

*Thou shalt know the truth it is the truth which will set you free!*

## Triune God and Science

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### Outline

1. Two types of Knowledge: PK, SK, "Spiritual"
2. OT: Two faces of God. Elohim, Adonai
3. NT<sub>1</sub>: Miracles
4. NT<sub>2</sub>: Jesus is calling, The Gospel
5. The Bridge Model

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## 1. Introduction:

Continuation on the Bible and Science. Look at Bible from the perspective as a physicist. In my lecture two weeks ago, we look at this topic from **Judaic-Christian perspectives** based on the Hebrew Scripture of the Jews or the Old Testament for Christians. Today we will look at this topic from the New Testament perspectives.

We divide human knowledge into two categories.

- 1) The **physical knowledge, PK**. Science represents ~ truth in the PK.
- 2) The **spiritual knowledge, SK**.

The word "**spiritual**" plays a pivotal role in our discussions. Different people may use the word with different meaning. I would like to remind you how we use it.

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## How is the term "Spiritual", or SK defined?

We begin with a quote from *Thomas Keatings, a monk & a spiritual teacher*: "**All of us have been born entering this world with 3 basic needs: Security-survival (SS); Power-control (PC); Affection-esteem (AE). Without adequate fulfillment of these basic needs, we probably would not survive infancy**". [ From the book "*The Human Condition*" by Keatings]

For a person, SK is what is needed for **relationships** between him/her and nature, (for believers, and God), and with oneself, and with fellow mankind. It is the very SK which enables one to meet one's basic needs, and to live a fulfilled life.

### Analogy in the key words between Physics and SK:

**Physics**: Put an object in the physical world, the effect on it may be measured by "**forces**" on it and by its "**interactions**" with environment. Analogously, **SK** on a person may be measured in terms of the forces due to his/her "**basic needs**" and the "**relationships**" with the community.

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## 2. Judaic-Christian's world view:

Within Judaic-Christian faith, there is one God. To many Jews the concept of "**Two Faces of God**" is well known. This concept has also been accepted by many Christians. The concept is closely related to our division of PK and SK.

**Elohim is God of Nature**. Elohim governs world by Laws of Nature (PK). **Elohim calls for the principle of acceptance**, accepting a natural event **as it is**;

**Adonai is the Lord of compassion**. **Adonai calls for the principle of transformation**, inspires man from the level **as it is** to the level **as it ought to be**.

To live in the world of "**is**" without the world of "ought" is to live in a universe **without dreams, or possibility**. To live in the world of "**ought**" without the world of "is" means to live in a world of **fantasy and pretense**.

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### When a calamity strikes...

**Elohim** counsels us to accept it as “an act of God”

**Adonai** urges and inspires us to respond the calamity by facing it with **courage, intelligence, faith, and hope.**

### Personal relationships with God through faith.

Biblical stories on such personal relationships e.g. the Patriarchs: Abraham, Jacob, Joseph...

#### **Psalm 23 Adonai (the Lord) King David.**

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing...

He leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul...

Even though I walk through the darkest valley  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me...

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### 3. Miracles in the NT:

#### 3-1 Feeding 5000 (one example)

**The story:** [John 6:1-13] Near Bethsaida Julias, a large crowd came toward Jesus. They were tired and hungry. The only food available to Jesus, was 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes, offered to him by a boy. Jesus blessed the food and started to distribute it. A miracle occurred. The food supply kept on growing until the crowd, which included 5000 men, was fed, with 12 baskets left overs.

#### **Interpretations:** (see **Barclay study Bible**)

**Scenario1:** Literal interpretation - Jesus exercised some divine power multiplied the food and fed a large crowd. The assumption: Elohim is omnipotent, He could choose to violate the Law of Nature.

**Scenario2:** Elohim choose to govern the Universe with Law of Nature without exceptions. Here to understand the miracle we must turn to Adonai. Need to look at the spiritual (or relationship) world. Need to discuss relationships between Adonai and people.

### **Scenario2 cont'd**

#### **Collaboration between Adonai and people led to a miracle:**

- Adonai inspires people to follow the example of the generosity of the boy. Adonai may also inspire and encourage others to share their hidden food (originally intended for their own use). It is the sharing of food among the crowd which led to the adequate food supply.
- Barclay felt scenario1 is unlikely. Earlier Jesus had already refused the temptation to turn stone into bread.

