, and it is now time to turn to the vision itself”. I use the term προοίμιον for the latter.

⁴⁴ Christiansen (1969) 49.

⁴⁵ Christiansen (1969) 75.

⁴⁶ Christiansen (1969) 47.

⁴⁷ Christiansen (1969) 48–74.

based on the ground and reaching all the way to the heaven, and second, having angels of God ascending and descending on it.⁴⁸ These are realized both in the case of the air and in that of the soul.⁴⁹

As regards Philo's interpretations (c) and (d) the connection with the ladder is reduced to the vertical movement present in both.⁵⁰ The lesser strength of the connection is, according to Christiansen, reflected in the fact that Philo no longer talks about "symbols" in these interpretations.

In a corresponding manner, Moses calls pleasure symbolically the serpent in Gen 3:1, because the movement of both is "tortuous and variable" (*Leg.* 2.72–76), whereas the other, brazen serpent of Num 21:8 expresses self-mastery, because both are "forcible and unyielding" (*Leg.* 2.79–81).⁵¹ The last example, *Leg.* 3.90–93 represents a variation of the theme, for there Philo establishes the relationships between Ephraim and memory and between Manasseh and recollection on etymological grounds.⁵² These examples suffice to show that there seems to be no difference between how Philo uses symbolism in expounding Jacob's ladder dream and other passages of the Pentateuch.

Wilfried Eisele analyzes Philo's interpretations of Jacob's dream in his monograph about the Middle Platonic influences in the Hebrews.⁵³ He utilizes Christiansen's work and presents thematic and structural observations – for instance that interpretations (a) and (b) have in common the fact that both the air and the soul are called οἶκοι, the former of souls (in *Somn.* 1.135), the latter of God (1.149). He also notes that interpretations (a) and (d) both repeat their essential points in the end, whereas (b) and (c) do not, and thus an axis of symmetry is formed between (b) and (c).⁵⁴

From the viewpoint of comparing Philo's interpretation of the dream with his treatment of other Pentateuchal material the most interesting contribution Eisele makes is his synoptic analysis of the points of contact between the sections *Somn.* 1.133–45, *Somn.* 1.146–49, and *Gig.* 6–18 (which comments on the giants of Gen 6:1–4).⁵⁵ He compares the divisions of souls in those three sections using diaeresis and finds both differences

⁴⁸ Christiansen (1969) 54.

⁴⁹ See p. 3 above for a description of the interpretations, and also the Philonic passages there mentioned for further details, especially for the realization of Christiansen's first characteristic in the case of the soul. Reality is not quite as neat as Christiansen's model, for concerning both interpretations she has to admit that there are also other entities than angels among the ascenders and descenders (Christiansen (1969) 61, 63). Given Christiansen's two characteristics for the ladder, these have no place in her model. Another example of how difficult it is to capture Philo's method in a fixed scheme is his "symbolic" (κατὰ σύμβολον) interpretation of Jacob's stone-pillow as a λόγος (*Somn.* 1.127–32): Philo does not produce any evidence for the identification and thus Christiansen's third element is missing. The only thing he appeals to is that "it is of importance to know that the divine 'place' and the holy land is full of incorporeal 'words'" (*Somn.* 1.127).

⁵⁰ Christiansen (1969) 63–66.

⁵¹ Christiansen (1969) 67–71. In the latter the technical terminology of symbolism is absent, but according to Christiansen Philo's method and phraseology leave no room for doubt that a symbolic relationship is meant.

⁵² Christiansen (1969) 71–74.

⁵³ Eisele (2003) 196–225.

⁵⁴ Eisele (2003) 197. The thesis of a symmetry is hampered by the fact that the length of interpretation (d) is only one-fourth of that of (a).

⁵⁵ Eisele (2003) 198–214.

and common features.⁵⁶ Both the first of the sections of the *Somn.* as well as the one from *Gig.* deal with the descent and ascent of souls. While in the latter it is clear that the souls started with a descent, in the former this less so. Turning to the question of what Philo regards as the original dwelling-place of souls Eisele notes Philo's "hint" at Plato's *Timaeus* 41d in *Somn.* 1.137: both say the number of souls is equal to the number of stars. Eisele's conclusion is that Philo clearly alludes to Plato's idea that the stars are the homes of souls and therefore the souls' first vertical movement is that of descent, as in *Gig.*⁵⁷ Thus the basic setup in both is the descent, struggle/folly of bodily life, and liberation. Both also mention angels that have never wanted a share of the earthly things (*Somn.* 1.140, *Gig.* 12). Eisele's second section of the *Somn.* contains the image of the body as a river (*Somn.* 1.147), as do the *De gigantibus* (13) and the *Timaeus* (43a).⁵⁸

Eisele also notes that the basic bipartition of souls into those that incarnate and those who act as God's mediators and desire nothing earthly (the angels) is mentioned also in Philo's expanded commentary of Gen 9:20 in *Plant.* 14.⁵⁹ Similar notions about angels Eisele finds also in *Conf.* 168–82 (expounding Gen 11:7) where Philo says, e.g., that there are incorporeal souls or angels in the air (174) and that, unlike human beings, they have not been imprisoned in the body (176–77).⁶⁰ Thus in his interpretations of Jacob's dream of the ladder Philo brings up ideas which are also found in several other contexts in his works.

