

# A Comparison Between Quantum Physics and *A Course in Miracles*

by Lorraine Marie Coburn

Quantum physics is confusing, confounding, and convoluted. It indicates that our universe is upside down, and what we think we see is not reality. In fact, physicists are having a hard time determining what reality really is. At the subatomic level, particles can be in two places at one time, can pop in and out of existence, can be created out of nothing, and can communicate faster than the speed of light, as if they are reading each others' minds.

Pioneer physicist Neils Bohr said, "Anyone not shocked by quantum mechanics has not understood it." Likewise, students of *A Course in Miracles* are known for throwing their Course books across the room and swearing about its seemingly ridiculous message. ACIM and physics tend to agree that the nature of physical reality is deceiving. However, they tend to diverge on the ultimate nature of reality, because *A Course in Miracles* states that physical forms do not even exist and have never existed. In the meantime, many physicists are still searching for a grand unified theory that will explain how the universe works.

Leading physicists differ widely in their interpretations of quantum reality and new discoveries are being made constantly. *A Course in Miracles* is also subject to interpretation, therefore, so are the ideas in this article.

According to the Course, Heaven is changeless, formless, eternal love. Nothing but God/Love exists and there is no physical universe, no bodies, no planets, no form. It is pure non-duality, oneness with no opposite. However, we perceive that we live in bodies on planet earth, so ACIM speaks to us as if those are real, while telling us that ultimately they are not. On earth there is duality, apparent choices to be made among opposites. Separation is the rule—separate bodies, separate nations, separate time periods, etc. Heaven is outside of time and space, and, according to ACIM, time and space do not even exist, because "Reality is ultimately known without a form, unpictured and unseen." (T-27.III.5:2)

## **A Particle or a Wave?**

What Albert Einstein saw in quantum physics experiments upset him so much that he spent the rest of his life trying to figure out the missing puzzle pieces. He never found them, and while physicists continue to search for a grand unified theory, all they keep getting are more and more questions. The ego's dictum is thus, "Seek and do not find," (T-12.IV.1:4) which can explain the endless exploration of a universe that does not exist.

A photon can be either a particle or a wave. Matter is not stable and nothing in the material universe is set in stone. There is no fixed reality in our world until we look at it, and no specific basic particle that acts in a predictable way to create matter. In short, nothing is real until we decide it is by looking at it. The basic light photon can act either as a particle or a wave, but not both at the same time. It exists as potential states of being and does not collapse into form until something observes it. Then it becomes a particular particle in a particular space and time.

This bothered Einstein, and he said, "I like to think the moon is there even if I am not looking at it." Einstein is also famously known for saying, "God does not play dice (with the universe)." Stephen Hawking, the present-day Einstein who has developed theories of black holes, answers, "Not only does God play dice, but...He sometimes throws them where they can't be seen."

Just as everything is a throw of the dice, once we observe one thing, other aspects related to it are up for grabs. The Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle states that we cannot know the position and momentum of a particle at the same time. Once the position (space) is measured, then the momentum (time/speed) cannot be measured, and vice versa.

*A Course in Miracles* makes numerous statements in alignment with the particle/wave conundrum. A basic premise of the Course is that there is no world and we are making up the world. "I have invented the world I see." (W-p.I.32.h) "Projection makes perception. The world you see is what you gave it...It is the witness to your state of mind, the outside picture of an inward condition." (T-21.in.1:1-2;5)

A popular metaphysical idea is that we create our own reality through the Law of Attraction. The movie *What the Bleep Do We Know!?* uses the observer principle to suggest that we can decide what we want in life, visualize it, and it will show up, as we collapse the quantum wave potential. Even though the movie features physicists, most mainstream physicists scoff at this idea, stating that the observer effect only applies to the subatomic level and not to large things and events.

Some students of *A Course in Miracles* believe that the Course teaches the Law of Attraction, and cite the statements, "I am responsible for what I see. And everything that seems to happen to me I ask for, and receive as I have asked." (T-21.II.2:3;5) Other students interpret this differently, stating all events happened in the past, (but actually never happened) and we are only responsible for choosing to view events from the perspective of the Holy Spirit or the ego. In this view, we are not able to attract specific events into our lives. To choose among images in the world is to choose among illusions, and the Course advises us to "Seek not to change the world, but choose to change your mind about the world." (T-21.in.1:8) ACIM states, "In this world the only remaining freedom is the freedom of choice; always between two choices or two voices. (C-1.7:1)

Another interpretation of the above passage is that all possible events and scenarios happened in the tiny tick of time in which we dreamed this world. (T-26.V.3:5) There are an infinite number of images that can show up, depending on whether we have chosen forgiveness and love with the Holy Spirit, or separation and fear with the ego.

