

The Power of God in Our Midst

Joshua 10:9-15

Preached by Phillip Kayser at DCC on Sunday, August 6th 2023

I. Introduction

It might be thought that a passage dealing with ancient bloody warfare is not very relevant to the daily things that you and I are going through. But that is actually not the case. The power of God on display through the miracles of this chapter is a power that has been on display for the past 2000 years and is a power that is available to you and me. We will see that God is sovereign for when, where, and how He gives miracles, but God's power goes way beyond miracles. We will be talking about miracles, but it goes way beyond miracles. Ephesians 1:19-20 says that the same power that raised up Jesus from the dead can continue to be at work in us who believe. Not just in apostles, but in us who believe. It's available to us. He speaks of it as being the "exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe." So yes, this passage is very relevant. It highlights the nature of God's power that is wielded on behalf of His people.

But I will say that it is sad that so many Christians are skeptical about modern miracles. If you have any friends who are in that position and who doubt that miracles continue (probably because they have bought into either rationalism or empiricism), I recommend Craig S. Keener's 1000 page book two volume book, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts*. It's the first picture in your outline. It is a meticulously researched book that looks into the millions of claims to amazing miracles worldwide, discounting what could be explained away and only focusing on the cases that have no explanation other than God's miraculous power. And as far as I am concerned, any academic who reads that book and comes away still skeptical that miracles continue to exist will have zero foundation for his skepticism and will have to admit that his skepticism is based on pure prejudice against the Bible and is contradictory of his *own* criteria for testing truth claims since he is ignoring a vast database of credible documented miracles today. But since *you* are not skeptics, I will just dive straight into the text. But I may give you a couple stories from his book.

II. God's power did not preclude human responsibility (v. 9a)

Verse 9 says, "Joshua therefore came upon them suddenly, having marched all night from Gilgal." Let's just look at the first part of that verse. Joshua didn't wait at his home base and pray, "Lord, please, would you take care of those enemies who are coming against Gibeon?" No. He immediately took action, marched all night, and totally surprised the Amorite coalition with the presence of his army. They were not expecting that. They were expecting Joshua to be dealing with the rest of the coalition that was headed toward Gilgal. But when Joshua knew that he had a responsibility to do something, he immediately did it, and did it

with all of his might. And it was *as Joshua obeyed by faith* that God blessed Joshua with supernatural provision. And in this he is a good example for us.

If it is within your power to act, prayer should not be a substitute for action. That's the main lesson on this point. Prayer without action is considered lazy hypocrisy by God. In fact, it is arrogantly treating God like a servant rather than the Lord. Yet how many Christians pray that God will bless their exam when they have not studied for the exam? How many ask God to bless their performance, when they have not practiced for it? Proverbs 13:4 says, "The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich." So God *is* going to act - He *is* going to richly provide, but He does so as His child is diligent. One commentator on Exodus 13 said,

Prayer without action will not remove physical disease, will not improve social position, will not give mental culture, and will not strengthen moral character. Men must go forward as well as pray.¹

And I say "Amen." There are hundreds of illustrations of this in the Bible. God provides His power (and sometimes even miracles) to those who are responsible and who act - who do what they can. The little boy in the Gospels gave his fishes and loaves - not enough to feed a crowd, but he did what he could, and God blessed that effort of faith with His supernatural provision. But there are also many examples of God refusing to act on behalf of those who are lazy. Some people quote Isaiah 40:29 out of context. It says,

He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength...

Yes, praise God that is true. But the rest of the passage goes on to say that this power is given to those who serve Him so that they can mount up with wings like eagles, and run and not be weary. There is action. God promises His power in 1 Corinthians 1 to those who are actively living out His calling.

And Keener documents numerous examples of God blessing Christians who could not do what they believed they were called to do, yet tried to do it anyway, trusting Him to come through. I'll read one example. Keener says,

One well-known account today is from Dr. Chauncey Crandall [in Palm Beach, Florida], and some local and national television news outlets reported on this particular raising [from the dead] claim. A renowned cardiologist with world-class credentials, Crandall certainly fits Hume's profile of an ideal witness with much to lose by lying; indeed, in today's milieu, he is risking his reputation even to claim such matters truthfully. Crandall told me that he did not seek the notoriety; why risk his established reputation for something so controversial? Yet he could not deny where the evidence led him [and I will parenthetically add that

¹ William Adamson, "Illustrations to Chapter 13," in *Exodus, The Preacher's Complete Homiletic Commentary* (New York; London; Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1892), 273.

in the footnotes he gives much more evidence that this guy was dead, that cyanosis was extensive, evidence from his eyes, and other standard evidence. But he summarizes the story, saying]. On Friday October 20, 2006, fifty-three-year-old auto mechanic Jeff Markin checked himself into the hospital in West Palm Beach, Florida, and died of a heart attack there. Emergency room personnel labored for nearly forty minutes to revive him, unsuccessfully shocking the flatlined man seven times. Crandall was called in to certify the obvious: there was no point in continuing attempts to revive the man.