Annegret Meyer analyzes *Somn.* 1.133–56 as a part of her study on mystagogy in the Gospel of John.⁶¹ She makes several observations about Philo's other works that agree with or supplement Philonic anthropology as presented in the *Somn.*⁶² For instance, that the soul is chained to the body, as in interpretation (a) in accordance with the "Platonic" *sōma-sēma* scheme is mentioned in *Somn.* 1.139 and *Migr.* 9.⁶³ Meyer also discusses Philo's hierarchical dualism where the body and sense-perception are the lower parts of the human being (cf. *Somn.* 1.146).

⁵⁶ For *Somn.* 1.133–145 Eisele uses the "fünf Arten von Luftbewohnern" of Christiansen (1969) 59–60, which is actually a misnomer. Only the angels are to be thought of as another *kind* of souls, whereas the first four groups (the descenders, the ascenders, the returners and the escapers; see interpretation (a) on p. 3) consist of souls that move through different *states*: they first descend, and then – tentatively accepting reincarnation as the most apparent interpretation of Philo's words, as also Eisele does (pp. 213, 220) – alternate between ascending and returning until they ascend to the ether for good.

⁵⁷ There is reason to believe that in Philo's view the destination of souls is higher than the stars, see, e.g., *Opif.* 69–71 or *QE* 2.40. The question of the direction of the first movement is coupled with whether Philo believed in the pre-existence of the soul or mind. In Yli-Karjanmaa (2009, forthcoming) I argue that the balance of evidence is overwhelmingly on the side of the said belief.

⁵⁸ This metaphor, which is "[f]rom *Timaeus* 43a" (Colson in PLCL V, 375), occurs also in *Spec.* 2.147, and somewhat similar images appear in *Ebr.* 22 and *Fug.* 49.

⁵⁹ Eisele (2003) 226–27.

⁶⁰ Eisele (2003) 227–33.

⁶¹ Meyer (2005) 312–35. She does not refer to the studies of Christiansen or Eisele.

⁶² Meyer (2005) 315–16.

⁶³ Plato himself says the notion is not his but older (*Gorgias* 493a); cf. *Migr.* 16. Philo acceptingly uses the wordplay in *Leg.* 1.108 and *Spec.* 4.188 and the thought occurs elsewhere as well.

Meyer finds parallels from Philo's other works also for notions present in interpretations (b) to (d).⁶⁴ For instance, in *Somn.* 1.148 Philo states that the ascent of the soul is a purification process and that the soul receives help in this process from the λόγοι. These ideas are also mentioned in *Migr.* 2–8, 173–175. The λόγοι show the soul “the spectacle of the only objects worthy of our gaze” (*Somn.* 1.147). Meyer interprets this as “Aufstieg zur Schau der geistigen Welt” and sees it as “das soteriologische Ziel der Seelen-Reise”. This goal Philo also describes as, e.g., the flight “away from earth to heaven” in *Fug.* 63.⁶⁵ Further, Meyer compares the three classes of the wise, the practisers, and the bad (*Somn.* 1.151) to the tripartition of humankind into the God-born, the heaven-born, and the earth-born in *Gig.* 60.⁶⁶ Her observations reinforce my understanding that Philo extracts the same basic ideas from many different texts in the Penta-teuch, and that Jacob's dream of the ladder is in no way special on the grounds that it is a dream.

3. Philo's Interpretations of the Ladder Dream in Context

How little the dream classification bears on the interpretations of the ladder dream is plainly shown by the fact that Philo makes no use of its central elements. He does not mention, let alone appeal to, the soul's moving with God.⁶⁷ Nor does he relate his interpretations to such possession or God-inspiration that enables the soul to know future things.

Instead, there are many connections between the interpretations and the preceding section, the προοίμιον, which interprets events prior to Jacob's dream and thus acts as a reference section for analyzing below whether the explanation of the dream has a distinct dream-based character or if it represents, as I maintain, Philonic allegory as usual. The last subsection examines the possibility of regarding the dream and its interpretations as presenting things to come from the viewpoint of the development of the individual soul.

3.1 The Basis for Philo's Interpretations

As mentioned above (p. 2) Philo invokes the “scientific skill” or “rules of dream-interpretation” to explain the dreams of the third kind in *Somn.* 2. While I would *prima facie* say that these words may be less than warranted in the light of the actual interpretations, examining the matter is beyond the present scope.⁶⁸ However, Philo remarkably

⁶⁴ Meyer (2005) 317–21.

⁶⁵ Meyer (2005) 318. The flight is part of Philo's direct quotation from Plato's *Theaetetus* (176a–b), which Meyer does not note.

⁶⁶ Meyer (2005) 321. Cf. note 90 on p. 19 below for a similar tripartition in *Her.* 46.

⁶⁷ The idea of imitating, following, or being lead by God occurs frequently in Philo (e.g., *Migr.* 131, *Decal.* 100, *QE* 2.40). Especially interesting is *Migr.* 173: “Now he that follows God has of necessity as his fellow-travellers (συνδοίποροι) the words and thoughts that attend Him, angels as they are often called.” In *Somn.* 1.71 also, the divine Logos offers itself “as a fellow-traveler (συνδοίπορος) to a lonely soul”. Is this an echo of the mention of moving with the Mind/Soul of the universe in the introductory definitions? I feel it is not reasonable to expect that the idea expressed in the passage from the *Migr.* is so evident that Philo can presuppose his audience to know that having the Logos or λόγοι as fellow-travelers always implies moving in concert with God.

