

## JOSHUA'S LONG DAY

After leaving Egypt and wandering in the Sinai wilderness for forty years, Israel entered the land of Canaan late March to mid- April, 1448 B.C.<sup>1</sup> The Israelite leader, Joshua, had a clear-cut task set before him: to completely eradicate all the previous inhabitants of the land. The story is quite familiar to every Sunday school student: how the Israelites marched around Jericho until the city fell, the subsequent defeat at Ai followed by the judgment of Achan, the fall of Ai, and the ruse of the Gibeonites who tricked the Israelites into an unholy alliance. When the surrounding nations heard of that alliance, they attacked the Gibeonites who then sent to Joshua for help. The account of the battle that followed occupies about half of the tenth chapter of the book of Joshua where verses twelve through fourteen tell of the peculiar event which is commonly called *Joshua's long day*:

<sup>12</sup> Then spake Joshua 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 thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

<sup>13</sup> And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

<sup>14</sup> And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

### Reactions of the Commentators

The geocentric implications of this passage are obvious. Instead of the sun's motion through the sky being due to the rotation of the earth, here it states that the sun and moon daily move around the earth. The sun is commanded not to move or rise; it is not the earth which receives the commandment to stop turning. Over the last 400 years, this has been the source of much consternation among the commentators and Bible critics—both higher and lower critics. Their reactions fall into two main categories: those who wish to make the event to be a fiction and those who try to accommodate the account to modern science's insistence that the earth rotates daily on its axis. In either case, it is science that is held to be correct, and it is the Bible which is held to be in error and which must be conformed to modern belief.

Those who try to accommodate Joshua's long day to science fall into two groups. The first group includes those critics who try to blame the geocentric "flaw" in Joshua 10 on faulty transmission of the text or, at least, to faulty translation or a misunderstanding of what God meant to say. The second group consists of those who try to make of the event an illusion or else a quite natural occurrence. Generally, both groups will admit of a miracle, but not all will admit to a miracle in the sky; and all make the miracle something less than the Bible claims it to be.

### The Fiction Faction

Bible critics who claim that Joshua's long day is a fiction or allegory have contributed a great deal to our understanding of the event. Their main thrust is to disprove the account by showing either that there are no independent accounts and that Joshua 10 stands alone, or else to show that all accounts derive from one sun-stopping myth. The latter, for example, would be demonstrated if all accounts the world over stopped the sun in daytime. As a result of their efforts, we have a wide selection of tales to evaluate; and they do prove useful in understanding Joshua's long day as a worldwide event. We shall

look at those geographically unrelated accounts later in this chapter.

One of the fundamental assumptions of the fiction faction is that the Bible is the product of the human mind. This assumption is really what lies behind the agenda to collect the so-called “sun-catcher myths.” If Joshua’s long day is pure fiction, then the whole Bible may be relegated to the trashcan as nothing more than a pack of lies and fables. After all, if Joshua 10:12-14 cannot be trusted, what can be trusted in the Bible? The Bible claims itself inerrant. It either is or it is not. The fiction faction has decided that Joshua’s long day, if not the whole Bible, is bunk. What’s interesting is that most of those who have decided that are not yet ready to banish the Bible to the landfills of history.

### **Adjusting the Language**

Not all Bible critics are ready to throw out the Bible on the basis of the apparent conflict between the geocentric implications of Joshua’s long day and modern science’s heliocentric leanings. Many bend over backward to accommodate the Bible to science on this and other points. As far as Joshua’s long day is concerned, some have suggested that the effect was psychological, that the day only *seemed* supernaturally long. Deane made that proposal with these words:

...the Israelites may well have regarded the events of that one day as equivalent to the work of two, and thus in course of time it came to be believed in current tradition that the day was prolonged to twice its usual length, though Scripture itself nowhere supported the statement.<sup>2</sup>

There is one basic problem which must be dealt with by all who would wish to maintain that the actual time elapsed involved fifteen hours or less of daylight. Given the geography as related in Joshua 10, the Israelite army as a whole marched well over thirty miles. Any army would be hard pressed to march thirty miles in one day, let alone to fight as well. The larger the army, the slower it moves. Yet if Deane is correct, not only did the army march thirty miles, but it also fought a full-fledged battle as well, and all in twelve hours of daylight, (it being late March or April when these events took place). Deane, of course, assumes that men and not God authored the Bible. If that is the case, then the Bible can be safely ignored since God cannot be held accountable for the blunders of humanity.

It is very common to find commentators claiming that the Hebrew is mistranslated or misunderstood whenever the Bible disagrees with their notion of what it should say. When applied to Joshua’s long day, for example, one proposal is that the words “stand still” are better understood as “be silent” or “be still. Doing so caused the nineteenth century astronomer Maunder to claim that Joshua meant nothing more than that there be an end to the blazing noonday heat. According to Maunder, the miracle was the sudden appearance of storm clouds from the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>3</sup> To this Bernard Ramm concurs.<sup>4</sup>

Collett argues the same, claiming that the Hebrew should be translated “be inactive” or “be silent.” He then makes this astoundingly unscientific statement:

We have already seen that light is vocal, and it is generally held among scientific men that it is the action of the sun upon the earth that causes the latter to revolve [sic] upon its axis.<sup>5</sup>

In Collett’s opinion, light not only speaks, but sunlight shining on the earth is what causes the earth’s rotation. So, according to Collett, when the sun stopped shining at Joshua’s request, the earth stopped turning because there was no longer any sunlight to keep it turning. Both opinions are scientifically preposterous, especially the latter.

Boling<sup>6</sup> presents a look at the schizophrenia inherent in the “be silent” proposal. Although he translates Joshua 10:13 as “Sun was *stilled* and Moon stood fixed”; and so admits the interpretation “be still”: and although he allows that the Hebrew may mean “to be clouded over,” he believes that Joshua’s long day was an eclipse. Significantly, despite the above admission that the Hebrew might mean to “be still,” he finally contradicts his own translation by concluding that the Hebrew can only mean “stay put,” “hold a position,” or “strike a pose.”<sup>7</sup>

But the introduction of clouds to cover the sun could not in the least account for the report of the thirteenth verse that the “sun stood still” and the “moon stayed.” The only way that the Hebrew word *dawmam* could be translated as “silent” would be if the sun were making so much noise that it was either disrupting the battle or Joshua’s concentration. And, lest anyone doubt God’s ability to tell us plainly when the sun is covered with clouds, we present Ezekiel 32:7 for his consideration:

And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light.

Be that as it may, having Joshua say “stand still” to the sun does not change the content of the thirteenth verse where the sun is said to stand still. Generally, the commentators can get Joshua off the “scientific” hook, but they have no luck at all getting God off the hook in the thirteenth verse; it still reads that the sun “hasted not to go down about a whole day.”

