
JOSHUA 10:1 Now when Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

Adoni-zedec, king of Jerusalem, hearing of the capture of Ai, and that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel, calls to his assistance four other kings to fight against Gibeon, Jos 10:1-4. They join forces, and encamp against Gibeon, Jos 10:5. The Gibeonites send to Joshua for succor, Jos 10:6, who immediately marches to their relief, receives encouragement from God, and falls suddenly on the confederate forces, Jos 10:7-9, and defeats them; they fly, and multitudes of them are slain by a miraculous shower of hail-stones, Jos 10:10, Jos 10:11. Joshua, finding that the day began to fail, prayed that the sun and moon might stand still, that they might have time to pursue and utterly destroy these confederate forces, Jos 10:12. The sun and moon stand still, and make that day as long as two, Jos 10:13, Jos 10:14. Joshua and the people return to their camp at Gilgal, Jos 10:15. The five kings having taken shelter in a cave at Makkedah, Joshua commanded the people to roll great stones against the mouth of the cave, and set a watch to keep it, while Israel were pursuing their enemies, Jos 10:16-19. The Israelites return to Makkedah, bring forth the five kings, then slay and hang them on five trees, Jos 10:20-27. The Israelites take and destroy Makkedah, Jos 10:28, and Libnah, Jos 10:29, Jos 10:30, and Lachish, Jos 10:31, Jos 10:32, and defeat Horam king of Gezer, Jos 10:33, and take Eglon, Jos 10:34, Jos 10:35, and Hebron, Jos 10:36, Jos 10:37, and Debir, Jos 10:38, Jos 10:39, and all the country of the hills, south, vale, and springs, and the whole country from Kadesh-Barnea to Gibeon, Jos 10:40-42. They return to Gilgal, Jos 10:43.

Verse 1

Adoni-zedec - This name signifies the Lord of justice or righteousness; and it has been conjectured that the Canaanitish kings assumed this name in imitation of that of the ancient patriarchal king of this city, Melchizedek, whose name signifies king of righteousness, or my righteous king: a supposition that is not improbable, when the celebrity of Melchizedek is considered.

Jerusalem - ירושלים Yerushalam. This word has been variously explained; if it be compounded of שלום shalom, peace, perfection, etc., and ראה raah, he saw, it may signify the vision of peace - or, he shall see peace or perfection.

JOSHUA 10:2 they were very afraid, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities, and because it was greater than Ai, and all its men were mighty.

Verse 2

As one of the royal cities - Not a regal city, but great, well inhabited and well fortified, as those cities which served for the royal residence generally were. It does not appear that the Gibeonites had any king - they seem to have been a small but powerful republic, all the men thereof were mighty, merely governed by their elders: for in their address to Joshua, Jos 9:11, they mention no king, but simply state that they were sent by their elders and the inhabitants of their country; nor do we any where read of their king; and therefore we may naturally suppose that they had none.

JOSHUA 10:3 Therefore Adoni-Zedek king of Jerusalem sent to Hoham king of Hebron, to Piram king of Jarmuth, to Japhia king of Lachish, and to Debir king of Eglon, saying,

Verse 3

Hoham king of Hebron - This city was situated in the mountains, southward of Jerusalem, from which it was about thirty miles distant. It fell to the tribe of Judah.

Piram king of Jarmuth - There were two cities of this name; one belonged to the tribe of Issachar, see Jos 21:29; that mentioned here fell to the tribe of Judah, see Jos 15:35; it is supposed to have been about eighteen miles distant from Jerusalem.

Japhia king of Lachish - This city is celebrated in Scripture; in that city Amaziah was slain by conspirators, 2Kgs 14:19. It was besieged by Sennacherib, 2Kgs 18:14, 2Kgs 18:17; and without effect by the king of Assyria, as we learn from Isa 37:8 : it was also besieged by the army of Nebuchadnezzar, see Jer 34:7; it also fell to the lot of Judah, Jos 15:39.

Debir king of Eglon - Where this city was situated is very uncertain; but we learn from Jos 15:39, that it fell to the lot of the tribe of Judah.

JOSHUA 10:4 “Come up to me, and help me, and let us strike Gibeon; for it has made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.”

JOSHUA 10:5 Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their armies, and encamped against Gibeon, and made war against it.

Verse 5

The five kings of the Amorites - This is a general name for the inhabitants of Canaan, otherwise called Canaanites; and it is very likely that they had this appellation because the Amorites were the most powerful tribe or nation in that country. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were Jebusites, Jos 15:63; those of Hebron were Hittites, Gen 23:2, Gen 23:3; Gen 25:9, Gen 25:10; and the Gibeonites were Hivites, Jos 9:7; and yet all these are called Amorites occasionally, probably for the reason already mentioned, viz., because that tribe was most numerous and powerful.

JOSHUA 10:6 The men of Gibeon sent to Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, “Don’t abandon your servants! Come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us; for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the hill country have gathered together against us.”

JOSHUA 10:7 So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valor.

JOSHUA 10:8 The LORD said to Joshua, “Don’t fear them, for I have delivered them into your hands. Not a man of them will stand before you.”

JOSHUA 10:9 Joshua therefore came on them suddenly. He went up from Gilgal all night.

Verse 9

Joshua - came unto them suddenly - This he did by a forced march during the night, for he went up from Gilgal all night; from Gilgal to Gibeon was about eighteen or twenty miles; and, having fallen so unexpectedly on these confederate kings, they were immediately thrown into confusion.

JOSHUA 10:10 The LORD confused them before Israel, and he killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth Horon, and struck them to Azekah and to Makkedah.