⁶⁸ David Hay (1987) 431 notes in his article on the political aspects of *De somniis*: “Only in passing does Philo offer remarks on dreams in general, and it seems clear – despite his references to scientific principles of dream interpretation (2.4, 110) – that his guiding concern is not to <set> forth a theory of dreams in general but rather to interpret the particular dreams of scripture to which he refers.”

makes a similar type of explicit declaration regarding the explanatory basis of the ladder dream. In *Somn.* 1.4 he writes:

The vision is introduced by a prefatory passage necessary for its understanding, and if we study this in detail we shall perhaps be able easily to grasp the meaning of the vision.

He then quotes the “prefatory passage”, Gen 28:10–11,⁶⁹ and begins clearing ground for the understanding of the dream (*Somn.* 1.5):

It is worth while, then, at the outset to investigate these three points, firstly, what “the Well of the Oath” is and why it was so called; secondly, what “Haran” is, and why it is that on coming out from the Well aforesaid he comes at once to Haran; thirdly, what “the place” is, and why, when he reaches it, the sun sets, and he himself goes to sleep.

Given that Philo maintains the dream is to be understood through examining the prefatory passage, one would expect to find links between the answers Philo gives to these questions in his προοίμιον and the four interpretations of the ladder with its angels. Such links there are, and they are discussed in detail in section 3.2.

Philo’s answers to the questions of *Somn.* 1.5 may be briefly summarized as follows:

1. The well is a symbol of hidden, hard-to-get knowledge (*Somn.* 1.6). The “oath” in its name⁷⁰ refers to the certainty of the fact that “wisdom is essentially without end or limit” (*Somn.* 1.12) as well as to the confidence with which one may take an oath that no mortal shall ever be able to answer the most difficult cosmological questions (*Somn.* 1.24).⁷¹
2. Charran means sense-perception, the foreign land where Jacob is to stay for a while (in practice, the body; *Somn.* 1.41, 45). That the one who leaves the well forthwith arrives there happens “of necessity” (*Somn.* 1.42).
3. “The place” means the Logos of God (*Somn.* 1.62, 68), while the sun can mean either the light of God or that of the senses (*Somn.* 1.73, 79). The light of God sometimes sets, and then the Practiser will have to resort to the lesser light of the λόγοι (*Somn.* 1.116). When the light of the senses sets, divine radiances come into view (*Somn.* 1.84). Jacob’s going to sleep symbolizes his resting on a divine logos and laying his whole life thereupon (*Somn.* 1.128).

⁶⁹ “And Iakob departed from the well of the oath and went to Charran. ¹¹And he came upon a place and lay down there, for the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of the place and put it at his head and lay down in that place.” For a comparison between the LXX’s text and Philo’s see the Appendix.

⁷⁰ τὸ φρέαρ τοῦ ὅρκου < באר שבע, Beer-sheba.

⁷¹ For such questions, see *Somn.* 1.22–23. Philo says in *Somn.* 1.8, drawing on Gen 26:32, “they found no water in [the well], inasmuch as the ends pursued in the different branches of knowledge prove to be not only hard to reach, but absolutely beyond finding.” It is worth noting that the LXX as we have it and the MT contain opposite information about whether water was found in that particular well or not. The LXX runs, καὶ εἶπαν· οὐχ εὑρομεν ὕδωρ (“and [they] said, ‘We did not find water.’”), the MT, ויאמרו לו מצאנו מים (“– – and said to him: ‘We have found water!’”). The explanation is that the Hebrew words לו and לא are pronounced similarly. The former means, “to him”, the latter, “not”. The Greek translator either had לא in his text or confused the words.

3.2 Connections between the Explanation of the Prefatory Passage and the Four Interpretations of the Ladder Dream

With the exception of the well, the discussion of the various elements of the interpretations follows broadly the order in which they appear in the interpretations; each subsection begins with a summary of the findings. The προοίμιον ends at *Somn.* 1.132 and the interpretation of the dream begins at *Somn.* 1.133.

3.2.1 The “Well of the Oath” – Hidden Knowledge

Among the symbols explained in the προοίμιον the well is exceptional in that it has almost no direct connections to the interpretations of the dream. It can perhaps be seen as an introduction that underlines the depth of the wisdom to be imparted: “for the nature of knowledge is to be very deep – [it] loves to hide itself (κρύπτεσθαι) in secrecy” (*Somn.* 1.6). In *Somn.* 1.84 Philo explains how the rise of the senses leads to the disappearance (κρύπτεσθαι) of the heavenly forms of knowledge, and a thematic link is thus formed with the denunciation of the bodily life in interpretation (a).

3.2.2 The Ladder as a Symbol of the Air – Interpretation (a)

In both the προοίμιον and interpretation (a) Philo brings up his disregard for the earthly, sense-bound life and its enslaving nature that repeatedly confines the soul. He advocates escape from that foreign land and rising far above it and describes the role of God’s angels or λόγοι in encouraging the aspiring soul.

