

infallible standard of religious truth; and I desire to hold up this principle prominently at the outset, as one to which I cordially subscribe. The mass of evidence in favour of the divine inspiration of the Bible is too great to be set aside by any thing short of scientific demonstration. Were the Scriptures to teach that the whole is not equal to its parts, the mind could not, indeed, believe it. But if it taught a truth which was only contrary to the probable deductions of science, science, I say, must yield to Scripture; for it would be more reasonable to doubt the probabilities of a single science, than the various and most satisfactory evidence on which revelation rests. I do not believe that even the probabilities of any science are in collision with Scripture. But the supposition is made to show how strong are my convictions of the evidence and paramount authority of the Bible.

But does it follow, from these positions, that science can throw no light upon the truths of Scripture? By no means; and it will be my leading object, in this lecture, to show how this may be done by science in general, and by geology in particular.

In discussing this subject, we ought to bear in mind the object of science, and the object of revelation. And by the term *science* I refer mainly to physical science. Its grand aim is, by an induction from facts, to discover the laws by which the material universe is governed. Those laws do, indeed, lead the mind almost necessarily to their divine Author. But this is rather the incidental than the direct result of scientific investigations, and belongs rather to natural theology than to natural science.

On the other hand, the exclusive object of revelation is of a moral character. It is a development of the divine character and the divine government; especially that part of it which discloses a plan for the reconciliation of a lost and wicked world to the favour of God by the death of his Son. Every other subject mentioned in Scripture is incidental, and would not have been noticed had it not some connection with the plan of salvation. The creation of the world and the Noachian deluge, for instance, are intimately related to the divine character and government, and therefore they are described; and the same is true of the various phenomena of nature which are touched upon in the Bible.