

Remote from human passions, remote even from the pitiful facts of nature, the generations have gradually created an ordered cosmos, where pure thought can dwell as in its natural home and where one, at least, of our nobler impulses can escape from the dreary exile of the actual world

*Bertrand Russell, describing the detachment and objectivity of mathematical reasoning*

The good Christian should beware of mathematicians and all those who make empty prophecies. The danger already exists that the mathematicians have made a covenant with the devil to darken the spirit and to confine man in the bonds of Hell.

*St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo (Africa) 400 AD*

:... to learn the art of geometry and to take part in public exercises, an art as damnable as mathematics, are forbidden

*Roman jurists under the Code of Mathematicians and Evil-Doers ~400 AD*

To speak freely of mathematics, I find it the highest exercise of the spirit; but at the same time I know that it is so useless that I make little distinction between a man who is only a mathematician and a common artisan ...

*Blaise Pascal, 1660*

God forbid that Truth be confined to mathematical demonstrations.

*William Blake*

Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth, but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere, like that of sculpture, without appeal to any part of our weaker nature, without the gorgeous trappings of painting or music, yet sublimely pure, and capable of a stern perfection such as only the greatest art can show. The true spirit of delight, the exaltation, the sense of being more than man, which is the touchstone of the highest excellence, is to be found in mathematics as fully as in poetry.

*Bertrand Russell*

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Man's understanding where mathematics can be brought to bear, rises to the level even of God's.

*Galileo--an alarmed Church duly included this remarkable assertion of human pride*

*among the eight counts of heresy at his famous trial*

“... after an unbroken tradition of many centuries, mathematics has ceased to be generally considered as an integral part of culture in our era of mass education. Almost everyone knows that mathematics serves the very practical purpose of dictating engineering design. Fewer people seem to be aware that mathematics carries the main burden of scientific reasoning and is the core of the major theories of physical science. It is even less widely known that mathematics has determined the direction and content of philosophical thought, has destroyed and rebuilt religious doctrine, has supplied substance to economics and political theories, has fashioned major painting, musical and architectural, and literary styles, has fathered our logic, and has furnished the best answers we have to fundamental questions about the nature of man and his universe. Despite these by no means modest contributions to our life and thought, educated people almost universally reject mathematics as an intellectual exercise.

*Morris Kline*

Presumably because they know themselves to be entrusted with the task of bringing from the gods to the accomplished portion of mankind a share of ambrosia in this form; they do not think it proper to put it carelessly on ground or wood, or any other ugly or irregular material; but first collecting the sweets of the most beautiful flowers which grow upon the earth, they make them for the reception of the honey, the vessels which we call honeycombs (with cells) all equal and similar, and contiguous to one another, and hexagonal in form. And that they have contrived this by virtue of a certain geometrical forethought, we may infer in this way. They would necessarily think that the figures must be such as to be contiguous to one another, that is to say to have their sides in common in order that no foreign matter could enter into the interstices between them and so defile the purity of the produce. Now there are three rectilinear figures which are capable of fulfilling this condition, I mean regular figures which are equilateral and equiangular, for bees would have none of figures which are not uniform... There being then three figures capable by themselves of exactly filling up the space about the same point, the bees by reason of their instinctive wisdom chose for their construction the figure which has most angles, because they conceived it would hold more honey than either of the other two.

*Pappus, noted Greek geometer ~400 AD*