Philo characterizes “the place” which Jacob meets very much in the same way as he does the air: it is full of immortal souls, or incorporeal λόγοι (*Somn.* 1.127 vs. 1.135, 137).⁷² Of the souls of the air those “that have earthward tendencies and material tastes descend to be fast bound in mortal bodies” (*Somn.* 1.138). This expresses an idea that Philo brings up in many other places throughout his *oeuvre*, the enslaving nature of the sense-perceptible world and the body. In the προοίμιον on Gen 28:10–11 this idea is mostly related to Charran (i.e., ‘holes’), which means the senses (*Somn.* 1.42).⁷³ Charran is a foreign land (*Somn.* 1.45) where one ought not to stay very long. For as Rebecca tells Jacob to tarry with Laban only for “some days” (Gen 27:44), so also “the Practiser does not brook to spend a lifetime in the territory of the senses, but a few days and a short time in compliance with the necessities of the body to which he is tied” (*Somn.* 1.46).⁷⁴

⁷² Philo’s mention of angels in the air in *Conf.* 174 was noted above (p. 12). His insistence in *Somn.* 1.135–37 that the air cannot in any case be devoid life finds a parallel in *Gig.* 11. What is the origin of this connection between the air and incorporeal entities? Given that the air means the sublunary world (*Somn.* 1.134), that its inhabitants are invisible (*Somn.* 1.136), and that angels have been called daimons by philosophers (*Somn.* 1.141), Xenocrates’s (the second post-Platonic leader of the Academy, d. 314 B.C.E.) mention of sublunary, invisible daimons is certainly an interesting parallel: θεὸν δ’ εἶναι καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας πυρώδεις ὀλυμπίους θεοὺς, καὶ ἑτέρους ὑποσελήνους δαίμονας ἀοράτους (fragment 213).

⁷³ The idea of the senses as openings to the soul comes up also in *Migr.* 188, *QG* 4.13, 239 and *QE* 1.22, and the meaning of Charran as the (land of the) senses or the body also repeatedly in *Migr.* 187–214 as well as in *Fug.* 45 and *Abr.* 72.

⁷⁴ Other examples of Philo’s views on the involuntary nature of the soul’s incarnation and its bondage to the body can be found, e.g., in *Leg.* 3.151, *Post.* 26, *Conf.* 92, *Mut.* 36 and *QG* 4.29, 74, 188. The influence of Plato can be suspected in places. In *Somn.* 1.138 Philo writes about incarnating souls, ἐνδεθροόμεναι σώμασι θνητοῖς, and uses the same verb, noun, and adjective as Plato in *Timaeus* 44a in a corresponding context: ψυχὴ – εἰς σῶμα ἐνδεθῆθαι θνητόν.

In the interpretation of the dream, physical death ends the soul's stay in the body, and it ascends.⁷⁵ This takes place "according to the numbers and periods determined by nature" (*Somn.* 1.138).⁷⁶ Of the ascenders, some return because they long for the mortal life (*Somn.* 1.139). There is a parallel for this in the προοίμιον. In *Somn.* 1.43, Philo writes:

For our soul moves often by itself, *having stripped* itself of the entire encumbrance of the body and *having escaped* from the noisy pack of the senses, and often again when clad in these wrappings.⁷⁷

What this is connected with is Philo's explanation that the one who leaves knowledge (the well) is at once "received"⁷⁸ by the senses" (*Somn.* 1.42). While there is no certainty of what exactly he means, my tentative interpretation is that the soul for some necessary reason has to leave its original, noetic state of wisdom and enter the sense-perceptible world, clad in or tied to a body.⁷⁹ Death at times liberates it but its sensual desires draw it back. Referring to the becoming clad in the bodily wrappings in the above quotation, Philo says that the one "who has been balked of the things of the intellect is forthwith swept down to those of sense-perception" (*Somn.* 1.44).⁸⁰ Another possibility is that Philo means that the soul exits the body in contemplation and returns afterwards.⁸¹

A little more distant point of contact can be found in *Somn.* 1.120–26, where Philo, in his comment on the literal reading of Jacob's using a stone as a pillow (Gen 28:11), scorns those who live luxuriously. He refers to the body as the soul's abode with which it is bound up (συμφυής; *Somn.* 1.122). He extols the disciples of the holy Logos as being above the "temptations of money, pleasure, popularity" etc. (1.124), which can be seen as belonging to the "familiar and accustomed ways of mortal life" that Philo mentions as the reason for the return of some souls in *Somn.* 1.139.

⁷⁵ Whitaker's translation does not express the idea of death very well: "– – others ascend, being selected for return". The verb Philo uses is διακρίνω (αἱ δ' ἀνέρχονται, διακριθεῖσαι πάλιν) which he uses for the separation of soul and body in death in, e.g., *Leg.* 1.106, *Agr.* 164, *Plant.* 147 and *Conf.* 36.

⁷⁶ Philo uses similar expressions of time in the context of physical death in *Plant.* 14 and *Her.* 282.

⁷⁷ Whitaker in PLCL translates the participles ἐκδύσα and ἀποδρᾶσα as "stripping" and "escaping." But they are aorists, and balance in the μέν – δέ structure seems to require that they correspond to the final participle ἐπαμπισχομένη ("when clad") in referring to a state in which the soul is *after having done* something, not what it *is doing*. Yonge: "after it has put off – – and has escaped – – while it is still clothed."

⁷⁸ Or perhaps, "trapped" (ὑποδέχονται).

⁷⁹ Philo uses the notion of the body as the soul's garment in, e.g., *Leg.* 2.55, *Post.* 137, *Deus* 56, and *QG* 1.53, 4.78. In the first of these, Philo describes the soul who loves God as "having disrobed (ἐκδύσα) itself of the body and the objects dear to the body."

