

# Science and the Bible E-Zine

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"Truth: That which is in accord with fact and reality."

This is written so that you may believe the bible because of science rather than in spite of science.

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## 1) What's Happening at Science and the Bible?

By Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist

### About This Month's Features:

For some time now, a pastor at the church where I attend has been presenting a teaching on the character of Nehemiah at an early Tuesday morning men's gathering. That series is concluded and the next is anticipated to be a series on the Character of God as illustrated by the various names of God. So, it seems appropriate to, at this time, present a few comments on the subject of our concept of the Character of God as it is affected by the differences in various concepts as conceived and expressed in the different languages of ancient Hebrew, and modern English, particularly when those concepts are in the realm claimed by modern science. So, this month, the Feature Article of the Month and the Word of the Month will take a different twist. Instead of concentrating on a word in either language, the emphasis will be on a concept and the lack of equivalence of concepts as expressed in one language versus another.

### Correction:

I just noticed in last month's issue I forgot to change the name of the word of the month in the heading for that section. It remained "earth" from the previous issue where it should have been changed to the ancient Hebrew word meaning "*Toward or Beyond the Rising Sun,*" *an ancient Hebrew word with No Single English Word Equivalent.*

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## 2) **Understanding Ancient Language.**

**By Max B. Frederick, AnOldScientist**

In many cases, a concept in one language is not directly equivalent to a concept in another language. It is not simply a matter of using different words to describe the same concept. The concept itself is not the same.

Translation from one language to another is not a matter of finding the correct wording in one language to express a concept recorded in another. To adequately communicate in one language what is recorded in another language, it is necessary to understand what is being expressed. This step in the process of translation called *understanding* or *comprehension*, goes beyond a mechanical exchange of one word or concept in one language for a similar one in another. In some cases, the translator cannot understand the concept in the original language. In other cases, the concept is one that cannot be expressed or comprehended in the target language. Most everyone has at some time run across the concept, "words cannot adequately express..." The same shortcoming is present in translation. Many times words in one language cannot adequately express what is easily expressed in another language. This is not due to a shortage of words, but due to a shortage of concepts that can be expressed in a specific language.

Many times, in the new language, there is no direct equivalent of a concept that is expressed in a single word in the original language. At other times, in the second language there are many different concepts that are all rolled into one in the original language. In this case, it may appear to be an easy task for the translator to simply choose from the context which concept is the one of interest. But, it is still difficult to express the all inclusive concept when, in the collection of concepts available in the target language, that particular all inclusive concept is simply missing.

This is particularly true in converting from ancient Hebrew to modern English. Sometimes descriptions of some concept familiar to modern science, but unfamiliar to theologians results in the theologians translation just sounding like some nonsensical theobabble. Other times, theologians resort to theological words that really have no use outside their religious circles. Even theologians have to invent concepts to describe such words.

An example, one which has caused scholars to struggle for centuries, is the concepts in English of wind versus spirit. When translating, scholars have struggled over each occurrence of that word, whether the meaning assigned in each specific case, should be spirit, or wind. The problem is not dual meaning of one word in the ancient language. In the ancient Hebrew, both were the same concept. That concept was

“invisible power, force, or energy.” That concept of invisible power is not limited to wind or spirit. It also can include such things as electricity and magnetism. It might even include radiant heat energy and other electromagnetic radiation, such as radio waves that we use to transmit information to radios or TV’s. But we have a different word for each of those concepts. But, the all inclusive concept of ‘*invisible force*’ is missing from our thinking.

So, when Jonah was describing to the pagans who he was and what was his power to cause evil to come upon them, he had to come up with an answer they would understand. Jonah was in a ship that was in danger of sinking and all the mariners had called upon their higher powers to no avail and they had decided it was Jonah who had a higher power that was causing them evil. They had decided they were in danger of sinking because Jonah had not called upon his higher power to save them. So they asked of him pointed questions. In that situation Jonah came up with a great description of his higher power that you did not have to be a theologian to understand. He said, “I am a Hebrew; and I fear the ‘*everlasting existence*’ (YHWH) , the ‘*mighty Powers*’ (Elohiym) of the cosmos, the maker of the turbulent roaring (the wet, that is what they called the sea) and [the maker of] the dry (land.) (Jonah 1:9)

Notice, in this translation, the meanings of the words are minus the superimposed religious connotations of standard bible translations. Using words that induce thoughts that are more akin to what the Hebrews and pagans thought when they used their words makes more sense in the context of all the mariners calling upon their “higher powers” to no avail. Notice, the ability of the Hebrew language. in which the bible records this conversation, to transmit the descriptive meanings that are totally ignored when one reads it thinking theological thoughts induced by the religious use of words such as “god” or “lord” rather than what the Hebrews thought when they used their words. When we try to express it in our set of English language religious concepts, we end up with a distortion of the original concepts.