Verse 10

Slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon - Multitudes of them fell in the onset; after which they fled, and the Israelites pursued them by the way of Beth-horon. There were two cities of this name, the upper and lower, both in the tribe of Ephraim, and built by Sherah, the daughter of Ephraim, 1Chr 7:24. The situation of these two cities is not exactly known.

To Azekah, and unto Makkedah - These two cities were in the tribe of Judah, Jos 15:35-41.

JOSHUA 10:11 As they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Beth Horon, the LORD hurled down great stones from the sky on them to Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than who the children of Israel killed with the sword.

Verse 11

The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them - Some have contended that stones, in the common acceptance of the word, are intended here; and that the term hail-stones is only used to point out the celerity of their fall, and their quantity. That stones have fallen from the clouds, if not from a greater height, is a most incontestable fact. That these have fallen in different parts of the world is also true; the East Indies, America, France, Germany, England, Ireland, etc., have all witnessed this phenomenon: of such stones I possess and have seen several fragments; some considerable pieces may be seen in the British Museum. That God might have cast down such stones as these on the Canaanites, there can be no doubt, because his power is unlimited; and the whole account proves that here there was a miraculous interference. But it is more likely that hail-stones, in the proper sense of the word, are meant as well as expressed in the text. That God on other occasions has made use of hail-stones to destroy both men and cattle, we have ample proof in the plague of hail that fell on the Egyptians. See the note on Exo 9:18. There is now before me a square of glass, taken out of a south window in the house of Mr. Ball of Crockerton, in the parish of Longbridge Deverell, county of Wilts., through which a hail-stone passed in a shower that fell there June 1, 1780, at two o'clock, P.M. The hole is an obtuse ellipsis or oval, and is cut as true as if it had been done with a diamond: it is three inches and a half in diameter; a proof that the stone that pierced it, which was about eleven inches in circumference, came with inconceivable velocity, else

the glass must have been shivered to pieces. I have known a cannon ball go through a square of glass in the cabin window of a ship, and make precisely the same kind of hole, without either shattering or even starring the glass. It is needless to add that this hail-shower did great damage, breaking even trees in pieces, and destroying the vegetation through the whole of its extent. But allowing that extraordinary showers of hail have fallen in England or France, is it likely that such showers ever fell in the promised land or its vicinity? They certainly have. Albertus Aquensis, one of the writers in the collection *Gesta Dei per Francos*, in describing the expedition of Baldwin I. in the Holy Land, observes that, when he and his army were in the Arabian mountains, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, they suffered incredibly from horrible hail, terrible frost, and indescribable rain and snow, so that thirty of his men perished by them. His words are: "Sexta vero die montanis permensis, in extremo illorum cacumine maxima pertulerunt pericula, in Grandine horribili, in Glacie terribili, in Pluvia et Nive inaudita, quorum immanitate, et horrore ingruente ad triginta homines pedites prae frigore mortui sunt." - *Hist. Hieros.*, p. 307. I conclude, therefore, that a shower of hail-stones may be meant; and that this shower, though natural in itself, was supernaturally employed on this occasion, and miraculously directed to fall where it did, and do the execution described. But I am ready to grant, notwithstanding, that as a most stupendous miracle was in this instance wrought, in causing the sun and moon to stand still; there can be no doubt that the shower of stones, which was also miraculous, might have been of real stones as well as hail-stones. Of late, this subject of the fall of real stones from the clouds has been very closely investigated, and not only the possibility of the fall of such stones from the clouds, or from much higher regions, but the certainty of the case has been fully demonstrated. These substances are now, in philosophical language denominated aeroliths or air-stones; and the following table constructed by M. Izarn, a foreign chemist, exhibits a variety of facts of this kind, and shows the places and times in which these substances fell, and the testimony by which these facts are supported. As it is as possible that God might have projected a shower of stones on these idolaters, even from the moon, as to arrest that planet in her course, I give the table, and leave the reader to decide, in the present case, for aeroliths or hail-stones, as may seem to him most congruous to the fact here related.

Historical Record	Large Hail Stones	Substances	Places Where They Fell	Period of Their Fall
Testimony	Shower of stones	At Rome	Under Tullus Hostilius	Livy
	Shower of stones	At Rome	Consuls, C. Martius and M. Torquatus	J. Obsequens
	A very large stone	Near the river Negos,	Thrace	Second year of the 78th Olympiad
	Three large stones	In Thrace	Year before J.C., 452	Ch. of Count Marcellin
	Stone of 72 lbs	Near Larissa,	Macedonia	January, 1706
	Paul Lucas	About 1,200 stones; one 120 lbs.	Near Padua in Italy	In 1510
	Carden, Varcit	Another of 60 lbs	Near Padua in Italy	In 1510
	Carden, Varcit	Another of 59 lbs	On Mount Vasier,	Provence November 27, 1627
	Gassendi	Two large stones weighing 20 lbs	Liponas, in Bresse	September, 1753
	De La Lande	A stony mass	Niort, Normandy	In 1750
	De La Lande	A stone of 7 1/2 lbs	At Luce, in Le Maine	September 13, 1768
	Bachelay	A stone	At Aire, in Artois	In 1768
	Gurson de Boyaval	A stone	In Le Cotentin	In 1768
	Morand	Extensive shower of stones	Environs of Agen	July 24, 1790
	St. Amand, Baudin, etc	About 12 stones	Sienna, Tuscany	July, 1794
	Earl of Bristol	A large stone of 56 lbs	Wold Cottage, Yorkshire	December 13, 1795
	Captain Topham	A stone of 10 lbs	In Portugal	February 19, 1796
	Southey	A stone of about 120 lbs	Sal, department of the Rhone	March 17, 1798
	Le Lievre and De Dre	Shower of stones	Benares, East Indies	December 19, 1798
	J. Lloyd Williams, Esq.	Shower of stones	At Plann, near Tabor, Bohemia	July 3, 1753
	B. de Born	Mass of iron, 70 cubic feet	America	April 5, 1800
	Philosophical Magazine	Mass of iron, 14 quintals	Abakauk, Siberia	Very old
	Pallas, Chladni, etc	Shower of stones	Barboutan, near Roquefort	July, 1789
	Darcet, jun., Lomet, etc	Large stone, 260 lbs	Ensisheim, Upper Rhine	November 7, 1492
	Butenschoen	Two stones, 200 and 300 lbs	Near Verona	In

