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other words, I read the second book of Chronicles, it does not "find" me; I read the "Imitatio Christi," and it does "find" me—therefore the latter is inspired, the former is not. The written word is more than a reflection of the inward light; *it is an outward and objective revelation of God, which exists entirely independent of the intuitional faculty of the soul.* The whole historical record of the Old Testament is part of the great depository of God's revealed will. It comes to us with Divine credentials attested by Christ and the Apostles; it is *Θεόπνευστα*, "God-breathed." And yet there is an inward witness to the truth—there is an experimental evidence—there is a key which unlocks the sacred treasury. The sheep know the voice of the Divine Shepherd. I walk along the sea-shore; there is a pool of salt-water. I place in it a land-plant; it collapses and withers and dies. I take up a piece of sea-weed which seems half-dead, and place it in the pool; how beautifully it expands its feathery fibres, how brightly it unfolds its radiant hues, how joyously it waves its elegant streamers. There is an affinity between the sea-weed and the salt-water. "He that heareth hath the witness in himself."

J. W. BARDSLEY.



### ART. III.—JOSHUA'S LONG DAY AND THE SUN-DIAL OF AHAZ.

"The will of God has been active and operative as the sole cause throughout all ages of the world's creation and history."—Sir J. W. Dawson, "Origin of the World," p. 14.

**T**HE battle of Beth-horon (Josh. x. 8-14), one of the most wonderful in the world, is not so well known as are many of less importance. It was fought by Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, against five kings of the Amorites and their combined armies. The armies being discomfited by Israel with a great slaughter, the surviving Amorites were chased along the way to Beth-horon, and were smitten to Azekah and unto Makkedah. As they were going down to Beth-horon, "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. Then spake Joshua to the Lord . . . and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. 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. 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."

The account may have been taken from, or may merely refer to, a work then in existence, *Jasher*, the Book of the Upright, twice mentioned (*Josh. x. 13* ; *2 Sam. i. 18*), a book of songs in praise of Israel's great men. In any case, fables of falsities would have no record in Scripture ; and the miracles, being recorded, are a part of that whole which is by inspiration of God (*2 Tim. iii. 16*). Verses 13 and 14 are regarded as a quotation from the Book of *Jasher* : "The sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. 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."

If we say "the strange occurrences were not miraculous, the sun and moon only seeming to stand, and the storm of stones but a greater storm than usual," that exchanges one miracle for another, which, if less wonderful, is not more credible. It was no miracle for stones to be rained from heaven, but it was a remarkable coincidence that they fell during the battle, and certainly a miracle that the Amorites were slain and the Israelites not injured.

History records many storms of stones. Livy mentions one very remarkable, and we have much more satisfactory evidence of them than that he gave. They are in relation to the meteors, shooting-stars, and aerolites, of which there are many systems within the solar domain ; not reckoned by "hundreds and thousands, but by millions and millions."<sup>1</sup> The November grand displays of star-falls are of the same order. In times past the earth has been again and again cannonaded by such splendid artillery, as it will be also in the future. Were we so placed as to see all the many and various systems within the sun's sphere of influence, they would appear as a complicated network of interlacing streams of cosmical matter. They are superbly vast, and related to systems greatly vaster ; for "as the sun is one among the stars, so the milky way is held to be but one among the nebulae."

They are arranged in heavenly and earthly periods and motions with an accuracy beyond that of our most skilfully-constructed chronometers. Upon unintelligent elements intelligible arrangements are enforced, and the harmonies of an all-embracing purpose. No man, even in a state of barbarity

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<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Proctor, "The Universe," p. 54.

(as Cicero states, "De Nat. Deor.," L. ii., c. 34), "dubitet, quin ea Sphæra sit perfecta ratione;" and as for the scientific, they are well aware that we have the workmanship of reason displayed in the heavens, and, on the earth, day unto day uttereth speech.

Though the world is naturally full of miracles and mysteries, there is a strange unwontableness, almost incredibleness, as to the sun and moon appearing to stand still, owing to the pausing of the earth's aerial rotation, that renders the narrative a jest to unbelievers and a trouble to the weak in faith; it is therefore necessary to vindicate the reasonableness of our faith as to

### THE MIRACLE OF THE SUN AND MOON.

It would cause an alteration in the course of time. There have been two alterations. This during the life of Joshua; another in the days of Hezekiah, a recession marked by a measurement of ten degrees on the sun-dial of Ahaz (Is. xxxviii. 4-8; 2 Kings xx. 8-11; 2 Chron. xxxii. 24). The long day of Joshua, we are told, was made by an addition of twenty-three and one-third hours to the twenty-four which marked that day of the winter solstice. The reversal of the shadow, by ten degrees gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, added forty minutes; thus extending the twenty-three hours and twenty minutes of Joshua's day into one of twenty-four hours.

