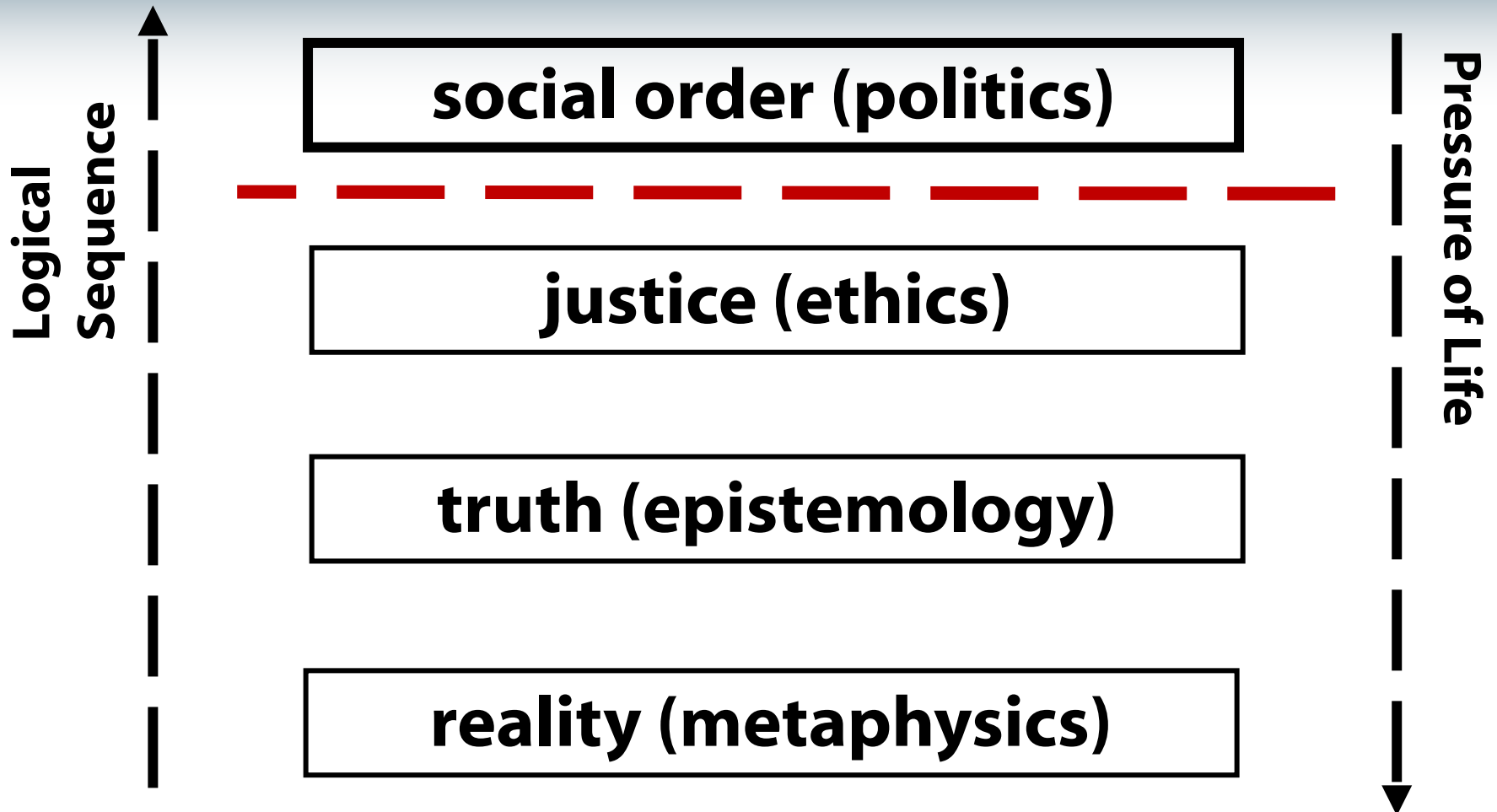


Biblical vs. Unbiblical Views of Reality, Truth, & Ethics

**(Application to Social &
Political Actions)**

LEVELS of DISCOURSE



Metaphysical Question

Feature	Bible	Pagan
Reality	Two levels with multiple kinds of created realms	One level perhaps with multiple kinds of realms
Life forms	Inviolate “kinds” of life with designed but limited adaptability	Spectrum of life with unlimited and casual transmutation
Man	Unique capacity to know and obey God’s verbal revelation	Just another animal that resulted from casual causes
Nature	Designed characteristics that are knowable and analogous to the Creator and His spiritual truths	Ultimately chaotic and unknowable

What is Reality for Prof. Russell?

“Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hope and fears, his loves and beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man’s achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruin – all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy that rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul’s habitation henceforth be safely built.”

~Bertrand Russell, “A Free Man’s Religion” (1903) essay in *Mysticism and Logic* (1917) pg. 45–46

Epistemological Question

Feature	Bible	Pagan
Truth	Two-level reality including the Person Who is Truth known by self-disclosure (revelation in language)	One-level reality (defined by man's autonomous mind?); language is not related to reality
Coherence (rational) test	Works because God created man and nature with a rational plan	Choice of the autonomous mind based upon metaphysical concepts
Correspondence (empirical) test	Works because God made man to know nature; thus language "works"	Choice of the autonomous mind based upon metaphysical concepts
Authority	God's self-disclosure	Man (individual or corporate)

How Does Prof. Kaufmann Obtain Meaning?

“Man can stand superhuman suffering if only he does not lack the conviction that it serves some purpose. Even less severe pain, on the other hand, may seem unbearable, or simply not worth enduring, if it is not redeemed by any meaning. ... It does not follow that the meaning must be given from above; ... that nothing is worth while if the world is not governed by a purpose. On the contrary, the lack of any cosmic purpose may be experienced as liberating, as if a great weight had been lifted from us. Life ceases to be so oppressive. We are free to give our own life’s meaning and purpose, free to redeem our suffering by making something out of it. ... The plain fact is that not all suffering serves a purpose; ... and that if there is to be any meaning to it, it is we who must give it.”

~Walter Kaufmann, *The Faith of a Heretic* (The Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company—Anchor Books, 1963), p 165.