Take the Ferar Fenton version from the early twentieth century as an example. Fenton rendered the twelfth and thirteenth verses of Joshua 10 as:

<sup>12</sup> Joshua also called to the Ever-living on that day: “Jehovah! Give the Amorites to the face of the children of Israel!” and he added, “Sun! In the eyes of Israel be still at Gibeon, and Moon! in the valley of Ailan!”

<sup>13</sup> And the sun and moon stood still, till the nation had mastered its foes! Is not this recorded in the true Record?—that the sun stood still in mid sky, and hastened not to set for about a full day?

Note how Fenton saved Joshua from making the “error” of thinking that the sun goes around the earth by having the words “in the eyes of Israel” be part of the quote rather than the commentary. Fenton may have saved Joshua’s pride, but God is still left “holding the bag” in the thirteenth verse, where the commentator’s words have not been changed. Fenton wrote in his foreword that his version was the “first ever” in which the translator “used his brain”!

### **The Jewish Commentators**

Oddly, only the Gentile commentators “know” enough Hebrew to notice that Joshua told the sun to be still: it seems to have escaped the Jewish commentators. Jewish scholars, both those who believed in the miracle and those who did not, make no such distinction in their writings; even among heliocentrists. One of the earliest Jewish commentators extant is Philo, who is notorious for bad paraphrasing and interpolating his own ideas into the Jewish text and history. His account:

And when Jesus arose to rule over the people, it came to pass in the day wherein he fought against the enemies, that the evening drew near, while the battle was strong, and Jesus said to the sun and the moon: O ye ministers that were appointed between the Most Mighty and his

sons, lo now, the battle goeth still, and do ye forsake your office? Stand still therefore today and give light unto his sons, and put darkness upon our enemies. And they did so.<sup>8</sup>

Note, no mention of “be silent.”

Manasseh Ben Israel summarized the mainline Jewish opinions on Joshua’s long day this way:<sup>9</sup>

Rabbi Levi Ben Gershon [Spain, circa 1300], philosophizing in the extreme, holds that the sun did not stop..., it is the agency of the mind that performs miracles...so that the miracle consists in taking revenge in so short a period.

In Spain, in the last half of the twelfth century, Maimonides taught that Joshua’s long day was “a most perfect day, that is like the longest summer day.” In other word, Maimonides did not believe it was a miracle. On the other hand, most Rabbis did believe in a long day, though they differed in opinion on how long the day ultimately was. Rabbi Joshua Ben Levi of Jerusalem about A.D. 200 advocates 24 hours. Three hundred years earlier, about 100 B.C., Rabbi Eliezer, also of Jerusalem, argued for a day of 36 hours. Rabbi Samuel Bar Nachman who lived around A.D. 320 held to a 48-hour day. So Jewish opinion was as divided as Christian opinion about what constituted Joshua’s long day.

The consensus of the early Jewish commentators is clear: none invoke the “be silent” approach. So they agree with Boling’s conclusion, mentioned earlier, that “be silent” and its variant forms are not valid translations of the Hebrew. As a result, the validity of adjusting the language to accommodate Joshua’s long day to science is thrown into question. There seems to be no basis left for doing so.

### **It’s Only Natural**

The second of the accommodation groups is those who advocate a naturalistic explanation for Joshua’s long day. We have already seen one such explanation when we looked at the suggestion that the Bible’s language be adjusted to mean that Joshua’s long day was nothing more than a cloud cover to cool the heat of the day. Related to this idea and also stemming from the “be silent” interpretation is the opinion that Joshua’s long day is an eclipse of the sun.

### **Was Joshua’s Long Day an Eclipse?**

An eclipse of the sun happens when the moon passes in front of the sun as seen from earth. If one is within about 100 miles from the center of the moon’s shadow, one may see a *total eclipse* of the sun, at which point the sun’s disk is obscured and one sees a halo around the sun (called the *corona*). An eclipse of the sun still inspires fear and awe among peoples of all nations. As a result, even though Babylonian astronomers were able to predict eclipses at the time of Joshua scholars still consider it reasonable to suppose that Israel’s enemies were terrified out of their wits by the sudden appearance of an eclipse. So it is that some critics even claim that it was the eclipse, and not God, that caused Israel’s enemies to flee.

Robert Dick Wilson (1856-1930) is regarded by many as the foremost linguistic scholar of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1930 he published an essay dealing with Joshua’s long day.<sup>10</sup> Fully aware of the error of rendering the Hebrew as “be silent,” Wilson took another common approach among Bible critics, which is to look to a *cognate*, i.e., related or similar language to get the meaning he wanted. In his case, he looked to the Babylonian.

Before we examine Wilson's work, let us give an example of how this approach can turn out. Many have commented on the similarities between English and Hebrew, on the many Hebrew words which are to be found in English. It has even been said that of all the modern languages, English is the closest to Hebrew. Based on that, it appears that English is cognate to Hebrew. Now suppose I am translating some English text into French and I come upon the English sentence "She hit me!" Now we all know that ladies do not hit people; only boys hit people. So I then conclude that the author of the original English sentence cannot have meant what he wrote. Perhaps a copyist error has crept into the text. Now it is possible that the "s" in the English text was inserted by an overzealous scribe. Now it so happens that in Hebrew, the sound "he" means "she" in English, and the sound "she" is equivalent to the English "he." So, since English is cognate to Hebrew, the original of, "She hit me," must be "He hit me!" This, of course, is nonsense. Using cognate languages to change interpretations of "difficult" Bible passages is done all too commonly.

After replacing the Hebrew words with their Babylonian (cognate) meanings, Wilson concluded that:

...the day of the battle had two comings-out of the sun, one at sunrise and the other at midday, when it came out from behind the moon; and that it had two goings-in, one when it went behind the moon and the other at sunset.<sup>11</sup>

On that basis, Wilson provides us with the following translation of Joshua 10:12-13:

<sup>12</sup> Be eclipsed, O Sun, in Gibeon, And thou moon in the valley of Ajalon!