⁸⁰ Philo mentions an attempted ascent followed by a forced or instability-driven descent also in, e.g., *Agr.* 169, *Migr.* 171, *Somn.* 2.281, *QG* 4.100, and *QE.* 2.40, but it is usually not clear if he means the afterlife. I make no attempt here to establish Philo's view on reincarnation, but only note that that is what he *seems* to be talking about in *Somn.* 1.139. There is no doubt that whatever he means in 1.43, it is also something recurring (πολλάκις) and involves exiting the body at least mentally. The question whether physical death is involved must for now remain unresolved.

⁸¹ So, e.g., in *Somn.* 2.233.

The last part of the interpretation of the dream's angels as human souls is that some denounce the bodily life as folly and escape from its prison to the ether (*Somn.* 1.139). This corresponds to the idea already mentioned that Jacob's stay in the foreign land of Charran, i.e., the senses, is not to be prolonged (*Somn.* 1.45; Philo repeats this in *Somn.* 1.256). Abraham, too, did not protract his (*Somn.* 1.47). Leaving Charran is not part of the narrative of Genesis at this point; nevertheless, Philo mentions what will follow. The point of coming to Charran was to study the senses and how they function as well as to "investigat[e one's] own tenement", i.e., the body, and to "see [one's] own soul and the mind" in the spirit of the maxim "Know thyself" (*Somn.* 1.55–57). Those who are like Abraham "advance to some other greater object of contemplation leaving behind – the lurking-places of sense-perception" (*Somn.* 1.59). Knowing oneself leads Abraham to despair of himself, "in order that he might attain to an exact knowledge (γνῶσις) of Him Who in reality is" (*Somn.* 1.60). Thus in both the προοίμιον and interpretation (a) Philo depicts a progress that involves leaving the bodily life and attaining an exceedingly lofty state. This state is not, however, described in terms of knowledge in *Somn.* 1.139; instead we are told that the liberated souls "range the heights for ever."⁸²

The literal part of interpretation (a) is that the angels on the ladder are God's messengers.⁸³ They "both convey the biddings of the Father to His children and report the children's need to their Father" (*Somn.* 1.141).⁸⁴ It is "a boon to us in our sad case to avail ourselves of the services of 'words' acting on our behalf as mediators" (*Somn.* 1.142). Philo again equates the terms "angel" and λόγος.

A similar idea appears in the προοίμιον in *Somn.* 1.68–69, where Philo makes no clear distinction between the λόγοι and the divine Logos itself. After identifying "the place" with "the Word of God" Philo describes its role as that of showing the way and teaching appropriate lessons.⁸⁵ He continues by saying that God's λόγοι heal the soul, give "holy exhortations with all the force of irreversible enactments". They also and call it to exercise like a trainer and develop irresistible force in it – which has no parallel in the interpretations of Jacob's dream.⁸⁶

Conveying biddings or exhortations and laws as the function of the λόγοι or angels is thus mentioned both in the exegesis of the prefatory verses and in interpretation (a) of the dream. The job of mediating in the other direction is not mentioned in the προοίμιον, but that is the less essential part: God does not need informants (*Somn.* 1.142).

⁸² Cf. *Gig.* 13–14, where Philo says of those souls that are liberated from the body: they soar "upwards back to the place from whence they came. – [They] study to die to the life in the body, that a higher existence immortal and incorporeal, in the presence of Him who is Himself immortal and uncreate, may be their portion." As for calling the body a prison, see, e.g., *Leg.* 3.42, *Migr.* 9, and *Her.* 68.

⁸³ In addition to this passage, Philo makes the point that Moses calls "angels" entities for which the Greek have other appellations in *Gig.* 6, *Plant.* 14, *Conf.* 174, and *QG* 4.188.

⁸⁴ Colson notes Plato's description of the function of daimons in the *Symposium*: "Interpreting and transporting human things to the gods and divine things to men; entreaties and sacrifices from below, and ordinances and requitals from above" (202e).

⁸⁵ Philo comments on Ex 24:10 ("And they saw the place, there where the God of Israel stood") identifying "the place" with the divine Logos in *Somn.* 1.62 and probably also in *Conf.* 96 and *QE* 2.37 (see the text-critical notes in the PLCL). He makes the connection also in *Opif.* 20 and *QE* 2.39.

⁸⁶ The Athlete-trainer metaphor occurs also in *Somn.* 1.129 and in Philo's other works.

3.2.3 The Ladder as a Symbol of the Soul – Interpretation (b)

In interpretation (b) Philo continues his description of the ways in which the λόγοι help the soul and presents a division of souls into the pure and those being purified. Corresponding ideas can be found in the προοίμιον.

What Philo says about the angels or λόγοι in the προοίμιον is almost equally applicable to interpretation (b) as it is to (a). In fact, the literal interpretation of angels as angels could well be part of (b), for God’s omnipresence obliterates any difference there might exist between the air and the soul as the medium of the angels’ movement; that God needs no informants is because he “is already present in all directions” (*Somn.* 1.142).⁸⁷

Philo says in *Somn.* 1.148 that one of the things the λόγοι of God do in the soul is “disconnecting it with what is mortal”. They thus help humans – “beings awaiting immortality” (*Somn.* 1.36) – reach their goal. The opposition of the λόγοι and all things mortal is also implicit in the way in which Philo in *Somn.* 1.79–82 contrasts “sound reason” (ὁ ὑγιής λόγος) on the one hand and the light of the senses (symbolized by the sun) used to perceive “the splendours of mortal life” – on the other. In addition, Philo approvingly tells us about the following interpretation by “some” concerning the setting of the sun: “the Practiser met a divine word when the mortal and human light had gone down”, and this is when “right reason (ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος) is forward to meet and greet at once the practicing soul” (*Somn.* 1.118–119). The role of the λόγοι in estranging the soul from the mortal life is thus found both in interpretation (b) and in the exegesis of the prefatory passage.

