

My dear Scrope,

Be careful what you write in the *Quarterly Review* about my book. Then you can get people to believe the new ideas that are in it. Then they will stop believing what Moses wrote in the Bible. You can make the religious people feel comfortable by the way you write. Then they will be ready to listen to you.



When I wrote the book I was afraid to say plainly that the Bible is wrong. You can be bolder in the *Quarterly Review*. But we must be careful. Do not make people feel uncomfortable. Then everyone will go along with us. Don't make them feel it is a battle and we have won. Tell them how open minded everyone is these days. Then the bishops and up-to-date Christians will join us. They will despise the old fashioned folk who want to stick to the Bible. Now is the time to strike. Rejoice you rascal! These days even a stuffy magazine like the *Quarterly Review* will let you say the Bible is not true in its pages. But you must go gently.

My book criticises of the Bible more than some people will like. I promise you I did not write half what I had in my notes. It will be twenty or thirty years before people are ready to hear it put so plainly. Tell the ordinary readers that the floods, earthquakes, etc., that I describe are recent. The same applies to the wearing down of cliffs. Tell them to do this sum: first think of how long they think man has been on the earth. Then add up the length of time the changes we see today take to happen. Then multiply the two figures together. Tell them not to rely on written records like the Bible. They should look at the record of history in the rocks instead....

Very truly yours,  
Charles Lyell

PS. ...In your review of my book keep yourself out of it. Make a summary of my ideas and leave it at that. Let them work out what it means themselves.