<sup>13</sup> And the sun was eclipsed and the moon turned back, while the nation was avenged on its enemies. Is it not written upon the book of Jasher? And the sun stayed in the half of the heavens, And set not hastily as when a day is done.<sup>12</sup>

Now note that the geocentric "error" has been transferred to the *Book of Jasher*. Wilson had thus spared himself the shame and embarrassment of being regarded as an ignorant Bible thumper, for he writes:

I confess to a feeling of relief, as far as I myself am concerned, that I shall no longer feel myself forced by strict exegesis to believe that the Scriptures teach that there actually occurred a miracle involving so tremendous a reversal of all the laws of gravitation. It can readily be understood how the Jewish interpreters of latter times, either through ignorance, or because of their overwhelming desire to magnify their own importance in the scheme of the universe, should have embraced the opportunity that the ambiguous terms of this purely scientific account afforded them to enhance the magnitude of the divine interference on their behalf.<sup>13</sup>

Wilson is not alone in his belief that Joshua's long day was an eclipse of the sun. Boling<sup>14</sup> promotes the eclipse of September 30, 1131 B.C. as the very eclipse. Unfortunately, that is more than 200 years too late, given the biblical chronology.<sup>15</sup> Eugene Faulstich is of a different opinion. He prefers the eclipse of April 19, 1421 B.C.<sup>16</sup>

Although an eclipse seems to make sense if Joshua wanted to frighten his enemies and to diminish the heat of the day, there are severe problems with this interpretation. Insofar as the heat of the day is concerned, any relief granted the Israelites would also be granted Israel's enemies. More importantly, an eclipse is of a short duration, lasting at most eight minutes. Since the eclipse was already scheduled in God's timetable, how can Joshua 10:14 report that God had listened to the voice of a man? Faulstich

answers this by saying that God had Joshua's request in mind when he created the sun and moon and when he set the moon into orbit around the earth. In any case, there is no miracle involved, only a natural event.

The strongest support the eclipse advocates claim is found in Joshua 10:12, where Joshua tells the sun to stand still *over* Gibeon and the moon *in* the valley of Ajalon. Since there is only a matter of a few miles separating the two sites, how can the verse be literally true unless both the sun and moon were directly overhead? In that case, the moon must have been covering the sun, the very situation known as an eclipse.

If, however, Joshua is speaking as a man, as verse 14 says, he need not be speaking an inspired revelation. Joshua could be using the language of appearance, an error which God cannot afford to commit. There need be no eclipse.

Note that the date is mid- to late-April. At that time, the sun is overhead along a circle no further north than one touching the southern-most tip of the Red Sea. Even at its furthest point north (the first day of summer) the sun is overhead only in a circle running through southern Egypt. Gibeon is a good seven degrees or 700 miles further north. The sun is never overhead at Gibeon and never has been in all recorded history. The second thing we note is that the moon is far larger than the valley of Ajalon. Taking Joshua's statement literally would have flattened the entire scene as the moon came down to rest in the valley. It is evident that Joshua could see the moon "in" the valley in order to tell it to stand still. If the moon were close enough to the sun for an eclipse, Joshua would not have seen the moon until the eclipse was actually under way. Why did he not then tell it, too, to stand still "over" the city of Gibeon? So it is that our conclusion is that Joshua was speaking as a man, that is, phenomenologically, when he told the sun to stand still *over* Gibeon and the moon *in* the valley of Ajalon, and that God did not put the words into his mouth in Joshua 10:12. (Recall verse 14.) By contrast, in the thirteenth verse God does not repeat Joshua's error of speaking phenomenologically.

### **The Refraction Rationalization**

In Chapter 5 we saw that one of the rationalizations for Hezekiah's sign was that it was an optical illusion. The same has been proposed for Joshua's long day. Keil and Delitsch are among those who hold that both Hezekiah's sign and Joshua's long day were optical phenomena:

an optical stoppage of the sun, or rather a continuance of visibility of the sun above the horizon.<sup>17</sup>

Basic behind this proposal is that the rotation of the earth did not stop but that God miraculously bent the light rays of the sun and moon so that, in Canaan at least, the sun and moon appeared to remain above the horizon. Yet the plain wording of the text is that the "sun stopped" and "the moon stayed"; it does not say that God "kept the light of the sun and moon" shining over the battlefield. Now God could have said that, but he did not.

### **The Gradual Slowdown**

Until about the middle of this century, most critics of Joshua's long day had the earth suddenly stopping its rotation. Such a catastrophic change, unless it were supernaturally controlled, would have to occur very slowly or else the earth would be torn to pieces and the oceans would have left their basins and

washed over the continents. Recognizing this problem in the mid- nineteenth century, Gausson<sup>18</sup> dealt extensively on how God could slow down the earth's rotation for Joshua without causing those earthly catastrophes. In the twentieth century the strongest proponent of the rotation slowdown is Immanuel Velikovsky who proposed that the earth was tidally slowed in its rotation by a close passage of the planet Venus and then sped up again to its original rotation speed when Venus left.<sup>19</sup>

Now there is no hint in Joshua 10 that there was a gradual slowing of the diurnal motion, but we can give an analogy which will enable an appreciation of the problem, as it is commonly defined. Since the equatorial rotation speed of the earth is about 1,000 miles per hour, which is the same speed as a jet fighter, we can use the slowing of a jet plane for comparison. Suppose there is no turbulence buffeting the jet and suppose that there is a saucer filled with water in the plane. The problem is to stop the plane without sliding the water out of the saucer. A little experimentation shows that one may decelerate the dish at about 0.5 miles per hour per second without spilling the water. If so, we conclude that it would take about 35 minutes to stop the earth's rotation without the oceans leaving their basins. Such may work for a saucer, but oceans are much deeper and have much more energy. Small shifts in the ocean bottom have been known to cause huge waves, for example. Still, 35 minutes, though optimistic, is not an unreasonable response time to Joshua's request. A further problem is that the atmosphere does not behave as well as the ocean in this regard. The air near the earth's surface would slow down first, but the air aloft would keep going, dragging the air below with it. The slowdown time needed to avoid 1,000 mile-per-hour winds scouring the earth's equator amounts to days, a most unreasonable time to respond to Joshua's request. Lest the reader conclude that the geocentric explanation has no such problem, we note that the geocentric case suffers the same problems. Insofar as the slowing-down of the earth's rotation is concerned, there is no way to escape the conclusion that Joshua's long day was a miracle.

### **The Tippie-Top**

Increasingly, heliocentric apologists have tried to abstract the meaning of the sun's arrest to such a degree that the actual intent of the passage is virtually unrecognizable. Howard Rand suggested that perhaps the axis of rotation of the earth changed in such a way that for about one day the battle site became the rotational north pole.<sup>20</sup> Although not original with Rand, the idea has gained popularity lately because of the influence of Velikovsky.

In the tippie-top scenario, some event inside the earth or else the fly-by of some planetary body caused the earth's rotational poles to move in such a way that, for one day, Joshua's battle site was at the north pole. One obvious problem is that the moon would still be seen to go around the sun during the battle. But the text says that the moon, too, stood still.

Not so obviously, Professor James Hanson of the Cleveland State University in Cleveland, Ohio, has shown mathematically that Rand's is not a possible explanation. Furthermore, Hanson also has shown that the explanation of Joshua's long day as proposed by Velikovsky is physically impossible unless Venus were still orbiting the earth today in an orbit even closer to the earth than is the moon.<sup>21</sup> In fact, none of the naturalistic proposals put forth to account for Joshua's long day are physically possible. The simple choice remains: Joshua's long day is either a miracle, or it is pure fiction.