1762 Acad. de Bourd A stone of 20 lbs Sales, near Ville Franche March 12, 1798 De Dre Several stones from 10 to 17 lbs Near L'Aigle, Normandy April 26, 1803 Fourcroy

These stones generally appear luminous in their descent, moving in oblique directions with very great velocities, and commonly with a hissing noise. They are frequently heard to explode or burst, and seem to fly in pieces, the larger parts falling first. They often strike the earth with such force as to sink several inches below the surface. They are always different from the surrounding bodies, but in every case are similar to one another, being semi-metallic, coated with a thin black incrustation. They bear strong marks of recent fusion. Chemists have found on examining these stones that they very nearly agree in their nature and composition, and in the proportions of their component parts. The stone which fell at Ensisheim in Alsace, in 1492, and those which fell at L'Aigle in France, in 1803, yielded, by the Analysis of Fourcroy and Vanquelin, as in this table: -

Their specific gravities are generally about three or four times that of water, being heavier than common stones. From the above account it is reasonable to conclude that they have all the same origin. To account for this phenomenon, various hypotheses have appeared; we shall mention three:

1. That they are little planets, which, circulating in space, fall into the atmosphere, which, by its friction, diminishes the velocity, so that they fall by their weight.
2. That they are concretions formed in the atmosphere.
3. That they are projected from lunar volcanoes. These are the most probable conjectures we can meet with, and of these the two former possess a very small degree of probability, but there are very strong reasons in favor of the last. Among the reasons we may notice the following:

1. Volcanoes in the moon have been observed by means of the telescope.
2. The lunar volcanoes are very high, and the surface of that globe suffers frequent changes, as appears by the late observations of Schroeter.
3. If a body be projected from the moon to a distance greater than that of the point of equilibrium between the attraction of the earth and moon, it will, on the known principle of gravitation, fall to the earth.
4. That a body may be projected from the lunar volcanoes beyond the moon's influence, is not only possible but very probable; for on calculation it is found that four times the force usually given to a twelve pounder, will be quite sufficient for this purpose; it is to be observed that the point of equilibrium is much nearer the moon, and that a projectile from the moon will not be so much retarded as one from the earth, both on account of the moon's rarer atmosphere, and its less attractive force. On this subject, see Mr. Haward's valuable paper in the Philosophical Transactions for 1802, and Dr. Hutton's dissertation in the new abridgment, part xxi. It is highly probable that the ancile, or sacred shield, that fell from heaven in the reign of Numa Pompilius, was a stone of this sort. The description of its fall, as given by Ovid, *Fast. lib. iii.*, bears a striking resemblance to recent accounts of stones falling from the atmosphere, particularly in the luminous appearance and hissing noise with which it was accompanied.

Dum loquitur, totum jam sol emerserat orbem,

Et gravis aethereo venit ab axe fragor.

Ter tonuit sine nube Deus, tria fulgura misit:

Credite dicenti; mira, sed acta, loquor.

A media coelum regione dehiscere coepit:

Summisere oculos cum duce turba suos.

Ecce levi scutum versatum leniter aura

Decidit, a pupulo clamor ad astra venit.

Tolit humo munus -

Idque ancile vocat, quod ab omni parte recisum est.

It is very possible that the Palladium of Troy, and the Image of the Ephesian Diana, were stones which really fell from the atmosphere, bearing some rude resemblance to the human form. See the Imperial Encyclopedia, article Aerolith. I believe it is generally agreed among philosophers,

1. That all these aerial stones, chemically analyzed, show the same properties;
2. That no stone found on our earth possesses exactly the same properties, nor in the same proportions. This is an extraordinary circumstance, and deserves particular notice.

JOSHUA 10:12 Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel; and he said in the sight of Israel, "Sun, stand still on Gibeon! You, moon, stop in the valley of Aijalon!"

Verse 12

Then spake Joshua to the Lord - Though Joshua saw that the enemies of his people were put to flight, yet he well knew that all which escaped would rally again, and that he should be obliged to meet them once more in the field of battle if permitted now to escape; finding that the day was drawing towards a close, he feared that he should not have time sufficient to complete the destruction of the confederate armies; in this moment, being suddenly inspired with Divine confidence, he requested the Lord to perform the most stupendous miracle that had ever been wrought, which was no less than to arrest the sun in his course, and prolong the day till the destruction of his enemies had been completed! Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou,

Moon, in the valley of Ajalon - To account for this miracle, and to ascertain the manner in which it was wrought, has employed the pens of the ablest divines and astronomers, especially of the last two centuries. By their learned labors many difficulties have been removed from the account in general; but the very different and contradictory methods pursued by several, in their endeavors to explain the whole, and make the relation accord with the present acknowledged system of the universe, and the phenomena of nature, tend greatly to puzzle the plain, unphilosophical reader. The subject cannot be well explained without a dissertation; and a dissertation is not consistent with the nature of short notes, or a commentary on Scripture. It is however necessary to attempt an explanation, and to bring that as much as possible within the apprehension of common readers, in order to this, I must beg leave to introduce a few preliminary observations, or what the reader may call propositions if he pleases.

