

authority of a judge, and his rule of action is the leading interest of himself and his fellow-men.

In the material world we have no control over the laws of nature; we gain physical knowledge only by studying them; and new physical power only by obeying them: and in questions of morality—of right and wrong—we are equally the servants of a law, either written in the heart or recorded in the word of God. To hesitate is to rebel; and to wait for the calculations of utility, would be, too often, but to seek a cloak of sophistry as a shelter for evasion.

Leaving, however, mere general objections, let us come to the system itself, and to the rule of its application. Paley first resolves all right into consistency with the will of God: and here, at least, is no matter for dispute; for every moral system implies some law or other, which can only emanate from God, and to obey that law is plainly to obey his will. But how are we to discover that will? We answer, by studying the moral nature of man, and his relation to the things around him—by ascending from moral phenomena to moral laws, which thus become the manifestations of the will of God, and may be embodied in the maxims of moral philosophy: or, by humbly accepting the revelation of his will, which is religious knowledge. But by whatever means we try to discern the will of God—by whatever path we endeavour to ascend towards his holy temple—we see but in part and understand in part; we grasp not one of his attributes; we comprehend not how they co-exist within his bosom; we remain but worshippers at the gate; the veil which conceals him from us cannot be lifted up, nor could our eyes endure the brightness of his glory.