

Deuteronomy 1:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Who went in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

Analysis

God 'went in the way before you' as both pathfinder and protector—'in fire by night, and in a cloud by day.' The pillar imagery signifies the Shekinah glory, God's manifest presence guiding His covenant people. This theophanic appearance demonstrates divine immanence—God doesn't merely give directions but personally accompanies His people. The Reformed doctrine of divine providence is beautifully illustrated: God sovereignly orchestrates every step, searching out resting places and removing obstacles. This prefigures Christ as our forerunner (Hebrews 6:20).

Historical Context

References the miraculous pillar of cloud and fire that guided Israel from the Exodus through wilderness wanderings (Exodus 13:21-22, 40:34-38). The cloud provided shade from desert heat by day; the fire gave light and warmth by night. This tangible manifestation of God's presence also protected Israel from Egyptian pursuit at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:19-20).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's personal guidance of Israel through the wilderness encourage you in uncertain seasons?
2. In what ways does Christ fulfill this role as our forerunner and guide into God's promised rest?

Interlinear Text

Who went	before	in the way	you to search you out	HO	a place
H1980	H6440	H1870	H8446		H4725
to pitch your tents	in in fire	by night	to shew	in the way	ASHR
H2583	H784	H3915	H7200	H1870	H834
Who went	HO	and in a cloud	by day		
H1980		H6051	H3119		

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 10:33 (Parallel theme): And they departed from the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them.

Psalms 78:14 (Parallel theme): In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

Nehemiah 9:12 (Parallel theme): Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go.

Psalms 105:39 (Parallel theme): He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.

Zechariah 2:5 (Parallel theme): For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

Ezekiel 20:6 (Parallel theme): In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I had espied for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands:

Numbers 14:14 (Parallel theme): And they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land: for they have heard that thou LORD art among this people, that thou LORD art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org