1. I take it for granted that a miracle was wrought as nearly as circumstances could admit, in the manner in which it is here recorded. I shall not, therefore, seek for any allegorical or metaphorical interpretations; the miracle is recorded as a fact, and as a fact I take it up.
2. I consider the present accredited system of the universe, called sometimes the Pythagorean, Copernican, or Newtonian system, to be genuine; and also to be the system of the universe laid down in the Mosaic writings - that the Sun is in the center of what is called the solar system; and that the earth and all the other planets, whether primary or secondary, move round him in certain periodical times, according to the quantity of their matter, and distance from him, their center.
3. I consider the sun to have no revolution round any orbit, but to revolve round his own axis, and round the common center of gravity in the planetary system, which center of gravity is included within his own surface; and in all other respects I consider him to be at rest in the system.
4. I consider the earth, not only as revolving round the sun in 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 48 seconds, but as revolving round its own axis, and making this revolution in 23 hours, 56 minutes, and 4 seconds; that in the course of 24 hours complete, every part of its surface is alternately turned to the sun; that this revolution constitutes our day and night, as the former does our year; and it is day to all those parts which have the sun above the horizon, and night to those which have the sun below it; and that this diurnal revolution of the earth, or revolving round its own axis, in a direction from west to east, occasions what is commonly called the rising and setting of the sun, which appearance is occasioned, not by any motion in the sun himself, but by this motion of the earth; which may be illustrated by a ball or globe suspended by a thread, and caused to turn round. If this be held opposite to a candle, it will appear half enlightened and half dark; but the dark parts will be seen to come successively into the light, and the enlightened parts into the shade; while the candle itself which gives the light is fixed, not changing its position.
5. I consider the solar influence to be the cause both of the annual and diurnal motion of the earth; and that, while that influence continues to act upon it according to the law which God originally impressed on both the earth and the sun, the annual and diurnal motions of the earth must continue; and that no power but the unlimited power of God can alter this influence, change, or suspend the operation of this law; but that he is such an infinitely Free Agent, that He can, when his unerring wisdom sees good, alter, suspend, or even annihilate all secondary causes and their effects: for it would be degrading to the perfections of his nature to suppose that he had so bound himself by the laws which he has given for the preservation and direction of universal nature, that he could not change them, alter their effects, or suspend their operations when greater and better effects, in a certain time or place, might be produced by such temporary change or suspension.
6. I consider that the miracle wrought on this occasion served greatly to confirm the Israelites, not only in the belief of the being and perfections of God, but also in the doctrine of an especial providence, and in the nullity of the whole system of idolatry and superstition.
7. That no evil was done by this miraculous interference, nor any law or property of nature ultimately changed; on the contrary, a most important good was produced, which probably, to this people, could not have been brought about any other way; and that therefore the miracle wrought on this occasion was highly worthy of the wisdom and power of God.
8. I consider that the terms in the text employed to describe this miracle are not, when rightly understood, contrary to the well-established notions of the true system of the universe; and are not spoken, as some have contended, *ad captum vulgi*, to the prejudices of the common people, much less do they favor the Ptolemaic or any other hypothesis that places the earth in the center of the

solar system. Having laid down these preliminaries, some short observations on the words of the text may be sufficient. Joshua's address is in a poetic form in the original, and makes the two following hemistichs: - שמש בגבעון דום וירח בעמק אילון -

Shemesh begibon dom:

Veyareach beemek Aiyalon.

Sun! upon Gibeon be dumb:

And the moon on the vale of Ajalon.

The effect of this command is related, Jos 10:13, in the following words: - וידם השמש וירח עמד - vaiyiddom Hashshemesh Veyareach amad, And the sun was dumb or silent and the moon stood still. And in the latter clause of this verse it is added: And the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

It seems necessary here to answer the question, At what time of the day did this miracle take place? The expression בחצי השמים bachatsi hashshamayim, in the midst of heaven, seems to intimate that the sun was at that time on the meridian of Gibeon, and consequently had one half of its course to run; and this sense of the place has been strongly contended for as essential to the miracle, for the greater display of the glory of God: "Because," say its abettors, "had the miracle been wrought when the sun was near the going down, it might have been mistaken for some refraction of the rays of light, occasioned by a peculiarly moist state of the atmosphere in the horizon of that place, or by some such appearance as the Aurora Borealis." To me there seems no solidity in this reason. Had the sun been arrested in the meridian, the miracle could scarcely have been noticed, and especially in the hurry and confusion of that time; and we may be assured, that among the Canaanites there were neither clocks nor time-keepers, by which the preternatural length of such a day could have been accurately measured: but, on the contrary, had the sun been about the setting, when both the pursuers and the pursued must be apprehensive of its speedy disappearance, its continuance for several hours above the horizon, so near the point when it might be expected to go down, must have been very observable and striking. The enemy must see, feel, and deplore it; as their hope of escape must, in such circumstances, be founded on the speedy entering in of the night, through which alone they could expect to elude the pursuing Israelites. And the Israelites themselves must behold with astonishment and wonder that the setting sun hasted not to go down about a whole day, affording them supernatural time totally to destroy a routed foe, which otherwise might have had time to rally, confederate, choose a proper station, and attack in their turn with peculiar advantages, and a probability of success. It appears, therefore, much more reasonable that Joshua should require this miracle to be performed when daylight was about to fail, just as the sun was setting. If we were to consider the sun as being at the meridian of Gibeon, as some understand the midst of heaven, it may be well asked, How could Joshua know that he should not have time enough to complete the destruction of his enemies, who were now completely routed? Already multitudes of them had fallen by the hail-stones and by the sword: and if he had yet half a day before him, it would have been natural enough for him to conclude that he had a sufficiency of time for the purpose, his men having been employed all night in a forced march, and half a day in close fighting; and indeed had he not been under an especial inspiration, he could not have requested the miracle at all, knowing, as he must have done, that his men must be nearly exhausted by marching all night and fighting all day. But it may be asked, What is the meaning of בחצי השמים bachatsi hashshamayim, which we translate in the midst of heaven? If, with Mr. Bate, we translate חצה chatsah, to part, divide asunder, then it may refer to the horizon, which is the apparent division of