Ethical Question

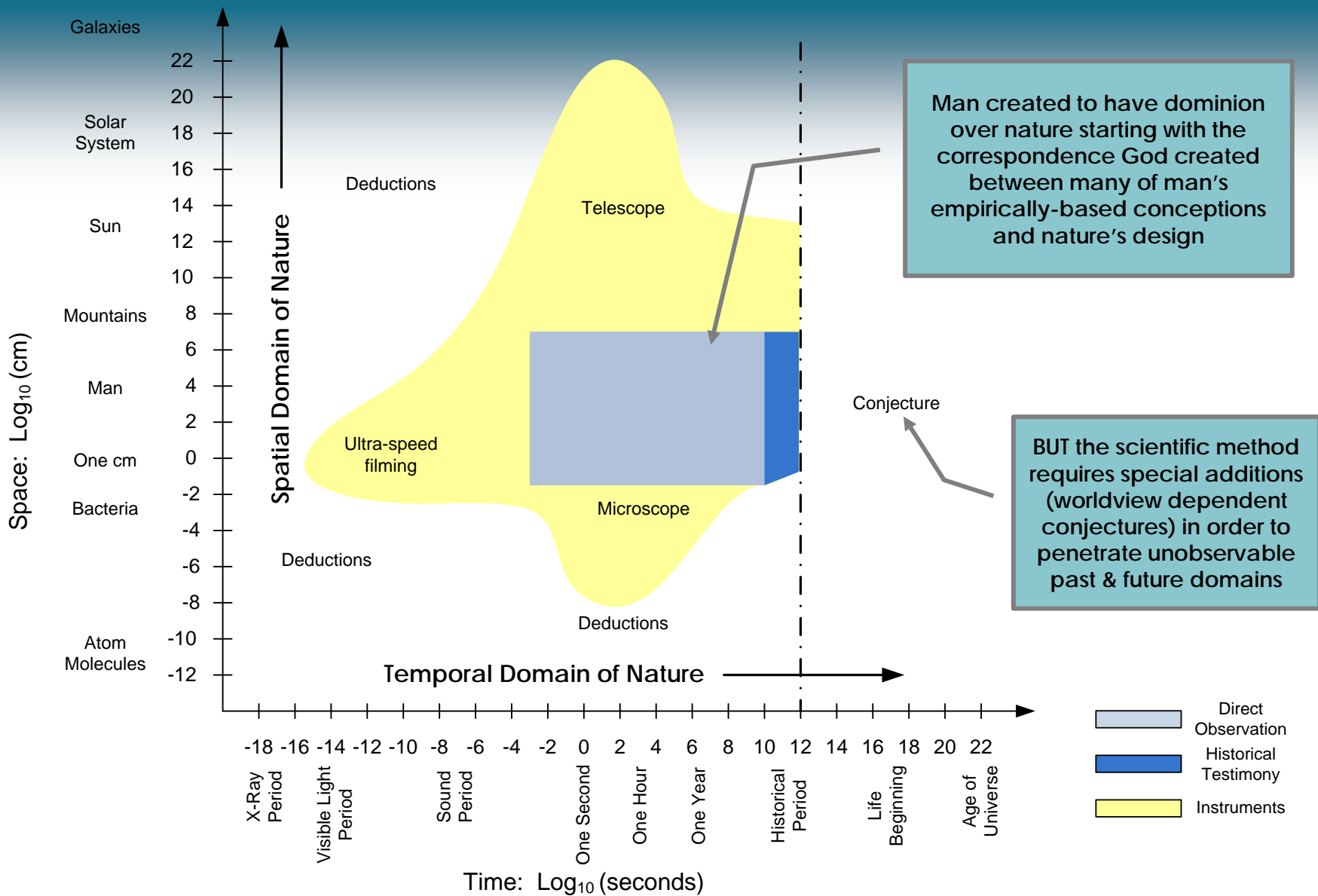
Feature	Bible	Pagan
Justice or “right”	God’s righteousness and justice (holiness)	Man’s personal preference (individual or corporate)
Evil	Post-creation origin and eventual eternal quarantine	Features of reality that violate my personal preference
Conscience	Designed analog to God’s holiness in man alone	An evolved sense in the advanced animal called man
Authority	God’s self-disclosure	Man (individual or corporate)

Why Does Nietzsche Deny Christian Moral Standards?

*"They [English skeptics that included Eliot] are rid of the Christian God and now believe all the more firmly that they must cling to Christian morality. . . . We hold otherwise. **When one gives up the Christian faith, one pulls the right to Christian morality out from under one's feet.** This morality is by no means self-evident; this point has to be exhibited again and again, despite the English flatheads. Christianity is a system, a whole view of things thought out together. By breaking one main concept out of it, the faith in God, one breaks the whole; nothing necessary remains in one's hands. Christianity presupposes that man does not know, cannot know, what is good for him, what evil; he believes in God, who alone knows it. **Christian morality is a command, its origin is transcendent; it is beyond all criticism. . . . it has truth only if God is the truth. It stands and falls with faith in God.**"*