And, true to the discoveries of modern science, according to the law of conservation of energy, Jonah was right. The eternal existence is the mighty powers, the eternal energy that can be converted to matter and vice versa ( $E=MC^2$ ), implying that energy is eternal, but matter (the cosmos, the heavens and the earth, the sea and the land) has a beginning and may have an end, but the power (energy) will go on forever.

It is difficult to conceptualize in the English language, that great stumbling block of trying to force multiple gods into one God, the idea that there is the Big God, and then there is the Holy spirit, but yet we say it is not two, but just one. That dilemma can be resolved simply by thinking the thoughts the Hebrews thought when they used the words *Elohiym*, and *Ruach*. *Elohiym* includes the powers that exist eternally, (energies, both visible expression and invisible presence) and *Ruach* is the invisibility of those powers, a subset of the features of that totality of powers (energies) which exists eternally.

Of course, you would ask about the third part of this supposedly singular/plural god? That is another subject, suffice it to say, the meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words translated “Word,” “Said,” etc. carried the concept, not of the vibrations of sound traveling through matter, but of the intelligence behind such concepts as in, “and

energies *said*, let there be..." when there was no such thing as air for the sound of words to travel through, it could not mean *words* as sounds traveling through matter as we conceptualize when we hear the word, '*said*'. Another example, "and the *Word* was made flesh and dwelt among us." So, the concept of a triune "god" is more scientific than religious, and trying to make sense in a religious discussion results in endless debate, where in a scientific discussion of the concepts, it becomes clear. Of course, the word/concept, "word" (logos) has to be the topic of the Word of the Month in a separate issue of this E-Zine.

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### 3) **Word Concept of the Month: Powers/Energy**

#### *A Glossary of Science Related Terms Used in the Bible*

*In January of 2010, this new feature was added to the Science and the Bible E-Zine. It is a Glossary of Science Related Terms Used in the Bible. In this feature various words that are commonly misunderstood are presented, defined, and discussed.*

*This month it becomes an ancient concept, rather than a single word, that is analyzed.*

*The need for discussion of the meaning of many ancient Hebrew words found in the bible arises from the fact that the Hebrew language fell into disuse and became a dead language for a period of time before it was translated into a newer language. During this period of time, the meanings of many words were lost and are only now coming to light as the original meaning of many science related passages are being verified by modern science.*

#### **Word Concept of the Month: Power/Energy**

We have many similar, or related words that relay the concept of power, energy, strength, might, force...

To the layman, it may be obvious that they all trigger the thought of a similar concept, but to a scientist, the differences seem to prohibit these dissimilar concepts from being thought of as a single concept.

In English, particularly since Modern Science has reduced the concepts to mathematical formulas, each word has its own distinctly different concept.

In English, the relationship between energy and power is a mathematical formula. Energy is the capacity for doing work. Power is the rate of doing work, or of using energy. From this point, the differences in the concepts of energy and power, according to the English concepts, are precisely defined according to mathematical formulas concerning energy, matter, space and time.

Not so in the ancient Hebrew language. It is all a single concept, and all rolled into one word, with one meaning. From that one word, many variations of meaning are derived, all relating to the energetic, mighty, powerful, or strong or force

characteristic of whatever is being referred to.

In fact, using the modern English concepts, Modern Science has discovered, in a simplistic sense, that energy is even interchangeable with matter according to the well known formula,  $E=MC^2$ .

The law of conservation of energy dictates that energy can be neither lost nor gained, energy is eternal. However, according to that formula, energy can be converted to the stuff the universe is physically made of.