the heavens into the upper and lower hemisphere; and thus the whole verse has been understood by some eminently learned men, who have translated the whole passage thus: And the sun stood still in the (upper) hemisphere of heaven, and hasted not to go down when the day was complete; that is, though the day was then complete, the sun being on the horizon; the line that to the eye constituted the mid heaven - yet it hasted not to go down; was miraculously sustained in its then almost setting position; and this seems still more evident from the moon's appearing at that time, which it is not reasonable to suppose could be visible in the glare of light occasioned by a noon-day sun.

But the main business relative to the standing still of the sun still remains to be considered.

I have already assumed, as a thoroughly demonstrated truth, that the sun is in the center of the system, moving only round his own axis, and the common center of the gravity of the planetary system, while all the planets revolve round him, Prop. 2 and 3; that his influence is the cause of the diurnal and annual revolutions of the earth; nor can I see what other purpose his revolution round his own axis can possibly answer, Prop. 5.

I consider that the word ΔIT dom, in the text, refers to the withholding or restraining this influence, so that the cessation of the earth's motion might immediately take place. The desire of Joshua was, that the sun might not sink below the horizon; but as it appeared now to be over Gibeon, and the moon to be over the valley of Ajalon, he prayed that they might continue in these positions till the battle should be ended; or, in other words, that the day should be miraculously lengthened out.

Whether Joshua had a correct philosophical notion of the true system of the universe, is a subject that need not come into the present inquiry: but whether he spoke with strict propriety on this occasion is a matter of importance, because he must be considered as acting under the Divine influence, in requesting the performance of such a stupendous miracle; and we may safely assert that no man in his right mind would have thought of offering such a petition had he not felt himself under some Divine afflatus. Leaving, therefore, his philosophic knowledge out of the question, he certainly spoke as if he had known that the solar influence was the cause of the earth's rotation, and therefore, with the strictest philosophic propriety, he requested that that influence might be for a time restrained, that the diurnal motion of the earth might be arrested, through which alone the sun could be kept above the horizon, and day be prolonged. His mode of expression evidently considers the sun as the great ruler or master in the system; and all the planets (or at least the earth) moving in their respective orbits at his command. He therefore desires him, in the name and by the authority of his Creator, to suspend his mandate with respect to the earth's motion, and that of its satellite, the moon. Had he said, Earth, stand thou still, the cessation of whose diurnal motion was the effect of his command, it could not have obeyed him; as it is not even the secondary cause either of its annual motion round the sun, or its diurnal motion round its own axis. Instead of doing so, he speaks to the sun, the cause (under God) of all these motions, as his great archetype did when, in the storm on the sea of Tiberias, he rebuked the wind first, and then said to the waves, Peace! be still! $\Sigma\iota\omega\pi\alpha, \pi\epsilon\phi\mu\omega\sigma\sigma\circ$. Be Silent! be Dumb! Mar 4:39; and the effect of this command was a cessation of the agitation in the sea, because the wind ceased to command it, that is, to exert its influence upon the waters. The terms in this command are worthy of particular note: Joshua does not say to the sun, Stand still, as if he had conceived him to be running his race round the earth; but, Be silent or inactive, that is, as I understand it, Restrain thy influence - no longer act upon the earth, to cause it to revolve round its axis; a mode of speech which is certainly consistent with the strictest astronomical knowledge; and the writer of the account, whether Joshua himself or the author of the book of Jasher, in relating the consequence of this command is equally accurate, using a word widely different when he speaks of the effect the retention of the solar influence had on the moon: in the

