

abyss and the windows of heaven being stopped; the one no longer poured forth its waters upon the earth, and the other no longer descended to occupy their place; and the rain had ceased to fall. When the above three causes of the deluge ceased their action, and had given place to the wind from God, the waters of course began to subside.

We are now arrived at the last epoch of this great event, the gradual decrease and final subsidence of the diluvial waters. The period of their increase, if with Lightfoot we add the 40 days to the 150, would be 190 days, or, as was before observed, six lunar months and about three weeks. *In the seventh month* of the deluge, as the same author observes,* on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat,† from which period the waters returned off the face of the earth, *going and returning*, as it is in the Hebrew,‡ rendered in our translation by the word *continually*, but almost all the ancient versions adhere to the literal sense, which seems to be important, and to indicate a flux and reflux of the waters, which would affect the deposition of the matters floating upon or suspended in them. Whether this flux and reflux partook of the nature of a tide, and was produced by the action of the moon, or whether it was occasioned by the wind, which, as Solomon observes, *goeth towards the south and turneth about to the north*,§ does not appear.

After the resting of the ark, more than two months elapsed before the tops of the mountains were seen, and finally, in nearly two months more the waters had universally disappeared; and after their long domination over the earth, lasting nearly eleven months, were confined again within the limits that God had originally assigned to them. Reckoning to the day of Noah's going out of the ark, on

* Ubi supra.

† See above, vol. i. p. 45.

‡ Heb. וישבו המים מעל הארץ הלוך ושוב.

§ Eccles. i. 6.