### **The Book of Jasher**

There is one other tact which a handful of commentators have taken in order to allegorize or else

account for Joshua's long day, and that is to assign parts of Joshua 10:12-14 to the book of Jasher mentioned in the thirteenth verse. It is their suggestion that there never was a miracle, that Joshua merely asked the sun to be "stilled," and that centuries later some nameless "editor" incorporated the fictional account of the sun standing still from an uninspired book entitled the *Book of Jasher*. The Hebrew word, *jasher*, means "upright" or "just." The term could just as well refer to the Bible itself as to any other book. Nevertheless, there is a book in existence today which some claim is the very *Book of Jasher* mentioned in Joshua. This seems extremely unlikely, however, since that *Book of Jasher* was apparently written sometime after the time of David as it contains several poems attributed to David. Most Christian commentators believe the book to be a forgery, written because the biblical reference afforded the occasion for its creation. The text of the *Book of Jasher* exalts the heroic deeds of the great men of Israel, but the men exalted therein were not necessarily righteous men, the title to the contrary. Then, as now, a nation's "great men" are seldom righteous and just. It appears, then, that the real *Book of Jasher* referred to in scripture is either the Bible itself, as the book of the upright and righteous, or else it refers to a long-lost book.

### **Joshua's Long Day around the World?**

Having concluded that Joshua's long day is a miracle, we may ask whether or not it was restricted just to the area of Canaan or whether it was global in scope. Certainly a "missing day" would generate considerable consternation among the peoples of the world, provided it was a global event. Are there other accounts of a long day or even a long night? Indeed, we can find stories of a long night as well as a long day. We can even find tales where the sun hung near the horizon for a long time. All the accounts taken together allow us to ascertain the time of day when Joshua told the sun to stand still.

Some of the world's recitations of Joshua's long day are vague and unspecific while others are quite clear. Among the former are those which relate only that the people had knowledge of the concept that the sun, moon, and stars can reverse their motions. An example of one of these is the account referred to by Augustine in *The City of God* where he quotes the *Aeneid* about a witch who:

...can reverse the wheeling of the planets, halt rivers in their flowing.<sup>22</sup>

### **Joshua's Long Day in Africa**

Toward the end of the last century, Charles Adiel Lewis Totten, then a retired Professor of Military Science from Yale University, published a controversial study on Joshua's long day.<sup>23</sup> The book dealt extensively with Joshua's long day and Hezekiah's sign. In recent times attempts to discredit it center more on the person of Totten than they do on the mathematics and science involved. Totten was the editor of *Our Race*, a publication devoted to the promotion of what today is called "British Israelism," although Totten's stance is eminently more realistic and moderate than that taken by that faction today. Robert Olden<sup>24</sup> says Totten obtained most of his material from J. B. Dimbleby of South Hackney, England, who was the premier chronologist of the British Chronological Society. Lest Totten be accused of plagiarism, Dimbleby is cited numerous times in Totten's works. Totten has also been accused of worshipping the Great Pyramid of Giza, from which, it is claimed, he received his inspiration for his work on Joshua's long day. Actually, the latter sounds more like Dimbleby, for a reading of Totten's works on the Great Pyramid reveals none of the mysticism implied by the charge.

Anyhow, flawed though some of Totten's works might be, in his book, he relates two independent and geographically distinct accounts of Joshua's long day. One of Totten's sources is a report by the Greek

historian Herodotus who wrote that when he visited Egypt, the priests there showed him an ancient manuscript which told the story of a day which lasted about twice as long as a normal day. Now the Egyptians had water clocks at that time so that they could accurately measure the duration of the day, not being dependent on the motion of the sun, moon, and stars, as would other peoples around the world. Totten's second account is from the Chinese which we shall present later.

For the Egyptian account, we find that the French classical scholar, Fernand Crombette, translated some Egyptian hieroglyphics which tell of Joshua's long day.<sup>25</sup> The text starts out with an edict from the king to exempt from taxation those who had been victims of a flood some two weeks earlier. Evidently the flood had been caused by an unusually high tide. The cause, according to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, was:

The sun, thrown into confusion, had remained low on the horizon, and by not rising had spread terror amongst the great doctors. Two days had been rolled into one. The morning was lengthened to one-and-a-half times the normal period of effective daylight. A certain time after this divine phenomenon, the master had an image built to keep further misfortune from the country.

Hephaistos...grant protection to your worshipers. Prevent the words of these foreign travelers from having any effect. They are impostors. Let these enemies of the sacrifices to the images be destroyed in the temples of the great gods by the people of all classes. Make life harder for these cursed worshipers of the Eternal. Punish them. Increase the hardships of these shepherds. Reduce the size of their herds. Burn their dwellings.

Rameses, our celestial ancestral chief; you who forced these wretched people to work, who ill-treated them, who gave them no help when they were in need: cast them into the sea. They made the moon stop in a small angle at the edge of the horizon. In a small angle on the edge of the horizon, the sun itself, which had just risen at the spot where the moon was going, instead of crossing the sky stayed where it was. Whilst the moon, following a narrow path, reduced its speed and climbed slowly, the sun stopped moving and its intensity of light was reduced to the brightness at daybreak. The waves formed a wall of water against the boats that were in the harbor and those that had left it. Those fishermen that had ventured onto the deck to watch the waves were washed into the sea.

The tide, which had risen high, overflowed into the plains where the herds were grazing. The cattle drowned represented half the herds of Lower Egypt. The remains of abandoned boats broken against the sides of the canals were piled up in places. Their anchors, which should have protected them, had been ground into them. Quite out of control, the sea had penetrated deep into the country. The expanding waters reached the fortified walls constructed by Rameses, the celestial ancestral chief. The sea swept around both sides of the region behind, sterilizing the gar dens as it went and causing openings in the dikes. A great country had been turned into a wilderness and brought into poverty. All the crops that had been planted had been destroyed and heaps of cereal shoots lay scattered on the ground.

The Crombette account is significant for a number of reasons. For one, it tells that the moon "climbed slowly," which would be correct if the moon kept its orbital speed but stopped its daily motion. This is allowed by Joshua 10:13's weaker statement on the moon: "and the moon stayed," instead of the stronger "stopped," for "stay" may mean "to linger or wait to witness an event." Likewise, Crombette's interpretation that the moon was going to the spot where the sun had risen is thus explained by having

the moon continue its orbital motion and its being located west of the sun, perhaps near last quarter.