first case the sun was silent or inactive, דוּד dom; in the latter, the moon stood still, עמד אמד. The standing still of the moon, or its continuance above the horizon, would be the natural effect of the cessation of the solar influence, which obliged the earth to discontinue her diurnal rotation, which of course would arrest the moon; and thus both it and the sun were kept above the horizon, probably for the space of a whole day. As to the address to the moon, it is not conceived in the same terms as that to the sun, and for the most obvious philosophical reasons; all that is said is simply, and the moon on the vale of Ajalon, which may be thus understood: "Let the sun restrain his influence or be inactive, as he appears now upon Gibeon, that the moon may continue as she appears now over the vale of Ajalon." It is worthy of remark that every word in this poetic address is apparently selected with the greatest caution and precision. Persons who are no friends to Divine revelation say "that the account given of this miracle supposes the earth to be in the center of the system, and the sun moveable; and as this is demonstrably a false philosophy, consequently the history was never dictated by the Spirit of truth." Others, in answer, say "that the Holy Spirit condescends to accommodate himself to the apprehensions of the vulgar. The Israelites would naturally have imagined that Joshua was deranged had he bid the earth stand still, which they grant would have been the most accurate and philosophical mode of command on this occasion." But with due deference both to the objectors and defenders I must assert, that such a form of speech on such an occasion would have been utterly unphilosophic; and that the expressions found in the Hebrew text are such as Sir Isaac Newton himself might have denominated, every thing considered, elegant, correct, and sublime. Nor does it at all appear that the prejudices of the vulgar were consulted on this occasion; nor is there a word here, when properly understood that is inconsistent with the purest axiom of the soundest philosophy, and certainly nothing that implies any contradiction. I grant that when the people have to do with astronomical and philosophical matters, then the terms of the science may be accommodated to their apprehensions; it is on this ground that Sir Isaac Newton himself speaks of the rising and of the setting of the sun, though all genuine philosophers know that these appearances are produced by the rotation of the earth on its own axis from west to east. But when matters of this kind are to be transacted between God and his prophets, as in the above case, then subjects relative to philosophy are conceived in their proper terms, and expressed according to their own nature. At the conclusion of the 13th verse a different expression is used when it is said, So the sun stood still, it is not דוּד dom, but עמד אמד; ויעמד השמש vaiyaamod hashshemesh, which expression, thus varying from that in the command of Joshua, may be considered as implying that in order to restrain his influence which I have assumed to be the cause of the earth's motion, the sun himself became inactive, that is, ceased to revolve round his own axis, which revolution is probably one cause, not only of the revolution of the earth, but of all the other planetary bodies in our system, and might have affected all the planets at the time in question; but this neither could nor did produce any disorder in nature; and the delay of a few hours in the whole planetary motions dwindles away into an imperceptible point in the thousands of years of their revolutions. But the whole effect mentioned here might have been produced by the cessation of the diurnal motion of the earth, the annual being still continued; and I contend that this was possible to Omnipotence, and that such a cessation might have taken place without occasioning the slightest disturbance in the motions of any others of the planetary system. It is vain to cry out and say, "Such a cessation of motion in one planet could not take place without disordering the motions of all the rest;" this I deny, and those who assert it neither know the Scripture nor the power of God; therefore they do greatly err. That the day was preternaturally lengthened, is a Scripture fact. That it was so by a miracle, is asserted; and whether that miracle was wrought as above stated, is a matter of little consequence; the thing is a Scripture fact, whether we know the modus operandi or not. I need scarcely add that the command of Joshua to the sun is to be understood as a prayer to God (from whom the sun derived his being and his continuance) that the effect might be what is

expressed in the command: and therefore it is said, Jos 10:14, that the Lord Harkened unto the Voice of a Man, for the Lord fought for Israel. I have thus gone through the different parts of this astonishing miracle, and have endeavored to account for the whole in as plain and simple a manner as possible. It is not pretended that this account should satisfy every reader, and that every difficulty is solved; it would be impossible to do this in such a compass as that by which I am necessarily circumscribed; and I have been obliged, for the sake of brevity, to throw into the form of propositions or observations, several points which may appear to demand illustration and proof; for such I must refer the reader to Astronomical Treatises. Calmet, Scheuchzer, and Saurin, with several of our own countrymen, have spoken largely on this difficult subject, but in such a way as, I am obliged to confess, has given me little satisfaction, and which appears to me to leave the main difficulties unremoved. Conscious of the difficulties of this subject, I beg leave to address every candid reader in the often quoted words of an eminent author: -

Vive, Vale! si quid novisti rectius istis,

Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum.

Hor. Epist. l. i., E. vi., ver. 68.

Farewell! and if a better system's thine,

Impart it frankly or make use of mine.

Francis.

Book of Jasher - The book of the upright. See the note on Num 21:14. Probably this was a book which, in reference to Joshua and his transactions, was similar to the commentaries of Caesar, on his wars with the Gauls. Critics and commentators are greatly divided in their sentiments relative to the nature of this book. The opinion above appears to me the most probable.

JOSHUA 10:13 The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies. Isn't this written in the book of Jasher? The sun stayed in the midst of the sky, and didn't hurry to go down about a whole day.

JOSHUA 10:14 There was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD listened to the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

Verse 14

And there was no day like that - There was no period of time in which the sun was kept so long above the horizon as on that occasion. Some learned men have supposed that the Fable of Phaeton was founded on this historic fact. The fable may be seen with all the elegance of poetic embellishment in the commencement of the second book of Ovid's Metamorphoses; but I confess I can see nothing in the pretended copy that can justify the above opinion.

JOSHUA 10:15 Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp to Gilgal.

Verse 15

And Joshua returned - unto the camp to Gilgal - That the Israelitish army did not return to the camp at Gilgal till after the hanging of the five kings and the destruction of their cities, is sufficiently evident from the subsequent parts of this chapter. When all this business was done, and not before, they returned unto the camp to Gilgal; see Jos 10:43. This verse is omitted by the Septuagint and by the Anglo-Saxon; and it does not appear to have existed in the ancient hexaplar versions; it stands in its proper place in Jos 10:43, and is not only useless where it is, but appears to be an encumbrance to the narrative. Should it be considered as genuine and in its proper place, I would propose that מקדח makkedah should be read instead of גלגלה gilgalah, for we find from Jos 10:21 that Joshua had a temporary camp there. Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Makkedah; after which we may suppose that Joshua having secured the cave, sent some detachments to scour the country and cut off all the remaining straggling Canaanites; when this was done they also returned to the camp at Makkedah, as is related Jos 10:21, and when the business was completed they struck the camp at Makkedah, and all returned to their fortified camp at Gilgal, Jos 10:43.