Crandall recounts that Markin was not merely dead but unusually obviously dead: his face, toes, and fingers had already turned black. Crandall concurred with the obvious conclusion; the patient was declared dead at 8:05 a.m. and after writing up his assessment, Crandall left to return to his scheduled patients. Very quickly, however, he felt an extraordinary compulsion from God's Spirit to return. He initially, but only briefly, resisted this compulsion, and then returned. The nurse was disconnecting the IVs and preparing the body for the morgue by sponging it down, yet Crandall suddenly found himself praying over the corpse, "Father, God, I cry out for the soul of this man. If he does not know you as his Lord and Savior, please raise him from the dead right now in Jesus's name." The nurse glared at him in astonishment, but Crandall instructed the emergency room doctor, who had just walked in, to shock him with the paddle one more time. (For Crandall, prayer and medicine work ideally together; they are not mutually exclusive options [again, illustrating that you do what you can do. He goes on].) The other doctor protested; they had all recognized that Markin was beyond resuscitation. Nevertheless, out of respect for his colleague, this doctor complied and shocked Markin's corpse.

Suddenly the monitor, which they were all watching, moved from a flat line to a normal heartbeat, which would have been extraordinary even if the heart had stopped only briefly. "In my more than twenty years as a cardiologist," he reported, "I have never seen a heartbeat restored so completely and suddenly." Markin immediately began breathing unaided, and within minutes Markin's fingers and toes began moving, and he began speaking. Perhaps recalling Frankenstein's monster, the panicked nurse started screaming, "Doctor Crandall, what have you done to this patient?" She did not know what they would do with him now. She could have had cause for concern; as already noted, someone dead even for six minutes would have irreparable brain damage. Markin had no brain damage, however, and even his numb, once-blackened extremities were ultimately restored. Crandall met with Markin Monday morning; sitting up, Markin talked with him, contemplating his second chance on life. Since then Crandall has grown still bolder in praying for miracles, and some of his patients have testified to the media about these extraordinary cures.²

² Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts* & 2, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 577–578.

I know it is a long story, but I will be referring back to it. The point is, the doctor did what he could and prayed that God would come through for what he could not do. When you can help a person financially, don't just pray that *God* would help him financially. It may be that God is calling you to be a part of that help. Whatever the thing you are praying for, do what you can and trust God to come through above and beyond your ability.

III. God's power did not preclude human sacrifice (v. 9b)

Moving on: the next phrase shows a related concept - that God's power does not preclude human sacrifice. It says, "having marched all night from Gilgal." They were up all the previous day, all night, and will fight an extra long day this day. That speaks of loss of time, sleep, energy, and convenience. At the end of the day they would have been dog tired from fighting, but they would have also had to acknowledge that nothing but God's power could account for their extraordinary victory. It's not either/or; it's both/and. God expects us to make sacrifices for His kingdom, and when we do so, He loves to bless us supernaturally above and beyond our ability.

Certainly God does sometimes work entirely apart from human means. He has in my life, and He has in other people's lives. But ordinarily God blesses those who sacrificially serve His kingdom by anointing *their* work with supernatural power. Many of the miracles that Craig Keener has documented show this to be true. But I like what A. W. Pink said. He said,

If more of the servants and soldiers of Christ were willing to lose a night's sleep in His cause, particularly in efforts to help their distressed brethren, we should oftener behold the Lord baring His mighty arm, showing Himself strong on their behalf.³

IV. Though God routs, kills, chases, and strikes down (vv. 10-11a), He did it through human means ("before Israel...fled before Israel")

The next point is building on the previous two points related to human responsibility. It says, "Though *God* routs, kills, chases, and strikes down, He usually did it through human means." Look at verses 10-11. "So the LORD routed them before Israel..." Notice that it is the *LORD* who routed them, but He routed them *before* Israel - in other words, *as Israel was pursuing them*. So God is the one routing them, but He used Israel as His tool. The text goes on to say, "killed them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, chased them along the road that goes to Beth Horon, and struck them down as far as Azekah and Makkedah." The Lord is the subject of each of those verbs. So God killed, chased, and struck them down. But notice the context in verse 11: "And it happened, as they fled *before Israel*..."

³ Arthur Walkington Pink, *Gleanings in Joshua* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 275.

Again, all of this involves human agency, but without God blessing the human agency, it would not have been successful. And the same is really true of all that we do. When you start your day of carpentry, plumbing, sewing, or farming, you should pray that God would prosper your work above and beyond your normal abilities and showcase the day as a day in which the Lord's supernatural power will be working through you. I do this every day in my work, but I also did this in my previous jobs as a janitor, at the plywood factory, as an orderly, and as a maintenance man. Daily and sometimes multiple times throughout the day I would ask for God's presence to anoint my work so that it wasn't just me working, but it was God working through me. Even the giving of a cup of cold water can be ordinary or can be blessed by God for the extraordinary. And I have seen God bless even *administrative* work supernaturally. And sometimes he would bless my *attitudes* supernaturally. Scripture says, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might." You will find God blessing you the most richly when you obey that admonition.

V. But God's miraculous power transcended human effort (vv. 11b-14)

But let's move on to notice the remarkable miracles themselves. This is the part of the chapter that many commentaries have hangups on.

A. The remarkable miracle of selective hail or meteorites (v. 11)

First, the unusual hail. Though God brings *all* rain and *all* hail, there is a difference between miraculous rain and hail and non-miraculous rain and hail. I label *this* hail a miracle. Verse 11:

And it happened, as they fled before Israel and were on the descent of Beth Horon, that the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah, and they died. There were more who died from the hailstones than the children of Israel killed with the sword.