In *Somn.* 1.147–148 Philo makes a distinction between those who are “still borne along in the body as in a river” and “still undergoing cleansing and have not yet fully washed their life defiled and stained by the body’s weight” and those “who have been purified to the utmost”. In the minds of the latter, God himself walks, whereas the former are those to whom the λόγοι “are helpers and comrades that with the healing of their breath they may quicken into new life (σωτήριοι πνέοντες ἀναζωῶσι)” the still immersed souls. These souls the λόγοι make “bright and clean with the doctrines of all that is good and beautiful (τοῖς καλοκἀγαθίας δόγμασιν)”. A similar contrast appears in *Somn.* 1.49–51, where Philo calls “blessed indeed” those “to whom it is granted to have joy of the love-charms of wisdom, and to banquet on the truths (θεωρήματα καὶ δόγματα) she has discovered”. The less advanced, even though “enamoured of discipline” and trying to “snuff – – at the exhalations of nobility (καλοκἀγαθίας)”, will have to content themselves with “carry[ing] off the second prize” and smelling the aroma of the banquet: “for these will be quickened and enkindled (ζωπυρηθήσονται) with breaths of virtue (αὔραις ἀρετῆς) even as invalids, who – – cannot take nourishment, inhale the reviving preparations – – as effective remedies (ἄκη σωτήρια) for faintness.”⁸⁸ The subsidiary imageries are different (purification vs. nourishment), but they convey much the same idea.

3.2.4 The Ladder as the Practiser’s Life and Human Affairs – Interpretations (c) and (d)

The third interpretation Philo offers for the dream of the ladder has fewer points of contact with the προοίμιον. It is also shorter and simpler. The basic point of interpretation (c) is that “practicing is by nature an uneven (ἀνώμαλον) business” (*Somn.* 1.150); “the practisers – – are often stepping up and down (ἄνω καὶ κάτω – – βαδίζουσιν) as upon a stairway” drawn by the better or worse portion, until God bestows victory to the former (*Somn.* 1.152). The same thing comes up already in *Somn.* 1.115 in the conclu-

⁸⁷ What also connects the angels in (a) and (b) is that only in these interpretations is the descent something positive.

⁸⁸ Cf. the λόγοι as “virtue’s rays” (ἀρετῆς αὐγαί) in *Somn.* 1.117.

sion of the interpretation of the sun (Gen 28:11) as God's light, which Colson summarizes, "the Practiser must sometimes pass from the greater to the lesser illumination" (i.e., that of the λόγοι).⁸⁹ The setting of the sun in the prefatory passage represents the notion of descent and, implicitly, that of ascent. Applied to the Practiser's mind this means that its movements "are uneven (ἀνώμαλοι), sometimes towards fruitfulness, sometimes to the reverse; it is continually, as it were, ascending and descending (ἀνιοῦσα καὶ κατιοῦσα)" (*Somn.* 1.115). When the mind is on high, it enjoys the rays of God himself, but "when it sinks low – its light is the images of these rays, immortal 'words' which it is customary to call angels." Here again the λόγοι act as helpers of the Practiser, and the thought in the last quotation fits almost equally well to all interpretations from (a) to (c).⁹⁰

The final, shortest interpretation (the ups and downs of human affairs) has a somewhat curious, literal parallel in the προοίμιον. Whereas in *Somn.* 1.154 Philo says that "nothing relating to man" stays the same "but all such things are liable to changes of every kind (παντοίας μεταβαλλόντων τροπᾶς)", he in *Somn.* 1.20 says the same thing, although more emphatically, about the air as an element: "it undergoes all kinds of change (τροπᾶς καὶ μεταβολᾶς παντοίας τρεπόμενός τε καὶ μεταβάλλον)". The wordings resemble each other but a connecting thought can only be discerned on quite a general level: the idea of the instability of everything created and mortal is one of Philo's leading themes he brings up time and again.⁹¹

For Philo's statement that the "affairs of men (τὰ ἀνθρώπων πράγματα) are naturally likened to a ladder owing their uneven course (διὰ τὴν ἀνώμαλον αὐτῶν φορᾶν)" (*Somn.* 1.153) parallels can be found in his other works.⁹² Eisele notes that in interpretations (c) and (d) the ascetic life and the human affairs are both characterized with the words ἀνώμαλον and πρᾶγμα (*Somn.* 1.150, 153, 156).⁹³

⁸⁹ PLCL V, 358. Cf. *QG* 1.84: "the life of the penitent consists of darkness [of the passions] and light [of virtue]."