Whether or not the tides mentioned in translation were really tides or a storm swell cannot be said. It is possible that the tidal bulge kept moving, but it is unlikely that the narrows of the Nile delta and the narrowness of the canals mentioned caused a bore wave, for then such should always have been the case under normal tidal conditions. It is possible, though unlikely, that the breakup for the tidal bulge may have caused waves which interfered with each other and that Egypt's dikes might have broken at one or two points by constructive interference, thus the resulting flooding. But it seems more likely that the events mentioned in Egypt were the result of a severe storm swell in the Mediterranean caused by the very storm that formed the hailstones mentioned in Joshua 10:11:

And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

Although most commentators insist that Joshua's long day started at noon or later, the sun is here mentioned low on the horizon. The Bible itself does not mention the time when Joshua spake. For comparison with the Egyptian account, and complementing it, there is a West African story of a long night.<sup>26</sup> In that account, the night lasted way too long because the owl over slept and did not awaken the sun.

### **The Chinese Account of Joshua's Long Day**

The second secular source about Joshua's long day, which was mentioned by Totten, is based on what seems to be a recently lost ancient Chinese manuscript. In 1810 Gill presents the account:

In the Chinese history<sup>27</sup> it is reported, that in the time of their seventh emperor, Yao, the sun did not set for ten days, and that men were afraid the world would be burnt, and there were great fires at that time; and though the time of the sun's standing still were enlarged beyond the bounds of truth, yet it seems to refer to this fact, and was manifestly about the same time; for this miracle was wrought in the year of the world 2554, which fell in the 75<sup>th</sup>, or, as some say, the 67<sup>th</sup> year of that emperor's reign, who reigned 90 years.<sup>28</sup>

Now the year of the world 2554 is identical to Bouw's independently derived biblical chronology for the date of Joshua's long day.<sup>29</sup> Incidentally, note that a 90-year reign (not Yao's age) is thoroughly consistent with the 110 to 120 year ages achieved by Moses, Aaron, and Joshua who would have been contemporaries of Yao. The length of time mentioned by the Chinese, ten days, may be too long simply because the Chinese did not have clocks which ran independently of the sun's motion so that the estimate would be purely subjective. Probably, the duration was exaggerated both by the trauma of the event and in the transmission of the story through time.

Despite the solid-sounding account by Gill, manuscripts which have survived to the twentieth century do not include the long day. The first mention of the long day associated with emperor Yao was by Hübner in 1733.<sup>30</sup> Although Hübner was quoted during that century, no manuscript exists today. Those manuscripts which have survived to this day differ from Hübner's in at least two ways: first, there is no mention of the 10-day long day, and second, the reign of Yao is reported to be 100 years, not 90.

Although there is no mention of the ten-day long day in current Chinese accounts, there is one in the “Brahman Yast,” one of the books of the *Avesta*. That reference is not, however, to a past event. Instead, it is a prophecy. The *Avesta* says that 1600 years from the date of the Persian culture (corresponding to about A.D. 1200), Hushedar will be born and, at age 30, he will command the sun to stand still for 10 days and nights. Obviously, the prophecy never came to pass, still it is strongly reminiscent of the Chinese account and may either have confused Hübner or else may reflect the actual Chinese account used by Hübner.

### **Joshua’s Long Day in North America**

Tales relating to Joshua’s long day abound in North America. Almost all of the tales in North America tell of a long night. The only exceptions are those related in the chapter on Hezekiah’s sign. Olcott<sup>31</sup> has collected five of particular interest.

1. The Ojibways tell of a long night without any light.<sup>32</sup>
2. The Wyandot Indians told missionary Paul Le Jeune of a long night.<sup>33</sup>
3. The Dogrib Indians of the North-West tell of a day when the sun was caught at noon and it instantly became dark.<sup>34</sup>
4. The Omahas say that once the sun was caught in a trap by a rabbit who checked his traps at the break of dawn, presumably before sunrise.<sup>35</sup> (This may be Hezekiah’s sign, instead.) Finally,
5. the Bungee Indians from the Lake Winnipeg area of Canada also tell of a long night.<sup>36</sup>

The preponderance of long night tales in the Americas would rule out the theory that Joshua’s long day was a miracle which was local to Canaan. It also rules out the speculation that the story migrated around the world, for then it would everywhere be a long day (or a long night), but not a mixture of long days and long nights.

### **The Long Night in the Central and South Americas**

Turning to the south, we find that Central and South America similarly experienced a long night. In the *Annals of Chauhtitlan*, the Mexican Indians tell of a long night. The Aztecs wrote of an extended period of time when the sun did not rise. According to their legend, there had been no sun for many years.

... So a conclave of the gods was called in Teotihuacan, and there it was decided that one of them should offer himself as a sacrifice that once again the world might have a sun ... The sacrificed gods had disappeared in the brazier’s flames, but as there was no sign of the sun, the remaining wonder when it would first appear. At long last, the sun burst forth ... But the sun, despite his brilliant light, did not move; he hung on the edge of the sky, apparently unwilling to begin his appointed task.<sup>37</sup>

Likewise, in their national book the *Popol Vuh*, (which translates into “Book of the Princes,”) the Quiché Mayans of Guatemala wrote about the people’s reaction to a long night with these words:

They did not sleep; they remained standing and great was the anxiety of their hearts and their stomachs for the coming of the dawn and the day ... “Oh, ... if we only could see the rising of the sun! What shall we do now?” ... They talked, but they could not calm their hearts which

were anxious for the coming of the dawn.<sup>38</sup>

Now in recent years it has become fashionable to assail the above translations on the grounds that they are biased towards the Judeo-Christian history of the world. For example, the Aztec god who sacrificed himself was to have the honor of becoming the sun. His condition for rising was that the gods kill themselves, which they ultimately were forced to do.<sup>39</sup> It would seem that this is a creation myth rather than an account of Joshua's long day, but the nature of Central American folk tales is very complex. For example, according to the myth there had been a sun before, and it had not risen for so long that people feared it dead. So how is it a creation account?

A similar situation exists with the *Popol Vuh*. According to some, that entire work is nothing more than one long creation myth. But the creation of man comes very late in the *Popol Vuh*, long after people have existed and had many adventures. The text quoted above from Goetz and Morley lies embedded in a lengthy section which starts with the longing and waiting for the sun, digresses into the origin of fire, and makes mention of the parting of the sea for the newly-arrived forefathers before resuming the story of the long wait for the dawn. If this is a creation account which occurred before the creation of man and which speaks of the creation of the sun, why are there many priests and tribes in existence? Why the reference to the forefathers who existed then if man had yet to be created? Such situations are typical in the literature of that region and time, and it may easily be understood in the light of the purpose of these tales: they exist to tie together salient pieces of history. So it is, too, with the Aztec tale. There was a long night, but the story has been expanded almost beyond recognition. Similarly with the *Popol Vuh* there is evidence of changes in the tale even over the last few centuries.

As for the charge that early translators were biased, are the anti-Christian translators not equally biased for their view? The fact remains, there is a reference here to a long night, exactly as would be expected if the various accounts around the world of Joshua's long day were true. Besides the accounts of a long night in North and Central America, there is also at least one story of a long night in Peru. According to Montesinos, the collector of the tale, the sun was hidden for nearly 20 hours in the third year of the reign of Titu Yupanqui Pachacuti II because of sin in the land.<sup>40</sup> Titu Yupanqui Pachacuti II ruled about 1400 B.C.