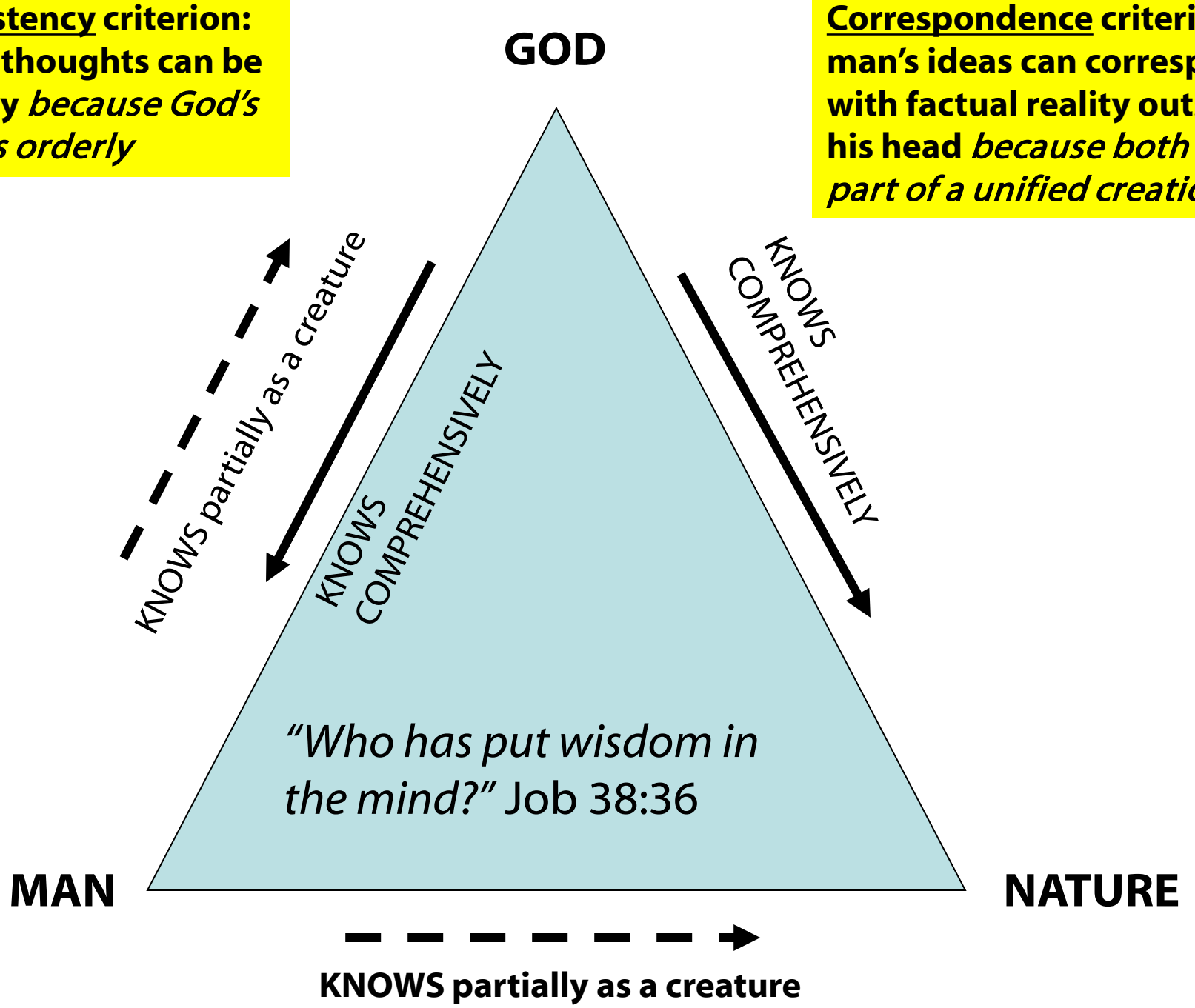
~Walter Kaufmann, trans. *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York, Penguin Books, 1976 edition), p. 515f.

Limits of Empirical Knowledge



Consistency criterion:
man's thoughts can be orderly *because God's plan is orderly*

Correspondence criterion:
man's ideas can correspond with factual reality outside his head *because both are part of a unified creation*



Theories of Justice & the Mosaic Law

Theory of Justice	Mosaic Law
<u>Natural Right</u> : determined by the nature of man	True nature of man revealed as designed in the image of God
<u>Social Good</u> : determined by promotion of the good of society	True good of society revealed by God's ordinances
<u>Positive Law</u> : determined by obedience to enacted laws	True justice known by God looking at the heart attitude of man toward His Law

Source Material Cited by the Founding Fathers

Citation Sources	Percent of the Total Number
Bible	34%
Enlightenment	22%
Whig (Scottish Presbyterians)	18%
English Common Law	11%
Classical	9%
Peers	4%
Others	2%

Donald S. Lutz, "The Relative Influence of European Writers on Late 18th Century American Political Thought" *American Political Science Review* (1984)

The Buried Foundation



Consequences of a Pagan View of Civil Government



“where there is no transcendental law and power in a separate and omnipotent being then power has a wholly immanent and immediate source in a state, group, or person, and it is beyond appeal. . . . The state becomes god walking on earth.”

~Rousas J Rushdoony, *The One and the Many*, p 61