

## What is Specified Complexity?

You look at an event, object or structure.

You ask yourself if the pattern it has is improbable. In other words, does it only look designed or is it really designed? A child might think that a log that looks like a snake was made by an artist though it might just be coincidence. If there is a safe and nobody knows the combination and you find it open, then the probable explanation is that the person who opened it knew the combination. The improbable explanation is that the person was just very lucky and put in the right combination by pure coincidence.

You ask yourself if it is suitably patterned. For example, if watch parts are thrown together and the result cannot tell the time then clearly no design has taken place. If the parts are made into a watch then the result is something that is patterned for telling the time. A watch's job is to tell the time so it is more than just patterned - it is suitably patterned. If the watch was put together and ends up making music and does not tell the time then the pattern is not suitable.

So an event or object or structure that has an improbable pattern that is suitable for it is a Specified Complexity.

### Events in Scripture and Specified Complexity

Genesis 44:33

Genesis 44:33 (New International Version, ©2011)

33 “Now then, please let your servant remain here as my lord’s slave in place of the boy, and let the boy return with his brothers.

Does Specified Complexity feature in this?

No. There is nothing improbable in this verse.

How can Specified Complexity be applied to this text?

It cannot.

What can be inferred from the Specified Complexity in this text?

There is no real improbability. There is no pattern.

Judges 6:36-40

Judges 6:36-40 (New International Version, ©2011)

36 Gideon said to God, “If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised— 37 look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said.” 38 And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water.

39 Then Gideon said to God, “Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew.” 40 That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.

Does Specified Complexity feature in this?

Yes.

How can Specified Complexity be applied to this text?

Gideon asks for something really improbable. A fleece to get miraculously wet. Then to add to the improbability he asks for God to make it impossibly dry on a wet floor. Only a designing intelligence with supernatural abilities could do what Gideon asks. And the design is intended. Gideon asks and the strange things happen just the way he asks. The miracle of

the wet and dry fleece communicates something. Thus it is suitably patterned for this purpose.

What can be inferred from the Specified Complexity in this text?

That God is able to answer prayer and give signs and he can suspend the laws of nature.

Psalm 22

For the director of music. To the tune of "The Doe of the Morning." A psalm of David.

1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from saving me,  
so far from my cries of anguish?

2 My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,  
by night, but I find no rest.

3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;  
you are the one Israel praises.

4 In you our ancestors put their trust;  
they trusted and you delivered them.

5 To you they cried out and were saved;  
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

6 But I am a worm and not a man,  
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

7 All who see me mock me;  
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.

8 "He trusts in the LORD," they say,  
"let the LORD rescue him.

Let him deliver him,  
since he delights in him."

9 Yet you brought me out of the womb;  
you made me trust in you, even at my mother's breast.

10 From birth I was cast on you;  
from my mother's womb you have been my God.

11 Do not be far from me,  
for trouble is near

and there is no one to help.

12 Many bulls surround me;  
strong bulls of Bashan encircle me.

13 Roaring lions that tear their prey  
open their mouths wide against me.

14 I am poured out like water,  
and all my bones are out of joint.

My heart has turned to wax;  
it has melted within me.

15 My mouth is dried up like a potsherd,  
and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth;  
you lay me in the dust of death.

16 Dogs surround me,  
a pack of villains encircles me;  
they pierce my hands and my feet.

17 All my bones are on display;  
people stare and gloat over me.

18 They divide my clothes among them  
and cast lots for my garment.

19 But you, LORD, do not be far from me.  
You are my strength; come quickly to help me.

20 Deliver me from the sword,  
my precious life from the power of the dogs.

21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions;  
save me from the horns of the wild oxen.