⁹⁰ *Her.* 46 has close points of contact with interpretation (c) and some other notions of *Somn.* 1 as well. There Philo describes life that is a mixture of Godwards-looking and creation-oriented life. The first of these opposites "has never come down to us, nor submitted to the constraints of the body." The wording (σώματος ἀνάγκας) is the same as in *Somn.* 1.45 about Charran, while the thought is similar to what Philo says about angels in *Somn.* 1.141. In the *Her.*, the inferior life "makes its lair in the recesses of Hades," so the whole comparison resembles the contradiction in interpretation (c) between the wise in "the heavenly region of Olympus" and the bad to whom "the depths of Hades" are allotted (*Somn.* 1.151). The idea in both interpretation (c) and in *Her.* 36 is that the "mixed life" of the practiser oscillates between the two opposites.

⁹¹ See, e.g., *Leg.* 2.89, *Cher.* 19, *Post.* 23–24, *Deus* 172, *Conf.* 30, *Mut.* 55, *QG* 3.41). In the *Somn.* it occurs, in addition to the present passage, e.g., in 1.192, 2.219, 226–227, 237. Philo uses the combination of παντοίος, μεταβάλλω/μεταβολή and τροπή also when characterizing the lowest sphere of the cosmos, i.e., "earth with water and air" (*Congr.* 105), everything below God (*Mut.* 57), worldly wealth (*Spec.* 1.26) and, once again, the air (*Spec.* 2.143). Searching the TLG reveals no precedents of combining these words in this way, so it may be his original phrase, applied usually in describing the fluctuation of things mundane.

⁹² Explaining *Gen* 6:3 Philo says, "human affairs (ἀνθρώπινα πράγματα) swing to and fro, sway now up, now down, as in a scale, and are subject to vicissitudes from hour to hour" (*Gig.* 28). A more remotely related thought – one that could be coupled with interpretation (c) as well – occurs in *Fug.* 49: Philo elaborates Isaac's exhortation to Jacob to flee to Mesopotamia (*Gen* 27:2), "into the midst, that is, of the torrent of life's river – and [to] beat back with vigour the current of affairs (φορὰν τῶν πραγμάτων) as it comes dashing upon thee with utmost violence."

⁹³ Eisele (2003) 197.

3.3 “Foreknowledge of Things to Come” – Description of the Soul’s Development Process

A feature of the dreams of the second type Philo states in both *Somn.* 1.2 and 2.2 is that they indicate future things. As regards the angels on the ladder, this is not upheld in the interpretations, if future things are understood to mean events of external reality.⁹⁴ However, the struggle of the soul to free itself from the senses implies a development in time. In this sense the interpretations of the ladder dream contain knowledge of future things.

This also applies to the second part of the dream, the Lord’s address to Jacob (Gen 28:13–15)⁹⁵, expounded in *Somn.* 1.157–188. It contains five promises containing future-tense verb forms. Philo interprets them as expressing general states of affairs instead of future events. Yet here too the interpretations can be understood as describing things to come from the viewpoint of the spiritual development of the individual soul. The promises, as they are in the text of the LXX, and Philo’s interpretations are as follows.

1. “[T]he land which you are sleeping on, I will give it to you and to your offspring.” Philo takes the land to mean virtue abounding with fruits, “whereon the Practiser slumbers” after his war “in which – – he overthrew the troop of passions and vices that oppose virtue” (*Somn.* 1.174). Although Philo turns the Practiser’s victory into one already achieved, the description is typological and applies to all who fight the vices and win.
2. “And your offspring will be like the sand of the earth.” Without mentioning the word “symbol” Philo, in accordance with Christiansen’s scheme (see p. 10) declares that “wisdom’s race” (τὸ σοφίας γένος) is here likened to the sand and then proceeds to explain the common characteristics (*Somn.* 1.175). Both are innumerable and contain the sea, which in the case of the wise means keeping back the “sinful and unjust deeds” with “trained reason” (ὁ παιδείας λόγος).
3. “[A]nd it shall widen out to the sea and to the southwest and to the north and to the east.” Here Philo explicitly refers to this being a promise, apparently one that concerns the “trained reason”, which will broaden out “to the very bounds of the universe”. For Philo, then, the promise seems to be about the universal boons bestowed by virtuous life: “The man of worth is not just a good to himself but a common good to all men” (*Somn.* 1.175–176).
4. “[A]nd all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring.” Philo continues the theme of universality. He changes the future tense into the present: “For as the sun is (ἐστὶ) a light to all who have eyes, so [is] the wise man to such as are partakers of a rational nature” (*Somn.* 1.176).
5. “I will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done all the things that I talked about to you.” Philo interprets these words in a way that resembles interpretation (a) of the ladder dream and the interpretation of Charran in the προοίμιον. The pre-existent “reasoning faculty”, i.e., the soul, has come down from heaven to the foreign land of the senses.⁹⁶ Its Father “will not per-

⁹⁴ So also Hay (1987) 433: “[Philo’s] interpretations of dreams in *Somn.* 1–2 emphasize not forecasts of future outward events but rather revelation of character types and principles.”

⁹⁵ See note 1 for the entire text.

⁹⁶ ὁ λογισμός, which occurs here, is in Philo usually synonymous with ὁ νοῦς (e.g., *Mos.* 2.6, *Praem.* 26) as the highest part of the soul. When no analysis of the soul’s composition is involved, ἡ ψυχή can be identified with ὁ λογισμός like here, or with ὁ νοῦς as in, e.g., *Congr.* 143.

manently disregard it in its imprisonment, but will – – loose its chains – – and will not stay his hand until the promises (ἀληθείας) given by words have been made good by actual deeds: for it is the special attribute of God and Himself alone to say what will surely come to pass” (*Somn.* 1.180–181).⁹⁷

Thus for Philo God’s promises are made for each individual soul, and they are not about future events in the historical sense. Seen in this way, the Lord’s promises do “foretell many coming events” (*Somn.* 2.2).