From Joshua's point of view, on the west of Gibeon, the sun would be in the east standing over Gibeon; and the moon far west, below the horizon, over the valley of Ajalon; the time, between eleven and twelve o'clock. Charles A. L. Hotten, Professor of Military Science and Tactics at Yale University, United States of America, writes that he has gone over calculations on the whole subject. The miracle occurred on the days of Tuesday, 24, and Wednesday, 25, of the fourth civil month of the year 2555 A.M., Jewish reckoning.<sup>1</sup> Calculating again, by reversal of the cycles, from the solar-eclipsing moon, June 17, 1890, A.D., Joshua's long day was 3,435 lunar years and ten lunations ago. The sun then stood over Gibeon, the moon over Ajalon, and Joshua was at Beth-horon. The sun was quiet, or still, שָׁמַח. The stoppage or retarding of the aerial movement of the earth concerns astronomy only so far as this: "Did such a conjunction, as the record demands, take place at Beth-horon within the limits set forth?" The reply is given by Professor Hotten: "It did."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Joshua's Long Day," pp. 17-19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 35.

We neither refuse nor accept the Professor's statement. Some mathematicians assert that an accurate calculation cannot be made; others maintain that it can. An unbeliever, shutting his eyes against the most forcible proof, will say, "It is no proof." We, who believe, do wisely to rely on the plain statement of God's Word, though the whole world should say—"It is a lie."

As to belief in miracles, all men ought to believe. They are natural and universal; everything rests on miracle; nor can we explain anything apart from miracle. The so-called laws of nature are but the observed or usual sequences of phenomena in heaven and earth. The usual and the unusual are to be proved by exactly the same evidence. The outcry against miracle arises chiefly from ignorance, both as to the smallest and largest masses in the universe: because they are so large, or so small. Day by day we give credit to events which surpass our own experience; and age after age accepts in art and science and philosophy that which before was unknown and seemed impossible. The wonderfulness of an event is no plea against the evidence in support of it. The principle of belief is not to be confounded with the subject matter to which it is applied. Any alleged event is a possibility. The history of science is full of startling discoveries, and the secret of discovery is the art of finding surprises. God could effect a universal stoppage without causing the least perceptible tremor. For nature to be amazed, and the earth forget to go round, being so intent to see the battle, were very little things to Him who is the Maker of all.

Anyone may suppose, if he likes, that astronomy is silent as to any evidence concerning the miracle wrought in honour of Joshua; and probably always will be. Some persons will assure us that there was only an optical or apparent stoppage; only a seeming lengthening of the day—men were so weary; only an unusual refraction of light; only a remarkable continuance of lightning, turning night into day; only—something else; but miracles were plain enough to madden Porphyry and to stultify Gibbon. It is fully reasonable to side with the writer of the Book of Joshua. He believed in the correctness of his narrative, meant what he said, and wrote with scrupulous and accurate regard for the truth. He was not a man to tell a lie and call it poetry. Any theory, apart from miracle, is inconsistent with the character of a Divinely-inspired writer, and is baffled in every attempted interpretation. The supernatural is that founding and crowning of revelation without which there is no certainty for human faith; and, apart from the supernatural, we respectfully challenge any man to give either an intelligible or a reasonable interpretation whether as to the

origin or continuance of nature. It is our sense of the unknown, of the mysterious, of something that exceeds every thought and all present knowledge, which underlies all scientific, philosophical and artistic investigation.

A man may demonstrate to himself the universal prevalence of miracle. Imagine, with a scientific imagination, as commended by Professor Tyndall, an ultimate atom. It is in a state of ceaseless activity, and probably of continual change as to form; nevertheless, it is always the same, like an immortal being. If we combine two or more atoms in compound molecules, the molecules and constituent atoms are never at rest. We discern no motion, but we may aid our thought of it by a picture. Take a coloured disc, set it going, say, at the rate of sixty miles an hour, illuminate it with an electric flash, and the disc, during the time of the flash, will appear to be stationary. Not so with the molecules and elementary atoms: for could we light them up by a flash, they would vibrate many times during the exceedingly transient moment of that flash. Is this natural wonder less a miracle than the staying of the earth on her axis? Nay; the visible miracle looked on by Joshua and his army was not so marvellous, and is really more credible than the unseen prodigy which is now wrought every moment. The all but infinitesimal atoms contain in their inconceivable minuteness a galaxy of wonders surpassing the splendid spectacle of the sun giving light in the sky.