So what makes this a miracle? Commentaries will sometimes explain away the miraculous here. After all, there have been other deadly hailstorms in history that were not miraculous. For example, there was a documented storm in China where the hail weighed several pounds.⁴ In May of 1888, a hailstorm in Moradad, India killed 250 people. The largest

⁴ "Records of several storms in the East are preserved, in which it is stated that the hailstones were found to weigh from one half to three quarters of a pound. In Northern China some have been known to weigh several pounds and to have killed cattle. God has in store "treasurers of the hail" (Job 38:22, 23) to use in the day of final battle (Rev. 16:21)." Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 2 (Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976), 225–226.

American hailstone on record was 17 inches in diameter and weighed one and a half pounds.⁵ So what makes this one a miracle?

I would say that it wasn't necessarily the size of the stones or the fact that it resulted in deaths. Non-miraculous hail can do that too. There are three facts that make me call this a miracle.

First, the hail *only killed Amorites* despite the fact that Israelite soldiers and the Amorites occupied the same ground. Israel's soldiers were chasing and killing the Amorites. So this discrimination between soldiers shows that Israel was being protected and Canaanites were being deliberately targeted.

Second, though Israel killed huge numbers of Amorites, the text says that the hailstones killed far more Amorites than the Israelites did. If it was just a few dozen who were killed, it might have been chalked up to a weird coincidence, but the vast number killed (that some people estimate as tens of thousands) shows that the protection of some and the destruction of others was planned.

Third, it says that "the LORD cast down large hailstones from heaven on them as far as Azekah." That phrase indicates three things: First, the hailstones hit people and were not just randomly hitting the ground. Second, the text says that God threw them. Third, the text says that the hailstones pursued them as they fled.

I will mention one other thought. Since the word for hailstones is not the normal Hebrew word for hailstones, but is the normal word for rocks, some add a fourth indication of the unusual here. This may very well have been meteorites that were targeting the Amorites. Whatever the stones were, they almost acted like laser-guided missiles in their unerring accuracy. God was clearly overruling the normal course of nature and was making nature turn on His enemies.

And Craig Keener documents many stories of God using nature to protect His people and to curse His enemies. For example when witches in one African village gathered around a sacred tree to curse the Christian's God, God struck the tree with lightning, scattering the villagers. And he includes photos of the tree and testimonies from the villagers.⁶ Likewise a Tanzanian pastor saw a rampaging lioness killing people and loudly asked God to strike it down. Instantly a lightning bolt struck the lion dead. Likewise, the non-charismatic missionaries, Eugene and Sandy Thomas, had a fire destroy the roof over the kiln that was drying their unfinished bricks for their building. And if the rain ruined the exposed unfinished bricks it would set them back financially and in their schedule. So this couple prayed for God's protection from the rain and the torrential rain poured all around the area of the bricks, but not a drop fell on the bricks or the brick kiln. In fact, people were running

⁵ Edward E. Hindson and Woodrow Michael Kroll, eds., *KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 417.

⁶ Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Credibility of the New Testament Accounts & 2*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 595.

in and out of the rain into the patch that remained dry for the whole time. We experienced many miracles in Ethiopia where God controlled the laws of nature to protect our family.

Why do I bring this up? Because liberals object to miracles on the basis that they violate the laws of science. Well, yeah! That's the very definition of a miracle, right? And what are the laws of science? Laws of science are only the statistical description of God's ordinary means of upholding all things by the Word of His power. Nature is not independent of God. God can change those ordinary laws of nature anytime he chooses. And he has done so down through history. Through Elijah, God made an iron ax head float. God controls the laws of physics. There would be no physics without God upholding all things by the Word of His power. God split the Red Sea so that the Israelites walked through on dry land.⁷

But back to the application, here's the conclusion that Warren Wiersbe made of nature coming against the Amorites. He said,

When God's people are obeying God's will, everything in the universe works for them... When we disobey God's will, everything works against us. (Read Jonah 1 for a vivid illustration of this truth.)⁸

So whether miraculous or not, God's power causes all things to work together for the good of those who love Him. That's an encouraging thought. Lions, magistrates, mosquitos, and hail are not random things that might accidentally hurt you. God's power controls it all.

And actually, that is another independent point that was not mentioned in the outline. Several commentators believe that God was making a special point with the particular miracles here. The Amorites believed Baal controlled the hail, snow, rain, moon, and sun but God was showing this belief to be false.⁹ And many of the power encounters in other

⁷ Tokunboh Adeyemo says, "This was not the only time that God suspended the laws of nature in response to the pleadings of his own. Sarah conceived and gave birth to Isaac when she was well past the natural childbearing age (Gen 17:15-17; 18:10-14; 21:1-3), Elisha made an iron axe head float on water (2 Kgs 6:4-7), and Jesus and Peter walked on the water of the Sea of Galilee (Matt 14:25-29). It is clear that when God chooses to intervene, he is not limited by anything, for nothing is impossible with him." Tokunboh Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary* (Nairobi, Kenya; Grand Rapids, MI: WordAlive Publishers; Zondervan, 2006), 282.

⁸ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Strong, "Be" Commentary Series* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 114.

⁹ "James Kelso remarks, "The crossing of the Jordan at high flood and the cyclonic hailstorm at Ajalon are of special theological significance; for Baal was the great Canaanite storm god who was supposed to control the rain, the hail, the snow and the floods of Palestine. These episodes proved that Baal was as powerless before Yahweh in Palestine as he had been in the episode of the plagues of Egypt" (James L. Kelso, *Archaeology and Our Old Testament Contemporaries*, p. 53)." Edward E. Hindson and Woodrow Michael Kroll, eds., *KJV Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994), 417."

countries were enabled by God to show that the gods of the pagans were nothing. He loves to do that.