Whatever interpretation we choose, what we observe determines what we see. All of the above theories-the Law of Attraction, having a choice between the ego's or Holy Spirit's perspective, or seeing different images when we forgive-reflect the observer principle .

As physics shows us, and the Course agrees, there is no objective reality. However, the Course states that the world is in our mind, while physics keeps looking to an outer physical universe.

### **Time and Space**

Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity showed that time and space are relative to the observer and are not fixed, objective realities. For example, if an object is moving at the speed of light, it will not age as fast as an object that is moving slower. If there are two young men in their twenties, and one becomes an astronaut and spends years in space traveling at high speeds, when he returns to earth he will be younger than the man who stayed earthbound.

Einstein noted, "The distinction between past, present, and future are only a stubbornly persistent illusion." *A Course in Miracles* is in agreement that time and space are relative, and goes further to state they are completely unreal. "Time is a trick, a sleight of hand, a vast illusion in which figures come and go as if by magic." The Course says that we are actually looking backward in time at events that have already happened, and we only perceive that they are unfolding in time. "For we but see the journey from the point at which it ended, looking back on it, imagining we make it once again; reviewing mentally what has gone by." (W-p.I.158.4:1;5)

One of the Course's stated goals is to abolish the need for time. (T-5.12.4:1). "The miracle minimizes the need for time. The miracle substitutes for learning that might have taken thousands of years. The miracle shortens time by collapsing it, thus eliminating certain intervals within it." (T-1.II.6:1,7,9). "When you perform a miracle, I will arrange both time and space to adjust to it." (T-2.V.A.11:3)

### **Oneness and Bell's Theorem**

*A Course in Miracles* and quantum physics are in agreement about the interconnectedness of all things, which the Course calls oneness and physics calls entanglement. The Course states that what we do to our brother we do unto ourselves.

A major physics principle is Bell's Theorem, which was designed to test whether particles could be discrete, separate objects, unconnected to the rest of the world. The experiments derived from Bell's Theorem have shown that particles are inextricably interconnected. There is no separation, which is a primary principle of *A Course in Miracles*. For example, say a particle is split into its twin half, and one half is in New York and the other half is in Los Angeles. When the particle in New York changes the rotation of its spin, the particle in Los Angeles instantly changes its spin correspondingly. How does the particle in Los Angeles know what its New York twin did? This communication is faster than the speed of light and happens without any apparent physical message, as if reading each others' minds.

*A Course in Miracles* states that our only problem is the belief that we have separated from God. (W-p.I.79) It also states that "minds are joined" (T-18.VI.3:1) and that "all I give is given to myself." (W-p.I.126.h)

### **The Big Bang**

Just like particles can arise out of nothingness, physicists say the universe arose from nothingness. How is this possible? The Big Bang Theory suggests that a dense, hot core of matter underwent a massive explosion that produced the physical universe. While the theory describes what happened, it still does not account for the origin of the matter that exploded.

ACIM says the origin of the seeming big bang matter is the tiny mad idea, a thought in the mind of the Son of God. (T-27.VIII.6:2) The thought was nothing and the resulting world was nothing. "You do not realize the magnitude of that one error. It was so vast and so completely incredible that from it a world of total unreality had to emerge." (T-18.I.5:2-3) It also emerged in a "tiny tick of time," (T-26.V.3:5) all events happening at once, rather than over billions of years as physics tells us.

### **Conclusion**

*A Course in Miracles* and quantum physics agree on the dubious nature of physical reality, while *A Course in Miracles* goes one important step further to say that physical reality does not, and never has, existed.

In *A Course in Miracles*, Jesus finally reveals the mysteries that have puzzled us forever. "There is no world! This is the central lesson the Course attempts to teach." (W-132.6.2-3) When we finally realize that the world is not out there, it's only in our mind, all the puzzle pieces that physicists seek are made clear.

In the Bible, Jesus says, "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth..." (John 16:12-13) In the Gospel of Thomas Jesus tells us, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and they will reign over all." In *A Course in Miracles*, Jesus says, "There is nothing outside you. That is what you must ultimately learn, for it is the realization that the Kingdom of Heaven is restored to you." (T-18.VI.1:1-2) John Bell, of Bell's Theorem, said "that the new way of seeing things will involve an imaginative leap that will astonish us." Now that's where physics is onto something.

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