

The Science and The Bible Club
of Penn State University

Purpose of the club: to research the relationships between Science and the Bible, and to educate people regarding these relationships.

Background

Matthew 4:4 Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

This verse documents the fact that there is a physical component to life, and there is a spiritual component. Bread feeds the physical component, but that is not enough to support life in all of its fullness. We also need "every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God". The word of God has been described as "soul food", because it brings life to our soul. Both the physical and the spiritual components of life are important.

Relationships between Science and the Bible

There are many relationships between Science and the Bible. Three are described below.

1. The purpose of the physical world

Scientists observe and record many details about the physical world. Many physical laws have been discovered. Much has been learned about heavenly bodies, even those many light years away. But scientists are unable to determine the purpose of the physical universe. This complementary piece of information is provided in the Bible.

Ps 19:1-4 The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament [the expanse] shows His handiwork. Day after day pours forth speech, and night after night shows forth knowledge. There is no speech nor spoken word [from the heavens]; their voice is not heard, yet their voice [in evidence] goes out through all the world, their sayings to the end of the world. Amplified Bible

The heavens declare the glory of God. The expanse shows His handiwork. What person hasn't looked up at the stars with wonder and amazement? God's handiwork is on display. The awe that we feel should be directed to God, for it is His creation.

Romans 1:20 For even since the creation of the world His invisible nature

and attributes, that is, His eternal divinity have been made intelligible and clearly discernable in and through the things that have been made – His handiworks.

Science can tell us about the properties of the physical world, but the Bible tells us the purpose of the physical world.

2. Practical information regarding the physical world

The Bible in various places provides practical information regarding the physical world. At the time of the exodus from Egypt, God gave Moses much information for the practical benefit of the nation of Israel. For example, in the book of Leviticus, chapter 14, information is given regarding leprosy "to teach when it is clean and when it is unclean". This includes what symptoms to look for – "if the hair in it has turned white, and the disease appears depressed and deeper than the skin it is a leprous disease"; how to prevent its spread – quarantine (Lev. 12:46), washing of clothes (Lev. 13:58), burning of contaminated clothes (Lev. 13:52), removing contaminated stones, scraping the walls of contaminated houses (Lev. 14:41) and if necessary tearing down an entire contaminated house and discarding the pieces in a region outside the city. These very useful instructions were given thousands of years before the germ theory of disease was known.

3. Physical analogies of spiritual matters

Jesus Christ frequently used the principles of science and nature as analogies for spiritual matters. For example, in one parable, he used seeds and the properties of seeds to teach a lesson (Matt. Chapter 13). Seeds sown by the roadside were eaten by birds. Seeds sown on rocky ground grew, but lacking depth of soil they withered when the sun came up. Seeds sown among thorns grew, but were ultimately choked by the thorns. Seeds sown on good ground grew and yielded grain. Many of the people at that time were farmers. They knew first hand about how various physical conditions affected seed growth. They understood what he was talking about. But, what they didn't realize was that these physical things are analogous to spiritual matters. Later Jesus explained to his disciples what his real point was – that just as the same seeds produced different levels of fruitfulness depending on the conditions where they were sown, so it is that the same word of God will produce different results depending on the conditions of people's hearts. The seeds that fell on the road are symbolic of those who hear the word of God, but don't understand it. As a result it is easily snatched away. The seeds that fell on the rocky soil are analogous to people who initially receive the Word of God with joy. But, when a little persecution arises, they fall away. The seeds among thorns are symbolic of those who hear the word of God, but then the pleasure of riches suffocates the word, and it ceases to yield fruit in their lives. The good ground represents those who hear the word of God, understand

and believe it. The word of God will produce significant amounts of fruit in the lives of these people.

There are many other places in the Bible where physical matters are given as analogues for spiritual matters. This is an area ripe for research.

Conclusion

Given above are just three examples of connections, or relationships between Science and the Bible. Many aspects of these three relationships could be studied and understood more fully. No doubt many other relationships exist. So, join us, if you would like, as we endeavor to research these relationships and educate others regarding them.

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