

# “I Sent the Hornet Before You”

Joshua 24:11-12

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## INTRODUCTION:

I am confident that all present hold affection for God, to some degree, and feel confident in His love, grace, mercy, and divine providence that He so bountifully bestows upon His people this side of the cross.

I am confident that God works on behalf of His people in ways that are good and in ways that we do not often see.

I am confident that God takes care of His own.

**Romans 15:4** – “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

## “I SENT THE HORNET BEFORE YOU”

**Joshua 24:11-12** – “Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you — also the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. But I delivered them into your hand. <sup>12</sup> **I SENT THE HORNET BEFORE YOU** which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.”

At the time of our text a number of things have happened:

- Israel has crossed over the Jordan into the Land of Canaan.
- Canaan has been taken during a seven-year period of conquest.
- The land has been divided into allotments and given to the 12 tribes.
- Joshua is making a great speech in acknowledging what God has done.
- Near the end of his life, Joshua gathered the Israelites together and in the course of his speaking, made that profound challenge

to the people in **Joshua 24:15** – “And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, **choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. **But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.**” Perhaps that verse is what we remember most from his speech.

- However, just three and four verses prior to making that challenge, Joshua said something I find most insightful . . . “Then you went over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the men of Jericho fought against you — also the **Amorites**, the **Perizzites**, the **Canaanites**, the **Hittites**, the **Girgashites**, the **Hivites**, and the **Jebusites**. But I delivered them into your hand. <sup>12</sup> **I SENT THE HORNET BEFORE YOU** which drove them out from before you, also the two kings of the Amorites, but not with your sword or with your bow.” Is this not a statement about God’s Divine Providence in providing for the care and needs of His people? Let me explain . . .

One reason why Israel met with such success in gaining a foothold in the Promised Land was God’s having “sent the hornet” before them **Exodus 23:28-30** – “And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before you. I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased, and you inherit the land.” While Israel was in her last years of Egyptian bondage, Thutmose III and his successor waged a number of military invasions in Canaan, overcoming their defenses and conquering the inhabitants. Archaeologists have found that Thutmose III had as his personal badge, “The Hornet.” which no doubt referred to his “hornet army—The “hornets” which God had sent to soften the Canaanites for Israel’s invasion. God takes care of His own before the day and place where they need taking care of. His divine providence was working way in advance of the Israelites arriving in Canaan . . . Decades before. **GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS OWN!**

## JOSHUA’S LONG DAY

A fascinating event occurred during the seven-year period of conquest in Canaan, a portion of which we read about in **Joshua 10:11-14**. A fierce battle was underway north to northwest of present day Jerusalem. “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. 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.’ 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. 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.”

It is interesting to note that parallel accounts in the records of other nations show that the incident of Joshua’s Long Day is not an isolated one. There is indisputable evidence from the modern science of ethnology that such an event occurred as Joshua records. In **ANCIENT CHINESE** writings there is a legend of a long day. The **INCAS** of Peru and the **AZTECS** of Mexico have a like record. There is a **BABYLONIAN** and a **PERSIAN** legend of a day that was miraculously extended. Herodotus, the “Father of History, who lived in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C., recounts that while in **EGYPT**, priests showed him their temple records, and that he read of a day which was twice the natural length of any day that had ever been recorded.

Yet, “Joshua’s Long Day’ has been pointed out by the critics of the Word as a myth and as being scientific trash. Joshua said. “Sun, stand still over Gibeon . . . and the sun stood still in the midst of heaven.” **Joshua 10:12, 14**. Since it is a scientific fact that the sun does not revolve around the earth, critics, in glee, point this out as but another mistake in the Bible. It hasn’t been too many years that science has known that the spinning of the earth is the result of the gravitational

pull of the sun. To stop the earth from turning on its axis, it would be necessary to stop the “pull” of the sun. A reduction in the gravitational pull of the sun would result in the slowing down of the rotation of the earth, and a prolonging of the day, or time.

Did Joshua have this scientific data in his day?