Another natural marvel. Chemical affinity may be taken as the highest known degree of heterogeneous attraction. Its action between the ultimate particles constitutes matter of distinct qualities and essence from any of its ingredients, and separates it from every sensible property, in common with its constituent elements, but that of their gravity combined, and not always that. Sir John Herschel observed, "A clever man, shut up alone, and allowed unlimited time, might reason out for himself all the truths of mathematics by proceeding from the simple notions of space and number of which he cannot divest himself without ceasing to think; but he could never tell, by any effort of reasoning, what would become of a lump of sugar if immersed in water, or what impression would be produced on the eye by mixing the colours of yellow and blue."<sup>1</sup> Thus a chemist, an artist, any man, may momentarily work natural miracles of an order altogether unimaginable by the inexperienced. Thus he may feed the high traditions of the earth, and help to spread and leave the sacred spirit of revelation in our children's breasts. We, and whatever is around us,

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<sup>1</sup> "Discourse on Nat. Philos.," p. 76.

are full of mysteries, which it is not less our wisdom than our delight to penetrate.

Another remarkable event is that shown on

#### THE SUN-DIAL OF AHAZ :

the bringing back on that dial the shadow of the sun ten degrees, as a sign to Hezekiah of recovery from sickness (Isa. xxxviii. 1-8 ; 2 Kings xx. 4-11 ; 2 Chron. xxxii. 34).

The equinox of this year was remarkable, occurring at high-noon. Its advent was foreknown as an astronomical event by the ancient astronomers, and no doubt watched for. Ahaz had given himself to Sabaism, star-worship (2 Chron. xxviii. 22, 23), and had erected a sun-dial in connection with the idolatrous service as a sort of altar, and for observations of the sun-course. We can think of Hezekiah slowly dying, listening fearfully to Isaiah, and the priests watching the gradual approach of the shadow to noon-mark. The shadow is just about to coincide with the meridian. Isaiah inquires, "Shall it go back ten degrees, or forward ten degrees?" Hezekiah said, "It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees ; nay, but let the shadow return ten degrees" (2 Kings xx. 10, 11), and it returned. Men could not doubt the evidence of their senses. The king and the high priest would be the most amazed : the king now knowing himself restored by grace of heaven ; the high priest, most resolved, not letting belief take hold of him without this "sensible and true avouch to his own eyes."

To strengthen Hezekiah's faith, for the shadow to go forward, being usual and natural—we are not certain what portion of time is meant by degrees—would not avail ; but to go back would be a miracle, whatever the time. Archbishop Usher, in his annals, following the opinion of the ancient Jews and Christians, says, "The sun and all the heavenly bodies went back ; and as much as was detracted from the next night was added to this day." Some prefer to accept the smaller miracle as wrought on the dial ; not the larger, on the sun and moon and earth ; as if the wonder were optical, not cosmical, simply a phenomenon of refraction. They state : "the sun returned" (Isa. xxxviii. 8) ; this does not mean the sun in heaven, but the sun upon the dial." Now the event is certainly represented, and is meant to be understood, as a miracle ; and a miracle is not a snare for noble hearts, but a proof that holy hopes are not deceptions, and that our life has present meaning with full assurance of a future very wonderful.

Herodotus noted a record of the Egyptians : "that the sun had four times risen out of his usual quarter, and that he had twice risen where he now sets, and twice set where he now

rises; yet that no change in the things of Egypt was occasioned by this, either with regard to the productions of the earth or the river, or with regard to diseases, or with respect to deaths" ("Euterpe," 142). To this may be added: It was not likely that a star-gazing people like the Babylonians would be ignorant of the wonder wrought on behalf of Hezekiah. We rightly regard the ambassadors of Babylon, with their present, as not only coming to congratulate Hezekiah on his recovery, but to learn of the sun-miracle. "The princes of Babylon . . . sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land" (2 Chron. xxxii. 31).

Professor Hotten, in "Joshua's Long Day, and The Dial of Ahaz," states—we give a summary of his words: The autumnal equinox of 1889 A.D., on Sunday, September 22, did not really commence until its sundown had been recorded at the eastern primary meridian. The ephemeris time of this autumnal equinox was about 8.45 after Greenwich mean noon of that Sunday, which is set back just six hours from the old time; and the true time was about two hours forty-five minutes after the Greenwich mean sunset beginning, of this particular Sunday, or nine hours thirty-seven minutes thirty-one seconds after sunset, commencement of ancient sunset at meridian; but it only comes so by intercalation of twenty-four hours. This intercalation being the twenty-three and one-third hours (about a whole day), and the forty minutes' backward motion in Hezekiah's time on the sun-dial of Ahaz. Thus the calendar is made correct.