B. The remarkable miracle of Joshua's faith (v. 12)

Moving on. Verse 12 shows the remarkable miracle of Joshua's faith. And yes, I think that kind of faith is a miraculous supernatural faith. It was not presumption. It was God-given. Verse 12 says,

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 over Gibeon; and Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon."

What possessed him to make a command like that? The text says that he had never seen a miracle like that. And interestingly, he didn't just timidly pray this in secret hoping that God would answer. It appears that God had stirred up faith to pray this remarkable prayer in the sight of all Israel.

And even today God sometimes instills this supernatural surge of faith to believe Him for something impossible. I read you one example in the story of the cardiac doctor in Florida who prayed in faith in front of his colleagues (colleagues who thought he was crazy and who were upset with him), and yet he prayed a crazy sounding prayer that God would raise the dead. He had never done that before, but it was such a strong surge of confidence from God that he needed to do this, that he did it. And Keener recounts other stories of people who had been dead for 24 hours and more in China, South Korea, for whom Christians prayed with a God-given confidence and these dead people were raised from the dead. But frequently God gives us a confidence to pray for something that makes no sense, and because God is the giver of such faith it is no surprise that He also answers those prayers. He has given me this supernatural faith to expect the impossible many times. Just as one example, we have many witnesses that God miraculously multiplied the meat and potatoes at Davenport when we had large unexpected numbers. And the multiplication happened after a surge of God-given faith. Some of you have experienced this yourselves.

C. The remarkable miracle of the long day (v. 13a)

But let's get to the most disputed miracle in this chapter - the sun standing still. Verse 13 says,

So the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, till the people had revenge upon their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day.

People who are skeptical of this miracle come up with all kinds of Scripture-twisting alternative explanations. Some say that this was a solar eclipse. But the last part of verse 12 shows that the moon and the sun were in different parts of the sky. There is no way it could be an eclipse. Others claim that this was a refraction of the sun's rays so as to make it *seem* like the sun and moon were in different positions when they really weren't. But no amount of twisting of the English or Hebrew original will allow for that. Other's say that this is just

poetry, so it didn't literally happen. But since when do the things in Biblical poetry not happen? And I would point out that the non-poetic sections of verses 13 and 14 also say the same thing. Another commentary says that the hailstorm darkened the sky so that the sun didn't appear for quite a long time. Wait a minute! The text says that they could see the sun and moon. And there are other weird theories. But when verse 14 says that there was not another day like that before or after, we have to believe that this was nothing ordinary; this was a miracle.

So among those who believe in miracles, there are three main theories of what happened. (I won't give any time to the flat earth theory since there are so many slam-dunk exegetical objections.)¹⁰

But the first of the three somewhat plausible views is the geocentric view. This was the most popular view in ages past until Galileo, and there is a growing body of scholars who are returning to this view - some of them feeling forced by the scientific evidence and others feeling forced by the Bible. This view takes the words at face value and says that the sun moves, not the earth. They emphasize the phrases, "Sun, stand still... so the sun stood still, and the moon stopped..." And then later it says, "So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day." So these people say that the miracle is not with the earth, but with the sun and moon stopping.¹¹ Once I post this sermon online, I will include a list of articles pro and con on this view and the other two views.

The second view is held to by a lot of six day creationists today, though not by all. This view holds to the current cosmology and says that the earth spins on its axis once every 24 hours

¹⁰ I will give an appendix that gives a brief introduction to the Flat Earth theory and why it is wrong.

¹¹ Gerardus D. Bouw, Ph.D. is a prolific Protestant writer who advocates geocentrism. His book, *Geocentricity: Christianity in the Woodshed* can be read for free online at <https://ia804708.us.archive.org/19/items/geocentricity-christianity-in-the-woodshed/GEOCENTRICITY.pdf> A Reformed evangelical who has also contributed to these discussions is Martin Selbred, "Rebuttal of North and Nieto" at <https://www.geocentricity.com/geocentricity/nieto.html> Other sources include *The Biblical Astronomer* archives. <https://www.geocentricity.com/ba1/index.html> Robert Sungenis is a Roman Catholic who has written extensively on the subject. *The Principle Movie* introduces you to some of the key concepts. It can be viewed at <https://www.theprinciplemovie.com/> His book *Geocentrism 101* is available on Amazon https://books.google.com/books/about/Geocentrism_101_Sixth_Edition.html?id=RVHSzQEACAAJ His book, *Galileo was Wrong: The Church was Right* is available for download on Academia or on CD Rom at Amazon <https://www.amazon.com/Galileo-Was-Wrong-Church-Right/dp/0977964000> For Robert Sungenis' response to Faulkner's articles below, see his two essays "Response to Danny Faulkner" and "Rebuttal to Dr. Danny Faulkner and Dr. Gerald Aardsma's Views on Geocentrism" For a fascinating take on this, see https://www.geocentricity.com/astromy_of_bible/jld/index.html

(or more precisely, once every 23 hours and 56 minutes) and orbits the sun every 365 days for seasons. So the miracle for them is the earth either stopped its spin or slowed down its spin. That too would take a miracle of gigantic proportions since no naturalistic explanation has overcome the problems with oceans overflowing their banks when the earth stopped spinning. But that's not a problem for a miracle working God - He can stop everything (including the oceans and lakes), not just the earth's rotation. Anyway, they explain the language of the sun moving from an earth-bound perspective. It rises and sets relative to our viewpoint even though it is the earth spinning that makes it so. They speak of this as phenomenological language.¹²

The third view is that God caused the earth to temporarily wobble where Canaan became the north pole for one day. You probably know that at the north pole the sun doesn't set during certain seasons. So that is their view.

