

## 30 AMAZING BIBLE STORIES YOU MAY NOT KNOW

### #14: The Longest Days of History

#### THE MOST WELL-KNOWN DAY THE SUN STOOD STILL | JOSHUA 10

- Verses 1-2 – Fear in the heart of the King of Jerusalem.
- Verses 3-5 – The five-king confederation goes against Gibeon, an ally of the Hebrews.
- Verses 6-11 – The great battle and its aftermath kills many (but not all) of the coalition of kings.
- Verses 12-14 – The back-story to verses 6-11.
  - Verses 12-14 are the fifth of ten *shirots* (songs) in the Hebrew Scripture. They give praise for events in Israel which the hand of God wrought.
  - Verse 12a – **Then spake Joshua** must be interpreted carefully.
    - Is this saying, “then, after the battle, Joshua spoke?” This would be the normal English reading.
    - The most basic meaning of the Hebrew are words like *formerly, beginning, before, since*.
    - It seems best interpreted to put this song as an interpretation of the previous verses, not a chronological follow-up.
  - Verses 12b-13 – the song itself:
    - Joshua commands the sun to **stand thou still** over Gibeon (in the south) and the Moon over Ajalon (in the north).
    - Verse 13 gives the result: **the sun stood still**, mentioned three times in this verse.
    - It is really near impossible to interpret these words (in English or Hebrew) in any way other than the plain sense.
    - What is **the book of Jasher**? The historian Josephus speaks about this account and mentions that it is written “in the books laid up in the Temple” (*Antiquities of the Jews, 5:61*) These books were likely lost in the destruction of the Temple in 70AD.
  - Verse 14 says that this is the only day in which the **Lord harkened unto the voice of a man**.

- Verses 15-27 – the rest of the very long day, till the sun goes down.

#### THE LENGTHENED DAY OF HEZEKIAH | 2 KINGS 20:1-11

- Verse 1 – the grave situation.
- Verses 2-3 – Hezekiah’s prayer.
  - Some believe that Hezekiah wrote Psalm 120 (and others) and that his prayer is seen in the Psalm, especially verse 1.
- Verses 4-7 – Isaiah’s good news.
  - Why did God answer Hezekiah’s prayer? Psalm 132:11 compared to verse 6, **for my servant David’s sake**.
  - Concerning the medicine of figs, Jewish Middle-Ages commentator *Rashi* says, “[This was] a miracle within a miracle, for even healthy flesh - when you place a cake of pressed figs upon it, decays, yet the Holy One, Blessed be He, puts an injurious substance upon vulnerable tissue and it becomes healed.”
- Verses 8-11 – the sign that Hezekiah would live.
  - The Lord granted Hezekiah 15 years of life (v. 6), and the “10 degrees” on the sundial was the promise.
- The word **degrees** is used six times in verses 8-11 (and five times in the corresponding account, Isaiah 38:8).
  - Psalms 120-134 are called “A Psalm of Degrees.”
  - The Hebrew says “A Psalm of *The* Degrees.”
  - Which degrees? Could it be a hint that there are 15 Psalms of degrees, and these each correspond very well to Hezekiah’s predicament? Compare 2 Kings 20:5 with Psalm 122:1, for example.

#### THE THIRD ALMOST UNKNOWN DAY THE SUN STOOD STILL | HABAKKUK 3:11

- Habakkuk 3 is a *Psalm* that is not found in the book of Psalms.
  - This Psalms is a key to interpretation of the Psalms in that it shows us the pattern that Psalms have a *superscription* and a *subscription* and that all modern Bibles have these in the wrong place! **To the chief singer...** (v. 19) is a *subscription*!
- Habakkuk 3:11 prophetically declares that there is *one more day* in which the sun will stand still, and that is the day of the Lord’s arrival.