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### Spiritual Origin of Miracles

**Question: On several occasions I was asked: “Do I believe the miracle stories actually happened?”**

My answer is yes. However, I think the **miracle takes place in the “spiritual” (i.e. the “relationship”) world.** For instance in the story of feeding 5000, the miracle happened in the relationships among Adonai, the boy and the multitudes. There was generosity of the boy, then Adonai encouraged and opened the hearts of multitudes. The miracle occurred when multitudes began to share their own food, leading to the growth of the food supply.

**2 Timothy 3:16( in NIV)** “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*” Notice that the usefulness of the Bible in this verse is related to **SK** (the content of instruction) not from PK. In other words, it is the SK of the Bible which is related to the faith.

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## Original verbatim story can't prove Natural Law is violated

Let us work with scenario1, which assumes the literal interpretation of the Bible is valid. John 1:11 says: ... **“Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. Then He also did the same with the fish,”** Here no details were given, telling where the extra food came from. Scenario1 assumes that Jesus used His divine power to generate the continuous food supply.

**Question:** Assume the miracle story was told as it is without added assumption, does the story imply that the Natural Law was broken?

The correct answer should be No. Notice that in the story, one crucial point is missing. No careful check was mentioned to make sure initially there was no hidden food among the crowd. One can argue that this missing point demonstrates there is a huge cultural gap between Jesus days and the present. Historians tell us miracle stories were relatively common in ancient culture. Presently a claim of miracle requires much more stringent scientific scrutiny. At present if a miracle could be scientifically verified, it would be a earth shaking event. It would deserve at least a Nobel prize. In this work, I will continue uphold time-honored Laws of Physics, i.e. Elohim governs the Law of Nature precisely without exceptions.

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## 3-3 Resurrection & Ascension (R&A) stories:

In these stories it appears that the resurrected body violates the Law of Nature, so it cannot be physical body, e.g.

- it can penetrate the wall
- it can ascend to heaven.

Thus the R&A account in the Bible are not physical stories. The stories are a part of SK.

R & A carries a important part of the **spiritual message** of the Gospel. Paul stresses that he advocated the **power of resurrection**.

## 4-1 Jesus is calling:

- **John 5:39, 40:** *You diligently study the Scriptures, because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life. We see that, it is not sufficient to simply study the Bible.*

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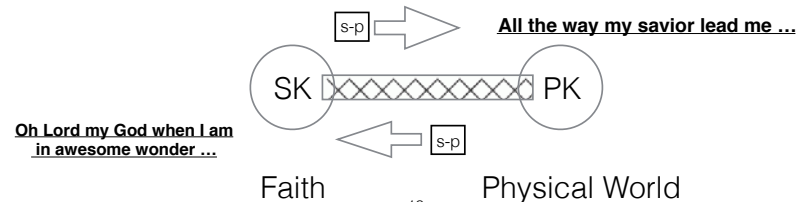
## 4-2 How to “come to me to have life”? The Gospel

- **John 3:16:** *“For God so loved the world that He sent His only Son, Jesus to the world. Whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*
- **Key word:**
  - **Love:** God loved the world He revealed Himself through, Jesus to the world.
  - **Believe in Him:** Jesus carried out the salvation plan — **the Cross, the Resurrection and Ascension**
  - **Eternal life:**
    - ♣ **Starting point: born again**
    - ♣ **Ongoing process: renewal of holy spirit**  
outflow of the living water (fruits of holy spirit)
- **Beginning and Growth of Christianity**
  - Jesus' public ministry: total of 3½ years
  - Now 2000 years later, the Gospel message is still dynamic and ongoing.

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## 5. The Bridge model & the two-way flows

- **S->P** My daughter is a brain cancer (GBM) survivor after 3 years' struggle. The Lord has been a vital partner with her. There was prayer & other forms of support. Together enabled her to survive.
- In WM, we see the Lord has been in partner with family members and friends especially for patients in the health care unit.
- **P->S** During my adolescent years my career outlook was very much influenced by Moody films on wonders of Nature. It inspired me go into physics to understand Nature better.
- After joining UT faculty I have been active in research and teaching in physics for over 40 years. Armed with my physics knowledge, I would like put my physics knowledge to use, in investigating the relationship between faith and science.



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