There are actually naturalistic variations of this third view proposed by Immanuel Velikovsky and a couple of others. They propose a more moderate wobble with a longer day, but not necessarily 24 hours of sunlight. Some of these advocates claim that there is a lot of scientific evidence of previous pole shifts due to meteorites hitting the earth. And they point out that the word translated as "hailstones" in Joshua 10 is not the normal word for hailstones. I've already mentioned that it is the normal word for rocks. So on the naturalistic version of this theory, meteorites from heaven that killed so many Amorites also hit the earth with such force that they made a shift in the north and south poles, explaining why prior to that time Alaska didn't have an ice cap. Supposedly in the time of Joshua the north pole was in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Norway and it moved to where the Hudson Bay is today, and in the process, the day was lengthened because spin itself was temporarily affected. They believe the miracle of Hezekiah's sundial going back explains a later additional change of the north pole from the western side of the Hudson Bay to its current location, creating instantaneous changes in the temperature in Siberia where mammoths instantly froze. So on this view the earth continued spinning on its axis

¹² For Barry Setterfield's articles against geocentrism, see <https://www.setterfield.org/Geocentrism.html> Danny Faulkner has also written a critique titled "The Rise of the Modern Geocentric Movement" <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/rise-of-modern-geocentric-theory-movement/> and "Geocentrism: History and Background" <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/geocentrism-history-background/> and "Geocentrism and Creation" <https://answersingenesis.org/creationism/arguments-to-avoid/geocentrism-and-creation/> and "Should You Follow the (Copernican) Principle?" <https://answersingenesis.org/astronomy/should-you-follow-the-copernican-principle/> and "the Copernican Principle & the Bible" <https://answersingenesis.org/science/copernican-system-and-bible/>

and continued to have its tilt, but the north pole changed locations.¹³ Now obviously in this short time I can't do justice to any of those views. Entire books have been written trying to explain this miracle.

But honestly, there can be no naturalistic explanation of this miracle. It is after all, a miracle. By definition it is not naturalistic. Miracles defy the laws of physics. As one author said,

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 [that would be on the second view that I gave] (or the universe's [spin energy and momentum] 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.

On any theory of how it happened it would take many additional miracles to happen. But hey! Our God is a God of miracles! The bottom line is that God said it, so it happened, however many stomach cramps this gives to scientists.

And by the way, scientists can't just discount this passage. They also have to discount numerous testimonies from all over the world of a long day that coincides with the time of Joshua's long day. The black marks on the map in your outline show all the places in the world that either record an extra long day or an extra long night around that period of time. They perfectly fall within the time zones of what areas should be light and dark. I'll just give a sampling of some of these ancient testimonies.

The Greek historian Herodotus wrote about visiting Egypt, where the priests showed him a manuscript documenting a day that lasted twice as long as a normal day. In other words, it was 24 hours of sunlight. They had water clocks at the time that were not dependent on the stars, moon, or sun, and they have a reputation of extremely accurate accounting. Egypt falls within the time zone that should have had light when Israel had light. It's a very credible testimony.

Fernand Crombette translated some Egyptian hieroglyphics which also tell of Joshua's long day without mentioning Joshua.¹⁴ I won't read those, but they stand as a fascinating

¹³ See Rand, H. B. 1968. *When the Earth Turned Over* (Merrimac Mass. 01860: Destiny Publishers). Immanuel Velikovsky, *Worlds in Collision*, (New York: Dover Press, 1950). For more modern explanations, see <http://www.scripturescholar.com/JoshuasLongDay.htm>

¹⁴ Part of it says, "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." The translation came from the *Cercle Scientifique et Historique*, France and Belgium. It is taken from among Crombette's three volumes of *Verdique Historique de l'Egypte Antique*.

concurring testimony that skeptics have to also discount. Skeptics have to discount a lot of ancient testimonies.

In 1810, the Reformed Baptist commentator John Gill refers to a now-lost Chinese document that speaks of a long day in the reign of the emperor Yao, which would date to this time.¹⁵

At least five North American Indian tribes speak of an extra long night in ancient history.¹⁶ Various tribes in Central and South America also speak of a long night in ancient history.¹⁷ And of course, in terms of time zones, the Americas would be in the nighttime dark when Canaan was in the daylight.

J. G. Frazer relates a tradition in the Fiji Islands of a day in ancient history when the sun stayed on the horizon for a whole day.¹⁸ It was almost set, but it stayed there not setting. And there are other ancient traditions that also speak of an extra long day in ancient history.

But even if we had none of those testimonies, we would believe it because God says it. The Bible alone is the truth standard by which all other claims to truth are measured. It's not vice versa. We don't prove anything in the Bible by going to ancient history. We just use ancient history to answer a man according to his folly and showing him that even on their own presuppositions, they cannot reject what the Bible says. Jesus said to the Father, "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) Psalm 119:160 says, "The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever." Let me explain why that is so significant. Saying that God's Word is truth is different than saying that God's Word is true. Wayne Grudem explains. He says,

The difference is significant, for this statement encourages us to think of the Bible not simply as being "true" in the sense that it conforms to some higher standard of truth, but rather to think of the Bible as itself the final standard of truth. The Bible is God's Word, and God's Word is the ultimate definition of what is true and what

¹⁵ John Gill, *An Exposition of the Old Testament, vol. 2*, The Baptist Commentary Series (London: Mathews and Leigh, 1810), 218.