### **The Long Sunset**

Stories of a long day and stories of a long night: are there any stories of a long sunrise or a long sunset? There may be some uncollected stories of a long sunrise in Africa, but none have surfaced. There is, however, a story of a long sunset in the Fiji Islands. J. G. Frazer tells of a tradition on the island of Lakomba in the eastern Fiji Islands where there is a hillside with a patch of weeds on it. The story goes that natives will tie the weeds together in order to keep the sun from going down. It is said that the sun did, indeed, stop from setting at one time.<sup>41</sup>

Although there are several other traditions of stopping the sun, most are remotely, if at all, connected to Joshua's long day. In Australia, for example, if a native wanted to stop the sun he would place a piece of sod in the fork of a tree. Similar traditions exist in Africa and in Central America. A tradition of that nature in Japan meant nothing more than the belief that a man's friends would wait dinner for him if he was going to arrive home late. Still, underlying all but the last of these traditions is the idea that the sun can, and by implication, did stop at least once upon a time.

## **The Extra-Long Night**

A handful of long day and long night tales do not seem to fit. The Hawaiian tale of Maui's capture of the sun is one, for it implies an arrest of the sun at sunrise. It is similar to the myths from other Polynesian Islands peoples, and those similarities serve to tie it to Peru's Hezekiah's sign accounts, not Joshua's long day.

Three peoples have a tale of a night which lasted several months: the Japanese, an ancient tribe in Lithuania, and the Cherokee Indians of North America. The Cherokee and Japanese tales are virtually identical and seem to stem from the same source. Both have the sun hiding in a cave for a long time and being tricked out of the cave.<sup>42</sup>

The account from Lithuania was collected by Jerome of Prague when he visited the "heathen" of the area in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. There he discovered a tribe which had migrated from the east and which also told tales of a night lasting several months.

There are two possible reasons for these accounts. All could be related to the Japanese account and could reflect either a volcanic eruption which darkened the sky over Japan and Siberia for months on end or else, it could be a tale of the long Arctic night, almost six months long at the pole. A two-month night is experienced about the latitude of Point Barrow, Alaska. Perhaps the accounts relate to these natural events. In any case, they stand in stark contrast with the other long day and long night tales from around the world.

## **Joshua's Long Day and the Computers**

In the late 1970s and early 1980s two stories appeared in print about a computer finding a missing day. The first is told by Harold Hill in his book, *How to Live Like a King's Kid*.<sup>43</sup> In Hill's own words:

When NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center here at Greenbelt, Md. first went on the air, a horrendous technical boo-boo surfaced, causing a complete shutdown [of the computer] after less than an hour's operation.

I was called in as an outside consultant and came up with a "quick-fix" that saved the day for them.

After things fired up I stayed around as an interested observer, to catch the very beginning of our Space Exploration activity. That was somewhere back in the sixties.

... A large team of IBM technicians was present to debug the system and get it running. No one really knew much except that it looked O.K. on paper. It was during that time that I heard about the aberration in the location of the Heavenly bodies that led to the Bible account of how the MISSING DAY incident came about.

I was not the one who came up with the Bible answer, nor do I know the names of those involved. I simply reported it as it came to me and used it in my lectures on the Bible and Science, which I frequently deliver in schools and Colleges in Science Seminars.

A Newspaper reporter in Spencer, Indiana [Mary Kathryn Bryan in 1970] came across a copy,

and fed it into the major News Services. To date I have received over 10,000 letters from all parts of the world.<sup>44</sup>

Many have correctly pointed out that computers do not stop “and put up a red flag.”<sup>45</sup> Some have reported that Hill has retracted his story, but that is not true. Hill still maintains its veracity even though NASA has disavowed any knowledge of him, and others have charged him with various degrees of fraud. It has also been suggested that Hill had based the story on Totten’s book,<sup>46</sup> but Hill claims not to have known of the Totten book at the time.<sup>47</sup> However, the main problem with Hill’s story is that it would require an independent date for some event such as an eclipse of the sun prior to Joshua’s long day. The most ancient of these observations does not go back as far as 1,000 B.C., let alone 1,500 B.C. Still, Hill’s story raised quite a bit of interest.

A second computer account of a missing day appeared in the Swedish *Goteborgs Tidningen* on March 15, 1981. According to that story, Stig Flodmark of the University of Stockholm had discovered that the earth’s axis had flipped on May 3, 1375 B.C. and associated that with Joshua’s long day. This proposal is the same as that of Rand who was mentioned earlier in this chapter. According to Flodmark, an Ugaritic astronomer described the event and gave the date. Flodmark refers to a book entitled *Tidal Friction and the Earth’s Rotation*.<sup>48</sup> The comment by the author of the quoted paper, F. R. Stephenson, in summarizing the Ugaritic observation, is “Sun put to shame; went down in daytime.” This hardly describes a tippie top phenomenon, especially with Gibeon at the rotational north pole for the day, for the sun would have been circumpolar for the Ugaritic astronomer; it would not have gone “down in daytime.”

### **Related Verses**

Joshua 10:13 does not stand alone in the Bible. There are several similar verses. One of those is found in Habakkuk 3:11 which states:

The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear.

Now Habakkuk 3:11 is a double reference: in the first instance, it refers to a future event foreseen by Habakkuk; and in the second instance, it refers back to the taking of Canaan, back to Joshua’s long day. As such, we may consider it as a unit with Joshua 10.

An apparent prophetic reference to Joshua’s long day is found in Job 9:7 which seems to foretell the events described in Joshua 10. It is evident that Job was most likely a contemporary of Abraham or, at least, Job lived no later than Joseph or his sons.<sup>49</sup> The verse reads as follows:

[God] commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars.

### **The Date of Joshua’s Long Day**

We noted that the entry into the promised land was early April of 1448 B.C. Can we ascertain the month and day of Joshua’s long day with any degree of certainty? It turns out that we can come close.

When the Israelites entered the promised land, it was the tenth day of the first month (Joshua 4:19), shortly before the time of the Passover which is at the time of the full moon. Now in 1448 B.C. the new

moon and the first day of spring closely coincided, the first day of spring being March 19.5 at the time;<sup>50</sup> so we can date the very entry into the promised land as Thursday, March 29, give or take a day.