Was he so ignorant of the solar system that he thought the sun moved from East to West, and that for time to be prolonged the sun must stand still? By modern standards, he was a primitive man, in a primitive culture, with primitive misconceptions. He probably knew very little about the planet on which he lived, its chemical compounds, or its shape. He knew even less about the solar system. As far as Joshua was concerned, so reason the modern scholars, practically everyone believed the earth was flat, and for this reason the sun rose in the east and hours later sank in the west.

- Did Joshua know that the earth upon which he stood about **8,000** miles in diameter? **7,926.28** to be precise.
- He had no idea that there were close to **200** million square miles of surface area on the earth . . . **71** percent of which was water.
- He was unaware earth was spinning on its axis in a cycle every twenty four hours . . . Well, **23** hours, **56** minutes and **4.09** seconds to be exact.
- And he didn’t even know that the earth was traveling through space at about **18.5** miles per second.
- Did he know that the sun he was commanding to stand still was **93,000,000** miles away, or that at its core it was over **30,000,000** . . . Degrees Fahrenheit . . . Or that the Sun was over **100** times bigger than the earth?
- Did he know that the earth made a complete orbit around the sun yearly?

We might say. “how little Joshua knew” . . . But ;let me tell you what he did know . . . **BUT HE KNEW HIS GOD!** He knew that God had promised to go before His people and fight their battles to give them victory. He knew what God has said in **Joshua 10:8** – “And the Lord

said to Joshua, "Do not fear them, for I have delivered them into your hand; not a man of them shall stand before you."

And in this battle he saw victory in his grasp, but time was running out. If he didn't conquer the enemy before dark, they would regroup and attack Israel the next day. Knowing his God, his and his God's promise, he called out to God for help, and in the presence of all Israel, he commanded the "sun to stand still." But the sun was already standing still, Joshua. It is the earth that moves, not the sun. Why didn't Joshua cry out, "Earth, quit moving," or "Earth, slow down your spinning on your axis to prolong time."

Joshua had no idea that his command slowed down 6.6 sextillion tons of spinning gravel and water to give Israel victory over her enemies. But did Joshua know something that God had revealed to him? Over 3,000 years ago he said something that would have met the approval of today's scientific establishment. His command in the Hebrew language was not "Sun stand thou still," but "**Sun, cease acting**" or "**Sun, stop working.**" It was then that the gravitational pull of the sun affected the earth. It was then that the earth began to slow down and the day was lengthened.

Permit me to read a few lines that appear on page 124 of Robert Boyd's *World's Bible Handbook*: An astronomer, who was a professor at Yale, made a startling discovery. He found that the "earth was twenty-four hours out of schedule. Another professor at Yale, Dr. Totten, suggested the astronomer read the Bible, starting at the beginning and going as far as necessary, to see if the Bible could account for the missing time. When he came to the account of the long day of Joshua, the astronomer rechecked the figures and found that at the time of Joshua there were only twenty-three hours and twenty minutes lost. His skepticism justified, he decided that the Bible was not the Word of God, because here was a mistake by forty minutes. Professor Totten showed him that the Bible account does not say twenty-four hours, but rather '**about the space of a whole day.**' On reading farther the astronomer found that God, through the prophet Isaiah and in answer to Hezekiah's prayer, promised to add fifteen years to his life (2 Kings 20:1-11; Isaiah 38:1-21). To confirm this promise, the shadow on the sundial was turned back ten degrees. **Ten**

**degrees on a sundial is forty minutes on the face of a clock.** When he found his day of missing time accounted for in the Bible, the astronomer bowed his head in worship of its Author, saying, “Lord, I believe!” **GOD TAKES CARE OF HIS OWN!**

**What a God Joshua served . . . And, what a God we serve!** **John 3:16-17** – “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”

We are not alone . . . God is with us daily, every step of the way.

- **Proverbs 16:9** – “A man's heart plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.”
- **Romans 8:28** – “And we know that **all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”
- **Ephesians 1:11** – “In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to **the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.**”

May the assurance of God’s providence in our lives strengthen our resolve to serve Him faithfully in the days to come.

- Live your faith
- Grow your faith
- Share your faith.
- Lead others to obedient faith.
- God can still send His hornet before you.

**God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**