¹⁶ Olcott, W. T., 1914. *Sun Lore of all Ages: A Collection of Myths and Legends Concerning the Sun and its Worship*, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons).

¹⁷ Caso, A., *The Religion of the Aztecs*, (Mexico City: Popular Library of Mexican Culture, Central News Co., 1937), pp. 15-16. Goetz, D. and S. G. Morley, translators, *Popul Vuh: The Sacred Book of the Quiche Maya*, (Norman, Oklahoma, 1972), Part III, Chapters 4-7, pp. 172-190. Bancroft, H. H., *Native Races of the Pacific States*, (5 volumes, 1883), Vol. 3, pp. 58-62. Montesinos, F., 1882. *Memorias Antiguas Historiales de Peru*. The manuscript for that book dates from 1648. A translation of it was done by P. A. Means for the Habluyt Society of London in 1920. Notes from Z. Sitchin, *The Lost Realms*, (New York: Avon Books), Ch. 7.

¹⁸ Frazer, J. G., 1914. "The Magical Control of the Sun," *Golden Bough*, 3rd ed., 1:316.

is not true: God's Word is itself truth. Thus, we are to think of the Bible as the ultimate standard of truth, the reference point by which every other claim to truthfulness is to be measured. Those assertions that conform with Scripture are "true" while those that do not conform with Scripture are not true...¹⁹

And I would encourage all of us to have an absolute confidence in every word of Scripture. Repeat Christ's words to the Father with confidence: "Your word is truth," and bank on it. Claim it by faith.

D. The remarkable miracle of the moon standing still (v. 13a)

I won't comment much on the moon standing still except to say that it too was a separate miracle of God. And the stopping of both was given for a purpose. Verse 13 says, "Till the people had revenge upon their enemies." To finish off the Amorites, they needed a longer day. I think there is some scientific significance to Joshua's use of two different words for the sun stopping and the moon decreasing or slowing down (in the original Hebrew), but I won't get into that right now.

E. Note: it is OK to document miracles (v. 13b)

But the second part of verse 13 is a corrective to some who have a false humility and believe that it is wrong to publish or talk about the miracles that God has done for us. Neither Jasher nor Joshua had any such feelings. They believed that God was glorified in recording this in the Bible, and Joshua indicates that it was appropriate for a non-canonical book to record these events as well. It says, "Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day." He is saying that even a non-canonical book recorded this event and encourages people to read it. And there are a lot of books out there that document the presence of miracles in our day and age. I believe that is appropriate. It is a way of glorifying God. We don't prove the existence of miracles by going to a book like Craig Keener's book. We just say that these testimonies glorify God.

F. Note: some miracles were not intended to be repeated in every generation (v. 14) - God is sovereign

But there is a correction to the opposite extreme in verse 14 as well. Some people think they can boss God around and produce any miracle that they desire. But God is sovereign in His distribution of miracles. Verse 14 says, "And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel." He is basically saying that we shouldn't expect God to stop the sun and moon again like this, and we for sure should not expect men to be able to command God. It makes my hair stand up on my neck when I see some Pentecostal preachers barking orders at God as if He were their slave. In any case, we should not expect that every miracle done in the Bible can be

¹⁹ Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, ed. Jeff Purswell (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 1999), 41

expected by us today. God is sovereign in His distribution of miracles. Even if there was a positive reason for God to stop the sun for *you*, doing so could have catastrophically negative results in other parts of the world. It certainly seems that the change that happened here may have contributed to Egypt's change from wet to dry and some areas from livable to absolute frozen tundra.

G. The remarkable miracle that not a life was lost (v. 15a)

But there is one more miracle that is mentioned in the first part of verse 15. It says, "Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him..." Notice the word "all." Lots of lives were lost in earlier battles in Joshua and in later battles in Joshua, but God performed a miracle in this battle by killing tens of thousands of Amorites and sparing every single Israelite soldier's life. And Keener's book narrates absolutely astounding protections that God has given to Christian soldiers as well as to Christians being attacked by soldiers. God is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. He continues to be a God of miracles. He can send His angels to push a car out of the way when it is about to crash into you.

VI. The blessing of rest from work and rest from miracles (v. 15)

But to balance everything out that I have said in this sermon, I have added one more point. Verse 15 speaks of *rest* from this adrenaline filled day. It says, "Then Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to the camp at Gilgal." That was their home base. That was where their tents were. He will reiterate some earlier history in verses 16 and following, but he ends *this* pericope by indicating that they did have an end to that day. And I believe this early mention of the end of the day was put here deliberately to balance everything out.

It's nice to have a rest from work and miracles. God did not design us to operate at a high level of adrenaline without stop. He intends for us to rest. Now, I want to hasten to say that it is *not a rest from God* since Scripture says that *God is constantly at work in our lives* and that He gives His beloved sleep. Even rest and sleep can be enabled by His power. As an insomniac, I rejoice in God's sovereign gift of sleep. His power is seen in the spectacular as well as in the ordinary, and it is my hope that this book will move all of us to the constant experience and awareness of His presence and power - yes, even in our sleep. May it be so, Lord Jesus! Amen.

