

science and revelation treat of the same subjects only incidentally, we ought only to expect that the facts of science, rightly understood, should not contradict the statements of revelation, correctly interpreted. Apparent discrepancies there may be; and it would not be strange, if for a time they should seem to be real; either because science has not fully and accurately disclosed the facts, or the Bible is not correctly interpreted; but if both records are from God, there can be no real contradiction between them. But, on the other hand, we have no reason to expect any remarkable coincidences, because the general subject and object of the two records are so unlike. Should such coincidences occur, however, they will render it less probable that any apparent disagreement is real.

If the positions taken in these preliminary remarks be correct, it will follow, that in judging of the agreement or disagreement between revelation and science, it is important, in the first place, that we rightly understand the Bible; and, in the second place, that we carefully ascertain what are the settled and demonstrated principles of science. An examination of these points will constitute the remainder of this lecture.

The meaning of the Scriptures is to be determined in the same way as the meaning of any other book written in similar circumstances. Its inspiration puts no bar in the way of the most rigid application of the rules of criticism, nor renders it unnecessary to seek for light in whatever quarter it can be obtained. The rules of grammatical and rhetorical construction, the study of contemporary writers, a knowledge of the history, customs, opinions, and prejudices of the times, and other circumstances that need not be mentioned, become important means of attaining the true *usus loquendi*, or principle of interpretation. But I pass by all these on the present occasion, because no one doubts their importance in rightly understanding the Bible. I maintain that scientific discoveries furnish us with another means of its correct interpretation, where it describes natural phenomena. And in this position we shall not probably find an entire unanimity of opinion. Let us, therefore, proceed to examine its truth.

It will not be denied that modern science has corrected the opinions of men in regard to very many natural phenomena. The same term that conveyed one idea to an ancient reader, or hearer, of the Bible, often conveys an opposite meaning to