The events which are described between the Passover and the battle at Gibeon all took time. The Passover celebration itself took a week; the fall of Jericho took seven days; the fall of Ai took at least four days; the construction of the altar on mount Ebal and the copying of the law probably took a week or more; the trickery of the Gibeonites took still more time; the communication of that trickery to the Gibeonites' neighbors and the subsequent formation of an alliance, not to mention their march to Gibeon, all took time. It is reasonable to assume that over a month passed between the celebration of the Passover and Joshua's long day. This is entirely consistent with the geometry of sun and moon presented in Joshua 10 where the moon seems to be west of the sun and both visible in daylight. Given that the time for the event was 9:00 a.m., the moon was most likely near or after its last quarter. More specifically, then, it appears that Joshua's long day happened somewhere between May 8 to May 15 of 1448 B.C.

### **The Commentators Concluded**

It should be painfully clear by this time that not only was Joshua's long day a real miracle, but also it presents man with a great problem: either God writes what he means and means what he writes, or he does not. Most Christian scholars over the centuries have been of the opinion that God needs them to make his truth known, that God is incapable of explaining certain matters to man without that help. This is why most churches hold tradition over the authority of the Bible. Joshua 10:12-14 strikes at the heart of this heresy.

In the twelfth verse it can be argued that when Joshua spoke, he was simply ignorant of the rotation of the earth and thus accused the sun and moon of moving. Hence he spoke geocentrically. This would not introduce an error in the Bible since this is a direct quote. All that inerrancy requires is that the quote must be an accurate quote. That's fine and well for Joshua, but what of the thirteenth verse? Who is the writer who reports that the "sun stood still, and the moon stayed?" The Bible says that God is its author through the Holy Ghost (2 Timothy 3:16). Verses 13 and 14 of Joshua 10 present us with the point of view of the author, and the author is God himself. God cannot lie, so this point of view must be true. If the perspective is not true, then either God is lying or someone else inspired the wording. If the author is not God then who is he? And just what is that person doing putting words in God's mouth? If this verse cannot be trusted, then how can we trust any other Bible passage? Could not the same shadow of doubt be cast onto any other particular passage of scripture? And what, then, becomes of the Bible's witness of itself in such passages as 2 Timothy 3:16-17? Or if the commentator is God himself, is he speaking phenomenologically or anthropocentrically? Or is that impossible?

For the moment, let us assume that God is speaking either anthropocentrically or phenomenologically. Let us further suppose that this is not the only place in the Bible where God does so but that, in particular, he does so in all geocentric passages. Then what does that mean? Just what does it mean to speak *anthropocentrically* or *phenomenologically*?

*Anthropocentrism* literally means "man-centeredness." In this view, God puts himself in man's place and speaks from a human perspective. Given that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, this is not at all far-fetched, but does this really excuse the God of Truth, who is the Truth, from writing the whole truth and nothing but the truth? God forbid! Note how simply God could have avoided the contradiction between heliocentrism and geocentricity if instead he had started the thirteenth verse with: "And the earth stopped its turning ...." God does not go out of his way to avoid difficult wording

just for the sake of simplicity (Proverbs 1:22). Nor does He express the science of the Bible in simple terms. Take Job chapter 38, for example, where two or three “puzzling” and “poetic” passages have in, recent years, been found to be literally true; yet most of the chapter is completely above man’s comprehension. Simply put, God does not speak anthropocentrically because God is not a man.

*Phenomenology* is a science which deals with appearances rather than with actual existence (the study of the latter is called *ontology*). Phenomenology is based on the observation that appearances can be deceiving. Thus when one claims that Joshua 10:13 is *phenomenological*, one effectively claims that God is not presenting the situation as it *actually* is but only presents it as it *appears to be*. If the appearance is not the same as actual fact, then in the final analysis God is not relaying accurate information about the situation. For the sake of “convenience,” God wrote an untruth. God presented the appearance of the situation as the truth rather than presenting the truth as the truth: this is what one means when one says that the Bible speaks *phenomenologically*.

Phenomenological or anthropocentric: either the sun stood still or the earth stood still; either God inerrantly inspired the wording or He did not; either the Bible is trustworthy or it is not. There is no middle ground. There is no room for compromise. After all, both the anthropocentric theory of inspiration and the phenomenological-language theory are forms of *accommodation* where God is said to accommodate his wording to the understanding of the common man. Good though that may sound on the surface, accommodation still maintains that God goes along with the accepted story even though he really does not believe it.

The whole issue would be moot if, as the liberals and infidels claim, the Bible was written by men and not God. Belief in the human authorship of Bible earmarked the Sadducees in Christ’s day and still earmarks their spiritual descendants, the liberals, today. The Pharisees recognized the truth about the authorship of the Bible but failed to live up to that fact. When confronted by the truth of their hypocrisy they became enraged rather than repentant. Today’s Pharisee is no different, reacting with violent rage when confronted by these matters. Still, let God be true and every man a liar.

### **Putting it all Together**

When it is all put together, we know more about Joshua’s long day than we know of most other events recorded in the Bible. The best date seems to be within four or five days either side of May 12, 1448 B.C., sometime between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. This we may conclude from plotting all of the long day, long night, and the long sunset accounts on a globe. Such extensive observations preclude the conclusion that the event was an optical illusion restricted to the land of Israel. It also disallows the notion that Joshua’s long day is fictitious, for the testimony of the peoples around the world is entirely consistent with its reality. That some peoples have tales of a long night while others tell of a long day while none have both a long day and a long night tale signifies that Joshua’s long day is not one account, originating in the mid-East, which has migrated all over the world; for if such were the case, then all nations would tell of a long day and none would tell of a long night, let alone a perfectly-placed long sunset. So we must conclude that Joshua’s long day was a real, historical event and not some fiction.

Why, despite the testimonies of various peoples around the globe to the reality of an extremely long day or night, and despite the geographic consistency of the data in terms of day and night, why should the majority of scholars dismiss this wealth of evidence as mere superstition? How could there be more substantial evidence? On the other hand, we shall have occasion to document examples where modern science has accepted the testimony of one individual of dubious integrity. Actually, the

heliocentric/geocentric debate is not new, nor is it secret, but the stakes are high and rarely mentioned; for authority is itself at stake. Just who is authoritative and in what? If doubt can be cast on the Bible as an authority in the area of science, then that leaves scientists as the final authority in that area. All too often science is merely another form of politics with little regard for truth if the truth be not expedient. Thus it can be said quite literally that today's science is tomorrow's superstition. That was as true in the sixth century B.C. as it is true today.

Witness Galileo Galilei, an early and vocal proponent of heliocentrism and regarded by many as the first true physicist. In 1613 he wrote in a letter to Castelli why Joshua's long day should not be believed:

And first I ask the adversary if he knows by what motions the sun is moved? If he does know, he must reply that it is moved with two motions, that is, an annual motion from west to east and an opposite diurnal motion from east to west. Hence, in the second place, I ask if these two movements, so diverse and almost contrary to one another, both belong to the sun and are equally its own? They are forced to answer no; that one alone is its own and particular motion, which is the annual, while the other is not the sun's at all, but that of the highest sky, called the Prime Mobile, which sweeps along with itself the sun and the other planets and also the starry sphere, constraining them to make one revolution around the earth in 24 hours, with a motion (as I said) almost contrary to their natural and proper motions.