Appendix A - Why I have not taken the Flat Earth Theory seriously.

I am familiar with the various versions of the flat earth theory. I have a very good flat earth friend, and we have gone round and round on this question, so I have no illusions that my brief answers will satisfy everyone, but due to time considerations I will have to be brief in my interactions with this strange view.

I will start by briefly summarizing the main exegetical argument offered by flat earthers. It is obviously not their only argument, but a lot of the arguments they offer are not unique to

flat earth theory and could support geocentrism. But as geocentrists point out, flat earth theory is radically different from the geocentric theory.

Briefly, the flat earth argument is that the Bible refers to the “circle of the earth” in Isaiah 40:22. The Hebrew word for “circle” is לֵּוּן and according to them, the simplest and “most obvious” shape that matches that description is a flat circular disk with ice barriers on the edge (or the heavenly dome, or something else on the edge) to seal the waters in. In fact, they will cite some Hebrew dictionaries that not only define the Hebrew word לֵּוּן as “a circle” and which also point to Isaiah 40:22 as describing the earth as a disk (see Halot) They also derive their theory from references that speak of the “circle of heaven” (Job 22:14) and that God “drew a circle on the face of the deep” (Prov. 8:27). A related Hebrew term (מְחַוֵּה) is translated as a “compass” in Isaiah 44:13, an instrument that draws a circle on a flat plane. Even scholars who do not believe in a flat earth cosmology will sometimes claim that the Old Testament writers did hold to a flat earth cosmology. For example, Paul Seely says,

Nor is the earth in the OT a globe. There is no evidence that anyone prior to c. 500 B.C. believed the earth was a globe, and the OT nowhere represents the earth as anything but flat.

The biblical account is also accommodated to the cosmology of the times. The earth-disc and surrounding ocean were thought to be surmounted by a rock-solid hemispherical dome, the sky, which came down all around the surrounding sea and sealed off the universe at the horizon. As Stadelmann says in *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, the horizon is “holding the sky and the earth firmly together.” In the biblical cosmology as in the rest of the ancient Near East, the firmament had to be sealed at the horizon because otherwise the ocean (יַם הַיָּם) on the outer side of the firmament would enter and overwhelm the earth with water. As Rabbi Eliezer said, “This firmament saves the earth from being engulfed by the waters of the heavens.”

The “whole earth” of Gen 8:9 is thus not only a flat earth limited in extent to the world described in Gen 10; it is insulated by the ocean surrounding it and sealed off by the inverted bowl of the sky so that there is no place for another continent. The Americas and Australia are permanently excluded, and not even the Far East or even all of Africa or Europe can get into this OT universe²⁰

Against compromisers like Seely, the Flat Earth people say that the Bible is correct and modern science is wrong. On the surface the initial exegetical points given by Flat Earthers seem plausible until a few other facts are considered.

First, if the “circle [לֵּוּן] of heaven” (Job 22:14) means that the heavens are shaped as “a half-globe” that fits tightly over the earth to keep people from falling off and to keep the waters in, then the same word for circle in Isaiah 40:22 cannot mean that the earth is flat. To be

²⁰ Paul H. Seely, “Noah’s Flood: Its Date, Extent, and Divine Accommodation,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 66, no. 2 (2004): 303–304

consistent they would have to say that the earth is a half globe or something akin to it, thus overturning their theory. Flatness is not an essential aspect of the meaning of circle. Indeed, most dictionaries see **הָיָה** in Job as being 3-dimensional. (Of course, some Flat Earthers reject the half-dome theory of heaven and see heaven as being a flat disk hovering over the earth – so see more arguments below.)

Second, dictionaries do not come without bias, and the dictionaries frequently cited as pointing to a disk in Isaiah 40:22 have a liberal bias that see no problem with ascribing mythology to Biblical concepts. A couple dictionaries say that the Bible simply adopted the mythological Near Eastern cosmology of its time. They do the same under numerous other definitions (see the numerous references to myth and mythology in HALOT and in BDB). One must always take into consideration the theological perspective of a dictionary and make sure that it is sound. Let me illustrate this with the fact that in the last decade, modern English dictionaries have redefined hundreds of words to conform to the modern woke movement. For example, the Cambridge dictionary now defines a woman as an “adult who lives and identifies as a female though they may have been said to have a different sex at birth.”²¹ My point is that dictionaries are not neutral

Nor are dictionaries or translations united on the meaning of “circle.” Consider the range of words used to translate **הָיָה** in Isaiah 40:22 - “seated over the arch of the earth” (BBE), “sitteth upon the globe of the earth” (Douay), “God sits high above the round ball of earth” (Message), “He sits enthroned above the vault of the earth” (NAB), etc. Various 16th century Latin Bibles translated **הָיָה** with “globus” (or globe). The 17th century Giovanni Diodati Bible also had “globus” and the 18th century Dutch Hebraist, Campeius Vitrina used “orbis.” The range of definitions in dictionaries is broader than Flat Earthers will let on as well. We will get to how the words are used, but consider the following dictionary definitions: “a circle, sphere” (Gesenius), “circle, sphere, arch” (Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies), “any part of a curve, an arch, sphere” (Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature), “orb or circle of heaven and earth (**הָיָה**) cf. Is. 40:22; Job 22:14; Prv. 8:27” (TDNT). The Hebraist John Gill defines **הָיָה** as a ball, a globe, or as the horizon/circle of a globe. Something that is “round, an arch, or a circle” (Dictionary of Targumim). “Circle...round dome, or vault, of heaven” (Samuel Rolles Driver and George Buchanan Gray). “denotes a circle, sphere, or arch (Barnes). With a variety of definitions, how do we determine which view is right? The following paragraphs can give some hints of how to start:

Fourth, synonyms can sometimes help to define the meaning of a term. One synonym that can mean circle is the Hebrew word **דָּוָר**. This word refers to a circle or horizon on a ball or globe. For example, Isaiah 22:18 says, “He will surely turn violently and toss you like a ball (**דָּוָר**) into a large country.” In any case, it is stretching the meaning of the word **הָיָה** to insist that it means a disk.