The two events form the complement of each other, and their combined action wrote a unique day in our chronology. We may approach the verification thus: the lunar, or metonic cycle, is a period of nineteen tropical years, or nineteen years, two hours and a few seconds. The year 1890 A.D. was the tenth of this current cycle, and the epoch is nine, that is, the moon was nine days old on January 1. Careful calculation shows that the sun and moon were in conjunction at mid-day of the winter solstice of 2555 A.M.; and their epact was at that time 0, a cycle was then beginning. There are in 3,334 years 175 full cycles and nine-nineteenths of a cycle, hence the solar year beginning at the winter solstice of 1889 A.D., was the ninth year of the 176th metonic cycle from Joshua's long day. Advance 1,441 solar years from that long day, and we have the birth of our Saviour.

An important fact should be noted. Despite changes in heaven, earth, and computations of time, the measured sequence of weeks, months, years has not been lost. Through the Flood, the Confusion at Babel, Joshua's Long Day, the Change marked on the Dial of Ahaz, the Weeks of Daniel to the Birth and



Sepulchre of our Lord, there has been no utterly confusing break. Men of every region, time, and religion have preserved the knowledge of an orderly, timely sequence as to days—sacred and profane—weeks, months, years, with sufficient accuracy.

This accuracy could hardly have been preserved had the writers of the Old Testament books been very numerous, and were their compositions liable to be altered by others more numerous and even less known. The unfolding of religious truth, by the advance of revelation, would scarcely be assured from human caprice and grave error, were the selection from so many small inspirations to be made by another unknown many, mere editors without any inspiration whatever. It was the personal indwelling of men by the Holy Ghost which gave unique glory to the Pentecost; and it was the known communion of Moses and of the prophets with the Almighty and wise God that made the Bible precious. Holy and inspired men were not in clusters; nor would Israel have believed, nor can we have undoubting faith, in itinerant books of wandering formation by men of uncertain name and dwelling. The most profound scholars, in union with touching reverence, themselves capable of most critical and accurate investigation, familiar with all that is useful in sceptical research, regard the darkest, most difficult, and improbable events, as amongst those readings whose very improbability guarantees their genuineness. Men are only strong as they rest on God; and we cannot, we will not, think that self-seeking priests, opposed by fault-finding, disputing, professional prophets, produced a book whose God-like character has won undying love from those good and great who beautify and sanctify the world.

Demonstration that the past is not the only age of miracles, but a mere beginning, not confined to the lives of saints, is being given by modern investigation. The star Groombridge overcomes the might of the known universe, and is speeding toward us with a velocity of three or four hundred miles a second, which, if continued, will carry it beyond all relation to whatever we see. Shall we speak as were it improbable for the Supreme sometimes to stay with His hand the revolution of a planet, small as our earth, as too great a display of power and love for the children of men?

From time to time our lecture-halls resound with strange things just brought to light, and splendid results are made visible by scientific skill. Solids, liquids, gases, are various forms of matter controlled by temperature and pressure. Platinum, and we suppose anything else, can exist as a fine vapour. By attaining a greater coldness than has hitherto been possible for man, twice as far below the freezing-point as

boiling water is above it, Professor Dewar has liquified the atmosphere, and no doubt it will soon be rendered solid. Oxygen and hydrogen are of a faint blue colour, oxygen being the darker. We can see the vital gas; keep it within a bulb in a heated room, and it will not suffer any rapid loss. Enough has been done to dissipate despair as to proof of the most astounding facts in connection with our faith. We are coming nearer and nearer to the mysteries of matter and energy. Transmutations of their forms are being applied to all the purposes of existence. The infinitely great and the infinitely little are in close physical relation. Experimental verification, which begins to require astronomers to revise their theories of heaven, is finding wonders in our common life, and in lowest strata of society, so that many of us are all aglow with hopeful expectation of a brilliant future. Mr. W. H. Preece<sup>1</sup> has devised a new form of cable that quadruples the rate of telegraph working. We in London may soon be able to converse with every capital in Europe, and speak even across the Atlantic. The electric light will make the streets of our towns brilliant by power gathered from the streams running past them. This beneficent and sanitary mode of illumination reminds us indeed of that other and spiritual light coming from above, which reveals how we may convert the now greatly wasted forces of heart and conscience into a power laying hold of the eternal. Our time is a wonderful time, and we are glad of it. We know that epochs in which faith and purity prevail are elevating and fruitful in all manner of good. No great deeds are done by falterers; no brilliant advantages are certain to them, but to the steadfast mind, the holy, faithful, unconquerable will, belongs all that is excellent.

JOSEPH W. REYNOLDS.



#### ART. IV.—THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE LAITY.

**I**N the Church of Christ all the members are priests. It is remarkable that the title itself is actually given to them by two only of the inspired writers of the New Testament; yet they all address them as admitted to all the privileges that the title implies, and instruct them as to the nature and duties of the sacred office they bear, as a holy priesthood.

The following are the passages in which they are called priests :

(1) 1 Peter ii. 4: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

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<sup>1</sup> Chief electrician to the General Post-Office.