22 I will declare your name to my people;  
in the assembly I will praise you.

23 You who fear the LORD, praise him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, honor him!  
Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!  
24 For he has not despised or scorned  
the suffering of the afflicted one;  
he has not hidden his face from him  
but has listened to his cry for help.  
25 From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly;  
before those who fear you I will fulfill my vows.  
26 The poor will eat and be satisfied;  
those who seek the LORD will praise him—  
may your hearts live forever!  
27 All the ends of the earth  
will remember and turn to the LORD,  
and all the families of the nations  
will bow down before him,  
28 for dominion belongs to the LORD  
and he rules over the nations.  
29 All the rich of the earth will feast and worship;  
all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—  
those who cannot keep themselves alive.  
30 Posterity will serve him;  
future generations will be told about the Lord.  
31 They will proclaim his righteousness,  
declaring to a people yet unborn:  
He has done it!

Does Specified Complexity feature in this?

Yes.

How can Specified Complexity be applied to this text?

The Specified Complexity here is that it describes details about the crucifixion and death and resurrection of Jesus centuries before they happened. The psalm is a prophecy. Because of the amount of detail, this is unmistakable. Also, there are many ancient writings and this psalm showing up in the Jewish Bible is no coincidence. The Jewish Bible was Jesus' CV.

For a psalm to correctly predict the details about Jesus is extremely improbable. It makes no errors at all. And the purpose is to tell Israel to expect a suffering and dying Messiah who triumphs over death. The improbability is made even more extreme by the hint that its subject will rise from the dead. So we have the improbability we need to identify Specified Complexity. The match with actual facts about Jesus shows the psalm is suitably patterned.

What can be inferred from the Specified Complexity in this text?

That God can see the future and tell us what will happen now. There is no natural explanation for this foreknowledge. Also the Specified Complexity happens here because God wants us to be able to identify Jesus as the Messiah from the Old Testament.

Matthew 17:27

Matthew 17:27 (New International Version, ©2011)

27 "But so that we may not cause offense, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

Does Specified Complexity feature in this?

Yes

How can Specified Complexity be applied to this text?

It is extremely improbable to go and catch a fish that has a four drachma coin in its mouth. It is even more improbable that

the first fish will have this coin in its mouth.

Another improbability is how the fish has the correct amount of tax due in its mouth.

And when somebody predicts the fishing of the coin in such detail the improbability goes off the scale.

The Specified Complexity is how this is so improbable that it is almost impossible and yet it happened. God fulfils Jesus' word to the letter which is beyond coincidence and he does it for the purpose of getting the tax paid. So it is suitably patterned. It would not be suitably patterned if the apostle got the fish and found a gold nugget in its mouth. But nevertheless, if it had been the case it would still be remarkable. The more perfection the more proof of design it is.

What can be inferred from the Specified Complexity in this text?

That God responded to Jesus' needs and Jesus knows the future. God was able to organise nature to fulfil Jesus' request. God caused the fish to find the coin and take it and cause the coin to stick in its mouth. He caused the apostle to find the fish easily. God designed all this to take place.

Acts 1:23-25

Acts 1:23-25 (New International Version, ©2011)

23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs."

Does Specified Complexity feature in this?

Specified Complexity is low in this episode. Two men were chosen. Then the apostles had to choose one of them to replace Judas.

How can Specified Complexity be applied to this text?

The apostles voted for two suitable men. Divine providence would have helped ensure this would happen. The two men being found is not that improbable. Their suitability indicates some degree of being suitably patterned by divine providence.

What can be inferred from the Specified Complexity in this text?

God works out his plans with the mundane and not just the supernatural.

Problems:

It is based on assuming the Bible is 100% accurate. Nobody assumes that of any book. The Christians start off with the notion that there are no errors in the Bible, but they need to prove that first. And they cannot prove it. Very little in the Bible can be proved. They say, "We must admit the Bible is all true for no errors have been proven." But that is an argument from ignorance. Not knowing if something is false does not mean it is true. Arguments from ignorance are arrogant - they pretend you know more than what you do. We call a person arrogant if they claim to know things that are in fact debatable. But the person who says they know things that they admit they do not know is far far worse and far more brazen.

Specified complexity is tricky for the person might think they are engaging in it and be totally wrong. Our minds like to make patterns that are not there. If you spill flour on the floor, you may imagine it forms letters and faces.

Surely the Hindu would use a specified complexity argument for insisting that Hinduism and not Christianity is true? Its very subjective.