Fifth, for the sake of the argument, let’s just assume that the term has only one meaning: circle, and let’s think about the nature of a circle. Peter Allison points out that if someone

²¹ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/woman>

were to walk in a straight line across a globe, he would be walking in a circle. If someone were to walk in a straight line on a disk, he would not be walking in a circle. A sphere with a light shining behind it always projects a circle onto a plane. The same is not true of a disk. A disk will only project a circle if it is shining from directly above or beneath the disk. The outline of a 3D sphere will always appear as a circle no matter from what point of view or orientation we may be looking at it. The same would not be true of disk. It would only appear as a circle when viewed from the top down or the bottom up, but as the disk turns, it's shape skews until it is a straight line from the side. As Peter Allison worded it, "A flat circular disk will only appear as a circle when viewed along the axis perpendicular to and passing through the center of the disk. From any other position it will not appear as a circle." So even the translation "circle" still better fits a globe.

Sixth, since Christ called the Bible "the key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52), one would think that the Biblical data would not close our minds to the data of science, but would help us to more clearly interpret that data. Whereas the other three theories referenced in this sermon seek to show how scientific data can align with their interpretation of the Biblical record, the flat earth theory routinely discredits science or is ignorant of science. Many examples could be given. I will mention one: There are thousands of pictures that have been taken of planet earth. These have been discounted as faked pictures. There are videos from a satellite that either show the satellite spinning around the earth or show the earth spinning. These two are considered to be fake. Physics students from the University of Leicester sent up a high altitude weather balloon that took the spectacular picture shown in this link: <https://phys.org/news/2017-01-students-breathtaking-curvature-earth-high-altitude.html> Flat earthers claim it is a fake. I told my Flat Earth friend that I have seen the photos taken by a military man flying in a high altitude reconnaissance plane that clearly showed the curvature of the earth. He claimed that it must be distortion created by the windows. I told him that his flight patterns and his own view of the earth from that high showed him that the earth is clearly a globe. My friend knew this pastor and so did not want to call him a liar, but this evidence did not convince him. There are now several opportunities for anyone to fly high enough to be able to view the earth from altitudes ranging from 75,000 feet to 328,000 feet, so Flat Earth people should pool their funds to take such a flight and debunk my position forever. There is a Spain-based zero2infinity that enables passengers to see the curvature of the earth. Another company, Worldview, charges \$75,000 to be able ride in a gondola suspended from a helium balloon that will give them a 100,000 foot altitude view of the earth. Virgin Galactic and Lynx plan to take people up 328,000 feet. But I suspect that no matter how many pictures are taken from those altitudes, the Flat Earthers will deny that they are real. I have shown them numerous pictures from NASA, and they believe NASA is making these up.

Seventh, I have not seen any credible explanations by Flat Earthers of the following things that are inconsistent with a flat earth. 1) geodetic surveying, 2) Foucault pendulums, 3) cyclones circling clockwise in the northern hemisphere and counterclockwise in the southern hemisphere, 4) the shadow of the earth is occasionally projected onto the moon as the moon passes through the earth's shadow. The earth's shadow is always circular. 5) How can flat earthers explain how the waters covered the highest mountains of that time more than 15 cubits (Gen. 7:20)? Global plate tectonics can explain the deluge height if the

earth is a globe, but how can those who hold to a flat earth explain that? 6) When God says, “as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12), that means that our sins are infinitely separated from us if the earth is a globe, but how far is east from west on a flat earth? It is finite. 7) The disappearance of boats over the horizon even when strong telescopes are used shows curvature. 8) Lunar eclipses should not be possible on a flat earth theory since Flat Earthers believe the sun and moon are much smaller than the earth and move in circles over the face of the earth. 9) Peter Allison points out, “If the earth were flat and the sunset was caused by the sun moving away from an observer at the base of a mountain, there would be no shadow on the mountain from the horizon. The light would simply fade away. Instead we observe a distinct shadow on the mountain from the horizon and we observe that shadow moving up the mountain. A shadow from the horizon is only possible if the sun is below the horizon. An upward moving shadow is only possible if the sun’s distance below the horizon is increasing.” 10) Why do the sun and moon not change size as they move into the distance? On a flat earth theory, one would expect this to happen. 11) How can they explain the numerous reports of those in Antarctica who describe numerous things utterly inconsistent with a Flat Earth theory (such as the existence of a south pole, traveling to Antarctica from all directions - thus disproving the ice walls on the edge of the earth, etc). Many of these trips to the south pole predate the times that Flat Earthers claim the government was hiding things. Peter Allison’s (as yet unpublished) reports on Antarctica are devastating to the Flat Earth theory, as is the rest of his research. It is for these and many other reasons that I did not give the Flat Earth theory credence in my sermon.