So I come to the third question, and ask them by which of these two motions the sun produces day and night, that is, by its own or from the Prime Mobile? It is necessary to respond that day and night are the effects of motion of the Prime Mobile, while from the proper motion of the sun not day and night, but the different seasons, and the year itself are produced.

Now if the day depends not on the sun's motion, but on that of the Prime Mobile, who can fail to see that in order to prolong the day it is necessary to stop the Prime Mobile, and not the sun? ... It being therefore absolutely impossible, in the arrangement of Ptolemy and Aristotle, to stop the motion of the sun and to lengthen the day, as the Scripture affirms to have happened.<sup>51</sup>

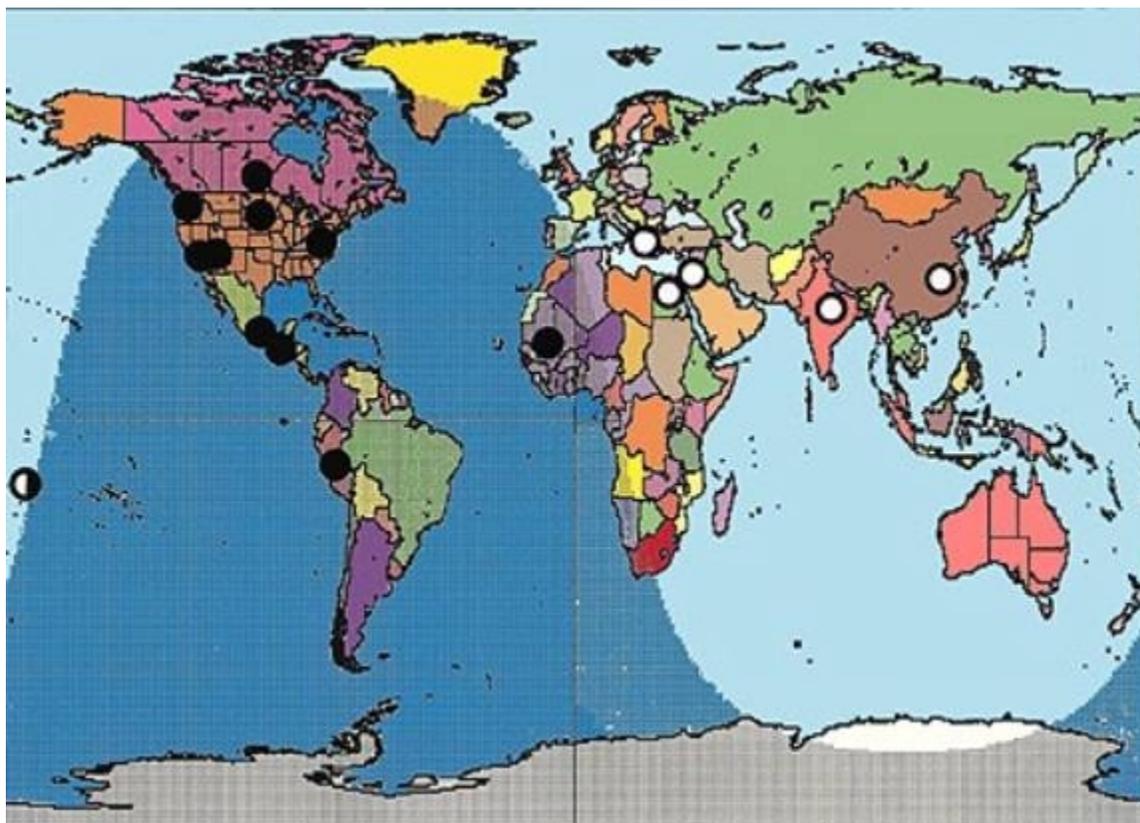
In his challenge, Galileo sets up a straw man and thus exemplifies the ignorance of the Bible which is so characteristic of humanity. True, if one ascribes the annual motion to the sun and the diurnal (daily) motion to the stars, then Galileo's argument is correct; but the Bible does not fall into such simple traps. The Bible clearly indicates that the sun is to rule the day. This means that the daily motion is unique to the sun and has nothing to do with the annual motion. The sun's period is exactly 24 hours. The stars' daily motion nearly matches the sun's period, being about 3 minutes 56 seconds less than the sun's period. Over the course of one year this amounts to one extra revolution about the earth, namely, the annual effect. (The north-south annual motion of the sun can be shown to be due to the difference between the sun's period of revolution and the rotation rate of the rest of the universe.) When viewed from that perspective, Galileo's argument falls flat on its face. Both motions are from east to west, but the sun's motion is roughly 1/365<sup>th</sup> slower than that of the cosmos. Thus the motions are not "almost contrary" but are almost identical. Yet no theologian has ever come up with a better argument against Joshua's long day than has Galileo at this one point.

## **Conclusion**

The upshot is that there appears to be solid evidence from the Bible and from folklore around the world

that there was one day which, depending upon geographical location, presented the inhabitants of the earth with an unusually long span of daylight or night. Attempts to explain this phenomenon by naturalistic means have all failed because no mechanism known to physics can absorb the earth's spin energy and momentum (or the universe's from a geocentric point of view) in such a short period of time without causing great upheavals such as the oceans spilling over the continents. Agnostic or atheistic scholars choose not to deal with the ancient witnesses. Such a phenomenon as Joshua's long day can only happen with divine intervention. But then science does not claim to have all the answers: its authority is found wanting. Is the Bible, then, the final authority after all? Not if God said that the sun stopped when it was *actually* the earth which ceased to rotate. And that brings us to the heart of the matter.

Attempts to phenomenalyze Joshua's long day or to make it allegorical thus fail. Christians and Jewish people are presented with a real historical event in Joshua 10:12-14. The central issue from their perspective is that of inerrancy of the Bible. God wrote in verse 13 that the "sun stood still and the moon stayed." God either meant what he wrote, or he did not. There is no excuse for God because he is the God of truth; therefore all things he says and does must reflect that fact. So God cannot utter an untruth and we must conclude that the Bible teaches, in Joshua 10:13 and else where, that the universe rotates around the earth once per day, carrying the sun, moon and stars with it, regardless of what introductory astronomy texts may say. We shall see later that the advanced texts belie the introductory texts on the matter of the rotation of the earth. For the time being, the choice is either the Bible or the introductory astronomy texts: which do you believe?



**Joshua's long day around the world:** The solid black circles show locations with tales of a long night; open circles plot tales of a long day, and the half-white half-black circle in the Pacific shows the location of a long sunrise tale. Recently, after this figure was made, another long sunrise tale was reported in Hawaii.

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