After all this manipulation of thoughts, of breaking the ancient Hebrew concept of 'powers/energy' into its component parts, there does emerge a concept in English that is similar to the ancient Hebrew concept, combining all that exists eternally together into a single concept, but it is a collection of formulas. It is not a single word. That collection of formulas is summed up in The First Law of Thermodynamics that states that energy can be neither created nor destroyed, energy is eternal, and The Mass-Energy Equivalence ( $E=MC^2$ ), that states that mass and energy are also interchangeable forms of that same stuff that is eternal.

Yet, in the first verse of the bible, the concept of interchangeability among energy and matter, space, and time, are expressed in the profound description of the origin of the currently observed cosmos.

The ancient Hebrew word, meaning strength, mighty, power, force, etc. in its plural form, 'elohiym,' is the name of the eternal entity (translated 'God') used in the first verse of the bible.

In other words, the plural form of energy (the name used for the eternal entity,) is what started the cosmos in its present form. Simply stated, the well known (in modern science) relationship between energy and matter, time and space, according to the formula,  $E=MC^2$ , is expressed in the first verse of the bible. The cosmos, (matter, time, energy and space,) resulted from the prudent exercise of energy. "*In the beginning, Energies, (God) created the heavens and the earth.*" (Genesis 1:1)

When theologians discuss the various names used to refer to God, many of them start with a part that is not translated into its meaning, but into a religious substitute, 'lord,' or 'God' rather than the original meaning of 'eternal existence' or 'power.' Many of those names start with the ancient Hebrew word that means power or powers (Elohiym) and is simply translated "God," as in "the God who...". However, that simplification does not do the concept of God justice, as in reality, the various names for God that include the concept of the great and powerful eternal entity are typically only half translated. To translate the second half of the name, but not the first half diminished the concept of the eternal entity of energy, to the simple pagan concept of a god. A fuller explanation/translation for each of such names for "God" is, "the eternal entity of power, energy, and might, that has..." (the property described in the second half of the name.)

In fact, now that we are on the subject, how is the physical entity of "God" actually described in the bible?

See the descriptions in Daniel 7:9 and Revelation 4:5 describing the throne and the

one sitting on it , with the white lightening (not to be confused with the prohibition concept of white lightening) and thunderbolts.

*I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment [was] white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne [was like] the fiery flame, [and] his wheels [as] burning fire. Dan 7:9*

*And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Rev 4:5*

Is not that sufficient evidence that the ancient concept of energy was there, even though there was not a precise word for it? If you look closely, or think back on what you heard in Sunday school, you can find more examples of this super energy, such as the glow on the face of Moses after the face to face encounter with God, or with that ball of energy Moses described as having the appearance of a bush burning without being consumed. Even artists depictions of the physical appearance of the biblical concept of God the Father seem to have a common thread of something that looks like a ball of energy with lightening coming out of it.

As Paul said in Romans 1:20, when listing the invisible things of God that are clearly seen from the creation, from that which is made, the first thing listed is God's eternal energy (power, KJV)

But, to conceive of God as simple raw energy or power or force, as in, "may the Force be with you," is an over simplification. That over simplification is common among religious people as they reference their "higher power."

As Jeremiah so aptly put it when he described the God who gave rise to the universe, there are at least three characteristics of the eternal existence we so glibly call God. In addition to power (energy, force, strength...), there is also, intelligence (the understanding of information) and wisdom (the prudent use of information).

*He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his intelligence. (Jer 10:12 & 51:15 MOST)*

And then John chimes in on the character of the creator of the universe when he opens his book with:

*"In the beginning was the Word (logos, understanding, logic, intelligence) and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light (a form of energy) of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." (John 1:1-5)*

What kind of theobabble is that? What do you mean darkness cannot comprehend light? To comprehend is to understand. That which has the potential to be understood is intelligence, not energy (light). Logos (logic, intelligence) is what has the potential for understanding. Comprehension is something you apply to intelligence, not to power/energy.

Thus, to engage a scientist in a conversation about the origin of the universe, you

must resort to the original concepts of what we religiously refer to as God. Only then might a scientist agree that the bible may have some merit. You see, many scientists are currently coming to the belief that possibly the universe started from some conversion process that started with energy or energies in some form, and resulted in matter type stuff (the cosmos) under some specific set of circumstances which they are generally reluctant to call intelligence.

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