JOSHUA 10:16 These five kings fled, and hid themselves in the cave at Makkedah.

Verse 16

Hid themselves in a cave - It is very likely that this cave was a fortified place among some rocks; for there were many such places in different parts of Palestine.

JOSHUA 10:17 Joshua was told, saying, "The five kings are found, hidden in the cave at Makkedah."

JOSHUA 10:18 Joshua said, "Roll large stones to the mouth of the cave, and set men by it to guard them;

JOSHUA 10:19 but don't stay. Pursue your enemies, and them from the rear. Don't allow them to enter into their cities; for the LORD your God has delivered them into your hand."

JOSHUA 10:20 When Joshua and the children of Israel had finished killing them with a very great slaughter until they were consumed, and the remnant which remained of them had entered into the fortified cities,

JOSHUA 10:21 all the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace. None moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

Verse 21

None moved his tongue - The whole transaction of this important day had been carried on so evidently under the direction of God that there was not the least murmuring, nor cause for it, among them, for their enemies were all discomfited. There is an expression similar to this, Exo 11:7, on which the reader is requested to consult the note.

JOSHUA 10:22 Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring those five kings out of the cave to me."

JOSHUA 10:23 They did so, and brought those five kings out of the cave to him: the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon.

JOSHUA 10:24 When they brought those kings out to Joshua, Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said to the chiefs of the men of war who went with him, "Come near, put your feet on the necks of these kings." They came near, and put their feet on their necks.

Verse 24

Put your feet upon the necks of these kings - This act was done symbolically, as a token, not only of the present complete victory, but of their approaching triumph over all their adversaries, which is the interpretation given of it by Joshua in the succeeding verse.

JOSHUA 10:25 Joshua said to them, "Don't be afraid, nor be dismayed. Be strong and courageous, for the LORD will do this to all your enemies against whom you fight."

JOSHUA 10:26 Afterward Joshua struck them, put them to death, and hanged them on five trees. They were hanging on the trees until the evening.

Verse 26

Smote - slew - and hanged them on five trees - Hanging alive seems a barbarous custom: among the Hebrews, criminals were first deprived of life; this was the debt required by justice: then they were hanged up, perhaps generally by the hands, not by the neck; this was done by way of example, to deter others from committing the crimes for which those had suffered: but they were never permitted to hang thus exposed all night, as this could have answered no purpose, either of justice or example, as they could not be seen in the night-season. One day also was deemed enough for their exposure, it being thought sufficient to show the public that justice had been executed; and to have exhibited them longer would have appeared to be a barbarous cruelty which attempted to extend punishment beyond the possible requisitions of justice. See the note on Deu 21:23.

JOSHUA 10:27 At the time of the going down of the sun, Joshua commanded, and they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave in which they had hidden themselves, and laid great stones on the mouth of the cave, which remain to this very day.

JOSHUA 10:28 Joshua took Makkedah on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, with its king. He utterly destroyed them and all the souls who were in it. He left no one remaining. He did to the king of Makkedah as he had done to the king of Jericho.

Verse 28

That day Joshua took Makkedah - It is very possible that Makkedah was taken on the evening of the same day in which the miraculous solstice took place; but as to the other cities mentioned in this chapter, they certainly were subdued some days after, as it is not possible that an army, exhausted as this must have been with a whole night's march, and two days' hard fighting, could have proceeded farther than Makkedah that night; the other cities were successively taken in the following days.

JOSHUA 10:29 Joshua passed from Makkedah, and all Israel with him, to Libnah, and fought against Libnah.

Verse 29

Fought against Libnah - This city was near Makkedah, see Jos 15:42, and fell to the tribe of Judah, Jos 10:20, Jos 10:42, and was given to the priests, Jos 21:13. Sennacherib besieged it, after he had been obliged to raise the siege of Lachish. See 2Kgs 19:8; Isa 37:8.

JOSHUA 10:30 The LORD delivered it also, with its king, into the hand of Israel. He struck it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls who were in it. He left no one remaining in it. He did to its king as he had done to the king of Jericho.

JOSHUA 10:31 Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, to Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it.

JOSHUA 10:32 The LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel. He took it on the second day, and struck it with the edge of the sword, with all the souls who were in it, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

Verse 32

Lachish - It appears that this was anciently a very strong place; notwithstanding the people were panic-struck, and the Israelites flushed with success, yet Joshua could not reduce it till the second day, and the king of Assyria afterwards was obliged to raise the siege. See above, and see the note on Jos 10:3.

JOSHUA 10:33 Then Horam king of Gezer came up to help Lachish; and Joshua struck him and his people, until he had left him no one remaining.

Verse 33

Horam king of Gezer - It is likely that Horam was in a state of alliance with the king of Lachish, and therefore came to his assistance as soon as it appeared that he was likely to be attacked. Joshua probably sent a detachment against him, before he was able to form a junction with the forces of Lachish; and utterly destroyed him and his army. Gezer is supposed to have been situated near

Azotus. See 1 Maccabees 16:34. It fell to the tribe of Ephraim, Jos 16:3, but was probably taken afterwards by some of the remnant of the Canaanitish nations; for we find it was given by Pharaoh to his son-in-law Solomon, 1Kgs 9:16, which proves that it had got out of the possession of the Israelites previously to the days of Solomon.

JOSHUA 10:34 Joshua passed from Lachish, and all Israel with him, to Eglon; and they encamped against it fought against it.

Verse 34

Eglon - It is likely that this town was not any great distance from Lachish. See on Jos 10:3 (note).