4. Conclusions

The examination of *Somn.* 1.1–188 performed shows that the contents of Philo’s interpretations of Jacob’s dream of the heavenly ladder (Gen 28:12–15) do not reflect the descriptions of this second type of dreams given at the beginning of both books of the *Somn.* The possible exception to this is that the interpretations can be understood as depicting “things to come”, but only from the viewpoint of the spiritual development of the soul.

Whatever conclusions may be reached by comparing the introductory definitions with Greco-Roman parallels, their significance for the analysis of Philo’s interpretations is reduced by the fact that these definitions have no bearing on how Philo in actuality explains the dreams in question. The only exception is the provision that the dreams are to foretell future things – but only if describing the development process of the soul is considered to fulfill such a criterion. The classification of dreams is not the essence of the *Somn.*; analyzing the classification is not interpreting the work and does not enable one to define its genre.

The supplementary specification concerning dreams of the second kind (*Somn.* 1.190) does apply to the ladder dream, in spite of Philo’s mentioning it only after concluding the interpretation; the ladder dream, too, is logos-mediated. As this is not mentioned in the introductory definitions, the latter’s irrelevance for the interpretations is further highlighted. The role of the λόγοι, which are also called angels, souls, and potencies, as helpers of human souls is pronounced in the *Somn.*

In his interpretations Philo brings up a large number of notions which he also presents both in the προοίμιον and elsewhere in his works. In itself, this does not prove a lessened degree of dependency on the actual dream. But when it is seen together with the prolific number of ideas Philo supposedly extracts from the simple setup of a ladder with ascending and descending angels, the conclusion offers itself that Philo is utilizing the occasion and presenting his audience with views he regards as important lessons and which he can somehow connect with the biblical narrative.

Further research should test the present results with regard to the second dream of the second class in *Somn.* 1, and also examine to which extent Philo’s introductory definition of the third dream type is upheld in *Somn.* 2. In addition, the interpretation of the ladder dream in *QG* 4.29 should be compared with those in the *Somn.* What exactly is Philo’s view of the relationship between Jacob’s dream and Abraham’s returning to his place (Gen 18:33)?

⁹⁷ This is again an example of the *ad hoc* nature of Philonic interpretations. In Genesis, returning to Charran is meant, in Philo, given Charran’s previous symbolic meaning, returning *from* it. In a little broader context the contradiction is somewhat alleviated, for in both cases Jacob will be brought back from a worse place, which in Genesis is Mesopotamia. Philo here stops short of calling “sense-perception” and “foreign land” by any name.

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Genesis 28:10–15 according to the text of the LXX with the deviations by Philo in *Somn.* 1.3–4 indicated

¹⁰Καὶ ἐξῆλθεν * Ιακωβ ἀπὸ τοῦ φρέατος τοῦ ὅρκου καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς Χαρραν. ¹¹καὶ ἀπῆντησεν τόπῳ †καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐκεῖ†· ἔδν γὰρ ὁ ἥλιος· καὶ ἔλαβεν ἀπὸ τῶν λίθων τοῦ τόπου καὶ ἔθηκεν πρὸς κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκοιμήθη ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἐκείνῳ. ¹²καὶ ἐνυπνιάσθη, καὶ ἰδοὺ κλίμαξ ἐστηριγμένη ἐν τῇ γῇ, ἥς ἡ κεφαλὴ ἀφικνεῖτο εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, καὶ οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ ἀνέβαινον καὶ κατέβαινον ἐπ’ αὐτῆς. ¹³ὁ δὲ κύριος ἐπεστήρικτο ἐπ’ αὐτῆς καὶ εἶπεν Ἐγὼ ‡κύριος‡ ὁ θεὸς Αβρααμ τοῦ πατρός σου καὶ ὁ θεὸς Ισαακ· μὴ φοβοῦ· ἡ γῇ, ἐφ’ ἥς σὺ καθεύδεις †ἐπ’ αὐτῆς†, σοὶ δώσω αὐτήν καὶ τῷ σπέρματί σου. ¹⁴καὶ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς γῆς καὶ πλατυνηθήσεται ἐπὶ θάλασσαν καὶ †ἐπὶ† λίβα καὶ †ἐπὶ† βορρᾶν καὶ †ἐπ’† ἀνατολάς, καὶ ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ †ἐν† τῷ σπέρματί σου. ¹⁵καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μετὰ σοῦ διαφυλάσσω σε ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ πάσῃ, §οῦ ἔαν[§] πορευθῇς, καὶ ἀποστρέψω σε εἰς τὴν γῆν ταύτην, ὅτι οὐ μὴ σε ἐγκαταλίπω ἕως τοῦ ποιῆσαί με πάντα, ὅσα ἐλάλησά σοι.

‡ φησὶν (referring to Moses as the narrator).

† Omitted by Philo.

‡ εἰμί. In *Somn.* 1.159 ff., 166, 173 Philo follows the LXX and writes κύριος when quoting and commenting on the verse. Colson in PLCL V, 294, erroneously says the LXX agrees with Philo above.

§ ἢ ἄν.