JOSHUA 10:35 They took it on that day, and struck it with the edge of the sword. He utterly destroyed all the souls who were in it that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

JOSHUA 10:36 Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, to Hebron; and they fought against it.

Verse 36

Hebron - and the king thereof - See the note on Jos 10:3. From Jos 10:23 we learn that the king of Hebron was one of those five whom Joshua slew and hanged on five trees at Makkedah. How then can it be said that he slew the king of Hebron when he took the city, which was some days after the transactions at Makkedah? Either this slaying of the king of Hebron must refer to what had already been done, or the Hebronites, finding that their king fell in battle, had set up another in his place; which was the king Joshua slew, after he had taken the city and its dependencies, as is related Jos 10:37. It appears that the city of Hebron had fallen back into the hands of the Canaanites, for it was again taken from them by the tribe of Judah, Jdg 1:10. Debir had also fallen into their hands, for it was reconquered by Othniel, the son-in-law of Caleb, Jdg 1:11-13. The manner in which Calmet accounts for this is very natural: Joshua, in his rapid conquests, contented himself with taking, demolishing, and burning those cities; but did not garrison any of them, for fear of weakening his army. In several instances no doubt the scattered Canaanites returned, repopled, and put those cities in a state of defense. Hence the Israelites were obliged to conquer them a second time. This is a more rational way of accounting for these things, than that which supposes that the first chapter of Judges gives the more detailed account of the transactions recorded here; for there it is expressly said, that these transactions took place after the death of Joshua, (see Jdg 1:1), and consequently cannot be the same that are mentioned here.

JOSHUA 10:37 They took it, and struck it with the edge of the sword, with its king and all its cities, and all the souls who were in it. He left no one remaining, according to all that he had done to Eglon; but he utterly destroyed it, and all the souls who were in it.

JOSHUA 10:38 Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to Debir, and fought against it.

JOSHUA 10:39 He took it, with its king and all its cities. They struck them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls who were in it. He left no one remaining. As he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to its king; as he had done also to Libnah, and to its king.

Verse 39

Destroyed all the souls - ויחרִימוּ אֶת כָּל נַפְשׁוֹ vaiyacharimu eth col nephesh, they brought every person under an anathema; they either slew them or reduced them to a state of slavery. Is it reasonable to say those were slain who were found in arms, of the others they made slaves?

JOSHUA 10:40 So Joshua struck all the land, the hill country, and the South, and the lowland, and the slopes, and all their kings. He left no one remaining, but he utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the LORD, the God of Israel, commanded.

Verse 40

All the country of the hills - See the note on Deu 1:7.

Destroyed all that breathed - Every person found in arms who continued to resist; these were all destroyed, - those who submitted were spared: but many no doubt made their escape, and afterwards reoccupied certain parts of the land. See Jos 10:36, Jos 10:37.

JOSHUA 10:41 Joshua struck them from Kadesh Barnea even to Gaza, and all the country of Goshen, even to Gibeon.

Verse 41

And all the country of Goshen - Calmet contends that this was the very same country in which the Hebrews dwelt before their departure from Egypt; and according to this hypothesis he has constructed his map, causing it to extend from the Nile, which was called the river of Egypt, along the frontiers of the land of Cush or Arabia. It however appears plain that there was a city named Goshen in the tribe of Judah, see Jos 15:51; and this probably gave name to the adjacent country which may be that referred to above.

JOSHUA 10:42 Joshua took all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.

Verse 42

Did Joshua take at one time - That is, he defeated all those kings, and took all their cities, in One campaign; this appears to be the rational construction of the Hebrew. But these conquests were so rapid and stupendous, that they cannot be attributed either to the generalship of Joshua, or the

valor of the Israelites; and hence the author himself, disclaiming the merit of them, modestly and piously adds, because the Lord God of Israel fought for Israel. It was by this aid that Joshua took all these kings and their land at one time - in a single campaign. And when all the circumstances related in this chapter are properly weighed, we shall find that God alone could have performed these works, and that both reason and piety require that to Him alone they should be attributed.

1. The principal subjects of this important chapter have been considered so much in detail in the preceding notes, that there is little room to add any thing to what has already been said. The principal subject is the miracle of the sun's standing still; and to assert that all difficulties have been removed by the preceding notes and observations, would be to say what the writer does not believe, and what few readers would perhaps feel disposed to credit. Yet it is hoped that the chief difficulties have been removed, and the miracle itself shown to have nothing contradictory in it. If, as is generally believed, the sun and moon were objects of the Canaanitish adoration, the miracle was graciously calculated to check this superstition, and to show the Israelites, as well as the Canaanites, the vanity of such worship, and the folly of such dependence. Even their gods at the command of a servant of Jehovah, were obliged to contribute to the destruction of their votaries. This method of checking superstition and destroying idolatry God adopted in the plagues which he inflicted upon the Egyptians; and by it at once showed his justice and his mercy. See the concluding observations on Exo 12:51 (note).

2. The same God who appeared so signally in behalf of his people of old is still the governor of the heavens and the earth; and, if applied to, will do every thing essentially necessary for the extension of his truth and the maintenance of his religion among men. How is it that faith is so rarely exercised in his power and goodness? We have not, because we ask not. Our experience of his goodness is contracted, because we pray little and believe less. To holy men of old the object of faith was more obscurely revealed than to us, and they had fewer helps to their faith; yet they believed more, and witnessed greater displays of the power and mercy of their Maker. Reader, have faith in God, and know that to excite, exercise, and crown this, he has given thee his word and his Spirit; and learn to know that without him thou canst do nothing.

JOSHUA 10:43 Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp to Gilgal.
